



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development

ENVI • NUMBER 071 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Tuesday, September 19, 2017

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Chair

Mrs. Deborah Schulte

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• (0845)

[English]

The Chair (Mrs. Deborah Schulte (King—Vaughan, Lib.)): I'd like to welcome everybody to the environment committee. Welcome back from the summer. I trust it was a nice summer and that everybody had a chance to have a bit of rest. We have, obviously, a lot of work to do this fall. I'm looking forward to working with everyone to do that.

We have some changes on the committee, and I just want to thank two members who are now no longer on the committee, Martin Shields and Jim Eglinski. I really want to say on the record how very much we appreciated working with them over the year and a half. It was a real pleasure. We got lots of work done and it was nice to have them on the committee.

I now want to welcome back Ed Fast.

Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC): It's good to be back.

The Chair: Thank you very much. It's very great to see you.

Robert Sopuck is now on the committee.

Thank you and welcome. I know you came and sat with us previously on some of the studies, so we're looking forward to having you on the team.

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Thank you.

The Chair: Joëlle, you're back, which is great. Thank you.

I know Wayne Stetski is standing in for Linda. We've had you here before on this study. Welcome back.

We have two people standing in right now for our regular committee members on the Liberal side, and they are Geng Tan and Jennifer O'Connell. Welcome. Thank you both very much for being here.

It's important to have our vice-chairs elected. One vice-chair is no longer on the committee, so if we could, maybe the first order of business before we start into the study on heritage would be to just take care of that committee business.

Robert, do you want to make a motion?

Mr. Robert Sopuck: I nominate Ed Fast for vice-chair.

The Chair: Okay. We're starting off just fine.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: All right. Excellent.

Welcome and congratulations, Ed.

Hon. Ed Fast: Thank you.

The Chair: We will get in touch with you on the subcommittee meeting coming up soon.

I'd like to start. Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) and the motion adopted by the committee on Monday, June 5, 2017, the committee will commence its study on heritage preservation and protection in Canada.

I just want to make sure. We definitely adopted this motion on the 5th, and we agreed to the work plan that we're going to follow now for the next three weeks, with the witness list submitted by Mr. Aldag on June 14. We did ask everybody to let us know if there were any other names they wanted us to bring forward. We have not gotten anything else as yet, so we have built the plan based on what we had. We appreciate that.

We're going to start today. I'd like to welcome our guests. We're going to start with, from the Parks Canada Agency, Joëlle Montminy, vice-president, indigenous affairs and cultural heritage directorate. Accompanying her is Genevieve Charrois, director of cultural heritage policy.

We also have, from National Trust for Canada, Natalie Bull, executive director, and Dr. Richard Alway, chair of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. As well, Dr. Martin Magne is the retired director of archaeology and history for Parks Canada.

Welcome and thank you.

We'll start off with Parks Canada. We'll do National Trust next, if you're all right with that. Then we'll do Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, and then Dr. Martin Magne.

When you have one minute left, I will hold up the yellow card. When I hold up the red card, it means you are out of time and I need you to wrap up. It's the same for the members.

Joëlle, the floor is yours.

Ms. Joëlle Montminy (Vice-President, Indigenous Affairs and Cultural Heritage Directorate, Parks Canada Agency): Thank you very much.

[Translation]

Madam Chair and members of the committee, thank you for your interest in the conservation and preservation of Canada's cultural heritage, a subject that is central to the mandate of the Parks Canada Agency.

It is a privilege to be before you today to share the agency's perspective on the current situation in Canada, to highlight Parks Canada's role, and to suggest some future prospects for the field.

Heritage places are of profound importance to Canada. They reflect the rich heritage of our country and provide an opportunity for Canadians to learn more about our diversity, including the history, cultures and contributions of indigenous peoples. Heritage places are a critical part of Canada's historical record and provide opportunities for employment and incomes, support sustainable tourism and contribute to the quality of life of Canadians by providing character and ambience to neighbourhoods, towns and regions.

Built heritage also helps preserve the environment by protecting existing structures thereby reducing construction and demolition waste.

● (0850)

[English]

Parks Canada's mandate is to protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, and to foster public understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment in ways that ensure the ecological and commemorative integrity of these places for present and future generations.

On behalf of the government, Parks Canada contributes to the protection of our national heritage, pursuant to a variety of legislative and policy documents. Over the years and through a patchwork of heritage commemoration and conservation instruments, the government has formally recognized more than 2,150 persons, places, and events of national historic significance, over 1,300 federal heritage buildings, 164 heritage railway stations, 92 heritage lighthouses, and 39 Canadian heritage rivers. In addition, 18 world heritage sites have been inscribed on the world heritage list. Each of these designations carries a different focus. For some it's commemoration, for some it's protection and conservation, and for some it's a combination of both.

Parks Canada has direct stewardship of a 171 national historic sites, as well as other heritage places recognized at the federal level, including more than 500 federal buildings, 10 heritage lighthouses, six Canadian heritage rivers, 12 world heritage sites, and more than 10,000 archeological sites representing the deep and diverse history of indigenous peoples. These heritage places often overlap with one another. For example, the Rideau Canal is a national historic site, a world heritage site, a Canadian heritage river, and home to 26 federal heritage buildings.

For Parks Canada, management of cultural resources is governed by its cultural resource management policy. The main objective of the policy is to ensure that cultural resources administered by Parks Canada are conserved and that the heritage value is shared for the

understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Cultural resources covered by our policy include buildings, artifacts in our collections, in situ archaeological resources, cultural landscapes, and engineering works. It is applicable to all Parks Canada heritage places.

Other key resources that help the agency manage its cultural resources include the "Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada", the cultural resource impact analysis process, and Parks Canada's research permitting system.

I'll say few words on each of these. The "Standards and Guidelines" is a pan-Canadian set of principles and guidelines to guide the conservation of historic places. It is a product of the historic places collaboration under the FPT table on culture and heritage. The cultural resource impact analysis process is used to assess the potential impact of proposed projects on cultural resources under the care of Parks Canada and to identify any mitigation measures that may be required. The agency's research and collection permit system allows us to ensure that all natural, archeological, and social science research proposed to be undertaken in the protection heritage areas adheres to our standards.

Parks Canada also has tools to assist with the conservation of federally recognized heritage places owned by others. The federal heritage buildings review office provides guidance to other federal custodians on the conservation of their heritage buildings. The national cost-sharing program for heritage places provides matching funds to eligible non-federal custodians of national historic sites, lighthouses, railway stations, and federal heritage buildings to support heritage conservation and presentation projects.

All of these tools are what we have in our tool box, but the government does face challenges in the conservation of federal heritage.

As was noted by the Auditor General in 2003, built heritage is at risk because of inadequate financial resources allocated to heritage conservation and the lack of legislative framework. For example, there is no legal protection for terrestrial or underwater archeological resources at the federal level, which can put these resources at risk, the vast majority of which are indigenous in origin. The lack of legislative protection also prevents the agency from meeting international standards, such as the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage.

At Parks Canada, national historic sites are not protected through specific legislation. Over the years it has often been suggested that a clear framework, established specifically to provide legal protection to national historic sites and other cultural heritage places, would help ensure that cultural heritage conservation is a priority in the context of limited financial resources.

Non-federal owners of national historic sites, heritage lighthouses, and railway stations also face significant challenges to preserve cultural resources. Budget 2016 invested \$20 million over two years in the national cost-sharing program, but the allocation is set to return to its permanent reference level of \$1 million in 2018. This program has been consistently oversubscribed, with Parks Canada receiving applications for over \$107 million in funding since 2009 for a total of just over \$40 million in available funding. A decline in funding will create additional pressure on non-federal owners of these important sites and increase risk vis-à-vis conservation of heritage values recognized by the federal government. It could also limit our ability to support development of a heritage plan in relation to the legacy of residential schools as required by the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

There are also external factors that impact on our cultural heritage. The effects of climate change and environmental forces are increasingly being felt by Parks Canada and others, be it the loss of permafrost, extreme weather, or erosion. Some work is currently under way in some Canadian jurisdictions to examine mitigation and adaptation measures to meet the challenges of climate change, including within Parks Canada.

Development pressure also continues to pose challenges for historic places in urban areas. Without legal protection, heritage conservation often takes a back seat to other considerations. While Parks Canada's expertise and leadership is often called upon to help other federal departments manage their heritage places, the federal family would benefit from a more uniform framework of conservation and protection measures for its heritage places, as well as greater definition of roles and responsibilities.

While many challenges remain, the recent investment of \$3.6 billion in Parks Canada's assets will address much of the deferred maintenance that has accrued over a number of years, including for historic buildings, engineering works, and other cultural resources. As was noted in budget 2017, a medium and long-term plan will also need to be developed to address ongoing financial needs to ensure that cultural resources stay in good condition.

● (0855)

[*Translation*]

In conclusion, the Government of Canada has adopted, over time, a number of legislative and policy instruments to protect our irreplaceable cultural heritage. Parks Canada is proud of its leadership role in heritage conservation within the federal family and as the steward of cultural resources.

The challenges we face to conserve our heritage are not new: funding, development, uneven protection and environmental forces. An analysis done in 1999 concluded that in one generation, Canada had lost 20% of its built heritage, and much of what remains continues to be threatened. It is therefore critical to continue exploring the best ways to address these challenges to prevent the continuing loss of Canada's heritage.

Surveys have consistently found that heritage protection is important to Canadians. In the context of Canada 150, Parks Canada's national historic sites have experienced a 27% increase in visitation—this serves to reinforce that Canadians care about the nation's history, culture and heritage.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll hold questions until after we've heard from everyone, but thank you.

The next presenter is Natalie Bull.

Ms. Natalie Bull (Executive Director, National Trust for Canada): Madam Chair, members of the committee, thank you so much for this opportunity. Thank you for your interest in historic places and for undertaking this milestone study.

I'm here today representing the National Trust for Canada, a national membership-based, not-for-profit, non-government organization and registered charity established in 1973. As part of a global network of national trusts, we provide tools and resources to citizens to help them save places that matter, and we inspire Canadians with great places to live, work, and play. We are a proud partner with government in programs including Young Canada Works and Canada Historic Places Day.

In the 30 years between 1970 and 2000, Canada lost more than 20% of its historic buildings. Losses continue apace today. Provinces, territories, and municipal governments are doing their part. Federal leadership is urgently needed.

In this presentation I will do my best to provide an overview of historic places in Canada, review the challenges faced by those who try to save and renew them, and offer recommendations for federal leadership. We are talking about a broad range of places owned or managed by at least four different types of owners. Taken together, the places owned by NGOs and charities, private owners, provincial and municipal governments, and the federal government make up a potential universe of many thousands of historic places, perhaps half a million or more. Some of these places are already designated, usually by a municipal bylaw established under a provincial heritage act. Thirteen thousand are currently listed on the Canadian register of historic places, an important national databank and reference.

Designation often brings with it some access to financial incentives—grants, tax measures, and other sweeteners—offered as a carrot to compensate for the inconvenience or extra cost associated with heritage compliance. Indeed, the carrot and the stick are at the heart of most jurisdictions' heritage strategies. We know that incentives are rarely available in amounts sufficient to influence an unwilling owner's decision to invest or demolish, and heritage designation generally does not bring absolute protection against demolition. The protection of historic places is a challenging business.

Why would a parliamentary committee be concerned with the state of historic places in Canada? I think there are lots of great reasons. For a start, there is the potential for positive impacts on climate change. Canada's buildings are the third-largest greenhouse gas emitting sector, and the reuse and renewal of heritage buildings capitalizes on materials and energy already invested, reduces construction and demolition waste, and avoids the environmental impact associated with new development.

In addition to climate change benefits, historic places can contribute to a strong economy. Rehabilitation projects generate up to 21% more jobs than the same investment in new construction. They're a great stimulus measure, and they typically use local labour and materials, such that 75% of the economic benefits of heritage rehabilitation projects tend to remain in the communities where these buildings are located. This is a great stimulus measure. A related economic impact comes from cultural tourism. For example, U.S. travellers seeking heritage experiences in Canada are expected to reach 12 million by the year 2025.

These places also matter to our national identity, and they have a social value, often as the last bastions of affordable housing or a low-cost base for start-ups. However, there are many barriers and disincentives that make it difficult for private sector owners to save and renew historic places, including rising land values in big cities that encourage owners to demolish existing buildings in order to maximize development on the site, and an often unpredictable bottom line, which can deter developers and even lenders. There are insufficient incentives to counteract these barriers, so we lose buildings like the 1898 Etzio building in Edmonton's Old Strathcona district, the landmark Stollery's department store at Yonge and Bloor in Toronto, and Ottawa's Somerset House, where we witnessed demolition by neglect.

NGOs and charities working to maintain and renew historic places also face financial barriers. Competition for grant funding is fierce. Just last week, after decades of effort, the building rehabilitation society in Guysborough County, Nova Scotia, was forced to accept the demolition of the 1888 Hazel Hill Commercial Cable Building, where the message of the sinking of the Titanic first reached land.

● (0900)

The only federal funding program dedicated to historic places is the cost-share program for national historic sites, federally designated railway stations, and lighthouses, as Joëlle described, but it is limited to just a few hundred places and they're not-for-profit owners. The funding available has ranged from zero dollars for many years to as little as \$1 million a year, and the current \$20 million over two years has been a really important boon, but we're very concerned about the notion of it returning to just \$1 million next year.

What is the federal role in heritage conservation? Canada needs policies that create a strong economy, protect the environment, and avoid climate impacts. Recycling and reusing existing buildings, our largest consumer good, offers a great opportunity for the federal government to achieve these goals. Interjurisdictional collaboration is needed with the province and territories to develop pan-Canadian standards and explore the opportunity for stackable grants and incentives. Many instinctively look to the Department of Canadian Heritage to lead this charge with its many programs that fund,

stimulate, and support a vast network of museums, culture, and heritage organizations, but historic places are not generally accommodated in its programs. According to its agency act, it is Parks Canada that has responsibility for historic places in Canada, reporting to the Minister of the Environment. It is confusing for the average heritage advocate, and frankly I would be very happy to see both ministries increasingly embrace the challenges and offer solutions for historic places.

In closing, I would like to offer the Government of Canada a series of priority actions that would do much to support the conservation of historic places inside and outside the federal family, and this is the framework that I think Joëlle referred to as well.

Number one, the federal government can join municipalities, provinces, and territories in offering much needed incentives to attract investment. A range of approaches may be appropriate to reflect the different ownership types and property types. For example, a predictable go-to source of federal matching funds like the cost-share program works well for heritage properties owned by charities and non-profits. Consideration might be given to a mechanism where donations by private individuals and corporations are matched by the federal government as an interesting way to encourage philanthropy. A federal rehabilitation tax incentive like measures recently proposed in Bill C-323 is a proven way to attract corporate investment to revenue-generating historic places, and gives older buildings vibrant, new uses. There's a range of mechanisms available to consider.

Number two, the government can implement two simple federal measures that would have broad benefit for historic places inside and outside the federal inventory. First, a “heritage first” policy requiring government departments to give priority to federal heritage buildings, or even those owned by others, before opting for new construction or leases to fill federal space needs. These measures could help create a new market for heritage buildings overnight. I know a local developer who says that such a measure would really transform the landscape for historic places in Canada. Second, a “do no harm” policy would be interesting to consider the impact of federal actions on all places in the Canadian register of historic places, regardless of ownership. This would help ensure that when the federal government spends infrastructure dollars, for example, they aren't used to the detriment of existing cultural resources. We know that funding for new convention centres, new roads, and infrastructure can sometimes displace important historic places.

Number three, the government can get the federal House in order and be an exemplary heritage steward. Canada is the only G8 nation without laws to protect historic places owned by its national government. As Joëlle mentioned again, in November 2003, the Auditor General of Canada assessed heritage protection practices within several federal departments and agencies and reported that built heritage under federal control will be lost to future generations unless action to protect it is taken soon. Very little has changed since that date. I refer you to the Auditor General's report and urge you to consider a range of measures including statutory protection of historic places on federal lands, national historic sites, and world heritage sites in the federal inventory, and statutory protection of archaeological resources on or under federal lands and waters.

Number four, the federal government can facilitate full participation of indigenous peoples in the identification and protection of their historic places.

Finally, the government can ensure that the Canadian register of historic places and the “Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada” are enshrined in legislation and adequately funded because they are the essential building blocks and underpinning for all of the recommendations listed above.

● (0905)

Thank you so much for your interest and for your action on historic places.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Bull.

Now we're going to hear from Dr. Richard Alway, chair of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

Mr. Richard Alway (Chair, Heritage Designations and Programs, Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I'm sure members of the committee are used to getting a tremendous amount of information in a short period of time, but information overload, I know, is always a problem on these occasions.

Just to identify myself more completely, I'm actually president of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies at the University of Toronto. It was sort of my retirement project when I retired as president of the University of St. Michael's College after almost 20

years, which is federated in and with the University of Toronto. I was asked to do the research institute as a retirement project, but after nine years, I think it's more of a second career.

From your point of view, my role as chair of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada is the relevant one. The board advises the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, who is the minister responsible for Parks Canada, and the Government of Canada, therefore, on the commemoration of places, persons, and events of national historic significance. It has done this since 1919, when it was founded by an order in council.

I also, at the moment, serve as vice-chair of the advisory committee on the official residences of Canada at the National Capital Commission, and previously I had two terms as CEO and chair of the Ontario Heritage Foundation, now the Ontario Heritage Trust, which is that province's lead agency for the protection, preservation, and promotion of cultural and natural resources of significance.

First of all, I want to congratulate the committee on undertaking this work. It's a great opportunity. I think a report that is broad, comprehensive, yet practical, and that might even have recommendations that would need to be phased, is really what is called for if one can hope for such an outcome. I think it's important to recognize that it was—and it's been mentioned twice already this morning—the 2003 report of the Auditor General that gained the attention of Canadians and focused it on heritage and the threat to Canada's built heritage that existed. It indicated very strongly that two-thirds of Canada's national historic sites in federal ownership were in fair-to-poor condition, many in poor condition. It was very critical of the federal government's described neglect in the area, and it advocated very strongly for a reinforced legal framework for protection, in other words, for legislation.

When the report came out, you may recall, it got a lot of attention. There was a flurry of interest. It didn't last terribly long because there was a lack of a coordinated, coherent response on the part of individuals across the country. Indeed, surveys taken more recently indicate that there is still broad support among Canadians for built heritage generally, but that when it's placed against competing interests from time to time, that's where it loses out.

I think this committee has a chance to be able to promote and analyze the role of heritage within the general cultural framework of the country.

What was the Auditor General's report really based on, and what is the narrative for historic heritage protection in Canada?

Beginning in 1908, the national battlefields of Quebec act was a piece of legislation dealing basically with the Plains of Abraham. In 1919, there was an order in council that founded the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, which started the program of federal commemoration of nationally significant persons, places, and events. In 1953, the Historic Sites and Monuments Act provided a statutory basis for the federal government to commemorate with plaques and occasional acquisitions—that hasn't happened very often recently—places, persons, and events of national significance.

● (0910)

In 1973, Natalie's organization, Heritage Canada—its original name—was founded by a federal government order in council. In 1982, the federal heritage buildings policy was founded, which does deal with federally owned structures. It asks for a heritage evaluation for all buildings 40 years old and older and for the production of a statement of heritage significance for each building, but there are two things here: one is a sort of registration of buildings and one is classification. For registration, there is basically no significant protection involved, and nothing of significance regarding conservation of the resource. If the building is classified, there is some degree of protection, in that demolition is made fairly difficult, but it's very incomplete.

In 1985 to 1988, as we've heard, the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act came in, and then the lighthouses in 2008. Both were private members' bills, which is very interesting, but I would note for the interest of the committee that neither involved significant a federal outlay of money, and none involved diverting federal revenue in any way. The finance department is always interested in this. Both those pieces of private member's legislation went through.

Bill C-323, which is very current, of course does involve a tax incentive. It will be interesting to see what happens with that. I certainly would advocate that kind of approach, but I think it's much more difficult to do, particularly as more or less a first step.

What would make great sense today?

First of all, I would say that the legislation to protect federally owned national historic sites, 171 owned by Parks Canada and 65 by other federal departments, should include protections for UNESCO world heritage sites. We go to a great extent to try to add to the Canadian list in this area, as it's thought to be a very good thing, but we offer no guaranteed protection once they're on the list. We're really the only G8 country that doesn't have federal legislation protecting nationally significant places. I think this is a huge gap that could be filled fairly easily, and I suspect the government would be open to that type of recommendation.

It also should ensure any legislation measures to prevent adverse federal action on the over 730 national historic sites that are owned by somebody other than the federal government, some by provinces and most by private individuals. There is only so much one can do, as property rights in Canada, through the BNA Act and the Canadian Constitution, are assigned to provinces and territories. There's a limit here to what the federal government can easily accomplish. I think it is important to have protection for archaeological resources on federal lands and under waters as well.

I think cost-sharing has been mentioned before. The federal provision here was as much as \$6 million or \$7 million going back to maybe 15 years ago. It declined to \$1 million for several years just a few years ago. Now we've had two years at \$10 million, but that's about to expire. I think it's important to recommend an extension of cost-sharing, and let's say for five years at a \$10-million level. That's as close as one gets to making a program permanent, and I think it's well merited.

Tax incentives would complete the picture of tools here, but I think it's harder to achieve that and I think we need to be practical. I would hope that the committee would sketch out broad recommendations that could carry this area forward into the future in a comprehensive manner, recognizing that some of the recommendations might have to be phased in their execution.

I wish the committee well. You have an important task. I thank you for the opportunity to say my piece.

● (0915)

The Chair: Thank you very much. We appreciate that.

Now we'll hear from Dr. Martin Magne.

Mr. Martin Magne (As an Individual): Thank you, Madam Chair, and I thank the committee for inviting me to speak to you today.

I'll just give you a little bit of my background so you understand my perspective. I was with Parks Canada for 24 years. I retired as director of the archaeology and history branch. Prior to that, until 1992 I was with the Alberta government. I was head of the Archaeological Survey of Alberta and I oversaw the archaeological research and resource management program with a staff at one time of up to 24 people. I also worked as a private archaeology consultant for five years, mainly in western Canada, and I practised field archaeology everywhere west of Quebec.

I'm here today to speak to you about archaeological resource management in Canada. I first want to give you a broad perspective on provincial and territorial programs. Then I'll focus on federal programs and where I believe there are opportunities for improvement. I won't address shipwrecks and underwater archaeology too much. It's a complicated subject and beyond my ability to speak to you on today.

By archaeology I mean the material remains of human activities in the past, including the indigenous past going back some 20,000 years. It's a non-renewable record. Therefore, that's why archaeologists require high-resolution recovery and recording methodologies. Archaeological sites vary a lot. They can be a single stone artifact. They can be large aboriginal villages. They can be remains of industrial buildings, fur trade forts, and so on. They can be under the ocean, under lakes, on mountain tops, anywhere in the country they can be found.

They can be also given different levels of significance and that's a key way of looking at resource management. There are different scales of assessing significance. You can have qualitative assessments. You can have highly quantitative metric types of assessments for what is scientifically significant, what is historically significant, what is culturally significant. That's something to keep in mind.

All provinces and territories have legislation that protects archaeological resources and the management of those—because they occur mostly below ground but not all below ground—is facilitated by requiring assessments of developments that will disturb the ground such as dams and roads, subdivisions, parking lots, harbour improvements, etc.

The proposed projects are reviewed by the government bodies for the potential to impact those resources. Some types of geographic positioning are more likely to contain archaeological resources than others. If it is prime real estate today, it was prime real estate 20,000 years ago too.

The field assessments then are undertaken under legislation, regulatory requirements, by the proponent, whether it's the provincial government themselves or private industry, at their cost to assess whether there's something there and what its relative value is and then that assessment can lead to more intensive developments to further explore the nature of those resources and to gather those in the interests of the province or territory and the Canadian public. Of course, the artifacts coming from those resources are then curated by those government agencies as well.

The federal situation is different. First, as has been noted by my co-presenters here today, there is no federal legislation, no single statute, that protects archaeological resources other than possibly the Indian Act, which at one time protected only highly specific sites such as historic graves, totem poles, and rock paintings. I do not honestly know whether those provisions are still in place. There was a very strong push for federal archaeological legislation in 1989-90. It was drafted but it did not come to pass.

The push was accompanied by a three-year program called access to archaeology that was administered by the Department of Communications at the time, which provided funding for public archaeology. It was very popular. In particular, that program targeted indigenous community involvement in heritage and archaeology work.

There was another drafting of federal archaeology legislation some 15 years ago with the historic places initiative, which resulted in some expanded protective measures and incentives for built heritage in co-operation with the provinces and territories. However, the archaeological component was not completed.

Parks Canada is the only federal agency that is active in archaeological resource management. At one time, what is now the Canadian Museum of History was funded by the northern oil and gas program to undertake archaeological research in the Arctic, but that was principally a research-driven program and not a resource management one.

Federal lands, of course, are of a much smaller scale than what is contained in the provinces and territories, and those federal lands are unequally distributed. For comparative purposes, with about 440,000

square kilometres in area, federal lands equal approximately two-thirds the size of Alberta. Approximately 93% of federal lands are administered by Parks Canada.

● (0920)

Other federal land managers are the Departments of National Defence, Fisheries and Oceans, Transport, and Indigenous Affairs. Transport, for example, oversees airport lands, and I was heavily involved at one time in helping with the archeology in the Vancouver International Airport. The size of the land area, of course, is only part of the equation in estimating the archaeological resource management needs, since, for example, many DND and DFO lands are in strategic harbour locations and some Indian reserves are in areas that are rich in economic resources.

Again, for comparison, Parks Canada right now has a record of about 10,000 archeological sites. The Province of Alberta has a record of, say, 35,000 to 40,000 archeological sites, and British Columbia has about the same level. Most of those inventories were gathered by resource management from industrial development.

Parks Canada has a staff of archaeologists that undertake resource management principally for park purposes, both in resource management and for the purposes of public history and public education. Parks Canada maintains site records, curates artifacts, informs and engages the public, and works closely with indigenous communities. However, Parks Canada archaeologists also assist with the management of archeological resources on other federal lands.

In other federal lands, archeology is administered in the following manner. Under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, archaeological resources are to be considered in determining whether a project will have an environmental effect. Parks Canada is listed as an expert department that is available to assist the relevant department with that determination and with pursuing further action. However, there is no compulsory requirement for that consultation with Parks Canada experts. CEAA is fairly effective for large projects, but it is definitely not effective in capturing archaeological impacts in the case of smaller-scale projects where environmental effects, largely spoken, are negligible.

In any case, it remains the responsibility of the land manager itself, the Department of Environment, for example, or DND, to determine whether an archaeological issue has any possibility. Some CEAA archaeology projects—many, actually—take place without Parks Canada's knowledge. Some projects, such as CN's large Prince Rupert harbour development, take place in a regulatory grey zone largely administered by provinces, but again, they don't recognize that as their lands.

Outside of CEAA, under federal archaeology policy, Parks Canada has a mandate to provide advice to other departments as well. At the present time, Parks Canada provides support only to some five to 10 federal projects per year, but Parks has no authoritative role nor any proactive role in reviewing federal projects ahead of development, unless requested to do so by the responsible department.

I suspect that there are many projects impacting archaeological resources on federal lands of which Parks Canada is not aware. I base this on some work that I did in the nineties, assisting various government departments when there was a period of government downsizing and changes to Indian reserve management administration. I had contacts with many departments, principally DND, Public Works, DIAND, and DFO in B.C. and Alberta, to assist them with assessments for National Defence base closures, harbour privatizations, logging, infrastructure, and housing developments on Indian reserves, etc. Overseeing private consultants and working on a fee-for-service basis at the time, by 2005, my staff were overseeing up to 40 projects a year. We learned at the time that many more were not being captured in our loosely framed net at the time.

In 1999, that work led to Parks Canada creating a document for DND, a reference manual for land archaeology, which laid out procedures for them for archaeological assessments, including consultations with indigenous communities and identification of appropriate repositories. When these works take place on federal lands these days, the materials that result from them are deposited in repositories identified by the province.

I want to say one thing. Since the 1970s, indigenous communities have become greatly aware of the value of archeological heritage in their territories, and there have been some very good programs, particularly in British Columbia. There is a resource inventory program called RIC, which has trained aboriginal people to participate in forestry impact developments.

I believe that federal archeology legislation would be very welcomed among the professional community in Canada and would be applauded internationally. I think it would benefit from some level of provincial and territorial involvement as well at some scale. Careful thought would need to be given to the curation of collections.

● (0925)

Finally, I believe that meaningful engagement with indigenous communities with respect to archaeology, including consultation at drafting stages, would be a very positive sign of government's intent to responsibly manage the material remains of their history in this country.

I thank the committee for inviting me today.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

You've all been excellent with your time management, and you've given us a lot to think about. I'm sure there are lots of questions around the table.

I want to remind people that this committee works slightly differently from some other committees. We have our first round of six minutes for everybody and then the second round is six minutes

each until the last questioner, who has only three minutes. We have Liberal, Conservative, NDP, Liberal on the first round, and Conservative, Liberal, Conservative, Liberal, and NDP on the second round. We're slightly different from some of the other committees, and I just want to make sure that you're aware.

They were very good with their time management. Please keep an eye on me. I'll be waving at you. I really don't want to interrupt. I know the questioning is important.

We'll begin with John Aldag. Thank you.

Mr. John Aldag (Cloverdale—Langley City, Lib.): Good morning, everybody.

Thank you to the witnesses for being here this morning and for your excellent testimony. I think for our first session on this heritage study, it paints a really good picture of where we're at right now with heritage protection in Canada and some of the successes, as well as some of the challenges, we face.

I also want to thank the committee for agreeing to dedicate some time in this fall session for this study. Hopefully you've seen, through the discussion already this morning, why there is such a need for some interest in perhaps revisiting where we're at with heritage protections in the country.

I have so many places to start. I'd like to thank Parks Canada for the very realistic comments, the accurate picture you portray, that we have a system of national historic sites. I guess where I'm going is that I see there are two pieces we're talking about. One of them is what I would term getting the federal house in order: the things the federal government owns and is responsible for, from historic sites owned by Parks Canada to other historic sites and archeological resources. Then there's the federal leadership outside of the federal piece, and those are the things that Natalie and her organization were able to talk about.

I want to start with the federal house in order piece, looking at some of the legislative requirements and processes. To begin with, looking at national historic sites, I think we said there are 171. We did a study earlier this year on national parks and looking at systems plans. Could Parks Canada provide a comment—perhaps Dr. Alway as well—on how the current designation process works, how it goes from kind of a grassroots program, looking at persons, places, and events of national significance, and who determines at what point those may move over to federal ownership, either by Parks Canada or under federal departments?

I think we have an existing collection, but is there any opportunity for the addition of new ones? Perhaps in your response to this systems plan piece, you could comment on what's happened over the last, say, 20 years related to new sites. Maybe Dr. Alway could start.

• (0930)

Mr. Richard Alway: Parks Canada owns 171 national historic sites. There are 65 owned by other federal bodies. That's the universe we're talking about.

Nominations come to our board for the designation of a place as a national historic site. There are certain criteria and policies that we operate within. There's a screening process by staff. If something is thought to have at least some merit and warrant discussion, it will come forward to the board. We get extensive documentation in advance of the meeting. We look at it and reach a determination as to whether to recommend designation or not. The minister then acts, currently, in her wisdom, to do that.

What does this mean? It means that at some point a bronze plaque, consisting of 640 spaces or a certain number of words within the 640 spaces, in the two official languages, will be erected to commemorate that place. We also determine the extent of the place. What are the boundaries that should be considered and that bear on this national historic significance directly? In other words, it may only be part of the overall site that we determine. That is then adopted by the government and that becomes a national historic site.

In early days, the government many times would commemorate through acquisition. From 1919 probably through the late 1930s, there was a lot of acquisition of national historic sites, often in conjunction with the formation of national parks, because a certain number of these national historic sites are within parks. That's how that occurred.

Basically there's very little addition at the current time because, of course, it brings with it considerable financial obligation.

Mr. John Aldag: That's where I was going to jump in. The six minutes goes really quickly, so let's move from the designation process to parks.

How do things get into the federal stewardship, and has that happened in the last 20 years? Can you make any sort of comment on that?

• (0935)

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: As Dr. Alway was saying, the federal government is no longer looking at acquiring new sites. The last time the government was considering acquiring national historic sites was in the 1990s. We acquired some sites, for instance, the Bar U Ranch National Historic Site. It was part of the 1990s green plan.

Since then, the acquisition of new historic sites is no longer the approach, given the significant cost associated with the maintenance of those sites. The focus right now is to expand the system through the designation process and to support owners, whether they are other federal departments or non-federally owned sites through our

Mr. John Aldag: It would be fair to characterize it almost as a legacy program, where there are properties that we own and are responsible for maintaining. Ensuring we have legislation that we've heard doesn't exist would be important in order to make sure those places are maintained. Then, moving forward, as new sites are designated but not owned by the federal government, there would need to be some sort of program in place to provide support. That may not mean legislative protections, but it could be—as was

mentioned—financial support. That would be the kind of relationship you would see moving forward.

The Chair: You have less than a minute. Be quick.

Mr. John Aldag: Okay, I'll take advantage of it.

Martin, really quickly, on the archaeology piece, you said there was legislation in the late 1980s or early 1990s. Do you know if that ever was tabled?

Mr. Martin Magne: I really don't know. I was quite removed from that when it happened.

Mr. John Aldag: Okay, but there was legislation at some point. It sounds like there were attempts to—

Mr. Martin Magne: It went to memo to cabinet. That's all I know.

The Chair: My apologies, we are actually out of time. Sorry about that.

Mr. Fast, please.

Hon. Ed Fast: Thank you all for appearing before us and contributing to the study.

Most of you have identified two areas you would like us to move forward in. One is in the area of legislation, and the other is in the area of funding. Am I correct in making that assumption? All right.

In terms of legislation, you've all talked about the fact that we don't have legislation that adequately protects national historic sites. Of course, they're scattered over different ownership structures—federal, UNESCO, provincial, private—so this is going to be a challenge. Each one of those areas is going to require a different tool, as you called it.

Are you suggesting we pull together those functions that relate to heritage protection from the different departments—you mentioned Indigenous Affairs, Environment, DND—put them together under one act, and give them to one particular department to administer?

Any of you may comment on that.

Mr. Richard Alway: There is a focus for the federal role here. It's obviously in the national historic sites it owns. That's the easiest part of the puzzle. The legislation can apply there quite directly, and it's quite easy to do that.

You have FHBRO now, which is an office that executes the provisions of that policy, but there's not a lot of teeth to it. That's what I was saying earlier. There is a body now. It operates within Parks Canada. What you're talking about to some degree already exists using the tool that's there, which I would claim isn't sufficient.

With respect to national historic sites owned by other bodies and by private individuals, I think it's much more difficult to do the same type of thing. You can say that no federal action should harm a national historic site owned by another body or by an individual. That can happen. I don't know how often it has happened, but certainly there are examples where that has happened. In several reports over the years this is always mentioned as something that should be done when this area is looked at.

The other thing of course is, with those other sites, how can you support, not provincial governments particularly, but private individuals who may own those sites? The thing the finance department traditionally prefers is a grants program, because it's predictable. They know exactly how much foregone revenue there will be from their point of view. That's very important as they try to predict things and do budgets, etc. They're much more leery, and you have to do a lot more fast talking, to get them to agree to do things with the tax system. I suspect even more so today, given the current situation.

There is more to be done here, and I think the cost-sharing is an easy way to start. I think to be complete you do need the tax incentive part looked at, but cost-sharing is....

Let me give you a very dramatic example. The federal program, when it existed just a few years ago, was \$1 million for all classifications of structures right across the country. Just a few years ago the Quebec government itself had a program of \$32 million for one classification of building, ecclesiastical structures. At one point I thought \$1 million is so derisory as a program, all it's doing is raising expectations across the country and then they get dashed because the money won't be there. I came to realize that at least as a program it was a placeholder. It's much easier, if circumstances allow, to expand a program that already exists than it is to get a new program in place. I think the structure is there and it simply needs to be extended. They're doing it at \$10 million a year now, hardly a huge amount of money, given what's involved.

Huge leverage is involved with this program. In other words you give out the money and you say for every dollar we give out, you have to raise two, or you have to show...there are all sorts of conditions put on it. There are the statistics to show that it works. Not only does it work, but then there is also the spinoff activity so it has all the economic and employment benefits, and so on.

● (0940)

The Chair: You have 30 seconds.

Hon. Ed Fast: Anybody else want to comment?

I guess the challenge we have as committee members is, yes, it's all about competing interests. When you place historic sites within the larger context of competing interests, sometimes they lose out.

We need to put in place a way of addressing these challenges by not only relying on taxpayer money, but allowing the private sector to be inspired and incented to contribute its part. Any additional information that you may have about how we can do that.... If it's by tax incentives, I would welcome follow-up submissions that tell exactly how you would like to see that done, so we can be a little more specific in the report that will emanate from this body.

The Chair: There's going to be no time to answer that within the timing, but there are more question opportunities coming up, so maybe we can explore that further. Also you can send something afterwards, as well, and we'll talk about that.

Go ahead, Mr. Stetski.

Mr. Wayne Stetski (Kootenay—Columbia, NDP): Thank you for being here today. I just want to reassure you that my experience of this committee is that it really does focus on trying to solve problems rather than on partisan politics.

Hon. Ed Fast: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wayne Stetski: We'll hope that continues through the—

Voices: Oh, oh!

The Chair: No, let's not go there.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: I have a number of questions. I want to start with Parks Canada specifically. You mentioned that there are \$3.6 billion targeted to fix Parks Canada's infrastructure, and I'm not sure over what length of time that is. I

s any of that money particularly targeted at the historic resources that need fixing, and if not, how do they get on the list?

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: Yes, the investment of \$3.6 billion is over five years. It started in late 2014. It's to support all of our infrastructure work to natural and cultural areas, so not just national historic sites. We estimate that approximately \$1.3 billion is being invested to preserve, rehabilitate, and restore national historic sites. Again, those can be structures, not necessarily all the cultural resources in those sites but the broad national historic sites. It could be all kinds of repair.

As I mentioned in my remarks, there was a lot of deferred maintenance over the years on a lot of our assets, so this is really aimed at this. As we are doing this work, we are doing impact assessment on cultural resources and making sure the work is done in a way to protect and preserve our cultural resources.

● (0945)

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Having said that, you've said that Parks Canada is not accepting any new national historic site proposals. Just to help me and I guess to help Canadians in general, if you have a place, a person, or an event that you think is important, how does that get protected in the end? What's the process and who has to agree to take it on, because there are multi-levels, it seems, currently involved with historic preservation?

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: As we mentioned earlier, with respect to national historic sites, Parks Canada is looking at expanding the system through the designation process, and this comes from proposals from the public in general, which are reviewed by the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board, so they could be owned by any other owners. They may happen to be on our own sites, on federal lands. It could happen to be on Parks Canada lands if it's part of a national park, for instance, but we're not to acquire sites beyond the designation. The designation is one step in terms of expanding the national historic site system, but not necessarily by Parks Canada buying those sites.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Does it start with an application to the board?

Mr. Richard Alway: Yes, and our agenda is totally driven, pretty well, by public interest as we receive those nominations from the public for persons, places, or events. If it's a place, all right, it's going to get its plaque. The plaque will be installed and there will be a ceremony and some recognition that way. But in terms of protecting that site, if it's not owned by the federal government and therefore coming under FHBRO to some degree, or by Parks Canada where it's going to get the money directly through the Parks Canada budget because they have a responsibility to keep up assets to a certain level....

They do a pretty good job. I must say over the years, I have nothing but good things to say about the Parks Canada operation in this area, but it's very tough, given funding and the competition for the funding.

The point is that there's no protection unless there's municipal protection or some form of provincial protection. There's no federal protection for that site if it's privately owned.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: We had a number of great monuments and signs that were in my riding of Kootenay—Columbia, and they've disappeared over the years. They go up once, and then who's responsible to make sure that they are maintained in the future?

Mr. Richard Alway: Parks Canada is responsible to make sure they are maintained. There is a program, and they certainly are replaced when it's identified. If the text on the plaque is more than 25 years old, it will be re-examined in terms of the most recent historiography because, of course, one has a new appreciation of a number of things as history is written over the years. Therefore, we occasionally will revise a text when that occurs.

There have been thefts of plaques, especially as metal prices have gone up at certain points, and occasional vandalism, but Parks Canada is pretty good at trying to identify and have a program for replacement.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Okay, so if a community had one and for some reason it has disappeared, they should go back to Parks Canada.

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: Yes.

The Chair: You have less than 30 seconds.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: All right, I'll wait for my three minutes then.

The Chair: Okay, fair enough.

Next up is Mr. Amos.

[*Translation*]

Mr. William Amos (Pontiac, Lib.): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Many thanks to the witnesses. Their presentations are much appreciated.

I would like to ask Ms. Montminy my first question.

In the context of possible recommendations on federal legislation, what are the potential conflict areas or aspects that might be controversial? Are there any areas that we should look at before we discuss them in our—

• (0950)

[*English*]

Mr. Mike Bossio (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, Lib.): Sorry, I have no translation.

Can we try again?

The Chair: Please start from the top. Thanks.

[*Translation*]

Mr. William Amos: I would like to thank the witnesses.

Ms. Montminy, I would like to ask you a question about the limitations of a federal act. I agree that it would be useful to provide a framework for the protection of our natural heritage through legislation.

What elements of debate or controversial areas do we need to look at before giving our best advice to the government?

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: Thank you for your question.

Obviously, this depends on the scope of the proposed legislation. First of all, we might think of legislation that would preserve national historic sites protected by and belonging to the federal government. As Mr. Alway said, the property rights make it impossible to legislate beyond that.

For sites under federal jurisdiction, we might imagine that these sites would have to undergo a series of assessments of possible interventions. For example, if the Department of National Defence owned a site, an assessment of the potential impacts would be required before making any changes to the use of the premises or buildings. After that, advice should be sought on how to make the necessary restorations.

Possible challenges are obviously the costs associated with maintaining historic sites in a state that meets the standards and guidelines we would like to see implemented. Clearly, if it were in the act, it would still have to be determined whether federal departments have the resources to meet the requirements of the act.

Right now we have to go through a policy and give advice of that nature. Subsequently, departments may choose to follow the guidelines or not, as this has not been included in the legislation. If you were to include these standards and practices in legislation, then it would be necessary to follow the standard. So that's the issue with historical sites.

With respect to all buildings that could be designated or classified by the federal government as having heritage value, there are a very large number of buildings that are owned by the federal government. If the legislation were to affect all heritage places and historic buildings, the same thing would be true, but at an even higher level. In theory, the question is how to meet the requirements of the bill that are related to conservation.

If departments were to dispose of a building or a site protected by legislation, the requirements would be very high. This is a rare occurrence, but if that were to happen, we would require that the building be considered for other uses, so that it would not be disposed of. If this were done, the new owner would have to meet the conservation standards. It could really create a more rigid framework, but that would obviously help to maintain the heritage value of those places.

● (0955)

[English]

Mr. William Amos: Thank you.

I'd like to follow that up with a question to our other witnesses around what I thought was a very helpful point by Mr. Fast. It was around the issue of resource allocation, which will really be the challenge. I think therein lies for me the point that when you talk about the breadth of the legislation, one cannot ignore the question of where resources will be allocated.

I appreciate Mr. Alway's point around the ecclesiastical historic site and heritage building investments, particularly made in Quebec. It's felt all across a rural riding like Pontiac, and to the betterment of all of our region. Covered bridges are also significant investments. Those are really important. What I'm most interested in hearing—if we can't get it orally today, then certainly follow-up would be great—is how can the federal government best leverage provincial investments that are already significant? How can we incent more?

I'll give you a quick example from my riding. Old Fort William is a wonderful old historic site on the Ottawa River. It's a famous trading location that had Hudson's Bay involvement. The owner of the Old Fort William hotel right now hasn't sufficient capital to fix this building. He's told that he can't do anything unless he does it to a certain standard. Somewhere along the line the system isn't working when you have landowners who are incapacitated, if you will, financially, but there's no system in place to encourage that investment.

I wonder if you could comment on that, Mr. Alway and Ms. Bull.

The Chair: I will have to cut that off, because you've run out of time.

We can pick that up in the next round, if you guys are okay with that.

We'll now move to Mr. Sopuck.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Thank you.

I'd like to follow up on Mr. Amos' comments regarding rural preservation. I think he was on to something very important.

I represent a large rural riding, and the intensity of the interest in heritage preservation is truly remarkable. Even though I've lived there 40 years, it still astonishes me to see what volunteer efforts people go to in my area in order to preserve the Ukrainian churches and so on.

Ms. Bull, given that you represent the National Trust, what can your organization do to help these small but very heroic local efforts that do not get a lot of recognition across the country but are

intensely appreciated by local communities? What can you do to help?

Ms. Natalie Bull: Thank you very much for the question. That really is exactly what the National Trust is all about. We're really a grassroots organization. Our focus over the last few years has really been on providing tools and resources to small local organizations.

You may have heard of our program, "This Place Matters", which has a combined crowdfunding and competition format. We raise money from private corporate partners, and then, using this web-based platform, engage local groups in posting their projects and using their social networks to compete for votes. Over the last three years, we've been able to flow \$1.4 million to a number of projects across the country.

We're working in creative ways to become a source of funding for local projects. Through our publications and our conference, we're able to bring profile to the local groups and to the projects that they're making happen.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: I'm very interested in that. Perhaps we could talk off-line. I'd really like some more details about that.

In terms of rural versus urban—

The Chair: Actually, can I jump in? I think we'd all love to hear the exploration of that. If you wouldn't mind sharing that with all of us, I think that would be of interest to everyone.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Sure.

The Chair: We stopped the clock, so you're good to keep going.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Good.

I got so excited about that I lost my train of thought.

Voices: Oh, oh!

● (1000)

The Chair: Sorry. So did I.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Mr. Alway, perhaps I'll ask you this question regarding rural versus urban.

After Confederation, Canada was initially, largely, a rural country. It gradually urbanized and now it is urbanizing at a rapid rate. Do you think there's enough emphasis on historic site preservation in rural areas versus urban areas? When I look at the pictures here of historic places, in the urban areas they're fairly easy to define. There's a building there, and you can look and see it, whereas the rural heritage aspects are more dispersed and smaller. What's the emphasis, in your view?

Mr. Richard Alway: I think you've described something that is natural, given the development of the country, and the important thing is to try always to find out whether there are areas that are under-represented in programs or under-represented in terms of emphasis of attention by the government or by parts of the government that could be helpful.

I'm not qualified, really, to comment on that except to say that in terms of the recognition that we recommend for designation, there are a number of nominations that come forward from small towns or from individuals in rural areas and we've tried to make sure that these nominations will receive very full consideration. All a nomination really requires is a simple letter of maybe a paragraph saying, "I would like to have considered for national designation X" and maybe put in a sentence about why you think X might be a decent candidate. Then the staff at Parks Canada that we have at our disposal—it makes it sound as if it's extensive; it isn't—in looking at everything that comes in, will do a preliminary investigation and if they believe there is some real merit, they go ahead and do all the research and all the effort themselves. In terms of getting recognition, it's a relatively simple thing within the system.

I think the system responds pretty effectively from that point of view, to anything that comes from an individual who has an idea that they feel is very important but don't have the resources or the background or whatever to develop the thing. Parks Canada will do that.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Mr. Magne.

Mr. Martin Magne: To speak from experience, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Parks Canada occasionally reviews the status of the national designations. For example, they've seen over time that there are certain historic themes that are under-represented. A few years ago they looked at indigenous history, women's history, and ethnocultural history, as perhaps requiring a little more input from the public to raise the percentage of those types that are represented.

We sent out calls to both rural and urban areas to get recommendations from the communities as to what they might recommend. I would say there was tremendous interest. There was no difference either, rural or urban, in going to the Japanese community in southern Alberta or to the black community in central Alberta, and so on. It was greatly—

Mr. Robert Sopuck: If I could quickly make one more comment, before my time is up.

Your comment about what was good real estate back then and good real estate now, the Forks in Winnipeg is a perfect example, and that's why we appreciated your comment.

Mr. Martin Magne: Absolutely.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: I had the honour, committee, this year to be on the Canada C3 icebreaker trip when we stopped in Torngat Mountains National Park and I got to walk on the Ramah chert site, which you're all familiar with—

Mr. Martin Magne: Right on.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: —and, of course, the superintendent.... We could touch one of the chert but you couldn't even pick it up to look at it. That's how tight the rules and regulations are. It was a real honour to be there and I think Parks Canada is doing a great job on its archaeological preservation.

Thank you, Madam.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Bossio.

Mr. Mike Bossio: First off, I'd like to welcome our member back physically to the committee, Ed Fast. It's great to have your intellect and your good-natured banter back at the table. It's great to have you back.

Hon. Ed Fast: It's great to be back.

Mr. Mike Bossio: Thank you all for being here today.

I'm glad that Will and Bob have picked up on the rural side of it. I have a very rural riding and I am fortunate enough to have a number of historical sites in my riding. It's a competition of resources to maintain these sites that really hurts our rural ridings, because the wealth and the lobbying capacity are in the large urban centres, and even the resources to be able to put toward applications and the like are in large urban ridings.

I'm deeply concerned that a lot of the rural ridings get overlooked. I have a town hall in my riding that is of a Greek revival style, which is unique in a rural riding and especially in southern Ontario, and in Ontario, period. It's the centre of town, so when we're talking about rebuilding rural communities, rebuilding Main Street, a lot of these buildings are the centrepiece of the town. Therefore, if they don't receive that upkeep, then they also become the disintegrating part of rebuilding Main Street.

Part of my concern is about cost-sharing and around tax incentives that once again the wealthier centres have financial resources to bring to bear on, so they act as a magnet to draw those resources even further away from rural communities.

I think Joëlle would be the best to answer this. Is there a focus in Parks Canada specifically on rural areas? Is there a designated kind of commitment to the rural side of it, so that the urban side doesn't dominate when it comes to funding?

● (1005)

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: No, there is no particular focus on rural versus urban. The applications are all looked at on their merit. There is, though, a new.... As part of the expanded program, we are looking at assistance in order to prepare submissions, so that's something the proponents can request. Once we are involved, we offer lots of guidance and assistance. We have had a lot of success stories in how we have interacted with the proponents who are the owners of a particular site.

It is a privilege for us when we have the opportunity to work with different owners in terms of providing ongoing advice, but the program itself does not favour rural versus urban.

Mr. Mike Bossio: A big part of my job since I came to the Hill has been educating my urban counterparts on the unique rural challenges that exist and applying that rural lens to government policy and programs.

Is there, within the department, active consideration that we're all from urban and we all understand urban? It's not a criticism. It's just natural that you would view things through an urban lens. Is there active thought to look at things through a rural lens, to ensure that rural is not being adversely impacted or negated through the negligence of just not realizing that those challenges even exist?

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: At Parks, as you can appreciate, our sites are spread across the country and often associated with national parks, which tend to be not so much in urban centres, so we do not necessarily look at it through this lens, but we certainly would not do anything that would favour one over the other, or offer preferential treatment to one or the other. That's not how the crowd-sharing program is designed right now, and the management of our sites is done based on....

I don't know if Natalie would like to add something in terms of how the National Trust is—

Mr. Mike Bossio: Actually, I had the opportunity to meet with the National Trust, and the GoFundMe crowdsourcing mechanism is a great story. Robert, you're going to enjoy hearing about that. It is something I want to continue to delve into.

There is a significant historic site, once again in the centre of town, in a town called Deseronto, but it's the post office. The building is in total disrepair. It's falling apart, but it is an incredibly beautiful structure. The town wanted to purchase it from the post office and utilize it, either for residential or for commercial use, or whatever, commercial at the main level and residential above. It's a multi-storey stone building.

I can't seem to figure it out. It's federally owned by the post office, but it's not a federal site. Is there some kind of difference between a post office site and a federal site? It was built in 1901.

Ms. Genevieve Charrois (Director, Cultural Heritage Policies, Parks Canada Agency): I would need to take a look at the specific building you're talking about. It could be a national historic site, or it could be a federal heritage building, which is solely for federal inventory. That's an assessment that's done for buildings owned by the federal government.

In that case, it would be with the portfolio of the department. You would need to see if it's available for purchase.

• (1010)

Mr. Mike Bossio: Okay, so there are multiple designations.

Ms. Genevieve Charrois: Yes.

The Chair: I'm sorry, Mike. I have to cut that off. My apologies.

Monsieur Godin, go ahead.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to thank the witnesses for being here.

You are enlightening us on some things. We are here to improve the procedure, and this is your reality on a daily basis.

I see that the problem is a financial one, and it is a recurring problem. We will never eliminate a heritage site, we will always add

to it. The costs of restoration and upgrading will ensure that, even for existing sites, there will be additional costs. This seems realistic to me.

Now, what do we do?

My colleague Mr. Bossio was talking about a post office. In my riding, sites of great historic value are somewhat lost. I have two very clear examples of ownership and the will of the environment.

My riding is home to the historic site of Fort-Jacques-Cartier-et-du-Manoir-Allsopp, in Cap-Santé. This abandoned fort marked Canada's history with Jacques Cartier. The mansion is a little outdated and poorly maintained, and the local people don't have the means to maintain it.

As a member of Parliament, what can I do to help them? In the report we will table, what mechanisms or tools can we put in place to restore historic sites? We realize that the funds are not unlimited. Knowing this, what do we do now?

My questions are for Ms. Montminy and Ms. Bull.

[*English*]

Ms. Natalie Bull: Maybe I'll start.

[*Translation*]

I'll answer in English because it's a bit quicker for me.

[*English*]

It's interesting that, as a non-governmental entity, the National Trust for Canada, learns from national trusts around the world and we know that there is the potential for a national trust to work in partnership with government to become a powerful force to collectively build a culture of philanthropy in Canada. I think that is the next frontier of funding for historic places in this country. We've already started down that path with our crowdfunding platform. With help with funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage, we've also recently built an online portal called Regeneration Works, which directly provides resources, webinars, training, and even direct one-on-one coaching to organizations that are trying to save historic places in their own areas.

Therefore, I think we've really recognized that, as you say, funding is key and there are many creative ways to bring funding to bear. Obviously, the federal government needs to be an important partner, but there are means to help local groups become much more savvy in tapping into corporate partnerships and the number of grants that exist out there as well. There are pots of funding in untraditional locations that we can help groups become aware of, but as an organization as well, I think the National Trust needs to be supported. We're a charity, so we're also out there looking for funding to support the programs that we offer.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: Parks Canada has a lot of tools that enable it to help the various owners to conserve and preserve their sites.

As for funding for owners who are not part of the federal family, the only way we can currently provide them with financial aid is through the Parks Canada national cost-sharing program for heritage places. As I mentioned, funding for this program was increased by \$10 million a year for two years, after which it will return to \$1 million a year. That's all the financial aid available for private owners.

Mr. Joël Godin: Thank you.

Ms. Bull, you are requesting federal funding and recommending that tools be given to private sector individuals who are involved in protecting our heritage, including tax breaks. Could that encourage more people aware of the importance of heritage protection to invest in this area?

Humans being humans, you will understand that these people will want a profit in return. A tax break could be a benefit, but there are other ways. Where is the line drawn for the private sector? A private company that contributes to the development of a site will want benefits in terms of visibility, marketing or advertising. These are possible solutions. Were these things considered?

My question is for Ms. Bull, but Ms. Montminy could also answer. At the various Parks Canada sites, is marketing bordering on what is acceptable?

•(1015)

[English]

The Chair: Joël, we have less than 20 seconds. Can we wrap up?

Go ahead.

Ms. Natalie Bull: There's a lot of potential for local organizations to work with corporate partners. There are things to be learned and cautions to be applied. Again, I think there is a great potential. Funding to help organizations like ours and support those efforts I think is one piece of the puzzle.

[Translation]

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: The approaches are sometimes very limited as to the marketing of events at our sites. We accept donations, for instance, but this doesn't really fit the Parks Canada mandate.

Mr. Joël Godin: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Aldag.

Mr. John Aldag: Jennifer was going to take the first question.

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell (Pickering—Uxbridge, Lib.): Thank you. I'm not a regular member of this committee. I just have one question and then I'll turn it back.

I have a lot of heritage sites in my riding, especially in Pickering on the Transport lands. My question—and I think I heard part of the answer—is in regard to who actually is responsible for it when it's federally owned. What I'm hearing is that it's the department.

I guess part of my question or my frustration is that investments are made by the federal government in restoring these sites and then nothing is done to maintain them. In my riding, we have an historic

home. Fifteen years ago, half a million dollars was spent, and now that home has completely fallen apart again.

Is there any type of organization, whether internally with the federal government or externally, that is monitoring to ensure restoration is happening continuously, rather than having it suddenly get to a point where things are going to fall apart and you have to do something?

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: There may be a couple of nuances. Parks Canada is responsible for the conservation and maintenance of the national historic sites that it owns and administers. Other federal departments also own and administer their sites, so they are responsible for the preservation and maintenance of those as well.

When they are federal buildings on national historic sites, there is, under Treasury Board policy and through FHBRO, guidance that's provided for all federal departments on how to maintain their federal heritage buildings.

With respect to your question, I don't know exactly if it's a Parks Canada site in your riding.

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell: No.

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: Then it is up to the department that owns that particular site to decide on its own investment in and maintenance of that site.

At Parks Canada, we have reporting mechanisms. We have ongoing assessment of our sites, including the assessment of the state of cultural resources in those sites, and we report that regularly. We have those tools. Other departments may not have exactly the same ones, the full suite of ongoing assessment, monitoring, and reporting tools that we have.

Ms. Jennifer O'Connell: Thank you.

Mr. Aldag.

Mr. John Aldag: That's a really good point.

I've read through the Auditor General's reports. I think they mention that many of the other custodian departments don't have that the way Parks Canada does, so there's no public reporting on the state of these sites, and even FHBRO buildings that other departments.... That may be something we need to look at in recommendations.

Natalie, I wanted to get your thoughts. You talked about the “do no harm” policy as something the federal government can do. I don't think you mentioned the “heritage first” policy, and I've heard that's something in the States. Could you comment on that as another thing we could explore?

Ms. Natalie Bull: Right. I think I did mention heritage first policies as part of my proposal—

Mr. John Aldag: Did you? I missed that, then.

In the monetary-type things or policy, those are great ones and I know we've spoken about that. That's great. I missed that specific reference.

Just for clarification on the cost-share program, when I was involved in the program, national historic sites with for-profit ownership—so, for example, a hotel—did not qualify for the funding. I think the program applies only to things that are not-for-profit and federally or provincially owned and perhaps indigenous-owned. There are other categories of classification and ownership that would not qualify. I don't know if everybody understood that. Even though you have the designation, it doesn't mean that other programs exist.

I want to jump to indigenous designations. I'm working on another project. I've been looking at the Truth and Reconciliation report, and recommendation 79 relates to indigenous designations. It's sort of curious that for the national historic sites program we heard that there was a systems plan, not for acquisition but for designation. As Martin mentioned, a few years ago, priority was put on indigenous women's history and ethnocultural communities. Is there any update now? What's the current focus?

I realize it's a very grassroots-driven program, but recommendation 79 actually talks about, "a national heritage plan and strategy for commemorating residential school sites, the history and legacy of residential schools, and the contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canada's history." Is that working its way into Parks Canada's leadership in trying to get these designations and nominations before the board?

•(1020)

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: Briefly, yes, we have started engaging with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, for instance, specifically on call to action 79(iii), the aspects of commemorating the legacy of residential schools. We're looking at how we're going to be implementing that. There's also, as you know, under 79, the appointment of members to the board—indigenous members, Métis, first nations, and Inuit. We're working on that, and that will be done in consultation with indigenous groups. There's also the other section of 79, in relation to reviewing our policies, protocols, and practices to make sure we are inclusive of indigenous perspectives and voices in the work of the board. If we had more time, I'm sure Dr. Alway could comment as well.

Mr. John Aldag: Before the Chair cuts me off, I want to say—

The Chair: I'm definitely cutting you off.

Mr. John Aldag: —that one of the few national historical sites that have been added to Parks Canada in the last decade or so is Saoyú-?ehdacho, which is an indigenous national historic site. Things do happen, and there are—

The Chair: John.

Mr. John Aldag: —some opportunities on an indigenous front.

The Chair: I know this is—

Mr. John Aldag: I didn't see the red card.

The Chair: Oh, it was up. It was up.

We might actually have time for another small round if we want, so let's just stick to the schedule.

Mr. Stetski, go ahead, please.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: I can't see the red card either.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Thank you, John, for asking that question around truth and reconciliation. It was on my list as well. I'll move on to another one.

Historic buildings and sites add value to our communities. They make them more interesting places to live. They give us a sense of local pride, and they're also important for tourism and the economy. There are 970 national historic sites across the country, 171 administered by Parks Canada. In the village of Kaslo, in my riding, we have two national historic sites, the S.S. Moyie, which is a paddlewheeler on the lake, and then Kaslo City Hall.

The Kootenay Lake Historical Society was disconcerted to find this summer that neither of them show up on lists of national historic sites published by Parks Canada, particularly because they want to get maximum exposure for these values. What can we do to ensure that the federal government is better promoting all historic sites to Canadians, and not just the 171 that are currently on your list?

Ms. Genevieve Charrois: We will double-check the status of your national historic sites, because they should be on the registry of heritage places and the national historic sites designation list. I was going to say that to be on the list you need to also be capable of showing the location of the site, but in your case it's not that, so we'll check, because I'm pretty sure that in Kaslo we have national historic sites.

•(1025)

Mr. Wayne Stetski: One of them is an old paddlewheeler, an old boat, so....

Mr. Richard Alway: That may not be classified as a site, in fact. It's part of the program, but we'd have to look it up. It may have actually gone through as an event. In other words, it represented a form of transportation, etc., which was important in opening up this area economically but a moveable resource like that wouldn't be a site.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: In a 2015 op-ed piece in the *Ottawa Citizen* you wrote that, "Canadians have lost more than 20 per cent of their heritage places in the last 30 years, with more bulldozed every day. Most of our National Historic Sites...are in poor to fair condition due to chronic underfunding." Has anything changed since you wrote that?

Ms. Natalie Bull: I think we're still losing historic places every day. The national historic sites managed by Parks Canada have received an influx of funding. The cost-share funding has been increased to \$20 million over two years. We're coming to the end of that amount. In some ways, there is still a huge need to identify stable and predictable funding for national historic sites that are privately owned, not owned by government, but also for many more historic places that are out there.

We know that there are huge gaps in the incentives that municipal and provincial governments are able to cobble together to attract investment in important historic places. We know, from looking south of the border, that the American system, with a federal rehabilitation tax incentive, is able to stack those incentives together and make a much more game-changing incentive available to heritage projects.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: You suggest better collaboration.

Ms. Natalie Bull: Exactly.

The Chair: That was excellent.

We've just finished our rounds. I am seeing a little bit more time. I needed about 10 minutes at the end to give you some information that I want you to consider for the next meeting. If you want, we could do a very short two, two, and two. That's really short, which means your questions have to be concise. It's just a wrap-up. Is that an opportunity that people want? Yes?

Okay. One thing I want to ask the committee before I start is that, we had talked before about using social media. I would like to take a picture of the committee in action, just so that we can then send it through and they could put it up, just saying we're doing this study, letting people know out there on the social media started for committees that we're doing this study. Does anybody have a problem with that? We'll just be in the corner to take a picture, as we're doing this next section. Is there any objection?

Voices: No.

The Chair: Great. Thank you very much. I think we're good with that.

We'll get started. Should we go backwards around? Wayne, you were in the middle of it. Do you want to have two minutes? Then we'll go back around that way and end with the Liberals.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: I have a quick question for Martin. Were you one of the discoverers of the long-lost Franklin expedition ships?

Mr. Martin Magne: I was not a discoverer, but yes, I was overseeing the program.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: That agreement stipulates that the British government agrees to transfer ownership of all recovered artifacts to Canada, other than those significant to the Royal Navy or any gold. At the same time, Nunavut has claimed ownership under a provincial-federal agreement and Canadian taxpayers spent millions of dollars to recover those artifacts. Despite all of that, the current government, apparently, was handing over the artifacts to Britain.

Are you concerned about the future ownership and display of these and other artifacts?

Mr. Martin Magne: I won't be able to speak to what is currently happening with respect to the discussions between Great Britain and

Canada. However, under international military law, all military vessels and their contents belong to the country of origin.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: The entire vessel and...?

Mr. Martin Magne: Correct. This is no different from anywhere else in the world. Joëlle could probably speak to where we're at.

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: Yes. As you know, there is an MOU from 1997, where Britain has agreed that they would be transferring the wrecks and the contents of the wrecks to Canada should they be found. Negotiations are under way in order to honour this MOU.

Mr. Wayne Stetski: Without that agreement, the general understanding is that the ships go back to the country of origin.

● (1030)

Mr. Martin Magne: They can remain where they are, but they'd belong to the country of origin.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Fast.

Hon. Ed Fast: Let's talk about funding again. Funding has ranged anywhere from \$1 million to \$10 million over the last two years.

What's the ideal level of funding?

Mr. Richard Alway: Who's to say, but I would say, given reality, since the government has established it at \$10 million and did it for two years, I think that level should be maintained. In other words, it would be nice if it were higher. If it's to go lower, I think all the good things that we've talked about, and spinoffs, and the leverage, and doing more in rural areas, and all the rest of it, get contradicted. I think maintaining and extending is very significant, and must be done. I really think that's important because I saw what happened when the previous program went from about \$6 million or \$7 million, down to \$1 million. It was very bad, and very discouraging throughout the heritage community right across the country.

Hon. Ed Fast: Does everybody agree that \$10 million is about the level?

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: I would only say that the program has been consistently oversubscribed. I gave you some numbers in my opening remarks....

Hon. Ed Fast: Over \$100 million.

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: Since 2009, and again the program has had different levels of funding throughout those years, so I would say it fluctuates, but it could be up to 2.5 times oversubscribed. On average, that's what we've seen. Right now, at the \$10-million level, we receive maybe under \$20 million in proposals, so there are great needs out there.

Hon. Ed Fast: Have you caught up in terms of maintenance and repair of the historic sites that are under your control?

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: Again, the investment of \$3.6 billion will help us tremendously to do that, and we'll continue. Again, it's an ongoing thing. As I mentioned, we have ongoing assessments of our cultural resources, and then we continue investing over time. This investment is not going to be the end of it. We will have to continue securing long-term sources of finance to maintain just the assets that Parks currently have.

Hon. Ed Fast: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Tan.

Mr. Geng Tan (Don Valley North, Lib.): I'm new to this committee.

Madam Montminy, you mentioned in your conclusion that one of the challenges of heritage preservation is called the environmental process. What percentage of heritage sites is lost due to this single factor? How much funding is necessary to effectively address this kind of challenge?

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: I don't think we have this information right now. We are currently conducting some kind of an assessment, trying to understand the impact of climate change on the conservation of our cultural resources. We are just in the early days of doing that, so I wouldn't have a percentage per se that would be impacted directly. I could just tell you that it's impacted by climate change. I would give you the example of erosion, for instance, and I think I've included a couple of images in the deck that I circulated that show erosion is a reality at a number of our sites. Think of the permafrost challenges that we're facing, for instance, in Dawson City, and our beautiful site there.

There are significant challenges, but I wouldn't be able to give you the exact number in terms of the impact on our cultural resources.

Mr. Geng Tan: Your example of erosion, there's basically no cure, no way to address that. It's just inevitable.

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: No, absolutely not. There are a number of mitigation measures that we put in place, and there are several ways to do this. We could build structures in order to better support the structure. We could go all the way up to moving the structure, but losing the building is the last resort.

Mr. Geng Tan: How much money would you have to spend for this kind of mitigation compared with other maintenance support to similar buildings?

Ms. Joëlle Montminy: These are the choices that we have to make. As we assess all of our sites, we have to make these choices.

The Chair: Thank you very much. It's been an excellent session and we really appreciate our guests for sharing their wisdom with us.

We have a lot of questions that are still potentially going to come out. You've also heard questions that we didn't get complete answers to. We'd love you to send us anything that you want to still share with us based on the questions you heard. We'll be looking forward to that. We have a short study, so if you could do it fairly soon, that would be much appreciated.

Also, I think the analysts may have some more questions that they want to explore, to get a bit more detail, if that's possible. Would you be prepared to entertain their questions and then they can put that in part of the study? Again, it's a fairly quick turnaround, and I apologize for doing that, but we are doing this for three weeks and then we'll get into report writing, so we just want to make sure we have that.

Thanks again for your time.

[Proceedings continue in camera]

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