



PITUAMKEK

NATIONAL PARK RESERVE

Establishment Agreement Summary



**Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq maw-
lukuti'tiji kt+ki menaqa klo'tmnow**

*"PEI Mi'kmaq working with partners
in conservation."*



Located in northwestern Prince Edward Island (Epekwitk), the area is known in the Mi'kmaw language as **Pituamkek** ("Bee-doo-UM-gek"), or 'At the Long Sand Dune'.

"I grew up on Sandhills, running barefoot on the beaches, watching my parents fishing. It's special there because it's a Mi'kmaq Heritage Landscape, with a name that honours our long history and relationship to the land through recognition of our beautiful language. Our connection to this land is ancient and sacred. It has been a long time in the making and we look forward to the next steps in the establishment of Pituamkek, which will benefit all Epekwitnewaq (Islanders) and Canadians – historically, culturally, and environmentally, now and in the future."

Chief Darlene Bernard, Lennox Island First Nation

Co-Chair, Epekwitk Assembly of Councils/representative of the Mi'kmaq Epekwitnewaq Kapmentemuow, the Mi'kmaq Nation Government of PEI.

HISTORY

2005 · The Mi'kmaq Confederacy of P.E.I. begins to build a body of research around the cultural and ecological importance of the Pituamkek area. Mi'kmaw leadership also initiate meetings with Parks Canada and provincial government officials to discuss the possibilities.

2006 · The Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI develop a proposal to create a co-managed national park reserve or other type of protected area in the Pituamkek (Hog Island Sandhills) area.

2008 · The Mi'kmaw governments / Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI recognize Hog Island and the Sandhills (Pituamkek) as a Mi'kmaw Heritage Landscape.

2009 · A tripartite group of representatives from the federal, provincial and Mi'kmaw governments begin a dialogue to find mutually acceptable ways to protect the Hog Island Sandhills and associated islands. NCC begins acquiring parcels of land in the area for conservation.

2010 · Mi'kmaw leaders write a letter to the Minister of the Environment requesting that Parks Canada support their proposal. Parks Canada recognizes the Hog Island Sandhills and barrier Islands as being of national significance and meriting consideration for protected status.

2010 – present · Partner conservation organizations – Nature Conservancy Canada and Island Nature Trust - collaborate with L'nuey to acquire lands for conservation in the area, and to build relationships and additional support for the proposed Pituamkek national park reserve project.

2019 · Official development of a national park reserve concept for Pituamkek begins in August 2019 with the launch of a feasibility assessment, including community consultations, to determine if and how a national park reserve could be established in the Hog Island Sandhills.

2021 · On June 4, the Epekwitk Assembly of Councils and the Government of Canada announce the launch of public consultations as part of the feasibility assessment process. Later, a summary of the results of the public consultation clearly demonstrates a strong public desire to protect the Pituamkek area.

2022 · The Government of Canada and the Epekwitk Assembly of Councils mark the successful conclusion of the feasibility assessment for a national park reserve with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding. This achievement leads to the beginning of negotiations towards a formal establishment agreement.

2023 · The Government of Canada and L'nuey on behalf of the Epekwitk Assembly of Councils continue negotiations toward the establishment of a national Park Reserve in Pituamkek, with the finalization and signing of the Establishment Agreement.

2024 · In Budget 2024, the Government of Canada announces that it is one step closer to establishing the new Pituamkek National Park Reserve. On April 16, the Government of Canada proposes to provide \$71.9 million over 12 years, starting in 2024-25, for Pituamkek's creation and operation. On July 4, 2024, Pituamkek National Park Reserve is formally established during an announcement and community celebration in Lennox Island.

“My ancestors lived here a long time. My Dad and my brother used to come here fishing, late at night. Different Mi'kmaw families used to come along and fish eels. They lived off the land...Along the riverbanks they used to find wild potatoes—Tapatat—and wild peas and collect all that...and they'd come back and cook it.”

*Georgina Knockwood Crane,
Mi'kmaq Elder*



THE AGREEMENT

The Mi'kmaq Epekwitnewaq Kapmntemuow (meaning: "Mi'kmaq Nation Government of Epekwitk/P.E.I.") and the Government of Canada have a common desire that Pituamkek National Park Reserve be regarded with the **highest degree of respect and be protected and managed for present and future generations** of Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq and all Canadians.

This agreement recognizes that **sharing responsibility for the management and operation of Pituamkek National Park Reserve is mutually beneficial for Canada and the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq** and is a tremendous opportunity to protect and present Pituamkek and maintain its cultural continuity and ecological integrity.

PURPOSE

The agreement expresses the following vision:

The Mi'kmaq peoples have lived at various sites in the vicinity of Pituamkek and in what is now known as Prince Edward Island for thousands of years; here, nature, Mi'kmaw history and culture are inseparable. **The landscapes of Pituamkek National Park Reserve, in their natural state, are home to living Mi'kmaw land-use traditions, which need these lands to continue to thrive.**

The landscapes of Pituamkek are home to endangered and rare species and ecosystems, ancient Mi'kmaw archaeological sites, living Mi'kmaw culture, rare geological formations, and precious natural beauty. The lands and landscapes of Pituamkek constitute a natural and cultural treasure for the Mi'kmaq, all Canadians and for humanity.

In recognition of a shared vision and evolving relationship with respect to the care, protection and enjoyment of Pituamkek National Park Reserve, the Mi'kmaq Epekwitnewaq Kapmntemuow and the Government of Canada **agree to cooperate in the planning, operation and management** of Pituamkek National Park Reserve.

"[Pituamkek] has been a place of many stories: fishing, hunting, trapping...all sorts of things to survive. We moved around a lot to keep the land healthy too...because you wore everything down.

We often went there to pick cranberries or blueberries...Me and my dad would go over, especially to fish eels, and I've yet to taste food as good as new potatoes and eels and bread cooked in the sand. Hog Island brought us through a lot of rough times... if you were to go out to Hog Island to fish oysters, you always had a meal."

Keptin James (Jimmy) Bernard



NETUKULIMK (*neh-doo-goo-limgp*)

A Mi'kmaq word based on the concept of achieving adequate standards of community nutrition and economic well-being that does not jeopardize the integrity, diversity or productivity of the environment.

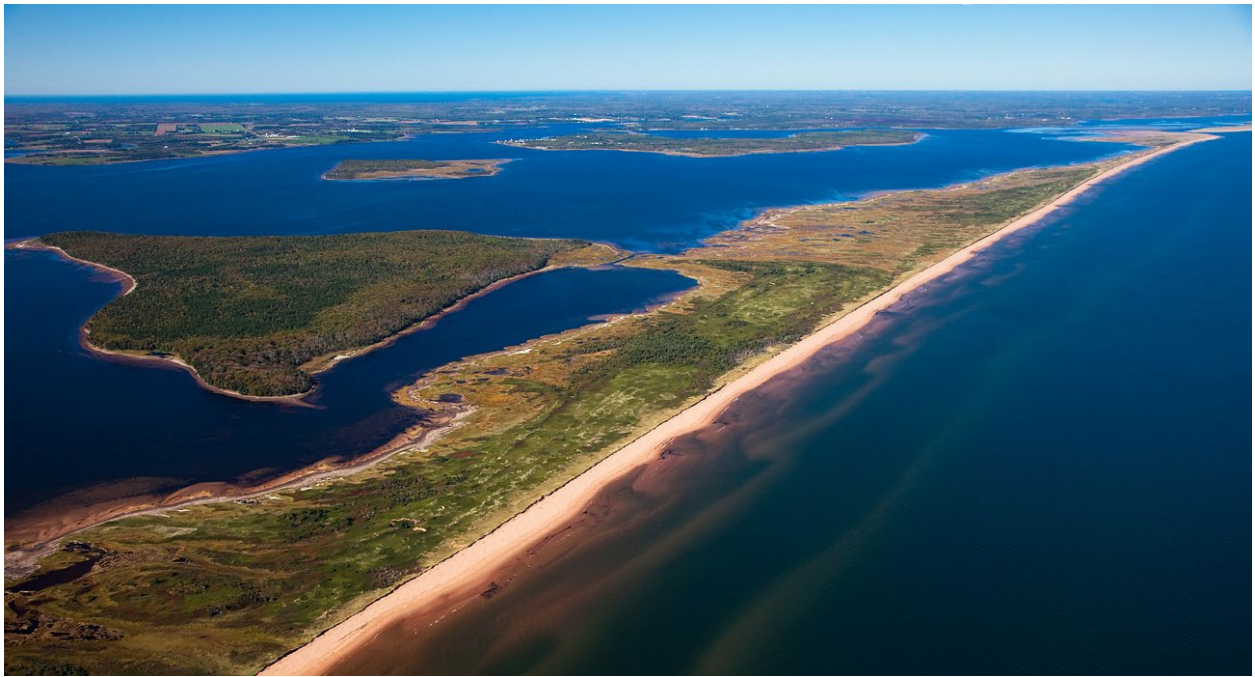
MUTUAL OBJECTIVES

The Agreement acknowledges the **importance of the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq Way of Life and Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq Knowledge**. The Parties are committed to incorporating these concepts and practices into the planning, management, operation, monitoring and evaluation of Pituamkek National Park Reserve.

These mutual objectives include:

- **Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq Way of Life** will be maintained and fostered
- **Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq use** will be provided for
- **The History and Culture** of Pituamkek National Park Reserve will be shared with others
- **Heritage Resources and Sacred Places and Sacred Objects** identified by the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq will be protected and managed in a manner that promotes Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq Way of Life and incorporates Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq Knowledge
- To respect **Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq Knowledge and knowledge holders** by incorporating relevant and accessible Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq Knowledge in exercising powers, making decisions and developing interpretation and promotional materials





TREATIES AND ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

The Peace and Friendship Treaties of 1725, 1749, 1752, 1760/61 and 1779, signed by the Crown and the Mi'kmaq are solemn and binding agreements **which set out ongoing promises, and mutual obligations and benefits for the Mi'kmaq and the Crown**, but which do not cede Mi'kmaq Aboriginal title to the land.

Pituamkek National Park Reserve remains subject to Treaty and Aboriginal rights, **meaning that it does not impact any rights that the Mi'kmaq have or may have**. Treaty and Aboriginal rights are protected in the Constitution, Canada's highest law. These rights supersede any park or protected-area law. The Mi'kmaq will continue to carry out traditional land use within Pituamkek. **The right to hunt, fish, trap, gather and travel** will continue in Pituamkek as it always has.

SHARED PRINCIPLES

Shared principles guide the relationship of the Mi'kmaq Epekwitnewaq Kapmntemuow (Mi'kmaq Nation Government of PEI – also known as the Epekwitk Assembly of Councils), and Parks Canada and the activities undertaken together through this Agreement:

- A shared respect for **Netukulimk** — a cultural concept based on **achieving adequate standards of community nutrition and economic well-being** that does not jeopardize the integrity, diversity, or productivity of the environment.
- A shared understanding of Seven Generations — a Mi'kmaq concept that **decisions made today should result in a sustainable world seven generations into the future**. These decisions guide individual and collective Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq beliefs and practices in resource protection, procurement and management to ensure and honour sustainability of the land and its resources for past, present and future generations.
- A shared commitment to **protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage** and foster public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure the Ecological Integrity and Cultural Integrity of these places for present and future generations.
- A shared acknowledgment that **traditional Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq practices are key to affirming the rights of the Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq**.
- A shared recognition that the best decisions and optimal outcomes result from the most complete knowledge possible and that positive outcomes **are more likely when two (and sometimes more) perspectives are heard**.

SEVEN GENERATIONS

A Mi'kmaq concept that decisions made today should result in a sustainable world seven generations into the future.



CO-MANAGEMENT

The establishment agreement shares a vision for the creation of a Co-Management Board, “Toqi Alsutekekl” (DOH-kee Al-zoo-DEH-keg-gul) a Mi’kmaw term that translates to ‘they manage together’, meaning the co-management body is to make decisions concerning the management of the Pituamkek National Park Reserve. Through the Mi’kmaw concept of ***Etuaptmumk* or Two-Eyed Seeing**, all proposals, activities or developments that affect the planning, management, operation, monitoring and evaluation of Pituamkek National Park Reserve **will be tabled for the Co-management Board for consideration and decision.**

TOQI ALSUTEKEKL

(DOH-kee Al-zoo-DEH-keg-gul)

A Mi’kmaw term that translates to ‘they manage together’ meaning the co-management body.

Key functions of the Co-Management Board may include:

- **Broad collaboration** towards carrying out decisions concerning the management of Pituamkek.
- **Completing assessments** of the state of Pituamkek including Ecological Integrity and Cultural Integrity
- **Developing and approving guidelines, protocols and measures** for the care, protection and enjoyment, research, and monitoring of Pituamkek
- **Developing and approving policies** for the issuance of permits, licences and other authorizations for access to, and use of Pituamkek
- **Determining the purpose, design, location** and other requirements for infrastructure within Pituamkek
- **Developing the scope of** and **completing a draft Management Plan**



ETUAPTMUMK (*eh-doo-ahp-duh-mumk*)

A Mi'kmaw concept through which the strengths of Indigenous knowledges are seen through one eye, and the strengths of Western knowledges through the other, so that both distinct eyes may be used together for the benefit of all. This is also known as «Two-eyed seeing».

MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Management Plan for Pituamkek will be developed under the guidance of **Toqi Alsutekekl** and will seek broad Mi'kmaw, public and stakeholder input. The Management Plan will include a **long-term ecological and cultural vision**.

The Management Plan will include:

- Provisions for resource protection and restoration of the Pituamkek area
- Zoning requirements and outlines
- Visitor experience plans and objectives
- Public awareness policies for outreach and engagement
- Performance evaluation of the Agreement

The Co-Management Board will develop a draft Management Plan in consultation with **Mi'kmaq Epekwitnewaq Kapmntemuow and the Government of Canada**.

The Co-Management Board will, with the assistance of the Parties, seek the **views of relevant public bodies, third parties and the public** on the draft Management Plan.

In accordance with the Canada National Parks Act, the Minister will **table the approved Management Plan in Parliament**.





“The Mi’kmaq have occupied Epekwitk since time immemorial. Our people have always been stewards of the land, so to protect and preserve an important part of our environment and a vital part of our Mi’kmaq cultural heritage is something that we must do—in honour of past and future generations to come. We are eager to work collaboratively with Parks Canada to make this dream become reality.”

*Chief Junior Gould, Abegweit First Nation
Co-Chair, Epekwitk Assembly of Councils/representative of the Mi’kmaq Epekwitnewaq Kapmentemuow, the Mi’kmaq Nation Government of PEI.*

MOVING FORWARD

The agreement marks the beginning of next steps for Pituamkek National Park Reserve. These steps will include:

- The implementation of the Mi’kmaq Epekwitnewaq Kapmentemuow-Parks Canada **co-management structure** set out in the agreement
- The creation of a more detailed **conservation and visitor experience vision** for the area
- The development of a **management plan**

The visitor experience offer **will initially be modest but will grow over time**. Infrastructure that enables Pituamkek to host visitors will be one of the priority planning items developed under the guidance of the co-management structure. As a result, it will be some time before visitors can be welcomed to Pituamkek.

This establishment agreement for Pituamkek builds on the fulfillment of the Government of Canada’s **commitment to true and lasting reconciliation** with Indigenous peoples and a **renewed government-to-government relationship with Epekwitnewaq Mi’kmaq**. The Mi’kmaq Epekwitnewaq Kapmentemuow led the way in initiating and continuously advocating for the establishment of Pituamkek National Park Reserve since the beginning of this process in 2006. Working together, the Government of Canada and the Mi’kmaq Epekwitnewaq Kapmentemuow are taking action to protect this iconic natural and cultural landscape for future generations.

REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

The Agreement provides for **periodic review**. When the Agreement signatories agree, they can amend the Agreement to ensure that it is achieving their **shared vision and objectives** for Pituamkek.

For more information, please contact:

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Parks Canada Parcs Canada

