



Media Release

Proposed Universal Significance for Grand Pré's UNESCO Bid

March 26, 2009, Grand Pré, Nova Scotia.

Some of the most highly respected scholars in Atlantic Canada have concluded that Grand Pré has significance for all of humankind. *Nomination Grand Pré* recently released the report from a working group made up of specialists in the fields of history, archaeology, folklore, literature, geology, geography, marine biology and Mi'kmaq history, whose task was to identify a universal significance for Grand Pré.

This report outlines the main reasons for seeking to have Grand Pré established as a World Heritage Site under UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) guidelines. Sites selected for World Heritage listing are inscribed on the basis of their merits as the best possible examples of the cultural and natural heritage.

Grand Pré is proposed as a lasting and inspiring cultural landscape. It is an outstanding example of a distinctive community-based approach to farming in 17th and 18th -century North America. The dykelands at Grand Pré, in use for over 300 years, are an exceptional example of the distinctive Acadian tradition of turning wetlands into highly fertile farmland. These same dykes were maintained by the Planters after their arrival in 1760 and by successive generations of farmers. As well, and as commemorated in its 20th-century memorials, it is also an exceptional example of a place where the tragedy of forced displacement, has become a symbol of hope, determination and pride, for all of humanity.

Dr. A.J.B Johnson, the chair of the working group, is excited about the results. "Grand Pré is known to most people as the historic site that commemorates the Acadian Deportation, but it is more than that. It is a larger cultural landscape that has many layers of natural and cultural history. It's a place that is meaningful to many different peoples" stresses Dr. Johnson. He adds, "it is the area's richness and complexity, and the fact that it is all there on this exceptional agricultural landscape of dykelands, rolling hills, and powerful tides, that make Grand Pré so special".

"Having Grand Pré as a World Heritage Site would not only celebrate how beautiful and special this area is to the world but would also provide tremendous opportunity for tourism and other economic development projects. I think Grand Pré is a place the whole world should come and see," says the Warden of the Municipality of Kings, Fred Whalen. He goes

on to add, "We are a farming community and this designation would highlight not only our agricultural past but support our farming future."

A copy of the working group's report is available on the project's website at www.nominationgrandpre.ca

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