

## 1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Percé UNESCO Global Geopark, Canada, Canadian Geoparks Network

**Year registered/Next renewal:** 2018/2022



**Science Literacy Week, Percé, September 2019** Photo: Marie-Claude Costisella

Science Literacy Week is a Canada-wide celebration of scientific literacy funded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC). Nearly 150 primary school students visited our and our partners' booths and attended an interactive educational workshop. Percé UNESCO Global Geopark also organized three days of public lectures in partnership with 11 scientific organizations from the region.

## 2. GEOPARK FIGURES

**Number of staff:** 35 seasonal workers and 5 full-time staff, including 1 geoscientist

**Number of visitors:** 44,802

**Number of events:** The Geopark organized 5 events and co-organized 6 more

- Main organizer: 5 events
  - Science Literacy Week, September 16–21

- Science Odyssey, May 4–9
- 24 Hours of Science, May 10
- Halloween, October 31
- Night hike and introduction to astronomy at the suspended glass platform
- Co-organizer: 6 events
  - Festi-Neige, February 14–15
  - Oktoberfest, September 20–21
  - Grand Percé cleanup, Green Corps, Town of Percé, June 8
  - Val d'Espoir Carnival, January 25 to February 10, and Fred la Marmotte (Groundhog Day), February 2
  - Xpress Race, January 31 to February 2
  - Ultra Trail Gaspesia, June 14–16

### **Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes**

Percé UNESCO Global Geopark delivered interactive educational workshops to 18 school groups. We also had an educational booth at the Québec Mines + Énergie conference, which was attended by some 2,000 young people ages 6 to 16 from 36 schools.

A total of 707 children from 19 schools visited Percé UNESCO Global Geopark. It's difficult to break these numbers down into classes since multiple classes are often grouped together during visits.

### **Number of Geopark press release**

We published one official press release to announce the launch of our new website. Magazine Gaspésie, published by Musée de la Gaspésie, ran a feature on international researchers from the 18th and 19th centuries who were interested in Percé's geology.

Numerous interviews were conducted with media outlets, including Radio Gaspésie, CHAUTVA, Radio CGR, and Radio-Canada, to announce the translation of our signage into Mi'kmaq (an Indigenous language in Eastern Canada) and to promote Science Literacy Week.

The Geopark regularly posts on Facebook (9,704 followers), Instagram (1,713 followers), and Twitter (272 followers).

### 3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

#### Major achievements in 2019

- The Percé UNESCO Global Geopark board created an observer seat for a member of the Mi'kmaq First Nation.
- In celebration of the UN Year of Indigenous Languages, the Geopark translated all site names into Mi'kmaq. Signage in the park is now trilingual in French, English, and Mi'kmaq. Members of the Mi'kmaq First Nation regularly work with the organization. This initiative was made possible by the work of Mi'kmaq translators and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO.
- Percé UNESCO Global Geopark launched a new website. The updated format is more user-friendly and additional content is available for visitors. Numerous sections were added, including an overview of the area and a guide for responsible hiking.
- An article featured in a special edition of Magazine Gaspésie highlighted the Geopark's global heritage.
- The Geopark received a \$24,500 grant as part of the NSERC's PromoScience program. The grant was used to purchase equipment and develop and deliver an educational program tailored to the Quebec Ministry of Education's curriculum. An additional \$4,000 was provided by NSERC to organize Science Literacy Week, a Canada-wide event to promote science literacy. Almost 150 primary school students visited our and our partners' booths and attended an interactive workshop on earth sciences. The Geopark also organized three days of public lectures. Eleven scientific organizations from the region were involved, including Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Université du Québec à Rimouski, and the Miguasha provincial park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Percé UNESCO Global Geopark received a \$10,000 grant from the Canadian Geological Foundation to develop educational tools.
- In 2019 Percé UNESCO Global Geopark was added to the Quebec Ministry of Education's directory of scientific and cultural organizations. Schools wishing to visit these organizations can access funding for student transportation.
- We also developed a number of joint initiatives and partnerships over the past year:
  - The Geopark has continued to work with the Île-Bonaventure-et-du-Rocher Percé provincial park. Together, we developed an interactive educational activity that was presented all summer long in the town center.
  - We partnered with the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands Regional Environmental Council to create a geotrail that will showcase geological heritage in the two regions.
  - TechnoScience Est-du-Québec helped promote science-oriented recreational

activities at the Geopark and develop educational activities for young people ages 6 to 12.

- The Gaspé Peninsula regional waste treatment board, Musée de la Gaspésie, SOS Bats, Contact Environment, and Camp de Base participated in a number of activities organized by Percé UNESCO Global Geopark.

### **Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation**

Percé UNESCO Global Geopark attended the European Geoparks Network's 15th international conference in Seville and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO's AGM. Percé Geopark's science and education manager is the treasurer of the board for the Canadian Geoparks Network, which meets once per month. One of its main functions is assessing the progress of prospective geoparks in Canada.

### **Management and Financial Status**

Percé UNESCO Global Geopark is a cooperative composed of 25 business people and community organizations that joined forces to develop the project. It was officially granted non-profit status in February 2019, giving it increased access to funding programs.

The board of directors is composed of eight voting members and two observers representing the Town of Percé. An observer seat is also available for a representative of the Mi'kmaq First Nation from the Gaspé Peninsula. The board meets approximately once per month.

The management team includes the general manager, the operations manager, the communications and marketing manager, and the science and education manager.

Percé UNESCO Global Geopark is largely self-sustaining as a result of numerous revenue-generating activities at the main site, including the Tektonik exhibition and the suspended glass platform. In 2019 the organization received a \$62,500 operating grant from the Government of Canada as part of the Immigrant Investor Program. The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada provided \$38,500 for earth sciences education and the Canadian Geological Foundation provided \$10,000 to improve the educational program and develop new educational tools.

### **Geoconservation**

Natural and cultural heritage protection in Percé has been enshrined in provincial legislation since 1973. Among other things, the legislation governs the development and use of the natural

environment and built heritage. Removal of artifacts and minerals is prohibited by law. The municipal government has designated the Mont Sainte-Anne and Mont Blanc sectors as conservation zones, thereby prohibiting the exploitation of natural resources.

Île-Bonaventure-et-du-Rocher-Percé provincial park, which includes seven geosites, is protected and preserved according to the plan established by Parks Quebec. The plan aims to manage provincial parks and strike a balance between conservation of natural and cultural heritage and public access for education and recreation.

In 2019 a new trail and geosite map was created to showcase new trails. Percé UNESCO Global Geopark developed a trail that links the Pic de l'Aurore geosite with the existing network of trails that connects 13 geosites. New trails built by the Nature Conservancy of Canada, a partner of Percé Geopark, are also featured on the map.

We published a guide on responsible hiking on our website. Limited smoking areas are listed in the guide and indicated on the map. Field staff enforces the regulations. Signage is used to convey information, including signs and barriers that discourage hikers from leaving the marked trails.

The hiking trails are maintained by staff and include washrooms, recycling bins, and garbage cans. Some highly protected areas have been established, including the area bordering the La Crevasse geosite, where rare subarctic and alpine plants have been identified.

### **Sustainable tourism (geotourism)**

Percé UNESCO Global Geopark promotional tools, which include flyers, maps, and our website, are available in French and English. We have added a third language, Mi'kmaq, to signage in the park. Mi'kmaq is a First Nations language spoken in our area, and using it on our signs is a way for us to highlight the ancient but at-risk Mi'kmaq culture.

To support local artisans and artists, we have set up a handicraft gift shop in the Geopark reception building.

A sustainable development policy and action plan and a sustainable procurement policy have been implemented.

We have forged numerous partnerships, as mentioned above. Each year Percé UNESCO Global

Geopark trains kayak guides from Avolo Plein Air on coastal geological formations. We are also in negotiations with Guylaine Marchand, a guide who will lead visitors on Zodiac tours to showcase Percé's natural and cultural heritage.

Île-Bonaventure-et-du-Rocher-Percé provincial park, a member of the Percé Geopark cooperative, is engaged in a variety of interpretation, protection, and conservation projects. We also work regularly with the Nature Conservancy of Canada. In summer we hire an interpretative guide for the Barachois de Malbaie geosite.

### **New education programs on geoconservation, sustainable development, and disaster risk reduction**

We have expanded our education program to include interactive workshops for students in all primary and high school grades, in line with Quebec Ministry of Education expectations. In summer children ages 6 through 12 can attend one-hour sessions on earth sciences as part of our Scientific Mornings program. Three guided hikes, a guided minibus tour, and an entertainment program were on the lineup for the summer of 2019. Our Tektonik exhibit is a fun way to learn about the geology of Percé. A guide presents the continental shift, explains how the Appalachians were formed, and is on hand to provide more information to curious visitors.

We have added more educational content to the new Percé UNESCO Global Geopark website. It covers a number of topics ranging from the geology of Percé to Mi'kmaq culture to the mission of UNESCO Global Geoparks.

The Percé UNESCO Global Geopark internship program has developed partnerships with various Université de Sherbrooke departments. We hosted two history students for their final-year internships, which involved documenting the living memory of the community through interviews with seniors. Four applied environmental geomatics students are designing an interactive online map. Four students in the professional master's program at the Center for the Environment and Sustainable Development analyzed sustainable development at Percé UNESCO Global Geopark. A student at the Gaspésie-et-des-Îles-de-la-Madeleine CEGEP completed an internship on adventure tourism techniques. CEGEPs are generally equivalent to the last year of high school in France, but also offer three-year post-high school programs that lead directly to vocational careers.

### **Research at Île-Bonaventure-et-du-Rocher-Percé provincial park**

Île-Bonaventure-et-du-Rocher-Percé provincial park is an outstanding natural heritage area that's

protected and developed by the Quebec government. The park is also a key part of the Percé community, a member of the Percé Geopark Solidarity Cooperative, and a valued partner.

Notable scientific research has been conducted at Île-Bonaventure-et-du-Rocher-Percé provincial park, including studies on the park's northern gannet colony, the second biggest in the world.

Research projects conducted in 2019 include:

- A study on differential migration in northern gannets comparing short- and long-distance migration and its effects on the physical health of these seabirds.
  - Pelletier D., Seyer Y., Garthe S., Bonnefoi S., Phillips RA., Guillemette M. (2020) So far, so good. . . Similar fitness consequences and overall energetic costs for short and long-distance migrants in a seabird. PLoS ONE 15(3): e0230262.  
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0230262>
- A study on the impacts of exposure to oil on migratory birds. Researchers studied the repercussions of the 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico on northern gannets that migrate there and breed on Île Bonaventure (Percé, Quebec, Canada).
  - Champoux L., Rail J., Houde M., Giraud M., Lacaza É., Franci C. D., Fairhurst G. D., Hobson K. A., Brousseau P., Guillemette M., Pelletier D., Montevecchi W. A., Lair S., Verreault J., and Soos C. (2020) An investigation of physiological effects of the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill on a long-distance migratory seabird, the northern gannet. Marine Pollution Bulletin, No. 153. Vol. 110 953, pp. 1–14
- The provincial park was the site of field work for a research project entitled “The effects of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAC) exposure on Canadian birds during embryonic development” conducted jointly by INRS (Institut national de la recherche scientifique, Quebec) and the Canadian Wildlife Service.
- To minimize disruption to the seabirds, Île-Bonaventure-et-du-Rocher-Percé provincial park updated its environmentally responsible behavior guide for visitors to the park's shoreline.

### **Strategic partnerships**

Percé UNESCO Global Geopark works with a variety of partner organizations. Conservation and environment partners include Île-Bonaventure-et-du-Rocher-Percé provincial park, SOS Bats, Contact Environment, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Percé Green Corps, and the Gaspésie and Magdalen Islands Regional Environment Council.

Through an arrangement with the Gespeg interpretive center, Mi'kmaq storyteller Tim Adams comes to the Geopark all summer long to share his culture with visitors. The tour operators that help promote Percé UNESCO Global Geopark are Avolo Plein Air, Les Bateliers de Percé, and Croisières Julien Cloutier. There is a list of recognized geopartners in the appendix. The 25 members of the Geopark's solidarity cooperative are preferred partners (see the list in the appendix). Other organizations we have worked with this year include TechnoScience Est-du-Québec (education), Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles-de-la-Madeleine (education), the Gaspé Peninsula regional waste treatment board (sustainable development), Musée de la Gaspésie (history and culture), Festi-Neige de Percé (culture and tourism), Xpress Race (culture and tourism), Camp de Base (adventure tourism company), and Carnaval de Val d'Espoir (culture and tourism).

### **Promotional activities**

In addition to all of our posts on the website and on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, we have purchased a significant amount of advertising space. Percé UNESCO Global Geopark is featured on the websites of Association Touristique Régionale, Québec Maritime, and Québec Originale. We have purchased advertising space in Guide du Vacancier, Les Débrouillards magazine, discovery guides for the Miguasha and Île-Bonaventure-de-et-Rocher-Percé provincial parks, the Gaspé Peninsula visitor guide, and Espace magazine.

Promoting the 90 geocaches hidden within the Geopark has helped us attract a niche clientele. Students can sign up for the Young Scientists Club to learn about other UNESCO Global Geoparks in a series of video clips.

Percé UNESCO Global Geopark participated in the Amène Ta Visite initiative spearheaded by the Rocher-Percé Tourist Office. Amène Ta Visite is a pass that gives local residents free admission to designated tourist attractions when accompanied by a paying guest. The Geopark also offers a 15% discount to guests staying at the Rietel hotel in Percé. Geopark pricing includes a 10% discount with the purchase of two or more activities and a 15% discount for groups. Annual passes for certain activities are also available. The on-site gift shop sells a variety of Percé UNESCO Global Geopark promotional items.

We work with travel wholesalers including Authentik Canada, Toundra Voyages, Discovery Tour, CMTA Cruises, DNA, John View, Go West Tours, Senior Discovery Tours, and Groupe Voyages Québec.



Through a joint initiative between Percé UNESCO Global Geopark and Île-Bonaventure-et-du-Rocher-Percé provincial park, educational programming was offered in the form of one-hour presentations held twice a week at Place Suzanne Guité, a strategic high-visibility location between the waterfront promenade and the tourist office.

The geopark donates door prizes to numerous events such as the Open House at the Oasis Community Center in Percé, Barachois en Fête, and the Polar Plunge sponsored by Opération Enfant Soleil, a non-profit organization that raises funds to support high-quality pediatric care for all children in Quebec.

#### **4. CONTACTS**

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## Appendix

### List of members - Géoparc de Percé, coop de solidarité

Camping du Village	Tourism - Accommodation
Hotel-Manoir de Percé	Tourism - Accommodation
Hôtel La Normandie	Tourism - Accommodation
Au Pic de l'Aurore	Tourism - Accommodation
Riotel de Percé	Tourism - Accommodation
Motel Le Mirage	Tourism - Accommodation
La table à Roland	Tourism - Restaurant
Restaurant la Maison du Pêcheur	Tourism - Restaurant
Restaurant Biard	Tourism - Restaurant
Auberge les Trois Sœurs	Tourism - Accommodation
Les Bateliers de Percé	Tour operator
Hotel-motel Fleur de Lys	Tourism - Accommodation
Les bateaux de croisières Julien Cloutier	Tour operator
Les Entreprises du Rocher Percé inc	Regional
Fumoir Monsieur Émile	Tourism - Restaurant
Boutique la Marinière	Tourism – Shop
Espace Wazo	Tourism – Shop
Daniel Leboeuf	Drugstore
MRC du Rocher Percé	Regional
SADC Rocher Percé	Regional
Office de Tourisme du Rocher Percé	Tourism – Regional
Association Coopérative de Consommation de Percé	Cooperative - Grocery
Nadeau Matériaux	Private Sector - Shop
Parc de l'Île-Bonaventure-et-du-Rocher-Percé	National Park
Bureau Accueil Touristique	Municipal – Tourism

## List of Geopartnership

Ambulance Percé	Oasis
Au coin du campeur et du Pêcheur	Office du tourisme Rocher Percé
Auberge de jeunesse Maison Rouge	Pêche touristique Michael Moreau
Bateliers de Percé	Pharmacie de Percé - Uniprix
Boite à Tee-shirt	Produire la santé ensemble
Boulangerie Do-re-mi	Restaurant Café Champêtre
Boutique Au bon Secours	Riotel
Boutique Chose	Table a Roland
Boutique la mer	Vieille Usine
Brasserie Auval	Ville de Percé
Bureau accueil touristique	Wazo
Café de l'Atlantique	Motel Bleu Blanc Rouge
Calèche du Rocher	Motel Impérial
Camping Baie de Percé	Motel Le Mirage
Camping du Village	Motel le Repos
Chalets de l'Escale	Motel Natabel
Club de plongée	Hotel Vague Verte
Comité de Concertation du Barachois de Malbaie	Hotel-Motel Manoir de Percé
Coop de Percé	Hotel-Motel Rocher Percé
Coop de solidarité les Bio-Jardins	La Gougou
Croisières Julien Cloutier	La Marinière
Épicerie-Café Le Moulin	Le Goéland/Bateau croisiere
Espace Suzanne Guité	Magasin Historique antique
Fumoir le Paternel	Maison du pêcheur
Fumoir Monsieur Émile	Maison Rehel
Gîte aux jardins de l'anse	Marie-Josée Tommi
Gite chez Despard	Hotel La Normandie
Home Hardware	