



News Releases and Backgrounders

News Releases

The Government of Canada recognizes the national historic significance of the Acadian aboiteau system

A technology that changed the land

Memramcook, New Brunswick, November 9, 2010 -- On behalf of the Honourable John Baird, Minister of the Environment and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, the Honourable Rose-May Poirier, Senator, today unveiled a Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque commemorating the national historic significance of the Acadian aboiteau system.

"I am pleased to recognize the national historical significance of the aboiteau system, a technology adapted by the Acadian people that allowed the drainage of salt marshes for high-yield cultivation. This maritime technology played a pivotal role in the rise and evolution of the Acadian people during the 17th and 18th centuries," said Senator Poirier.

The Acadian aboiteau system is the essential element of a technique to drain salt marshes. Throughout the colonial period, Acadians were the only people in North America to drain and cultivate a large portion of the rich salt marshes that lay below high tide mark. These exceptionally fertile farmlands were the key to the prosperity of the Acadian community up until the Deportation in 1755.

"We need only look around a few Acadian communities to find evidence of the aboiteau's importance to the collective consciousness and identity. The choice of names given to key establishments and landmarks are testament to this Acadian legacy," said Minister Baird. "By recognizing the national historic significance of the aboiteau system, our government pays tribute to a people and a technology that have shaped the development of Canada."

Construction of these large-scale earthworks were community projects that contributed to the creation of a sense of belonging and pride amongst the Acadian people. The communal tasks necessary to build and maintain the large network of dikes have helped forge the Acadian identity of today.

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