



# Time for Nature



## Restoring a trampled campground

### Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site of Canada

Jeremys Bay Campground is very popular, maybe too popular. Since 1971, more than two million visitors have camped at Jeremys Bay in Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site of Canada.

#### Loved too much

Unfortunately, popularity comes at a price. Concentrated use of the campground's 360 sites may be causing environmental problems. A largely open understory with unrestricted movement has affected tree seedlings and the roots of larger trees. The soil on the forest floor is also becoming too compacted for new plants to grow. Without new growth, natural succession and regeneration cannot occur in this forest.

To tackle the problem, Parks Canada recruited a team of researchers and dedicated volunteers. They conducted some benchmark research, and implemented some actions that have improved prospects for the campground environment.



See the difference?

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#### What exactly was the problem?

First of all, Parks Canada needed to know what exactly was causing the deterioration of Jeremys Bay's forest. Was it trampling by visitors? Were maintenance activities a factor? Was the layout of the campground a problem?

Over the years, Parks Canada had tried various restoration measures. They planted trees in denuded areas, built fences to protect significant plant species and rerouted hiking trails. Although these measures helped, the deterioration continued. Part of the problem was the lack of scientific data about each restoration project.



## Finding out what worked

To scope out the problem, researchers from Parks Canada, the Friends of Keji Cooperating Association and the Université de Moncton (in French only) carried out a comprehensive environmental study. The researchers, supported by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, studied certain environmental indicators to determine the health of the campground environment. They looked at soil quality, water quality and evidence of erosion. They measured the regeneration and growth of trees and noted the kinds of wildlife present at the campground. By studying these factors before and after each rehabilitation project, Parks Canada could evaluate how well it had worked.



Parks Canada's staff and volunteers are helping the forest regenerate by planting tree seedlings.  
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## Giving the forest a helping hand

Guided by the research, the park's staff is helping the forest regenerate by planting tree seedlings around campsites and across shortcut paths. The Friends of Keji have also initiated an annual campground cleanup and tree-planting day.



Parks Canada has erected fences to protect sensitive areas.  
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Since park visitors are so important, volunteers and Parks Canada staff conducted a visitor survey to understand camper behaviour and gauge awareness of environmental issues. As a result, Parks Canada is focusing on visitor education and encouraging campers to help protect the site's sensitive features.

## Spreading the word

These are just the first steps in restoring Jeremys Bay. The researchers called for ongoing monitoring of rehabilitation measures, more education for park users and an expanded volunteer program.

Kejimikujik's managers are following up, and they intend to share the lessons they've learned with other scientists and park personnel. This will give Parks Canada a valuable tool since, over time, other campgrounds may require restoration.

For more information visit [www.pc.gc.ca/kejimikujik](http://www.pc.gc.ca/kejimikujik)