

From experiential tourism to flying drones: the evolving role of the Geological Survey in geoheritage projects

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The Geological Survey of Newfoundland and Labrador is increasingly active in a wide range of geotourism and geoheritage projects throughout the Province. Many of the geotourism projects are collaborative with colleagues at the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development, as well as with local partners and stakeholders, including the Aspiring Discovery Geopark on the Bonavista Peninsula and the Aspiring Cabox Geopark in the Bay of Islands region.

In collaboration with the Aspiring Cabox Geopark, the Geological Survey is involved in the new Northern Peripheries and Arctic Region Project entitled – “Drifting Apart”. Over the next 3 years, this project will support the development of new and aspiring Global Geoparks, the promotion of innovative products and services for social and economic prosperity and to continue to build a strong network of geoheritage destinations in the Northern Periphery and Arctic Region.

Over the last several years, the Survey has supported the bid for Mistaken Point to become a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This September, the Province and the Mistaken Point Ambassadors Inc. welcomed a representative from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) who conducted the Mistaken Point onsite evaluation mission, which is a critical step in a larger evaluation process that also includes formal desktop reviews of the nomination dossier.

This year also saw the re-branding and grand “Reopening” of the newly re-designed Fortune Head Geology Center and a new collaboration entitled the “Geological Treasures Network of Eastern Newfoundland” that aims to cross promote sites that are of geological interest.

The Survey has commenced a project utilizing our newly acquired drone (UAV) to capture high-quality imagery of our provincial geoheritage sites. This video and picture data will be used in a variety of ways; from updating our Building Stones of Newfoundland App to creating new digital access to the geology of the province. We plan to add a layer to our digital atlas that allows user to view videos of select geoheritage sites.