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**NOTE TO READER:**

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**During Stage 2 of the Site C Project, studies are underway to update many of the historical studies and information known about the project.**

**The potential Site C project, as originally conceived, will be updated to reflect current information and to incorporate new ideas brought forward by communities, First Nations, regulatory agencies and stakeholders. Today's approach to Site C will consider environmental concerns, impacts to land, and opportunities for community benefits, and will update design, financial and technical work.**

**RECREATION AND TOURISM ASSESSMENT - SITE C PROJECT**

**Final Report**

**MacLAREN PLANSEARCH**

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## PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Recreation and Tourism Assessment for Site C was initiated under Terms of Reference that were distributed by B.C. Hydro and revised and refined by MacLaren Plansearch Corp.

After the preliminary phases of the study were started, the consultants were directed to carry out their work according to a revised memorandum of understanding from B.C. Hydro in the fall of 1990 which changed the original timeframe and terms of reference.

In January 1991, the consultants were advised that the Site C project development process was to be deferred to a later date, and that a status report summarizing tasks completed and incomplete tasks was to be submitted.

This Status Report overview therefore identifies tasks completed, those still incomplete, and those not undertaken as per the project proposal and the revised draft Terms of Reference.

## TASKS ACCOMPLISHED TO DATE

### METHODOLOGY

The study process has been organized in a series of Tasks within four phases which reflect the tasks of Phase I and II in the Terms of Reference. They include:

Phase I: Refinement of Terms of Reference and Data Gathering

Phase II: Collection of New Data, On Site Investigation

Phase III: Identification of Impacts, Mitigative Measures and Opportunities for Enhancement

Phase IV: Identify Additional Research Studies

### TASKS ACCOMPLISHED TO DATE:

#### PHASE I: REFINEMENT OF TERMS OF REFERENCE AND DATA GATHERING

##### Task 1: Meeting with Client

Initial meetings were held with the Senior Environmental Coordinator and members of the project team.

Topics covered were:

- discussion the activities of the Study
- transfer all available documentation and background information
- establish communication linkages
- identify ongoing studies by B.C. Hydro
- outline of the proposed schedule

- definition of project status, related issues and concerns and the work plan.

This task was completed.

Task 2: Refinement of Terms of Reference

This task was completed to the draft level as directed by the client. Copies were circulated to stakeholders for commentary and feedback.

Task 3: Meetings with Regulatory Bodies

Work on this task was not initiated.

Task 4: Review of Documents/Literature/Inventory Area

A review was made of all documents that provide information on the recreation and tourism resources. It was carried out concurrently with the agency consultation process. This task was completed.

**PHASE II: NEW DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS  
AND ON SITE INVESTIGATION**

Task 5: Assess Recreation Demand and Tourism Market Potential

Using available literature and interviews a review was made of:

- o existing/potential recreation demand;
- o tourism market potential.

This task was partially completed through literature review, interviews, and a field visit to the Site C Impoundment area and Peace River Region. A full resource

evaluation has not yet been completed. Regional recreation resources were inventoried and GIS recreation mapping was completed.

The current recreation usage of the Site C area was assessed. The pre, post, and construction phase Assessment was not carried out.

Task 6: Initial Data Gap Identification

This task was completed.

Task 7: Presentation to Client

A review was presented to the client by both meeting and progress report as specified.

Task 8: Recreation and Tourism Resource Analysis

A review of recreation and tourism resources in the region and communities to be affected by impoundment was made.

The region was visited by two team members who investigated all indoor and outdoor recreation features and facilities, tourism accommodation attraction and operations as well as ancillary community and regional infrastructure. The one week field visit focussed on updating of the recreation and tourist resources.

The resulting data is summarized in this status report, and is by no means comprehensive. More detailed research is required. No trans-border issues were addressed.

Task 9: Review of Local/Provincial Trends

This task was completed in a summary fashion for use projections for the Site C impoundment area, and for general tourism demand for the area.

Task 10: Future Demand and Market Projections

This task was not undertaken.

Task 11: Meeting with Local Recreation Leaders and  
Travel Industry Operators

Technical information meetings were held with selected individuals in the recreation and tourism industry: They include:

- o Hotel/Motel Operators
- o Chamber of Commerce
- o Community Administrators
- o Campground Directors
- o Recreation Directors
- o Tourism Development Officers

Emphasis was placed on determining their long term plans and the compatibility of recreation and tourism initiatives. This task was completed.

Task 12: Assessment of Completeness of Database

Data gaps for immediate action or future study is identified on the basis of existing documentation as well as comprehensive on-site analysis. This task was completed.

Task 13: Preparation of Recreation and Tourism Resources  
Assessment Information Baseline

Several elements of this task have been assembled, but not yet written up in report format.

Task 14: Presentation to Client

This task was not undertaken.

PHASE III: IDENTIFY IMPACTS AND MITIGATIVE MEASURES

Substantial information and data relevant to Phase III has been assembled.

The tasks under this phase are Task 15: Identification of Impacts of Construction and Operators of Site C; and Task 16: Identification of Mitigative Measures and Enhancement Opportunities. These tasks have not been completed.

PHASE IV: IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL RESEARCH AND STUDIES

Some elements of this phase have been assembled. Tasks 17 and 18 were not undertaken.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Tourism and Recreation Impact Assessment is to provide background data for B.C. Hydro's ongoing planning requirements for the Peace River Site C Project.

This data collection enabled B.C. Hydro to define changes which have occurred in tourism and recreation since the previous Energy Project Certificate application. It also describes variations since previous studies, as well as defining relevant trends, impacts and issues.

### 1.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Site C dam and power station would be located about 60 kilometres from the B.C. Alberta border, and would be the third B.C. Hydro facility on the Peace River in B.C. The facility would generate about 900 MW of electrical energy, with an annual average firm production of 4710 GWh. The area of the dam is located approximately seven kilometres southwest of the City of Fort St. John. A road would be constructed from the provincial highway, with a bridge crossing the Peace River four kilometres downstream to provide construction access and permanent access to the power station and spillway.

Two proposed single circuit 500 kV transmission lines would run a total of 76 kilometres to Peace Canyon, where it would connect with the existing transmission system. The route would follow the existing right-of-way, but clearings would be widened.

Site C would be operated as a complement to the upstream plants of the G.M. Shrum and Peace Canyon plants. The reservoir's level would fluctuate about two metres 80 percent of the time, with maximum drawdown of six metres during unusual conditions.

An Energy Project Certificate application was prepared in 1980, and hearings were held under the direction of the B.C. Utilities Commission in 1981 and 1982. A draft EPC application has been prepared.

### 1.3

#### STUDY MANAGEMENT

The Recreation and Tourism Resources Assessment was coordinated by the Environmental Resources Division of B.C. Hydro, and interfaced with the public consultation process which began in 1989 under the direction of the External Relations Division. The study was coordinated with Socio-economic, Heritage, Terrestrial, Aquatic and other environmental studies which have been instituted by the Environmental Resources Division.

The consultants reported directly to the Technical Coordinator - Social Resources, under the overall direction of the Senior Environmental Coordinator, who was responsible for overall integration of environmental and social resources studies.

The Recreation and Tourism Resources Assessment was coordinated by the Technical Coordinator - Social Resources, for the Site C Project. Administrative direction was provided by the Senior Environmental Coordinator for the project.

## 1.4

EVALUATION OF KEY RESOURCES AND ISSUES

Key resources that were evaluated included:

- Natural Resources: vistas, vegetation, parks, waterways;
- Cultural Resources: special events, ethnic groups;
- Historic Resources related to tourism and recreation;
- Community Resources, e.g. community centres, museums, parks, areas;
- Commercial Recreation Resources, e.g. pools, golf courses;
- Tourism Plant, e.g. accommodation, food services, attractions, operators and suppliers;
- Regional and Community Infrastructure, e.g. airports, roads, waterways;
- Current environmental attitudes (Environmental Scan);
- Agency and stakeholder interests;
- Needs of regulatory bodies.

1.5

STUDY GOALS

The goal of the project was to study the recreation and tourism resources of the area affected by the Peace River Site C Project. By documenting the current status of the key characteristics, this project was intended to describe changes which have occurred since the previous studies, define relevant trends, potential impacts and issues, and present recommendations for mitigation and compensation of negative impacts as well as recognize possible project benefits.

The study team activities included:

- review and summary of the existing literature and data base in the specific areas covered by the recreation and tourism resource assessments previously completed;
- identification of significant changes which have occurred since the previous Energy Project Certificate application;
- evaluation of the need for further studies to update the existing information base and identify data gaps;
- assisting in discussions of new study needs with appropriate resources, agencies and public interest groups in the area;
- defining and mapping the boundaries of the impact areas;

- collecting new data, where appropriate;
- coordinating efforts with other project consultants;
- defining existing recreation and tourism resources, patterns of use, and anticipated changes which would result from the creation of the reservoir;
- providing a regional situation analysis of recreation and tourism plans and resources within local communities, taking existing study data into account;
- incorporating relevant information provided by the External Relations department's public consultation process into the documentation;
- identifying the positive and negative impacts on recreation and tourism plans, strategies and resources, for local communities on the region during pre-construction, construction and operation stages.

## 2. OUTDOOR RECREATION AND TOURISM INVENTORY AND DEMAND

### 2.1 RECREATION DATA BASE

Meetings with the client and with other consultants established the preliminary data base for the outdoor recreation component of the study. A review of the literature, maps, and data sources regarding outdoor recreation opportunities in and adjacent to the Site C impoundment area was completed as planned. Some material, such as 1979 Edwin, Reid and Associates Ltd. Recreation Assessment Study were found to have relevance to the existing baseline data. The original Canada Land Inventory maps were considered to be lacking in objectivity and applicability. Supplemental baseline maps were chosen and cross-referenced to collected field information, and to the 1979 study.

#### Field Visit to Region

A field visit to review and inventory tourism, community recreation, and outdoor recreation features and facilities was completed as per task #8 of the MacLaren Plansearch proposal, and as specified in the terms of reference. Interviews to update existing data and a field survey of the communities and the river corridor were undertaken by the consultants. Community recreation facilities were evaluated in terms of their capacity to absorb increased utilization and their present condition. Information for the GIS mapping project was collected.

Current facilities, usage, and long term plans and prospects as per task #11 of the proposal are identified

in the interview transcripts from the field visit. Notes for a preliminary regional analysis of recreation and tourism were developed, including the identification of positive and negative impacts of the project on community plans, strategies, and resources. No specific work was commenced on the impact assessment of the pre-construction, construction and operational phases of Site C development.

#### GIS Base Map Preparation

A base map was prepared updating the outdoor recreation resource inventory for the Site C impoundment, as specified in the terms of reference. The map included current viewsapes and incorporated the Provincial map symbol system for recreation. The base map was forwarded to Hugh Hamilton and Associates for conversion into GIS format. An accompanying map key was constructed indicating the point information to be entered into the GIS system. This data updates the original study prepared by Edwin, Reid and Associates in March, 1979. The GIS base map was completed by the second week of February, 1991.

Twenty-four sites were identified and described, as per Figure 2.1. Each site number coincides with a mapped location.

B.C. HYDRO  
SITE "C" LAND RESOURCE GIS  
RECREATION SITE INVENTORY  
LEGEND

<u>SITE #</u>	<u>SITE NAME</u>	<u>VISITOR USE</u>
1	TAYLOR LANDING PROV. PARK	PICNIC
2	PEACE ISLAND PARK	PICNIC
3	FT. ST. JOHN HISTORIC PARK	PICNIC
4	LIMESTONE SPRINGS	HIKING
5	PRIMITIVE CAMPING	
6	TUFA LIMESTONE DEPOSIT	PICNIC
7	BEAR FLAT(1)	PICNIC BOAT LAUNCH
8	ROADSIDE VIEW	VIEW(2)
9	DRINKING SPRING	SPRING
10	ATTACHIE SLIDE VIEW	VIEW(2)
11	HALFWAY RIVER CAMPSITE	CAMPING PICNIC BOAT LAUNCH
12	PRIMITIVE CAMPSITE	CAMPING
13	MULE DEER POINT	NATURE OBSERV.
14	PRIMITIVE CAMPSITE	CAMPING
15	VIEWPOINT	VIEW(2)
16	PRIMITIVE CAMPSITE	CAMPING
17	FARRELL CREEK	CAMPING FOSSILS PICNIC BOAT LAUNCH
18	PRIMITIVE CAMPSITE	CAMPING
19	VIEW OF "THE GATES"	VIEW(2)
20	LYNX CREEK	BOAT LAUNCH
21	HUDSON HOPE BOAT LAUNCH	BOAT LAUNCH
22	MAURICE CREEK	PICNIC CAMPSITE
23	ALWYN HOLLAND PARK	CAMPING PICNIC
24	GETHING'S CAMPGROUND	CAMPING PICNIC

(1) Bear Flat is partially privately owned.

(2) Indicates viewpoint above proposed reservoir level.

**FIGURE 2.1**  
**SHORELINE RECREATION SITES**

- Site #1. **Taylor Landing Provincial Park.** An important boat launching site for power boats using the Site C reservoir area of the Peace River. The park is located just downstream of the Taylor bridge. Includes a picnic site.
2. **Peace Island Park** (operated by the District of Taylor). Twelve campsites, picnic area, riverside recreation area.
3. **Fort St. John Historic Park:** Scenic vista of the Peace River valley, picnic area.  
(Note: Sites 1, 2 and 3 would be downstream from Site C).
4. Mineral Springs emerge from the south bank of the river approximately 800 m downstream opposite the mouth of Wilder Creek. These springs are located on the bench above the river bank, and feature tufa limestone deposits around the springs. A trail traverses the hillside leading up to the springs.
5. A primitive campground which could accommodate three parties has been established on the downstream point of an island close to the south bank.
6. There is a tufa limestone deposit on the south bank which is frequented by river users. The site is used for camping and picnicking as well, accommodating two parties.

7. Bear Flat is a camping, picnicking, and informal boat launching site. The site is identified as a hunting campsite, and as a site for wildlife viewing, particular for deer.
8. There is a viewpoint on the road switchback overlooking Bear Flat, with panoramic upstream and downstream views.
9. There is a spring on the south bank used by boaters for drinking water.
10. This viewpoint provides panoramic upstream views, particularly of the Attachie Slide.
11. There is a primitive four party campground and picnic site at the mouth of the Halfway River, and a boat launching ramp.
12. A campsite which could accommodate two overnight parties has been developed on the downstream end of an island.
13. This nature observation point is important for observing Mule Deer.
14. A large primitive campsite which can accommodate up to ten parties has been established on an island. The site is not visible from the river.
15. Viewpoint with panoramic upstream and downstream views.

16. A one-party campsite has been developed at the mouth of a stream featuring fossils in its banks.
17. The mouth of Farrell Creek has a heavily used primitive campsite, picnic site, and informal boat launch.
18. A primitive campground which can accommodate four parties has been developed on the upstream end of an island. This area of the river is called "The Gates" by boaters.
19. This viewpoint gives a panoramic view of "The Gates", one of the most scenic stretches of the river.
20. Lynx Creek is an important boat launch site, primitive campsite, and picnic area. It is used particularly by residents of Hudsons Hope.
21. Hudsons Hope boat launch ramp.
22. The mouth of Maurice Creek is a popular undeveloped picnic site and recreation area for the residents of Hudsons Hope, accessed by a four wheel drive road.
23. Alwyn Holland Park has twelve campsites, showers and picnic sites. Boats can be landed there, although no moorage facilities exist.

24. Gethings' Campground in Hudsons Hope is operated by the District of Hudsons Hope. It has fifteen campsites, showers, a picnic area, but no waterfront access.

(Note: 23 and 24 are outside the Site C reservoir area).

Documentary references: Recreation Impact Assessment, Edwin, Reid and Associates Ltd., p. 15-19, Outdoor Recreation Council Peace River Recreation Map, CLI Land Capability for Recreation, Charlie Lake L94A.

#### Changes in Peace River Outdoor Recreation Use since the 1979 Study in the Site C Impoundment Area

Recreational use of the Peace River has resulted in some changes to the resource since 1979, when the last recreation study was undertaken. Despite population growth in the region's communities, impact on the resource base continues to be minimal. Demand for the river resource is limited by the lack of public access to the river. Despite the improvement of access points since 1979, most river use is managed informally and growth in demand has been accommodated by volunteer and Ministry of Forests upgrades of the individual recreational sites. For example, the boat launches at Halfway River and Lynx Creek have been improved and picnic facilities have been developed.

The informal public access to the river at the Halfway River site is protected by a Park Reserve. The river access at Bear Flats (Cache Creek Bridge) is also public land, and this facility has been developed over the past

decade to serve as a picnic site and for camping. Provision of picnic tables and better vehicle access at each of the riverside sites seems to adequately service the increase in demand.

#### Formal Facilities Development in the Site C Area

The development of the boat ramp at Taylor has provided a significant access point for the public, in association with the campsite at Peace Island. These formal facilities have accommodated growth in demand in the southern end of the study area over the last decade. The development of an additional campground in Hudsons Hope and upgrades to the community boat launch has added capacity to the popular Alwin Holland Park and campground. Ongoing upgrades to formal facilities in Hudsons Hope would continue in keeping with the communities' "Playground of the Peace River" theme.

Demand for recreational services has been slightly higher than the 1979 Recreational Study. It has increased due to the promotional activities of the Peace River Alaska Highway Tourism Association, the Chambers of Commerce in each of the communities, and the publication of the Outdoor Recreation Council's Recreation Map of the Peace River-Liard. Because the majority of users have recreational vehicles, the informal riverside camping opportunities provided have been adequate for their needs and for those of the regional recreational users. The service centre function of Hudsons Hope in particular is important to this Recreational Vehicle market.

### 2.1.1 Regional Campground Facilities

The existing regional campground infrastructure is detailed in the 1989 Community Futures, Peace River Tourism Development Strategy. The development of provincial, regional, municipal, and private campgrounds catering to Recreational Vehicles has provided a basis for extended stays in the region for the rubber tire market. Attendance figures in the Peace River Provincial Parks indicate a 16 percent growth in overnight campground use from June 1988 to June 1989, increasing from 2,925 to 3,308. This is approximately 20% occupancy for June and September with an increase to 50% to 60% during July and August (pg. 185, Community Futures' Peace River Tourism Development Strategy). At this time 1990 figures are not available however discussions with Provincial Parks staff indicate that growth was up at least 10% for a total of 26% between 1988 and 1990.

This regional campground network has influenced the Peace River Region in terms of increased day use and boat launch activity, but the lack of formalized camping opportunities on the Peace River and recreationalist awareness of river access points has resulted in a displacement effect. In other words, regional outdoor recreation destinations have been developed outside the Site C impoundment. The clustering of services such as boat launches and sani-stations in private, municipal, and regional and provincial parks has spread Recreational Vehicle based activities throughout the region rather than concentrating activities in the Peace River Corridor.

There are 952 formally designated campsites in the Peace River region but only 39 of these sites are immediately adjacent to the Site C impoundment area. These include Peace Island, (Taylor) with 12 sites, and Gething's and Alwyn Holland (Hudsons Hope) with a total of 27 sites.

- The Impact of New Campground

The potential additions of new campgrounds as a result of a Site C Recreation development in the impoundment area would certainly have an impact on occupancy rates at existing municipal and provincial parks. The impact would be a function of:

- how many campsites would be constructed
- when the campgrounds would be ready for use
- the quality of the campsites and their ancillary recreation facilities.

The reservoir would be an attractive recreation feature in the region and would probably draw users from existing sites. On the other hand the long navigable waterway would also act as an additional attraction for the region and actually generate higher camper growth than the last few years.

The timing of the availability of campsite along the reservoir is an important element in determining impact. Assuming that campgrounds are not available until say the year 2000, and RV/camper growth continues at a steady 8-12% annually and if no new Provincial Parks Campsites are built during the next 10 years then occupancy rates may be only marginally affected.

**FIGURE 2.2**  
**CAMPGROUNDS IN THE PEACE RIVER REGION WITHIN DAY**  
**USE TRIP DISTANCE OF SITE C IMPOUNDMENT AREA**

CAMPGROUNDS	NEAREST COMMUNITY	NO. OF SITES
<b>Municipal and Regional</b>		
Chetwynd Municipal Campground	Chetwynd	20
Alwin Holland	Hudson's Hope	12
Gething (Lion Club)	Hudson's Hope	15
Dinosaur Lake	Hudson's Hope	65
Cameron Lake	Hudson's Hope	10
Peace Island Park	Taylor	12
Pouce Coupe Regional Park	Pouce Coupe	5
Mile Zero Campground	Dawson Creek	63
<b>Provincial Parks</b>		
One Island Lake	Pouce Coupe	30
Swan Lake	Pouce Coupe	43
Sudeten	Pouce Coupe	15
Kiskatinaw	Dawson Creek	28
East Pine	Chetwynd	0
Dunlevy Recreation Area	Hudson's Hope	0
Beatton Provincial Park	Fort St. John	37
Charlie Lake	Fort St. John	58
Moberly Lake	Chetwynd	109
Spencer Tuck	Chetwynd	0
Sukunka Falls	Chetwynd	0
Taylor Landing	Taylor	0
<b>Private</b>		
Tubby's Tent, Trailer and R.V. Park	Dawson Creek	75
Alhart Campsite	Dawson Creek	65
Windrem Campground	Chetwynd	17
Camp Sagitawa, Moberly Lake	Chetwynd	8
Harv's Resort, Moberly Lake	Chetwynd	6
Wildmare Grove Campground and R.V. Park	Chetwynd	17
Lot-a-Luck Acres (59k west)	Chetwynd	5
Sportsman's Inn Campground	Hudson's Hope	7
Alaska Highway Campground and R.V. Park	Dawson Creek	48
Chamber of Commerce R.V. Park	Fort St. John	32
Ron's Tent and Trailer Park	Fort St. John	30
Edgewood Park	Fort St. John	35
<b>Total</b>	Region	<b>862 **</b>

\*\* Note: Total including Tumbler Ridge campgrounds (Lions Flatbed Creek - 37, Gwillim Lake - 53) is 952. These campgrounds are considered to be too far away from the Site C area to be significant in providing accessible camping services.

### 2.1.3 Peace River Region Camping Facilities and Parks

#### Municipal and Regional Parks

Most of the municipal and regional parks in the area are free of charge, and are usually located conveniently close to the various town centres. Some would benefit from upgrading of available services, in order to attract larger R.V.'s.

From conversations with campground managers, the occupancy rates of the municipal campgrounds that are not on the Alaska Highway seem to be relatively low compared to those situated adjacent to the Highway. In Hudson's Hope during peak summer season, the free campgrounds tend to be only 20-40 percent occupied. The following is a brief description of available campgrounds.

#### Dawson Creek

- Mile '0' Campground:  
63 campsites, laundromat, bath and shower facilities, no R.V. hookups.

#### Chetwynd

- Chetwynd Municipal Campground:  
20 campsites for campers and tents.

#### Tumbler Ridge

- Lions Flatbed Creek Campground:  
37 vehicle and tent campsites; sani-station and fishing.

Hudson's Hope

- Alwin Holland Overnight Campground:  
Twelve sites, located close to town and the Peace River.
  
- Gething (Lion's Club) Overnight Campground:  
Fifteen campsites and sani-station, located close to town and to services.
  
- Peace Canyon Dam/Dinosaur Lake Campground:  
65 vehicle and tent campsites, boat launch, located in the Peace Canyon Recreation Area, near the dam site.
  
- Cameron Lake Campground:  
Municipal campground, camping, swimming and fishing facilities, located about fourteen kilometres south of Hudson's Hope.

Fort St. John

- Fort St. John Centennial R.V. Park and Campground:  
45 campsites, hookups and sani-station.

Taylor

- Peace Island Regional Park:  
Located on a small island in the Peace River, the park has overnight camping.

### Pouce Coupe

- Pouce Coupe Regional Park:  
Limited overnight camping and picnic facilities. The park is planning to add facilities for R.V.'s and is presently adding services for the campsite such as a bandshell. Located where the Pouce Coupe River meets the Bisette Creek at the southern boundary of the Village of Pouce Coupe.

### Provincial Parks and Recreation Areas

#### One Island Lake Provincial Park

This park provides 30 overnight camping, boat launching and group campsites. Road access is rough and about 30 kilometres off the nearest highway.

#### Swan Lake Provincial Park

There are 43 campsites, boat launching, playground and game field, swimming and picnic area at this park.

#### Sudeten Provincial Park

The park is adjacent to Highway 2 and provides fifteen campsites and picnic facilities.

#### Kiskatinaw Provincial Park

There are 28 campsites on the shore of the Kiskatinaw River, but no picnic facilities.

### Monkman Provincial Park

Monkman is a wilderness park accessible by riverboat, horseback, hiking and four wheel drive vehicle. There is no road access. The spectacular Kuneseo Falls are located in the park. No services are provided, but there are some wilderness walk-in campsites.

### Dunlevy Recreational Area

No camping is allowed but picnic sites, a boat launch and hiking trails are provided in this scenic recreational area. Dunlevy is located adjacent to Williston Lake, about 30 kilometres northwest of Hudson's Hope.

### Beatton Provincial Park

The park is located on Charlie Lake thirteen kilometres from the Alaska Highway, close to Fort St. John, and has paved road access. There are 37 vehicle and tent campsites. Swimming, hiking, fishing, picnic sites and a boat launch are available.

### Charlie Lake Park

Located directly on Charlie Lake, adjacent to the Alaska Highway, the park is easily accessible and the road is paved. There are 58 vehicle and tent campsites as well as a sani-station, swimming, hiking, fishing, picnic grounds and a boat launch.

Gwillim Lake Provincial Park

Located on Highway 29 between Tumbler Ridge and Chetwynd, the park has 53 vehicle and tent campsites as well as some walk-in wilderness campsites. Picnic sites and a boat launch are also provided.

Moberly Lake Provincial Park

This park is located in the foothills of the Rockies just south of Hudson's Hope on Highway 29. There are 109 vehicle and tent campsites as well as hiking trails, swimming, fishing, picnic sites, sani-stations, and a boat launch. Boat rentals are also available from a private marina.

Spencer Tuck Provincial Park

This park is situated on the north shore of Moberly Lake, just off Highway 29. There are no campsites, but swimming, fishing, picnic sites, and a boat launch are available.

Sukunka Falls Provincial Park

The park has rough road access about 45 kilometres off Highway 29. It has no camping facilities, but the fishing and scenery are excellent.

Taylor Landing Park

Taylor Landing has no campsites but provides a boat launch, fishing and picnic sites. The park is located close to the Alaska Highway.

### Private Campgrounds

Private campgrounds along the Alaska Highway experience a 60 to 75 percent occupancy rate during the peak summer months. Private campgrounds off the Alaska Highway tend to be associated with other commercial operations such as motels. The occupancy rates of these establishments are generally lower.

#### Tubby's Tent, Trailer and R.V. Park, Dawson Creek

Complete facilities for R.V.'s including 75 hook-ups, laundromats, showers, car wash and sani-dump.

#### Alahart Campsite, Dawson Creek

The campsite has 12 full hook-ups, 50 electric hook-ups, showers and a laundromat.

#### Fort Sasquatch, East Pine

Fort Sasquatch is located on Highway 97 west of Dawson Creek where the Murray River meets the Pine. There is a main house with three A-frame cabins. Each cabin is complete with kitchen, bathroom, and flushing toilets, and can accommodate up to four people per cabin. Fishing and horseback trips can be arranged from the resort.

#### Harv's Resort

This facility is located on Moberly Lake and offers one rustic cabin and a few campsites for accommodation. The restaurant and grocery are the main buildings.

Windrem Campground

The campground is connected to Windrem Motel in Chetwynd and provides about 17 campsites and some R.V. hook-ups.

Camp Sagitawa, Moberly Lake

This Christian camp has eight campsites as well as overnight cabin accommodation, sani-station, a boat launch and fishing.

Sportsman's Inn Campground, Hudson's Hope

The campground is connected to the Sportsman's Inn in the town centre. There are about seven campsites with electric hook-ups.

Alaska Highway Campgrounds and R.V. Park, Farmington

Located on the Alaska Highway between Dawson Creek and Fort St. John, the campgrounds provide 48 vehicle and tent campsites as well as R.V. hook-ups.

Ron's Tent and Trailer Park, Charlie Lake

The campground has about 30 sites just outside of Fort St. John.

**2.1.4 Fixed Roof Accommodation**

The over capacity in the motels and hotels that developed during the late 1970's has been taken up mostly by oil and gas and forestry related business which, with summer tourists maintain high occupancies year around.

### Adventure Lodges

A limited number of lodges have been developed which cater to the adventure outdoor recreation market. One facility is a Horse Ranch located outside Tumbler Ridge, which has recently built cabins for a Guest Ranch operation. It is planned that in addition to Guiding and Outfitting, the operation would cater to wildlife viewing and photo safaris.

Carbon Lake Lodge is a year round fishing lodge located about 50 km west of Hudsons Hope. The facilities include a main lodge and three cabins. Other activities include hiking, camping, cycling, canoeing, skidooing, and cross country skiing.

There is a one cottage Bed and Breakfast established at Bickford Farms near Fort St. John.

Commercial river boating operators on the river usually utilize Fort St. John Hotel facilities. Outfitters and packages sometimes utilize the same accommodations as staging facilities prior to moving clients to more remote camps. Some wildlife viewing and river canoeing trips use the same technique.

It can be concluded that direct tourist participation in the Site C impoundment area based out of fixed roof accommodation is very limited, and is relatively insignificant in comparison to Recreational Vehicle and campground based use.

The impact of Site C on the fixed roof accommodation was not considered in the development strategy.

### 2.1.5 Recreational Activities

- Boating

River boating continues to be an important activity, especially for the River Rats a local boating club located in Taylor. Canoeing is also popular and there is little apparent environmental impact on the river island sites from these activities. Some expansion of island campsites has occurred.

- Scenic Viewing and River Access

There are only a few places where the river can be viewed from the road. These viewpoints are essentially the same as those identified in the last study. The lack of river access and adequate signage limits recreation opportunities to tourists with specific knowledge of the area. Residents have thereby enjoyed a comparative advantage in information about the river and presently there is additional recreation capacity in the river corridor.

- Camping

There is evidence that recreational use has increased in the region since the 1979 study. This has been supported by both the establishment of several informal campgrounds as well as discussions with officials in Fort St. John and Hudsons Hope. This has also been documented in the Peace River Tourism Development Strategy for Community Futures. Self-contained recreational vehicles utilizing informal riverside campsites and boat launches have accounted for much of the growth. Development of formal

facilities in Taylor and Hudsons Hope have provided for greater river utilization through more visible and well promoted recreational opportunities. Development of the "Playground of the Peace" theme is promoting Hudsons Hope as a regional Outdoor Recreation destination for area residents and tourists.

#### 2.1.6 Outdoor Recreation User Days

The 1979 Recreation Impact Assessment Study incorporated projections of resident use of the Site C area without the project on the basis of an overall increase of 4% per year. This was based on the average rate of increased attendance at B.C. provincial parks over the previous 15 years. (P. 39, Recreation Impact Assessment, Edwin, Reid & Assoc. 1979).

Projected recreation user days for 1991 using this model, were 34,032 based on a slow coal development scenario, being considered at that time.

Non resident use of the Site C impoundment area was calculated as increasing at 1.1% per year since 1929 giving a total of 8,699 user days by 1991. The aggregate total of recreational user days was therefore projected at 42,731 for 1991.

Projected outdoor recreation usage was based on the assumption of strong economic performance in the resource sector, particularly in coal development. The 1981-82 recession and subsequent slower growth rates to 1986, including population decline in some communities (Dawson Creek) indicates that even the conservative slow coal development scenario was optimistic.

Despite rapid recovery of the regional economy due to revitalization of oil and gas and overall increase in the outdoor recreation participation rate of regional residents, a more conservative participation rate for residents and non residents has been calculated as indicated in the following table:

The 1979 Recreation Study conducted community interviews to determine the level of use of the Peace River. The consultants have attempted to update these numbers based on discussions with community leaders and professional expertise. These proposed statistics are nonetheless based on statistics that did not prove to be valid in the 1980's.

This was done by the following process:

- updating municipal population statistics
- estimating, participation rates by municipality
- estimating the average the annual frequency of visit

A 15% addition factor was added to include those living in the unincorporated areas.

CALCULATION OF RESIDENT OR LOCAL USER DAYS \*

	Population (*)		Particip- ation Rate		Frequency	User Days
Chetwynd	2,885	x	30%	x	3 times =	2,596
Dawson Creek	10,966	x	15%	x	2 times =	3,290
Fort St. John	13,889	x	25%	x	3 times =	10,416
Hudsons Hope	1,204	x	40%	x	5 times =	2,408
Pouce Coupe	845	x	10%	x	2 times =	169
Taylor	740	x	40%	x	5 times =	1,480
Tumbler Ridge	<u>4,387</u>	x	10%	x	2 times =	<u>877</u>
	34,916					21,236

Plus an additional 15%

21,236 x 15% pop. outside municipalities = 1,047 user days

Resident total user days = 22,283

Tourist User Days

There are approximately 175,000 non-residents and 175,000 B.C. resident tourists in the region.

If 1% of the non-residents and 3% of the residents use the Peace River Region it would generate an additional 7000 user days.

Total use days (resident and tourist) = 29,283

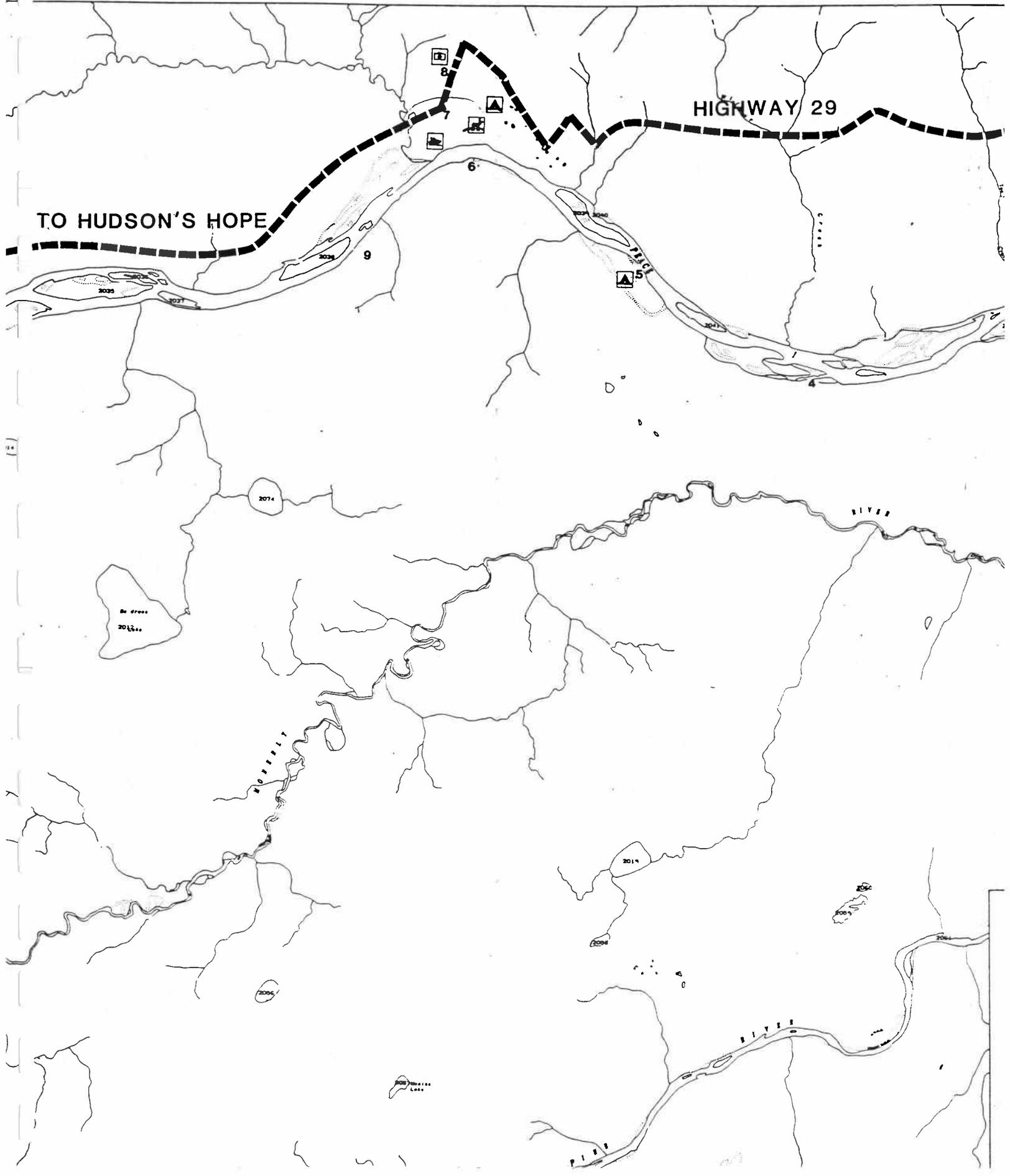
Again, these are professional estimates and are not based on empirical data.

\* Northeast Economic Development Region, January, 1990, Ministry of Regional and Economic Development, Victoria, B.C. (Based on an estimate of a 4% overall increase to 1990).

The participation and visitation rates for each of the communities vary according to their respective proximity to the Site C area.

Total user days for residents is estimated at 22,283 for 1991 based on the regional population of 40,153. The 7,000 user days for tourists represents active recreation engagements as opposed to driving through the river corridor. Tourist traffic on the Fort St. John-Hudsons Hope road has increased steadily since then, although the majority of non resident tourists stay on the Alaska Highway Corridor.

It is important to recognize that the highly scenic resource of the Peace River Corridor is a significant element in the destination product mix of the region. Although relatively few tourists actually use the river valley recreation opportunities directly, the visual resource in combination with regional campsites and attractions creates a unique destination touring opportunity. The Peace River Valley land status freeze, as outlined in the B.C. Hydro Corridor Development Plan and lack of formal recreation facility development in the corridor can be attributed in part to the Site C B.C. Utilities application. The recreation supply side has been significantly suppressed, favouring development elsewhere in the region. The freezing of development is at least partly responsible for the choice of the current conservative recreation use scenario, and for the following projections to 1996.



TO HUDSON'S HOPE

HIGHWAY 29

8

7

6

9

5

2074

Be cross  
2012.4

2006

2000  
Lake

2014

250

300

PIAN

RIVER

RIVER

**PROJECTED GROWTH IN USER DAYS OF SITE IMPOUNDMENT  
AREA TO 1996 AT AVERAGE 4% PER ANNUM**

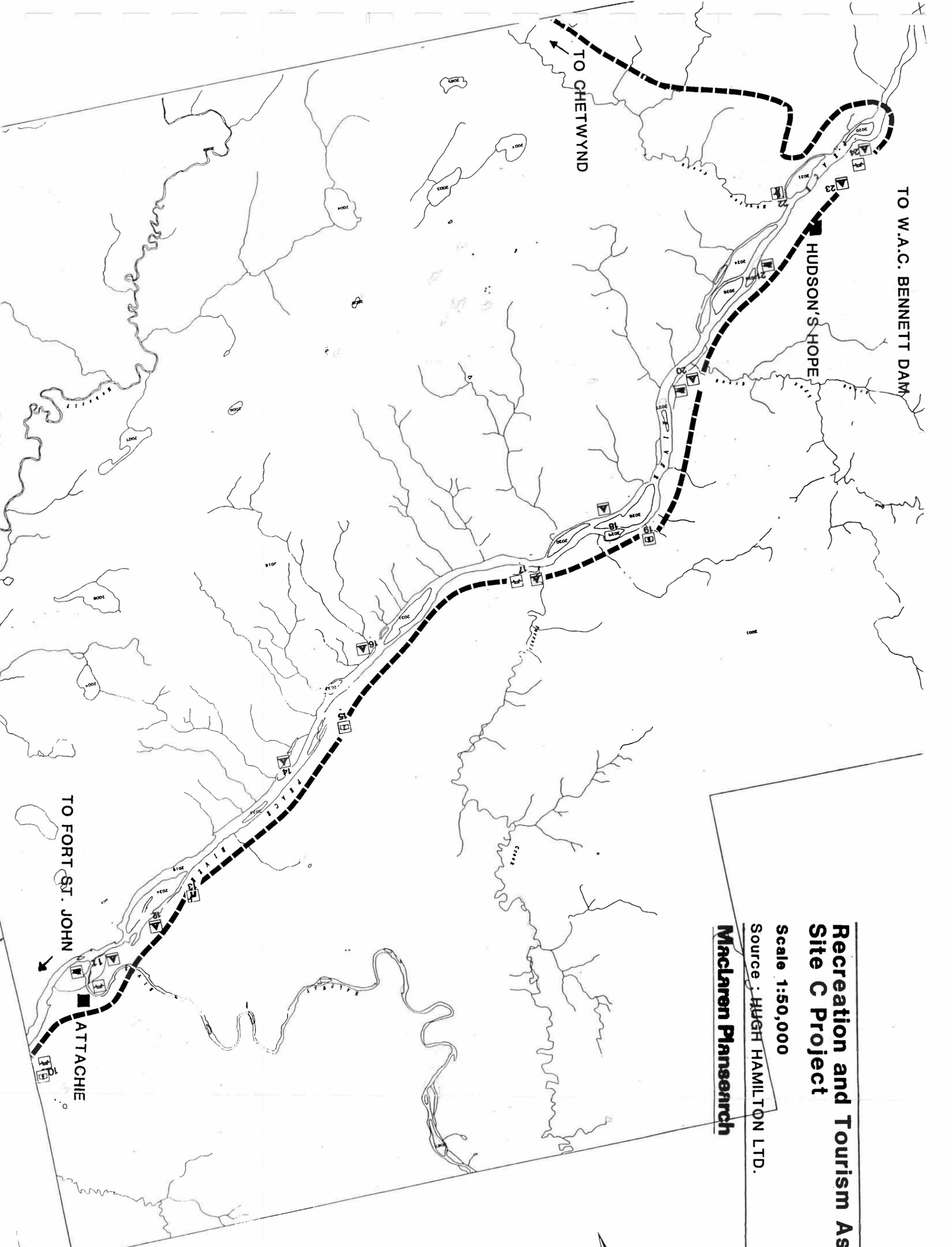
	<u>Resident</u>	<u>Non-Resident</u>	<u>Total</u>
1992	23,174	7,280	30,454
1993	24,101	7,571	31,672
1994	25,065	7,874	32,939
1995	26,067	8,189	34,256
1996	27,110	8,516	35,626

The lack of formal recreation development in the Site C impoundment area has not significantly affected resident use, but it is likely the non resident use has been curtailed. The current recession may further suppress growth in visitation to the region for 1991, but the 1992 Alaska Highway celebrations would most likely more than compensate for the current downturn. Visitation to the Site C area could therefore increase with awareness generated by the 1992 celebrations, and as a result of overall economic recovery.

2.2 **TOURISM INDUSTRY DATA BASE**

2.2.1 **Market Demand**

The tourism resources of the Peace River region are implicitly integrated with the outdoor recreation resource base. However while certain features of the Peace River Valley may serve as a local outdoor recreation resource they do not necessarily appeal or attract many visitors to the Peace River-Alaska Highway Tourism Region. In other words, the Peace River Corridor is not a destination. On the other hand the Peace River is a major physical feature for the region and has been identified in the image or theme for the region.



TO W.A.C. BENNETT DAM

HUDSON'S HOPE

TO CHETWYND

TO FORT ST. JOHN

ATTACHIE

**Recreation and Tourism Assessment  
Site C Project**

Scale 1:50,000

Source : HUGH HAMILTON LTD.

**Maclaren Plansearch**



Consequently the local tourist association is known as the Peace River/Alaska Highway Tourist Association (PRAHTA). As well, Region H, one of the seven provincial tourism regions, also reflects the presence of the Peace River and is called the Peace-Liard Tourism Region.

The impact and role of the Peace River on the regional travel industry has been defined by the Peace River Alaska Highway Tourism Development and Marketing Strategy, prepared by Dimensions Planning and MacLaren Plansearch in 1989. This document provides not only projections in terms of tourist growth but as well outlines the role of the Peace River Corridor in the overall conceptual development of the region.

The tourism plan was prepared by the Peace River - Liard Community Futures and coordinated by the Peace River Alaska Highway Tourism Association Marketing, director Ella Fraser. The plan includes a comprehensive resource inventory and market analysis, a development concept and a detailed description of all proposed projects and opportunities.

The following discussion outlines both the research results of that study as well as follow up interviews held in the region.

#### The Tourism Market in the Peace River-Alaska Highway Region

The Peace River-Alaska Highway region continues to be a popular destination and pass through area for both residents and non residents of British Columbia. In 1985 a total of 306,000 tourists visited the region. This has

since grown to approximately 350,000 in 1990. Growth has been constant, at 3 to 5% annually. However the recent Gulf crisis led to a substantial 8% drop in volume the latter half of the summer 1990 season. While these volumes have a significant impact on the region they represent a mere 2% of B.C.'s out-of-province visitors, and for the most part they are passing through the region on their way to Alaska. Dawson Creek tends to be the most popular stopover on the Alaska Highway, within the region. Discussions with the Chamber of Commerce suggest that approximately 60% of the visitors stay overnight.

#### Market Profile

Visitors are generally divided 50/50 between resident and non resident parties. The most common party composition for out-of-province visitors are two adults travelling together without children. On the other hand a higher percentage of B.C. residents and Canadians travel with children.

Visitors are generally older with a high percentage of RV and motor coach travellers being over 55 years old. A study, undertaken by B.C. Hydro, of visitors to the WAC Bennett Dam noted that approximately 50% of the visitors were from B.C., and that 33% were over 50 years old.

There are significantly higher numbers of Americans in terms of non resident visitors. The Visitor's Study conducted in 1987 by the Ministry of Tourism, indicated that 74% of non resident visitors to the region were American. This was followed by Canadians at 19% and international visitors at 7%. Virtually all of these Americans are enroute to Alaska and very few spend more

than two days in the region. In fact the average length of stay in the region is 3.3 nights compared with the provincial average of 5.7 nights. Again the Visitor '87 Survey indicated that 50% of the respondents stated that their main purpose for visiting the region was "passing through".

More specifically B.C. Hydro Visitor Survey report indicated that 30% of the visitors stayed one night and 31% stayed two nights in the region. An additional 30% stayed three to five nights. While this survey was taken within the Peace River Corridor, i.e. at the WAC Bennett Dam, it does not imply that the extended length of stay was spent in the Peace River Valley itself.

#### Trip Purpose

While most people coming to the Peace River Region indicated that they were just passing through, when asked the overall purpose of their trip seven out of ten stated that touring was the most significant activity. Touring was particularly popular with Americans (75%) and the international visitors (67%).

It is also interesting to note that the Canadian market had relatively little interest in taking part in wilderness or outdoor activities in the region. Visitors to the WAC Bennett Dam tended to be interested in other similar types of attractions. For instance, 43% of them visited the Hudson's Hope Museum and 25% visited the Quintette Mines. Interestingly, 66% indicated an interest in participating in recreation activities associated with the Williston Reservoir.

### Accommodation and Mode of Travel

The high number of recreational vehicles (42%) through the region suggests that camping is a favourite form of accommodation. In fact the visitor survey for B.C. Hydro indicated that 45% of the visitors camp while 35% stay with friends and relatives and 20% stay in a motel or hotel. American and international visitors tend to favor campgrounds (69%) because of their greater reliance on R.V.'s as a mode of travel to the region. Canadians, on the other hand, prefer travel by private automobile (82%).

Of significance is the 35% of visitors (defined in the B.C. Hydro survey) who stay with friends and relatives in the region. While it is not known exactly how many residents of the region actually visit or use the Peace River Valley it can be assumed that a certain percentage would pursue outdoor recreation activities with friends and relatives visiting from outside the region. Consequently as tourist use of the Peace River Valley Corridor increases, there would also be increased demand for recreation activities in the valley from visitors staying with friends and relatives.

The Community Tourism Action Plan, prepared by the Ministry of Tourism and Provincial Secretary in April 1989 for the City of Fort St. John, ranked the development of outdoor recreational opportunities as the number one concern. It also ranked the scenic route along the Peace River, including viewpoints, the Bennett Dam and Peace Canyon Dam as the region's fifth most important tourist attraction assets. Others that preceded it included (1) festivals and sports tournaments

(2) Alaska Highway; (3) outdoor experience and wildlife in provincial parks, and (4) local golf courses (4). This may suggest that while outdoor facilities such as campgrounds and R.V. parks are considered essential to tourism development in Fort St. John, the Peace River Valley Corridor, itself, is not considered a high priority attraction. Interest is spread more widely throughout the region.

### 2.2.2 Future Development of the Peace River/Alaska Highway Tourism Region

The Peace River Tourism Development Strategy outlined a five year tourism development scenario. The essence of this plan was the creation of a circuit tour development concept that had the following objectives:

- a) Respond to travellers passing through the region on the Alaska Highway and encourage visitors to travel a tour circuit around the region using Highways 97 and 29. This integrates the route along the Peace River Valley as an essential component to this tour circuit.
- b) Increase the length of stay in the region by at least one day by promoting extra travel and activity time along the circuit.
- c) Promote the natural features and attractions that are available along the circuit.
- d) Strengthen the theme and the image particularly as it relates to the outdoor recreation features and scenic values.

As the market segments for the region are primarily composed of recreation vehicles and automobiles they are in essence a touring market. The approach behind this development concept is to encourage movement throughout the region by creating a number of attractions along the proposed tour routes. The WAC Bennett Dam and the Peace Canyon Dam are considered two important attractions which encourage travel along this circuit.

The Peace River Tourism Development Strategy did not evaluate the differences in levels of attraction between the existing river corridor and the proposed Site C reservoir. What is crucial to the concept however is that the circuit can be completed between Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, Hudson's Hope, and Fort St. John/Taylor. The study however does suggest that the corridor or circuit movements can in part be generated by the promotion of strong subthemes that relate to the Peace River; they include:

- a) the movement of the voyageurs and explorers along the Peace River, Simon Fraser and Alexander McKenzie.
- b) historic waterways and trails for native people.

The importance of the Peace River Corridor is again emphasized in the marketing theme that was developed in this study. The proposed theme is: **Trails to the Peace.**

The concept also defines a primary tour corridor which includes the WAC Bennett Dam/Williston Lake as a prime attraction and motivator to draw people off the Alaska

Highway to travel along Highway 29 and 97. It is also anticipated that the scenic values of the Peace River Corridor would provide additional incentives.

The strategy addressed the possibility of a Site C development and under this option outlined the opportunity for a major interpretive exhibit that would discuss the historical features and events of the Peace River. This exhibit would also identify the native presence in the area and demonstrate the finding of the Charlie Lake Cave.

In summary, the Peace River Valley as it presently exists is considered an integral part of the long range development concept. It is anticipated that the name Peace River would continue to be a part of the marketing orientation and that the overall tour circuit concept would include a highway linkage between Hudson's Hope and Fort St. John. However it is also important to note that the Peace River Tourism Development Strategy did not identify the need for any particular infrastructure, service or attraction development within the corridor itself. The only proposals that would have made use of the Peace River Valley were boat tours from Hudson's Hope as well as historic interpretation of the explorer and native transportation along the river. While the former activity could still take place in a reservoir, the latter interpretation facility could be sited outside of the proposed reservoir area.

### 3. DATA DEFICIENCIES

The purpose of this study was to update the recreation and tourism baseline data to 1991. This was largely undertaken by a review of previous documents, the results of public consultation process, and one week of extensive interviews in the region. This enabled the study team to identify all current tourism/recreation facilities as well as determine outdoor recreation and tourism issues.

Five areas of data deficiencies were identified. They include:

- a) The impact of construction workers on community recreation facilities and municipal expenditures; especially in Fort St. John.
- b) Lack of statistical data on current level and type use of Peace River Corridor for outdoor recreation and tourism.
- c) The impact of Site C on the hospitality sector job market.
- d) Comprehensive visual analysis and estimation of scenic values in the existing Peace River Corridor.
- e) Lack of five year community recreation strategies.
- f) Evaluation of reservoir development on tourism and traffic flow.

Studies to address these deficiencies would provide a comprehensive baseline data and enable a more realistic appreciation of the impact of Site C. The following describes the nature of the work that could be undertaken:

a) The Impact of Construction Workers on Recreation Facility Demand and Municipal Expenditures

It is anticipated that the construction camps would house upwards of 1,000 people. As well other workers and their families would locate in the surrounding communities, in particular Fort St. John. The recreation requirements of this work force and associated families would place a pressure on existing recreation community facilities. This impact would vary with each community.

i. Fort St. John

The recreation facilities in Fort St. John are now used to capacity. In fact some facilities are outdated and badly in need of replacement e.g. a swimming pool. Other facilities such as the arena need extensive upgrading and modifications. Unfortunately because of the low tax base and demands for capital expenditure in other sectors it is not considered possible to upgrade these facilities in the near future.

ii. Dawson Creek

While Dawson Creek has excess capacity it is not known how much additional demand could be placed on the facilities before it starts to impact on the lifestyle of the local residents.

iii. Chetwynd and Hudson's Hope

Both these communities have both excellent facilities as well as abundant resources. However it is unknown how much increase would start to affect the quality of local recreation experience.

Future Data Collection

1. In order to adequately anticipate the impact of demand on the recreation facilities, and in particular Fort St. John, it is necessary to undertake an evaluation of the following:
  - A. Existing use of facilities.
  - B. Existing state of facilities.
  - C. Anticipated increased demand created by:
    - construction camp residents
    - new residents to the various communities
    - new residents living outside the city limits.
  - D. Estimate of total impacts in terms of
    - depreciation of the facilities
    - congestion and overcrowding
    - quality of programming
    - interaction between residents and transients.

E. Capacity of existing tax base to respond to increased transient demand.

b) Lack of Statistical Data or Current Recreation Use and Value of the Peace River Corridor

At this time all definition of the level of use and user profile of the Peace River Corridor is strictly anecdotal. Opinions seem to vary from "little use" to large numbers of people from Fort St. John" to "the river is used by most people in Hudson's Hope". As well as not knowing the extent of use, for example in terms of visitor days, little is known about the variety of activities that take place along the river. Again most definitions are anecdotal and are simply opinions based on the experience of the interviewee. However it can be assumed that the following activities do take place within the river corridor. They include:

- fishing
- hunting
- wildlife viewing
- boating
- touring
- camping
- hiking and picnicking
- sightseeing
- photography, etc., etc.

In order to adequately assess the regional use of the river corridor it would be necessary to undertake a survey of residents in the four

communities, with an emphasis being placed on Fort St. John, as well as on downstream communities such as Taylor and Pouce Coupe.

c) Impact on the Hospitality Sector Due to Loss of Jobs to Site C Construction and Administration Jobs

It has been estimated by a senior travel industry executive that as much as 25 to 30% of the hospitality sector jobs could be lost to Site C. It is also felt this would be especially severe in the supervisory and front line positions. This was typified recently in the latest edition of the provincial newspaper, B.C. News, which on its first page featured a woman who had left her waitressing job to work on pipeline construction.

Should Site C start up within the next few years the impact would be especially significant since it seems that the hospitality industry is now relatively stable. The combination of a growing tourism industry which presently attracts approximately 350,000 people as well as an active winter season due to oil and gas exploration have created full time job opportunities for most people in this traditionally seasonal sector. Under these conditions, jobs have become secure and employees more loyal to this industry sector.

The consultants suspect that Site C, however, could potentially be a destabilizing factor in this traditionally volatile industry. In order to fully understand the impacts it is necessary to break down the existing job categories and identify those

that would be most severely affected by a variety of job openings on the Site C project. By matching existing labour force with projected demands it would be possible to anticipate those categories that could easily be filled by staff from elsewhere. This would also indicate the training requirements that would be necessary to bring outside hospitality workers up to a level of acceptability by the local travel industry.

d) Evaluation of Scenic Values of the Peace River Corridor

The 1979 Recreation Study of the Peace River Corridor identified many of the scenic features however little emphasis was placed on evaluating the extent of the change in visual quality as a result of the new reservoir. While this report updates the recreation features and sites of the impoundment area, it does not undertake a comprehensive visual analysis. Field interviews suggest the most important recreation resources in the Peace River corridor are the scenic values. This is true for both the local citizens as well as the tourists. The Peace River Tourism Development Strategy considers the scenic qualities of corridor, as seen from the highway, as an integral part of the development concept. The study identifies Route 29 as both a form of access to the attractions at the WAC Bennett and Peace Canyon Dams as well as a scenic attraction in itself.

The purpose of an evaluation of scenic values would be to:

- a) prepare a comprehensive inventory of all visual features.
  - b) identify the mix of visual experiences including view types, length of views, landscape texture and composition.
  - c) use the most current research to numerically rate the value of the various visual experiences from within the corridor as well as onto the corridor from the existing road.
  - d) prepare a visual and spatial resource inventory and analysis of view types, texture and spatial composition resulting from the reservoir. A visual inventory similar to those prepared for the Canadian Park Services (e.g. Kouchibouguac National Park Visual/Spatial Analysis). View and spatial types would be compared with viewer preference data.
- e) Evaluation of Recreation Development to 1995.

A review of the communities indicated that none of them have a clear perception of the future of recreation development in their communities. In particular there is little understanding of how the regional recreation resources can be used as a part of their overall recreation programming. Facilities seem to be planned on an adhoc basis thus making it difficult to evaluate the long term impact of Site C on their recreation facilities and programs.

A regional, community-based recreation study would define the resident needs as well as identify proposed recreation facilities and programs.

This information would also be helpful in developing an updated Site C Reservoir Recreation Master Plan.

f) Impacts on Tourism and Tourist Flow

The Peace River Alaska Highway Tourism Development Strategy identified a travel circuit journeying Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, Hudsons Hope and Fort St. John as a primary tourism corridor within Hudsons Hope and Fort St. John was considered an important visual attraction component to the circuit. The reservoir would change the physical context and aesthetics of this portion of the tour circuit. A visual/spatial inventory analysis is necessary to address the impacts of the proposed impoundment area it is also necessary to evaluate the impact of proposed recreation facilities that would be developed with the reservoir. For instance, boat tours, fishing, quality "lake-side" campgrounds and picnic site would have a greater impact on extending length of stay. As individual or collective attractions they may also contribute to increased tourist volume, particularly on the stretch of highway between Chetwynd and Fort St. John.

The most significant impact on tourism would come from the construction of a high quality interpretive exhibit within the Peace River

Corridor. It would essentially interpret the natural history, native heritage and explorer/settler/pioneer legacy of the Peace River, particularly in that area affected by the flooding. A feasibility study is required to demonstrate both the scope and themes of such an interpretive exhibit as well as its impact on tourism volume, extended length of stay, regional recognition, visitor expenditure and local identity. The 1989 tourism strategy suggests the interpretative exhibit would have a position impact but those impacts have not been qualified or quantified.

#### 4. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

An environmental scan was conducted by reviewing all the available newspaper articles relevant to the construction of the Site C dam and published in the Vancouver Sun and Province from 1987 to 1990. The purpose was to determine the current state of public attitudes towards energy projects in general and Site C in particular.

It is generally perceived that the construction of Site C is being proposed in order to meet the power demand in B.C. and to export more power to the U.S. According to various articles, the Site C dam is number one on Hydro's resource planning list and its construction is only a matter of time. Based on an economic recovery in North America, B.C. Hydro has predicted an increasing demand for electricity both in Western Canada and the U.S. To meet this demand B.C. Hydro has prepared a 20 year Resource Plan (1989 - 2008) which calls for Site C development to possibly start between 1997 - 1999.

In the article "Race to Keep Up" (Province Dec, 13, 1989) it stated Hydro was facing a major problem in responding to electricity demand within the province. The average household, for example, used twice the electricity in 1989 as in 1962. The residential sector is expected to increase 19.9% and the commercial sector by 29.2%. However, the biggest power user is the industry whose growth was expected to increase 48.1% between 1989 and the year 2000.

Much opposition to construction of the Site C has been based on criticisms about the logic of Hydro's projections and assumptions. A Vancouver Sun 1990

article complained about basing the decision to build the Site C Dam on economic growth, particularly when the region was experiencing economic difficulties.

#### Environmental Issues

The environmental impact of the Site C dam has been one of the major concerns amongst the local residents of the Peace River region. After the construction of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, residents and environmental groups learned that reservoirs and dams of this magnitude have a significant impact on wildlife, fisheries, and downstream habitat. They also increase pollution, precipitate climatic change and are frequently responsible for a loss of farm land and historical features within the flooded area. These concerns however, were not considered important in the print media until the Federal Government "opened the door for Site C critics" by making public its commitment to participate in hearings involving the economic and environmental issues of the proposed Site C Dam. The change of attitudes was announced in the Province, on February 8, 1990, by then Energy Minister, Jack Davis. Since then, the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that environmental hearings must be held on the construction of the Rafferty-Almeda Dams in Saskatchewan. The Federal Department of the Environment ordered construction stopped until environmental studies were completed.

A few months earlier, on September 17, 1989, the Province published an extensive analysis of the Site C dam project in which it stated that "B.C. Hydro had a more open approach towards the environment now than they did in 1982". A Hydro spokesperson announced their commitment

towards the environment and intention to take into consideration lessons learned from the construction of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam and the concerns of the environmentalists.

In an effort to meet these commitments, B.C. Hydro announced that Public Information Meetings would be held within the Peace River region and that detailed studies on wildlife and fisheries would be conducted by independent firms.

#### Other Power Generation Options

Public demands for other options to the construction of the Site C dam resulted in a number of articles outlining B.C. Hydros' efforts in searching for alternatives. The following are the two most mentioned:

- The Keenleyside dam on the Columbia River built as a storage only dam could be upgraded to hydroelectric status by building a 240 megawatt power plant at a total cost of approximately \$370 million.
- Murphy Creek, a tributary of the Columbia River, located three kilometres upstream from Trail, could be upgraded into a 275 megawatt dam and power plant at a cost of \$723 million.

Other alternatives to the construction of Site C focused primarily on other megaprojects in the province. The article, "Power bids flood Hydro" (Province, May 1989) announced that at least five Canadian, Japanese and U.S. companies have expressed interest in building up to 600

megawatts of generating capacity in B.C. for both domestic consumption and power export.

North Pacific Power of Vancouver, Electric Power Development of Tokyo and Long Lake Energy of New York are interested in building a 275 megawatt plant at Murphy Creek near Trail on the Columbia River.

Long Lake Energy also wants to add 202 megawatts to Hydro's 607 megawatt Seven Mile project on the Pend d'Orielle River, a Columbia tributary. It's also proposing a 308 megawatt project at Waneta on the Kootenay River.

Sandwell Swan Wooster and Stothert Engineering, both of Vancouver, are interested in building a 180 megawatt plant at the Keenleyside storage dam.

Fording Coal of Calgary and Westar Mining of Vancouver expressed interest in developing projects in southeastern B.C. Fording's proposal calls for a 112 megawatt coal-fired project at Fording River, while Westar plans to use refuse coal to generate an unspecified amount of power at Sparwood.

B.C. Hydro also received proposals from five companies to generate energy capacity from natural gas, coal and wood waste.

- Energy America of San Diego, Ca. It proposes a 220 MW combined cycle natural gas project near Merritt.

- Long Lake Energy of New York and Dominion Energy of Richmond, Va. propose a 169 MW of woodwaste and natural gas generation. There are several potential sites in the B.C. interior.
- Selkirk Power Partnership of Vancouver proposes a 150 MW gas combustion turbine near Chilliwack.
- TransAlta Resources Corp. and Alberta Natural Gas of Calgary propose a 85 MW co-generation natural gas turbine project near Crowsnest.
- Westar and Shawinigan Integ Inc., both of Vancouver, propose the 305 MW East Kootenay coal project near Sparwood.

#### Conservation and Other Options

B.C. Hydro has plans to conserve electricity and delay the need for major developments, such as Site C, as long as possible. They include:

- Power Smart
  - a 10 year, \$225 million program designed to save 240 megawatts
  - persuading customers to switch to energy efficient products.
- Resource Smart
  - using existing generation facilities more efficiently by updating and finetuning.

- Co-generation - getting major industrial customers to generate their own power.
- Co-ordination of supply with other utilities in Washington State, Alberta and independent power producers such as Alcan Aluminum.
- Buying power from independent power producers.

#### Public Concerns and Perceptions

According to socioeconomic studies undertaken in 1989<sup>1</sup>, there was sufficient support in the area for the construction of Site C. These conclusions however, have been contradicted by several recent stories published in the newspapers about individuals who are directly affected by the development of the reservoir.

It was reported in the press that residents are disturbed that the decision on the Site C dam has left the valley waiting for sixteen years. This has resulted in a dramatic drop in property values particularly for those whose residences are located on the banks of the Peace River. Resentment has also increased since landowners who would be directly affected by the project have been approached in the last few years by B.C. Hydro with offers to buy their land at a low price. As a result, B.C. Hydro now owns one-half of the 4600 hectares that is to be flooded by Site C. Other negative opinions held by some members of the public include:

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<sup>1</sup>Site C EPC Application. Socio Economic Section.

- The disruption and impact of the dam is not justified since it would serve the U.S. markets only.
- The 1990 Hydro rate hikes are actually to pay for the project and those who would pay the most are those who use electric heat.

Again these are opinions that are held by some members of the regional and provincial public. The extent of these attitudes has not been documented and although they are not necessarily based on fact, they have grown over the past 5 to 7 years.

#### Conclusion

The overall public sentiment is one of concern for the quality of the environment. This includes not only the impacts of flooding of another river valley but also for B.C. Hydro's energy generation strategy.

Since 1982, public opinion has persuaded B.C. Hydro to investigate other options for power generation and conservation. Also, more stringent environmental review processes are now in place and required for any new major project.

Public opinion seems divided over the Site C proposal. There are those concerned about the environmental impacts, the people directly affected by the construction and the resource users in the area. Others feel that the economic benefit to the area is greater than the associated costs. However, none of the articles reviewed provide figures on the level of support for each option.

It is generally perceived, however, that the primary benefactors would be the industrial sector and those buying exported power despite the fact that present B.C. Hydro. policy states that Site C would not be built for export.

Finally, the media articles demonstrate that the Federal and Provincial Governments, B.C. Hydro and the private sector are seriously attempting to find alternatives to the construction of major new energy developments by implementing energy saving programs, co-generation and coordination of supply.

## 5. SUMMARY OF FIELD INTERVIEWS, NOVEMBER 26TH TO 30TH, 1990

### Interview Themes and Process

Several significant themes emerged from the interviews conducted in the field regarding the impact of the Site C impoundment area on residents and tourists. Major concerns were expressed in terms of community impacts, elimination of outdoor recreation access, and loss of scenic values for the tourism industry. Lost wildlife viewing and hunting opportunities were identified as significant concerns by residents.

The interviews also included a review of community plans to expand recreation opportunities through long term planning. They highlighted both the existing situation, and specific issues and concerns. Many socio-economic impacts emerged in the interviews, as well as environmental concerns and issues which may be related to recreation and tourism but are not an essential part of this study.

In the case of environmental impacts of the Site C impoundment area, several recommendations were made regarding the loss of wildlife habitat. For instance, the community of Hudson's Hope also specified mitigative measures which the community would like to see undertaken should the Site C proceed. Scepticism was expressed regarding whether or not the interests of residents who use the Peace River Corridor would be addressed in the Site C development process. Opportunities which had been lost as a result of previous reservoir development projects were identified, and the involvement of residents on committees was recommended prior to the

initial construction phase of the dam and reservoir clearing.

#### Existing Conditions

The interviews confirmed ongoing resident use of the Peace River Resource at varying levels within each community. Hudson's Hope interviewees identified the river as an essential part of their lifestyle. Informal riverside facilities continue to provide water based activities with additional capacity available.

Each community in the region continues to develop and enhance recreation opportunities for their residents, and tourists on an adhoc basis. Outdoor recreation use of the Peace River corridor by residents is based on informal facilities and there has not been a significant increase in demand in the past 5 years.

Development of regional outdoor recreation opportunities has provided additional capacity over the past decade for residents. Outdoor activities conducted in the area continue to closely resemble those reported in the 1979 study. There appears to be an increase in touring activity and in Wildlife viewing. Cross-country skiing was identified as an increasing activity as well.

#### Recommendations

Specific recommendations resulting from the meetings included the following:

- 1) Adequate provision for "like for like" substitution of wildlife habitat opportunities to compensate for the loss of valuable winter range.
- 2) Provisions be made in local communities to assist in the increased recreation loads on the community facilities resulting from Site C construction workers.
- 3) Replacement and realignment of roadways impacted by the Site C impoundment area.
- 4) Adequate development of interpretive opportunities and access to reservoir recreation.
- 5) Access to employment opportunities for local people.
- 6) Development of the fishing and boating potential of the new lake for residents of the entire region. This would compensate for loss of existing recreational opportunities for both residents and tourists.
- 7) Plans and programs of recreation site replacement as a result of impoundment, and bank stabilization programs to ensure safe access to the reservoir.
- 8) Proper management of recreation and tourism facilities after the construction of the Site C dam.

- 9) Appropriate and ongoing community participation in the planning of the reservoir recreation facilities.

Overall, most of the interviewees indicated that they generally believed that the Site C project would result in benefits for the region in recreation and tourism. It was recognized however, that there was a loss of the river resource and in particular the Peace River Islands for river recreation is irreplaceable.

#### Reservoir Benefits to the Region

Since high quality wildlife habitat in the valley and islands could not easily be replaced, reservoir benefits were seen in terms of:

- 1) increased boating and fishing activity
- 2) a good quality scenic-resource assuming that the clearing and reservoir development was undertaken in an environmentally appropriate manner, and
- 3) the opportunity for circle tours and road access which to be developed in association with the new impoundment.

#### Impact on the Hospitality Sector

The impact of Site C on the hospitality sector would be significant since a number of employees would transfer to high paying Site C construction jobs. This would necessitate importing hospitality employees from areas outside the immediate region. It was estimated that as

many as 600 people, particularly bartenders, cooks, chefs and waiters would be required as a result of the displacement effect of the Site C work force in the region.

### Summary

#### Site C development, but not at any cost.

A basic attitude that was expressed was that the region's communities were willing to accept the development but not at any cost. The reservoir was seen as a valuable tourist attraction to the region, but that the social and environmental costs would have to be considered if Site C was to be accepted. Interviewees expected to be more involved in the decision making process of the Site C construction. They wanted to be adequately compensated on a "like for like" basis for lost recreational opportunities, particularly from those communities on the river such as Hudson's Hope which had the most to lose. The desire for hearings to be held in the region underlines the importance of local participation in charting the future development of the entire area.

#### Regional Economic Performance

An important conclusion from the interviews was that despite an overall economic slow down across the country, the Peace River region as a whole is doing quite well economically, as a result of increased oil and gas exploration. The relative contribution of recreation and tourism to the economy continues to be relatively insignificant. Most of the hospitality sector services is dedicated to serving the oil and gas sector and the

majority of out-of-province visitors still continue to pass through the region on their way up the Alaska Highway.

#### Significance of the Peace River

The Site C impoundment is generally recognized as an inevitable, and could provide benefits to residents and tourists if the development proceeds in a socially and environmentally appropriate manner.

Only a small portion of the Peace River would remain in its original state after Site C is built. The interpretation of the river's history and pre-history is therefore an important element in the Compensation-Mitigation process for residents as well as for tourists. The Peace River provides both character and identity to the region. Recognition of these regional assets is reflected in the comments and opinions expressed in the interviews in a mosaic of more specific concerns about potential losses.

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# APPENDIX I

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LIST OF INTERVIEWS

1. Peace River Alaska Highway Tourist Association
  - Ella Fraser, Marketing Director
2. City of Fort St. John
  - Stan Kary - Administrator
  - Carol Susask - Recreation Director
3. Chamber of Commerce - Fort St. John
  - Renee Read - Manager
4. Pioneer Inn
  - Bob George - Manager
5. Dawson Creek Chamber of Commerce
  - Barbara Berry - Manager
  - Bob Haugen - Tourism Committee
6. District of Dawson Creek
  - Bob Trail - Mayor
  - Harold Hansen - Administrator
7. Peace River Regional District
  - Ben Knutson, Chairman
8. District of Chetwynd
  - Charles Lesser - Mayor
  - Andy Teslyk - Administrator
  - Betty Deck - Economic Development Officer
9. District of Hudson's Hope
  - Faye Lavallee - Administrator
  - Martin Dalsin - Recreation/Tourism Coordinator
  - Roger Porter - Superintendent of Works

10. Wayne Hammack - Manager/Owner, Sportsman Inn
11. Ministry of Regional Economic Development
  - Dave Pankratz - Regional Director
12. Northern Lights College
  - Joan Barnston - Tourism Coordinator
13. Town of Dawson Creek
  - Ellen Corea - Manager, Dawson Creek Tourism Association
14. North Peace Rod and Gun Club
  - Annual General Meeting Delegates

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# APPENDIX II

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SITE C TOURISM AND RECREATION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

RESULTS OF MEETINGS IN THE FIELD: NOVEMBER 26 - 30, 1990

1. November 26, 1990, 8:00 p.m., North Peace Rod & Gun Club, Clubhouse, Fort St. John

A presentation of the consultants' terms of reference was made to the annual general meeting of the North Peace Rod & Gun Club. The purpose of the consultants meeting was to determine the extent to which the 400 members of the Rod & Gun Club used the Peace River Valley for hunting and fishing, and to identify and record issues and concerns about the Site C reservoir development, and to update recreation baseline information on the Site C reservoir area's use by member hunters and anglers from this club.

Existing Situation

While most of the hunters did not actively use the reservoir area for hunting, the members felt that the valley contributes significantly to wildlife production. The following comments were made concerning the wildlife habitat.

- There is limited angling on the river by members.
- South slopes and the breaks which provide access offer critical winter range for ungulates, especially in tough winters. Flooding could greatly increase sloughing and slumping of steep slopes above the flooding line, reducing available winter range.
- There is fear that flooding in the lower Moberly will remove important wildlife winter range.
- Loss of winter range should be balanced by enhancing existing farmland above the reservoir safe line which could be developed on a lease back arrangement to farmers. Loss of the Peace River winter range affects ungulates (moose, elk) which travel long distances from other areas to winter on the islands and south facing slopes.

Issues and Concerns

The following issues and concerns were brought up by members of the club during the meeting. Also included are observations regarding new sources of information pertaining to Wildlife and Hunting.

- a) Those familiar with the Thurber report feel that the projected extent of slumping is underestimated. It is believed that slumping will occur along most of the reservoir shoreline, along the breaks and that it will continue for many years. Williston Lake was frequently used as an example of how extensive slumping can be in the Peace River Corridor.
- b) The Ministry of the Environment has prepared GIS wildlife habitat maps which are considered to be the best mapping to date. This information should be referred to in the Recreation Inventory and Assessment.
- c) Peter Davidson, who is presently working as a biologist for the Williston Lake Compensation Committee, suggested that the North Peace Rod & Gun Club undertake their own evaluation of the impact of the reservoir on its members.
- d) The reservoir will have a more significant impact on the Mule Deer population whose range in winter is more limited, unlike the moose that can move through deeper snow. As well the mule deer use the island for summer grazing, and many Canada geese nest on the islands. These nesting sites, and the summer range, will be lost.
- e) It was suggested by a member that Site #1 campground should be turned over to another organization to be operated, because the operation of this campsite has been unsuccessful.
- f) A concern was raised as to how many campsites would be established along the reservoir to compensate for the loss of existing formal and informal campsites.
- g) It was observed by a club member that B.C. Hydro is seen to be a "very poor corporate citizen with a terrible reputation". It was stated that B.C. Hydro has not paid attention to the work done by Rod and Gun Clubs on Elk Habitat enhancement along the Peace River Valley.
- h) It was observed by a member that "Like for Like" means adequate funding for wildlife habitat projects, in order to compensate for lost habitat along the valley floor.
- i) A concern was raised about Game Management during the construction phase, when there will be heavy hunting pressure for several years on the Peace River Corridor. Members wondered if special hunting regulations be developed to cover the construction period.
- j) It was pointed out that previous habitat enhancement efforts by the North Peace Rod and Gun Club (specifically, controlled burning to develop ungulate browse areas) have been undermined by the Ministry of

Forests, who planted conifer plantations on the enhancement area. The Ministry of Forests must be part of any habitat enhancement initiatives associated with the Site C development process.

- k) It was recommended by two members that high capability ungulate habitat be purchased by B.C. Hydro to replace land lost for wildlife as a result of the flooding of the Site C reservoir area in reasonable proximity to the reservoir.
  - l) It was recommended by a member that B.C. Hydro should establish compensation advisory committees now to do appropriate contingency planning for wildlife and fisheries affected by the Site C development.
  - m) A concern was expressed about the effects of water level fluctuations downstream from Site C. A member stated that the lost river fishing opportunity in the Site C impoundment could not be replaced. The member expected that the Site C reservoir would be a warmer water fishery favouring species such as Walleye.
2. November 27, 1990, 10:00 a.m., Fort St. John Chamber of Commerce, Renee Reed, Manager

#### Existing Situation

Other than some fishing, wildlife viewing, and picnicking, there was limited documented use of the Peace River by Chamber of Commerce members.

Consistent users are usually from the District of Taylor:

- There is a "Class A" world gold panning competition organized by the District of Taylor, downstream from the Site C damsite.
- The River Rats Club use the river between Taylor and Hudson's Hope for their river power boats.

Vic Brandle (785-2196) is sometimes hired by the Chamber of Commerce to bring dignitaries up the river to Hudson's Hope. A frequent stop is at the Hot Springs about 40 kms upstream from Taylor.

#### Issues and Concerns

It was mentioned that the existing president of the Chamber of Commerce, Jim Krouse, will soon be replaced by Bill Woodhouse, an employee of B.C. Parks.

Dave Reid visited the Chamber in October.

- a) The Chamber proposes that the Fort site be excavated and a small version of the fort be reconstructed adjacent to the museum. Artifacts from the excavation would be used at the Fort exhibit.
- b) The Chamber strongly recommends that hearings on the Site C application should take place in Fort St. John as well as Vancouver.
- c) Mrs. Reed outlined several myths about Site C that are prevalent in the region. They include:
  - 1) Animals are going to be drowned by the rising reservoir water.
  - 2) The road between Hudson's Hope and Fort St. John will not be rebuilt.
  - 3) There will be floating debris such as is presently found on Williston Lake.
- d) Social concerns expressed by Mrs. Reed include: potential impact of a transient work force especially as it affects schools, health, crime and commercial/retail/recreation operations. For instance there is stable hospitality and restaurant sector that would be affected by new clients and operators.
- e) People are moving back to Fort St. John because of the quality of life and more young people are staying. This trend should be protected by enhancing recreation opportunities.
- f) The proposed timber clearing schedule for the reservoir during Site C construction is a major concern of the Chamber of Commerce, in terms of aesthetics, wildlife impact, and limitations on recreation.
- g) The Chamber feels that Site C should be an open shop to allow for local hiring so that the money generated by construction activity stays in the community.
- h) There was also a concern as to the impact on commercial recreation during the construction phase, such as pressure on available bowling facilities and restaurants.

3. November 27, 1990, 2:00 p.m., City of Fort St. John: Stan Karey, City Administrator and Carol Sustak, Recreation Director

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Existing Situation

- It was stated that while the river is used by people in Fort St. John for boating, picnicking and fishing, there are no statistics as to the extent of the use.
- It was stated that the Site C reservoir area is not generally considered a good hunting area by residents of Fort St. John.
- Charlie Lake is presently a popular recreation area and the Site C reservoir would create an additional water body and help Fort St. John become a tourist destination.
- It is important to protect the wildlife of the area because outfitting, including packers, has become a viable local industry. Wildlife viewing has become more important along the road as well.
- The highway between Hudson's Hope and Fort St. John has high scenic value for tourists and residents. It is perceived that this highway is not being upgraded because of the potential development of Site C. However, "Highways, (the Ministry) cannot stall for another 10 years".

Existing Recreation Infrastructure and Facilities in Fort St. John

The influx of workers to the area could have a impact on Fort St. John's existing recreation infrastructure. Fort St. John has a "desperate tax situation" and its borrowing power is exhausted. It is therefore not in a position to increase its existing \$1 million recreation budget. Nevertheless, the following facilities need major capital expenditures in order to respond to the existing demands:

- **Swimming Pool**

The aging swimming pool must be replaced by a new facility. Plans have recently been completed for a \$4 million pool but funds have not been allocated.

- **Arenas**

There needs to be a \$1 million capital improvement for the arenas in order to keep them open.

- Ball Fields

The recent expansion of slow pitch has resulted in over 1,000 new players and excessive demands on ball fields.

- Arts & Cultural Centre

The City has been trying for the past few years to raise the additional \$1.8 million to complete the arts centre. Most recent suggestions have been to convert it into a SPCA Animal Shelter.

### Issues and Concerns

- a) Mr. Karey spoke at length about the difficult tax situation in the City of Fort St. John where only 1% of the tax base comes from industry. As a result, property taxes are high and small industry typically locates beyond the city limits. For example, Finning Tractor, in its recent expansion, moved its entire operation outside of the City limits.
- b) Poor water quality from Charlie Lake, the city's water supply, has been well documented and water treatment costs are continuing to rise. As soon as Site C is built it will be possible to access reservoir waters without necessitating lifting water up 800 feet. The existing drinking water system however is adequate until the year 2000.
- c) There has been a profound shift in people's attitudes towards development and there is a recognized fear of a boom and bust situation. The community is becoming increasingly stable and more people are moving here to stay.
- d) The City is strongly in favour of a permanent highway bridge constructed downstream of the Site C dam.

4. November 27, 1990, 1:00 p.m., Pioneer Inn, Fort St. John,  
Bob George, Manager

### Existing Situation

- It is difficult to find people for the hospitality service trades because of the growth in the oil and gas sector.
- In the region, there are approximately 2,000 people who are employed in the hospitality sector.
- Occupancy rates for hotels and motels are presently high and the construction of Site C will not substantially improve revenues.

### Issues and Concerns

- a) Site C will have a major impact on the hospitality and regional tourism industry as many people will transfer to the higher paying jobs on Site C. For example, as many as 50% of a hotel's staff could potentially find work during the construction phase.
- b) It will be necessary for the hospitality industry to attract people from other regions. This will necessitate advertising as far away as Newfoundland and Nova Scotia as well as in small towns in Alberta and British Columbia. There may be a need for as many as 600 people, particularly bartenders, cooks, chefs and waiters and waitresses.
- c) It would be important to have a supporting hospitality training program run through Northern Lights Community College.
- d) Fort St. John Airport

There is a proposal to promote the local airport as a gateway from Japan since it is 1 hour closer to Tokyo than Vancouver. The City has recently expressed interest in purchasing the airport.

5. **November 28, 1990, Dawson Creek Chamber of Commerce, Barbara Berry, Manager, Bob Haugen, Tourist Committee**

#### Existing Situation

- The Peace River is not used extensively by the people of Dawson Creek.
- Dawson Creek is the beginning of a circle tour including Chetwynd, Hudson's Hope and Fort St. John. Therefore the road between Hudson's Hope and Fort St. John must be replaced.

#### Visitor Statistics

- There are approximately 150,000 to 200,000 tourists arriving in Dawson Creek. The majority (65 - 75%) are American.
- Tourism has been steadily growing at approximately 8% to 10% annually and was up 12% until the Persian Gulf crisis. Since then it has been down approximately 8% due to the decrease in military travel.

- Americans are on a fixed schedule with approximately 2 or 3 days leeway. However approximately 10 to 20% say that they would stay two to three days in the region. An interpretative facility would encourage length of stay.
- It is difficult to convince caravans to do circle tours unless they get to Dawson Creek a few days early. Guide masters do not get to see Hudson's Hope and therefore do not encourage circle tours.
- Dawson Creek is promoting special events and performing arts and it is expected that the proposed new Pioneer Village will increase length of stay and opportunity to promote circle tours within the region.

### The State of the Hospitality Industry

Over the past 3 years the hotel, motel and restaurant sector has been extremely stable due to tourism in the summer and oil rig crews and sporting tournaments in the winter. Most hotels are running at 80 to 90% occupancy throughout the year and seasonality is no longer a problem as it is in other northern regions.

There are no high class hospitality facilities in Dawson Creek however the 25 hotels and 25 restaurants are enjoying healthy revenues.

### Community Stability

More people are building homes and the quality of real estate has greatly improved in the past 3 years.

The vacancy rate is approximately 4%. People tend to leave after graduation however return within a few years.

### Issues and Concerns

- a) The local recreation system could adapt to a 25% increase in recreation demand.
- b) When the Bennett Dam was built, the people were promised lower electrical rates, but this materialized. B.C. Hydro should assume responsibility for promoting the region as well as sponsoring special events.
- c) People in the region are becoming increasingly environmentally sensitive and are concerned about subsidizing U.S. energy consumption. They don't want to give their resources away to the Americans.
- d) The region could use an additional interpretative centre.

- e) A reservoir would be a tourist attraction especially for such activities as water skiing and canoeing.
- f) The Chamber wants to know if there are any plans to film the valley before the reservoir is created. The film could be used as part of an interpretive display.

6. November 28, 1990, Town of Dawson Creek: Bob Trail, Mayor

Existing Situation

- Dawson Creek is presently in a sound financial position because of the resurgence in the oil and gas industry.
- Tourism is considered one of our major industries however "our tourists are self contained and contribute minimally...." (to the local economy).
- Dawson Creek considers itself to be a potential location for new housing and it has the infrastructure to accommodate expansion. In particular the recreation facilities could accept an increased population. Dawson Creek could be considered a reasonable residential alternative to Fort St. John because if the power house is built on the south side of the river it would only be 15 miles further than Fort St. John.
- Local forestry companies in Dawson Creek are ready to start logging the reservoir.
- Dawson Creek should be considered a staging area for circle tours that include Chetwynd, Hudson's Hope and Fort St. John. Our interest is in encouraging people to stay in the region longer and this is why we created the Pioneer Village.
- Despite a decreasing agricultural base, the future of the Dawson Creek economy looks good because of oil and gas, tourism, and a diversification of the service sector. As well it is anticipated that agriculture could potentially be revitalized with the new emerging interest in ethanol as an automobile fuel.

Issues and Concerns

- a) Hearings should be held in the region as well as in Vancouver.
- b) The Mayor was not well received recently by B.C. Hydro Chairman, Mr. Larry Bell. When he went to Vancouver to discuss an increase of 200 homes in the region, he wanted to know if Dawson Creek might be the recipient of these new residences. Mr. Bell was perceived as dismissing the issue and refused to talk about it.

7. November 28, 1990, 2:00 p.m., Town of Dawson Creek, Harold Hansen, Administrator

Existing Conditions

- There is a shortage of tradespeople in the community. It is not even possible to get a bid on smaller contracts.
- There has been a significant growth in the south Peace region and there are virtually no vacancies in Dawson Creek. This has resulted in an increased demand on recreation facilities.
- The community is becoming increasingly stable; for example an Oil Man's Club has just been formed.
- Dawson Creek is a desirable place to live and 35% of the people working at Petro Canada, in Taylor, actually live in Dawson Creek.
- The City has large tracts of land that could be serviced.
- Dawson Creek has better recreation facilities than Fort St. John and they include:
  - two ice arenas
  - an excellent swimming pool
  - a ski hill
  - 18 hole golf course
  - theatre

There is still additional recreation capacity, e.g. the swimming pool is closed on Sunday. An increase in population could be accommodated by certain facilities.

Issues and Concerns

- a) While the recreation facilities can accept increased use it still must be determined how much more population the community would accept without experiencing stress on its facilities and services.
- b) Mr. Hansen stated, "more people would be good but only up to a point". The biggest part of our tourist accommodation space consists of recreation vehicles and caravans and therefore the hospitality sector would not be as seriously affected. However if hospitality people are brought into the region there will be no place for them to stay.
- c) An increase in residential development must be balanced by increased industrial growth or it becomes a loss for the community.

8. November 28, 1990, 4:00 p.m., Peace River Regional District:  
Ben Knudson, Chairman

Existing Conditions

- The river now only has limited recreational use but its potential will increase for recreation and tourism when the reservoir is constructed.
- It is presently harder to find construction workers and many Site C workers will have to be brought in. There is not likely to be much impact on tourism and hospitality employees.

Issues and Concerns

- a) The regional district is on record as recommending a local hiring policy. As well, hiring halls should be located in the region, and local contractors should be employed.
  - b) "We don't know what sort of impacts will take place, how do we find out?"
  - c) The greatest impacts will be on Fort St. John. Most of that impact will depend on how B.C. Hydro develops its camps and where they are located. The Site C work force will not spend its time drinking, and will be looking for other recreation facilities and opportunities.
  - d) Mr. Knudson asked how is it possible to establish realistic compensation for impact on a tax base?
9. November 28, 1990, 10:00 a.m., Dawson Creek Tourism Association: Ellen Corea, Manager

Existing Conditions

- Dawson Creek is more stable than Fort St. John, has better recreation facilities and is a good place to raise a family. Its character is more laid back, and the community has traditional values.
- The hospitality sector has been increasingly stable over the past 3 years and waitresses can now make in excess of \$24,000 per year. It is unlikely that new industry will result in shifts out of the hospitality industry.
- Rendezvous 92 is expected to have a marginal increase in tourism and should the Persian Gulf situation settle down the tourism should again grow and 8 to 10% in 1991.
- The expansion of the historic village will reinforce Dawson Creek as a destination community and as a staging

area for the circle tours. These types of heritage attractions have more tourist appeal than dam sites but they are both associated Circle Tour facilities.

#### Issues and Concerns

- a) The reservoir and Site C dam will add an additional tourist attraction to the area.
  - b) The dam will create a desirable recreation lake that should be used for boating, canoeing, and a marina.
  - c) Women from Dawson Creek would not likely want to work at Site C because of the difficulty of winter travel.
  - d) Women working in the retail sector, and women with clerical training are likely to apply for work with Site C, also men working in the bush.
10. November 29th, 1990, 10:30 a.m. - Town of Chetwynd: Andy Teslyl, Town Administrator, and Betty Deck, Economic Development Coordinator

#### Existing Situation

- Chetwynd has a new pulpmill and waferboard plant under construction, and the B.P. coal mine might be reopening. The present economic climate is positive, and combining present senior industrial projects together with Site C, there appears to be at least 10 years of strong employment prospects for ChetWynd and its benefiting area which is the largest in B.C. The "benefiting area" designation spreads the municipal tax base outside the municipal boundaries. Industry contributes the largest portion and a "pay as you go" approach has been used to develop community amenities for all costs except sewers and the leisure pool.
- The community has a large multi-purpose recreation complex including ice surface, curling rinks, wave pool, and hall. Chetwynd can accommodate significant population growth with present recreation and infrastructure services.
- Chetwynd has been proclaimed the Forestry Capital of Canada, in 1992 and will host forestry related events for the year.
- The community and benefiting area could accommodate 500-1000 workers between Chetwynd and Jackfish. It offers year-round recreation with a wave pool and Powder King Mountain.

### Issues and Concerns

- a) The proposed Chetwynd Site C bridge road should be put in place so that Chetwynd could accommodate some of the Site C workforce. The road right-of-way is already mostly surveyed. The existing rural road has seen substantial development of oil and gas properties and large areas along the rural road have been cleared for grain production.
  - b) The Town of Chetwynd wants the Site C construction bridge built to highway standards, and left in place. The new route will save 50 miles on the Alaska Highway trip and would create a circle route around the Site C reservoir.
  - c) The town administration is concerned that trees be cut back behind the safe line to reduce slumping and sloughing problems. (There was no concern regarding slumping and sloughing effecting deer winter range).
  - d) The community has asked for the lakes in the region to be stocked. More tourists would come if Moberly Lake was stocked with Walleye.
  - e) The community would like to see the fish hatchery reopened to enhance the indigenous fishery of Dolly Varden, Graylings, Walleye, and Pikes so that the region's fisheries will serve as a destination draw.
11. **November 30th, 1990, 2:00 p.m. - Ministry of Regional Economic Development - Dave Pankratz, Regional Director**

### Existing Situation

- Sportfishing is considered one of our greatest potentials. As well, guide outfitters are extremely important to the local economy.
- There is a significant wildlife viewing opportunity in the region, however, this is a difficult product offering because wildlife sightings cannot be guaranteed.
- Northern Lights has been trying to develop a tourism and hospitality training program. However, the industry has not been supportive because they feel their employees will soon transfer out of the tourism industry if they become more qualified.

### Issues and Concerns

- a) The terms of reference for the tourism and recreation impact assessment have been reviewed and there are no substantial changes.

- b) The local attitude towards Site C is positive because of the 2,000 jobs that will be created over 6.5 years. However there is a attitude of "development but not at any cost".
- c) There is a group promoting a rearing hatchery for indigenous fish species.
- d) There is an existing shortage of labour in certain areas including teachers and nurses.
- e) The new highway to Monkman Provincial Park will increase the length of stay in the region.

12. **November 30, 1990, 4:30 p.m., Northern Lights College: Joan Barnettson, Tourist Coordinator, Fort St. John**

Existing Condition

- The exact number of hospitality jobs in the region are not known. However, based on recent interviews carried out by the college it may be possible to come up with a reasonable estimate.
- The hospitality sector is very active at this time because of growth in the oil and gas sector. However there has been a number of transfers out of the hospitality sector into oil and gas.
- Industry has been reluctant to support training of their staff. It is believed that trained personnel would be more inclined to seek a permanent position in the travel industry.

Issues

- a) Northern Lights College is in a position to provide the necessary training if there is a shift out of the hospitality sector to the construction jobs on the Site C.

13) **November 30th, 1990, 10:00 a.m. - Village of Hudson's Hope Roger A. Porter, Superintendent of Works/Approving Officer, Faye E. Lavalee, Clerk/Treasurer, Martin Dalsin, Recreation/Tourist Coordinator**

Existing Situation

- The Hudson's Hope community has a special relationship with the Peace River, and that the river "belongs" to the people of Hudson's Hope, who represent the only community in the region which lives right on the river banks. The river is a fundamental part of the lifestyle of Hudson's Hope (population 1,158).

- Tourism is important to Hudson's Hope: 6,800 parties stopped at info centre in 1989. Council's goal is to make Hudson's Hope a tourist destination through development of the Coal Tipple museum. The Community offers free campsites, riverbank access at Alwyn Holland Park, fishing, wildlife viewing, high scenic values, a log information centre, and picnic sites, all established at considerable cost to the community.
- The area of Hudson's Hope is very large yet it has a low tax rate and low debt load. The community has good facilities for recreation and excess capacity for sewers, water, and roads. The community is able to service one acre lots, and can provide a facility base for people employed in Site C construction. There is a high level of community involvement and volunteerism. Hudson's Hope has a very active population that is engaged in a wide variety of recreation activities.
- All the municipalities in the Peace River Region have a major industrial base. Hudson's Hope however is the "playground" of the Peace, and therefore provides the recreation opportunities enjoyed by the entire region. With two large man-made lakes and another one to come, Hudson's Hope suffers the large impact from B.C. Hydro's dam construction.

Note: Mrs. Faye Lavalee said that a community recreation and tourism survey is planned, to identify very clearly the number of manhours that are spent on the Peace River by local residents. This will identify more clearly the impact that Site C will have on the way of life of the people of Hudson's Hope, and will specify lost recreation opportunities. It was also observed that impact is a "six-letter word" that the District of Hudson's Hope has had to live with for the past twenty eight years. It was observed that the Village of Hudson's Hope has had a 'very poor' experience in its relationship with B.C. Hydro over the years.

### Issues and Concerns

Note: a preliminary concern was expressed regarding recommendations made by the consultants. There was a request made that the participants in the interview be given a draft of their statements as recorded by the consultants. This request was agreed to by the consultants.

- a) It was recommended that B.C. Hydro should do a complete recreation plan for the new reservoir, with participation and input from local people. It was suggested that the plan should be executed by consultants so that the community didn't end up With a poorly managed park situation, such as the Peace Canyon Park.

- b) Concern was expressed that "like for like" opportunities compensating for lost river-based activities are in fact impossible. Examples of lost opportunities include:
- The Dinosaur Paddler's Raft Race in August: 400 spectators and participants, ongoing for over twenty years (Ferry Landing to Peace Valley Farms);
  - River jet boating activities;
  - Loss of recreation sites at Lynx Creek and Morrice Creek, the pathway from the water stand to the Ferry Landing will be flooded. These recreation resources must be replaced with new facilities;
  - Alwyn Holland park will be flooded, destroying a tourist resource and an important community asset for residents. How does Hydro propose to replace this loss on a "like for like" basis.
- c) The river islands of the Peace River represent an irreplaceable recreational and visual resource to the residents of Hudson's Hope. There are many favorite campsites on the Islands, which also provide very important nesting sites for Canada Geese and Bald Eagles, and habitat for ungulates. How does Hydro propose to replace these lost islands on a "like for like" basis.
- d) Valuable south facing ungulate (deer) winter range slopes will be lost, and must be replaced by B.C. Hydro.
- e) B.C. Hydro should reopen fishing below the dams, because these areas have the best angling on the Peace River.
- f) B.C. Hydro should commission further engineering studies of the reservoir's shorelines and safe line, because the Thurber study is too "broad-brushed". Bank soil stability is a great concern in the community.
- g) The proposed berm to be built near Hudson's Hope should be attractive, with a safe walkway on top.
- h) Bank stability is a serious issue in regard to the Coal Tipple museum, and may add to the final cost of the project. The cost could not be calculated because B.C. Hydro would not provide the stabilization report to the museum architects.

Also there is concern on how the interpretation program and story line for the museum will be affected by the presence of a lake rather than a river.

- i) Hudson's Hope is strictly opposed to the bridge and (Del Rio) road across the Site C dam. They also oppose an interpretation facility in Fort St. John that will compete with their proposed Coal Tipple museum.
- j) The highway to Fort St. John is in need of repair, the realignment in preparation for the reservoir should start immediately.
- k) There will be a need for new bike, horse, and hiking trails to replace lost recreational resources.