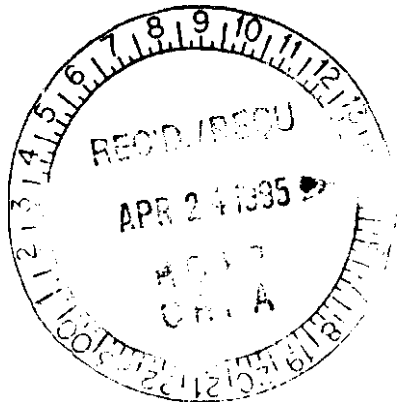
CASE STUDY
OF THE ALERT BAY ABORIGINAL ECONOMY



for

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

by

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Abstract

This case study was conducted in the British Columbia coastal fishing community of Alert Bay located on Cormorant Island adjacent to the Northeast coast of Vancouver Island, 330 km Northwest of Vancouver. While addressing the requirements of the Royal Commission we also sought to address those of the Nimpkish Band which were to disclose the on-going impediments to development in the interest of stimulating mitigation, and to generate appropriate planning information for internal use.

The information presented is derived primarily from two months of field investigation and interviews by two field researchers combined with a review of relevant documentation. The history of the community is discussed from an economic perspective. Geographic emphasis is placed on reserve allocations and recent efforts at re-patriation of lands and resources following European colonization. Community demographics are discussed with consideration for historical and contemporary dynamics. The relationship between educational opportunity and achievement, and economic development are emphasized. The Band's current economic goals and objectives respecting development are presented as they have evolved from the now 15 year old comprehensive NIDA (Nimpkish Integrated Development Approach) plan. Internal influences are presented with emphasis on strategies and dispute resolution, gender issues and the contemporary manifestation of traditional economies including both informal and underground elements. Current and prospective business and employment opportunities are presented. Internal institutions with potential to positively influence development are listed and discussed. External institutional influences on development are discussed in relation to their effects on economic development initiatives. In this regard, a successful project, NERP (the Nimpkish Enhancement and Restoration Project) and an unsuccessful one, NOP (the Nimpkish Oyster-culture Project) are contrasted and compared.

The recommendations that flow from the findings are both widely and locally applicable. They include that historically proven resource management and conservation measures be re-discovered and applied in the contemporary context; that promises made by governments regarding unencumbered access to resources be recognized and respected; that comprehensive claims be negotiated and settled; that education be recognized as the foundation to successful employment and economic development, and accordingly that educational institutions, particularly regional colleges, be funded to the extent necessary to

provide locally relevant post secondary education; that economic development be pursued in Alert Bay in the areas of salmon fishing and technology, fisheries for other marine resources, arts production and marketing, and tourism; that the participation of elders may be employed to aid the resolution of disputes; that governments not interfere in the traditional economies of Aboriginal people particularly in the area of trade in products derived from marine and aquatic resources; that both federal and provincial economic assistance programs be re-designed to serve the local development initiative, and not the reverse; and finally that the authoritarian relationship between governments and Aboriginal peoples be abandoned in favour of an equal and equitable partnership between nations.

Acknowledgements

This work leading to the preparation of this report would not have been possible without the helpful assistance and cooperation of many members of the Alert Bay community. But many people expressed the opinion that this study, like its several predecessors, may be ineffective. We hope this is not true, rather, we anticipate that the co-operation and good-will we were given will be repaid when this study contributes to the improvement of economic and social conditions for Canada's First Nations, and particularly for the Alert Bay Aboriginal community.

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1.0 Introduction

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples has undertaken 16 case studies of Aboriginal economies across Canada. Alert Bay was among these. The general objective for these studies was to aid economic development ambitions of Aboriginal people through the Royal Commission process. This goal was common to both the Commission and the Nimpkish Band in Alert Bay. Specific goals and objectives of the Royal Commission follow:

a. understand the roots of the problems and barriers that stand in the way of achieving a stronger more self-sufficient economic base in each site,

b. learn from those cases where innovative practices, strategies and institutions have been developed,

c. and provide the information base for the development of recommendations by the Royal Commission.

The objectives of the Nimpkish Band were to:

a. disclose governmental, institutional and societal obstacles to Aboriginal economic development in the Alert Bay community so that favourable change may be made through the Royal Commission process,

b. and develop an information base to serve the Band's on-going economic development planning process.

Accordingly, we adopted the objectives of both the Commission and the Nimpkish Band as our study goals and objectives. Time and budget constraints largely precluded conducting a formal economic analysis. Recognizing this problem from the start, we did not include doing so in our project goals. Rather, this study is an overview or foundation on which appropriate further analysis may eventually be constructed.

Is [1]Alert Bay representative of all coastal B.C. Aboriginal communities? They differ in many respects. Populations vary from less than 100 to more than 1,000 people. Some, such as the Burrard, Capilano and Musqueum are located in or near greater Vancouver, the largest population centre in the Province. These bands have benefited from their strategic locations by developing valuable reserve lands for residential, commercial and recreational facilities to serve the larger non-Aboriginal community. Others are located near intermediate population centres, such as Courtenay/Comox and Campbell River. Still others are relatively isolated, but are associated with non-Aboriginal communities that often exist largely to provide goods and services to the Aboriginal community. In these instances, if the Aboriginal community re-located for some reason the non-Aboriginal community would likely collapse. Alert Bay's Nimpkish Band is one of few Aboriginal communities that fit this description. A few communities are truly isolated. They have no road access or other regular transportation services. Communications often consist of one or more radio-telephones. Many other services that are ubiquitous in modern North American society such as hospitals, grocery stores, grades 1 to 12 schooling, and others are lacking. Klemtu, Kingcome, Guilford Island and Hopetown fit this description. Unemployment rates are much higher than the Canadian average in all Aboriginal villages. They are generally higher in more isolated villages than in those closer to population centres and those with reserve lands that incorporate economically valuable resources. Social problems closely follow unemployment rates.

Due to the wide range of environmental and socio-economic conditions, no one village or community could be considered representative of all Northwest coast coastal Aboriginal communities. However, Alert Bay may be considered average in terms of its population numbers, isolation, and level of economic development.

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[1] Alert Bay is an Aboriginal/white community located on Cormorant Island. Cormorant island is located approximately three km north of Vancouver Island and 10 km east of Port McNeill. While members of several *Kwakwaka'wakw* Bands live in the Alert Bay community, it is primarily the home of the Nimpkish Band. The Nimpkish (anglicized from *Namgis*) formerly lived in the Nimpkish River watershed, the mouth of which is only four Km by water from the current village location. The geography of the area is summarized in section 3.1, below.

The primary subject of this study is the Nimpkish (anglicized from *Namgis*) Band situated on the island village of Alert Bay. But Alert Bay's total Aboriginal community is comprised of members of several bands. Some live on the island while retaining membership in their parent bands. Others have applied for and received Nimpkish Band membership. Many people, often from former villages in the southern Queen Charlotte Strait Archipelago, have organized themselves as a politically discrete entity. Most of these live on a small partition of former Nimpkish reserve lands known as the Whe-La-La-U. We considered the Nimpkish Band exclusively in our information/data assembly, analysis and recommendations wherever possible. However, family and economic links between bands and the way in which former data and information was assembled blurred the discreteness in many instances. Further, some elements are common among all Kwakiutl (*Kwakwaka'wakw*). This is particularly true with pre- and post-contact historic elements. Data and information in this report refer to the Nimpkish Band where no other distinction is made. Wherever reference is made to "Aboriginal people of Alert Bay", to *"Kwakwaka'wakw"* or to "Aboriginal people" generally, the data and information also bears upon the Nimpkish Band. The goupt distinctions are utilized, as it would be inappropriate and disingenuous to attribute some elements exclusively to the Nimpkish people.

This report is organized generally according to that suggested by the Commission with modifications negotiated by Nimpkish Band staff to suite specific differences found on Canada's west coast. A community history is followed by an extensive discussion of selected contemporary elements. The latter incorporates the specific requirements of the Commission and the Band. It includes presentation of geographic, demographic, institutional, employment and other data and information as they relate to understanding the economy of the Aboriginal economy of Alert Bay generally, and specifically that of the Nimpkish Band. In the final section we summarize the recommendations derived from the content of the report and discuss, where possible, we give some methodology whereby they may be implemented.

2.0 Community History

We have divided Nimpkish history into two periods, pre- and post-contact. The pre-contact period extended from approximately 10,000 years ago to about the mid-1800's. Colonization of the coast by non-Aboriginals began approximately in the later decades of the 1800's. The transition from traditional to contemporary conditions comprises the post-contact period.

2.1 Pre-Contact

> "According to archaeologists the territory of the Kwakwaka'wakw, that is the Kwakwala speaking people, began to be occupied by the ancestors of our people sometime between 9,000 and 12,000 years ago, shortly after the last ice age. Amongst the archaeologists there is a great deal of argument about exactly where our ancestors came from and how they got to this area. It is a debate that most of our Aboriginal people find highly irrelevant.
>
> According to the Kwakwaka'wakw, before there were humans, the sky, the forests, the underworld and the sea were occupied by supernatural beings who could take on animal or human form at will. It was one of these beings, the Transformer, who wandered through the world making it ready for human occupation by changing some of the other supernatural beings, according to their wishes, into mountains, rocks, islands and rivers. It was the Transformer who created the salmon, the oulachon and other fish and placed them in the rivers and streams and other locations where they are now found. While travelling about the world, the Transformer also permanently changed evil and greedy supernatural beings and people into animals. To others, he gave the proper human form and instructed them in how to live in the world. Some supernatural beings voluntarily shed their supernatural forms to become human.
>
> These first humans appeared at specific locations and founded the first Kwakwaka'wakw families,..." (Speck, 1987: p2)

The specific origins of the Nimpkish River, traditional territory of the Nimpkish people, were given by Dan Cranmer (cited in Weinstein, 1991), as follows:

It is said that *Qwa'niqilakw*, the Transformer, travelled around the world changing many things. In time, he reached the place where *Gwa'nalalis* lived. The Transformer asked, "Would you like to become a cedar tree?"

Gwa'nalalis replied, "No, cedar trees, when struck by lighting, split and fall. Then they rot away for as long as the days dawn in the world."

Then *Qwa'niqilakw* asked, "Would you like to become a mountain?"

"No," said *Gwa'nalalis*, "for mountains have landslided and I would crumble away as long as the days dawn in the world."

A third time *Qwa'niqilakw* asked, "would you like to become a boulder?"

Again, *Gwa'nalalis* replied, "No, do not let me become a boulder, for I may crack in half and crumble for as long as the days dawn in the world."

Finally, the Transformer asked, "Would you like to become a river?"

Gwa'nalalis said, "Yes, let be become a river, that I may flow for as long as the days shall dawn in the world."

This is how the man *Gwa'nalalis* became the *Gwa'ni* River, now called the Nimpkish River.

Prior to the 19th century, Aboriginal society throughout much of the British Columbia coast consisted of numerous independent bands. The independence of the bands related largely to geographic separation necessitated by the fractured mountainous coastal landscape. This distinguished coastal peoples from most other North American Aboriginal societies where geography and other factors enabled organization into much larger tribes.

The basic unit of social organization within bands was the extended family known as the *numaym*. Several *numayms* living at a specific location, and utilizing a specific range of

resources and harvesting sites were the bands. In this sense, the notion of a discrete band and that of a village seem synonymous. Bands that shared language and most aspects of culture were considered nations. The assemblage of *Kwak'wala*-speaking bands was one of these nations, commonly known today as the Kwakiutl. The name Kwakiutl is derived from the first contact of fur traders and early anthropologists with a single band, the Kwakiutl Band, now centralized in Fort Rupert. Early Europeans applied the name to all *Kwak'wala*-speaking people. *Kwak'wala*-speaking people call themselves *Kwakwaka'wakw*. The Southern *Kwakwaka'wakw* were the largest subgroup of this nation. They continue to occupy the coastal region between Comox in the south and Smith Inlet in the north, including the northwest coast of Vancouver Island as far south as Cape Cook, the mainland inlets, and the numerous islands within this area.

Traditional *Kwakwaka'wakw* society was highly structured. Every aspect of life was ordered and governed by laws and traditions under a social, political and economic system known as "Potlatch". Ranked class structure was the dominant aspect of society. Individuals within *numayms*, the *numayms* themselves, and bands within the larger nation were all ordered. Usually, the *numaym* with the most prestigious names, songs, dances, and societal memberships headed the hierarchy within individual bands. The eldest male member of the primary *numaym* could be considered the "Chief" of a particular band in the contemporary context. However, *Kwakwaka'wakw* recognize the head of any important *numaym* as a Chief. Thus, a single band or village could have more than one, or even several Chiefs. Slaves, usually taken in conquest, were the lowest-ranked. Mobility between classes was rare. Where it did occur, it was often associated with the giving of names.

Feasts and winter ceremonials ritualized and celebrated the Potlatch system. The ceremonials affirmed the class ranks of individuals, numayms, and bands. Marriages were performed and recognized. Rights to resources were debated and affirmed. Young nobles were officially recognized as full members of society. Dances, songs and speeches proclaimed rank, position in society, ancestry, mythical origins, family affiliation, and membership in prestigious societies. Important events were proclaimed. The guests, who also served as witnesses, were paid. The value of payments given to each guest was

proportional to the status of the recipient. Acceptance of the gifts by the guests constituted endorsement of the events, proclamations and rights of the host *numaym*. In the absence of written language, the winter ceremonial process served to record the events and proclamations in the collective experience and memory of those in attendance, the witnesses.

Before a high-ranking *numaym* member could give a "potlatch", he had to accumulate sufficient goods for gifts. Accumulation often involved re-calling former debts with interest. Additional goods were gathered by borrowed with the understanding that they would one-day be repaid with interest. Younger nobles to whom fewer debts were owed would be forced to rely heavily on borrowing to accumulate sufficient goods. It would often take many years to retire the resulting debt. However, the status acquired by giving the "potlatch" and the related gift-giving established credits with the guests. Economic relationships thereby built up over time through this ongoing process of borrowing, re-payment and interest. The *Kwakwaka'wakw* economy flourished without the accounting or formal records-keeping that we find so necessary today.

During trade between bands or nations, transactions were based on bartering and trading for goods and occasionally for services such as canoe-building, box-making, or other specialized trades. *Dentalia*, the shells of a difficult-to-harvest marine mollusks, were sometimes used as a common currency. High-ranking *numayms* also owned one or more coppers. Coppers were inscribed with *numaym* crests and were important enough to be given names. They resembled European breast-plate armour in size and shape, but there is no suggestion that they were used as body armour. However, coppers were sometimes used in a form of economic warfare. Under appropriate circumstances a copper could be broken and a speech made challenging a rival. Coppers were highly valued, both in what they represented for the rank and status of their owners, and in real economic terms. Ownership of coppers was rarely transferred. When this did occur the value they represented became apparent. For example, the name of one very highly valued copper translated to "all that you own". For a high ranking *numaym* to acquire this copper, they would turn over all that they owned (songs, dances, names, goods, access to resources, slaves, etc.). In contemporary terms *dentalia* shells although less frequently used, were

analogous to our currency. While coppers have no direct contemporary analogues, one of their functions was to represent the wealth and status of their owners similar to the way legal title documents do today.

High rank was associated with wealth-generating resource rights and privileges. Generally, better locations where more abundant or more prized species could be harvested were associated with *numayms* of higher rank. These rights occasionally included outright ownership of specific tracts of land, areas of the sea, rivers and the resources within them. More commonly only the rights to harvest at specific locations were owned. For example, one *numaym* may have owned the rights to harvest cedar and other forest products from a particular land base, while another may have owned the rights to harvest salmon or clams from the same base.

> "...Kwakiutl villages were invariably located near abundant food resources. A few of the villages were situated to take advantage of marine resources such as clams and other purely marine species, while most were located near significant salmon streams. The abundance and accessibility of resources played an important role in the development of a complex society." (Gillis, 1983)

Resource rights were highly valued, and often vigorously defended. The following comment, attributed to George Hunt by Boaz (1966) illustrates this point.

> "The numayms of all the tribes also own all the rivers. They do not allow the members of other numayms to come and use their river to catch salmon. When a man disobeys and continues to catch salmon, they fight, and often both, or sometimes one is dead."

Rank, privilege, and access to resources were often passed to subsequent generations by and to men through the Potlatch system. However, important resource rights and prestigious songs and dances were also conveyed through the maternal side during marriage. The system was ambilineal rather than strictly matrilineal. It was often

advantageous for a man to marry into a high-ranking numaym. Marriages were usually arranged at this level, often for the purpose of establishing or reinforcing inter-*numaym* alliances.

Responsibilities were also associated with harvesting rights. Sharing in times of abundance and resource conservation were two such responsibilities. Resource sharing and conservation were not altruistic endeavours. Sharing was reciprocated between *numayms*. Lean seasons for one *numaym* would thereby be stabilized by the abundances of others. Conservation provided for the use and enjoyment of the resources by subsequent generations of ones *numaym*, and thereby enhanced the perpetuation of ones own lineage.

It will not be possible for us to know all of the events that occurred in the development of the relationship between *Kwakwaka'wakw* and their resources, particularly living resources, in the approximately 10,000 year interval between the time of the first people and the present. The first people were likely impressed with the abundance of resources. However, errors were undoubtedly made over this time in utilization rates. These errors likely reduced abundances of subsets of species, and even species themselves to the point where human survival was itself threatened. But there were also likely many successes where rational resource management decisions resulted in harvestable surpluses that were sustainable from one cycle to the next. Two important elements of the relationship of the *Kwakwaka'wakw* to their resources were a commitment to place and local control, both derived from ownership of the resources and/or their harvesting rights. Kew and Griggs (1991) noted that commitment to place and local control meant that kinship groups developed a sense of belonging which reinforced feelings of dependence on, and respect for local resources. They relate that contemporary bioregionalists advocate people's commitment to place as a fundamental feature of any sustainable resource strategy. Gillis and Ellis (1994) point out that the net result of thousands of years of evolution of the relationship between British Columbia's first peoples and their resources resulted in a highly successful management model. Among the evidence they call to support this tenet are that the resources survived in good strength at

least to the time of European contact, and that the descendants of those who made the correct management decisions are with us today.

This long-evolved resource management capability is known today as "Traditional Ecological Knowledge", or TEK. Traditional knowledge has been mandated as a key component of fisheries management in Canada's Northwest Territories. (N.W.T., 1991). They have taken the lead in this regard. N.W.T. resource managers are working to fully include traditional knowledge in contemporary resource management but TEK has not yet been recognized in British Columbia. The current non-Aboriginal vision for the principle of sustainability seems to address the next commercial fishing season, the next recruitment cycle, or even the next few decades. But does it address long-term economic sustainability from the Aboriginal perspective? What will the resource be like in 100, 1,000 or even 10,000 years? It is timely to start to manage for sustainability on this scale. We believe that the capability to do so will be found not exclusively in the accumulated non-Aboriginal experience and research of the last 100 or so years, but rather collectively in that of the past 10,000.

In summary, *Kwakwaka'wakw* society was highly developed and economically complex. It incorporated both acquisitive and egalitarian aspects. The complexity resulted, in part, from the abundant but patchy resources, and the need to manage and conserve them on a sustainable basis. It follows that the long-evolved resource management methods and conservation practices developed by the *Kwakwaka'wakw* and other coastal nations should be studied and understood, then applied in the contemporary context.

2.2 Post Contact

Initial contact and trade between the *Kwakwaka'wakw* and Europeans began in 1792 with the arrival of Captain George Vancouver. Prior to Vancouver's arrival the *Kwakwaka'wakw* bands were already familiar with European trade goods as they had highly developed and extensive trade relations with other indigenous coastal peoples. These Europeans, whose interests lay in trade rather than settlement, began business transactions and described the people as "intelligent and energetic traders, quite capable of

driving a hard bargain" (Gillis, 1983:5). During this period the *Kwak'wala*-speaking people were part of a mutually beneficial trading relationship. They received items such as metals in exchange for food items such as fresh and preserved salmon. As time passed, visits from European and American trading ships increased in frequency. Trading companies competed for trade in Aboriginal fur resources and established forts for this purpose. Non-Aboriginal settlement soon followed. The following comments by Weinstein (1991), cited in part from Blackburn (1970) illustrates the profound differences in attitude and approach to the abundant resources and the first peoples who managed them:

> "The settlers' myths... ...are steeped in the traditions of the European colonizing nations of several hundred years ago. According to these beliefs, man has an obligation and a right to efficiently develop the earth's resources. Many colonizers found religious justification for their acts in the traditions of God's intentions for man as described in Genesis. This was the source of the colonizers philosophical justification that they as "more advanced people", had the right to dispossess "the less advanced". The colonizers, of course, also decided who was more and who was less advanced. According to these rules agriculture was a sign of advancement and civilization, of proper use of land and resources. Uncultivated resource lands, on the other hand, were considered waste and were open to occupancy and use of the colonizers."

Intensive and permanent European settlement on the B.C. coast began in the latter half of the 1800's. The relationship between Euro-Canadians and Aboriginal people based on colonial structures came into being. *Kwakwaka'wakw* had been supplying coal from the vicinity of the current village of Fort Rupert to the Hudson's Bay Company for their industrial and domestic markets for approximately 13 years. The Company decided to take over the mining thereby assuring a source of supply and increasing their related profits. They established Fort Rupert in 1849 for this purpose. Approximately three thousand people from four *Kwakwaka'wakw* bands moved to nearby areas with the intention of working in the coal fields and trading at the new outpost. The Hudson's Bay Company ignored them, hired European miners and started to mine the land without regard for Aboriginal rights. The ensuing interference and protest of the *Kwakwaka'wakw* and the

resulting strike by the European miners brought the Hudson's Bay Company to the realization that it would have to deal with Aboriginal Claims before attempting to further develop the coal mines. This was the first recorded occasion when *Kwakwaka'wakw* asserted their title to lands and resources. James Douglas, then Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Fort Victoria, subsequently signed two treaties with the *Kwakwaka'wakw* tribes encamped around the fort in February of 1851. [2]Ancestors of the current Nimpkish Band, among others, were signatory to the "Douglas Treaties" as they came to be known.

> "In these treaties the tribes allowed very specific tracts of land to be used by the Hudson's Bay Company, but retained the right to hunt and fish on unoccupied land as they had always done... These were the first and only treaties ever signed by our people." (Speck, 1987:6-7)

The events at Fort Rupert in 1851 constituted the first of two crucial developments in the relationship between *Kwakwaka'wakw* bands and the growing non-Aboriginal settler population. This time marked the beginning of the transition to the rule of British law and the marginalization of Aboriginal interests. Culhane (1994) summarized the key events over the ensuing decade as follows:

> "While Douglas initially respected Aboriginal law to the extent that he regularly ordered Europeans to pay compensation to the families of victims injured by them, ... his practices also revealed that "the two races did not stand equal before the law...when an Indian wounded a European the statute book declared it to be an offence punishable by death" ... During the course of the 1850s, Douglas increasingly invoked British law to settle both European-Native disputes and intra-Native disputes. In 1855 he wrote

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[2]. The Douglas Treaties signed at Fort Rupert by Chiefs from several Kwakiutl bands are the subject of ongoing misunderstanding. There is a popular misconception that because the Treaties were signed in Kwakiutl Band territory, that the Treaties apply only to them. However, as Chiefs from several bands signed the Treaties, Treaty provisions also likely apply to more than one band. The Kwakiutl Band is currently seeking a contemporary interpretation of the Treaties through both negotiation with Governments and through the courts.

optimistically that he thought the Indians were beginning to have a clearer idea of the nature of British law which was "the first step in the progress of civilization" ...

The Gold Rush of 1857-58 brought the Pacific northwest to the forefront of Britain's interests in North America ... The summer of 1858 began with the arrival of 400 miners in Victoria, and by September there were thousands .... With the influx of miners and increasing numbers of settlers, Douglas gave up his former practice of "legal pluralism" and insisted that Indians and whites alike seek redress through representatives of British law rather than through traditional modes or individual retaliation.

In 1858, the British established direct rule on the mainland, creating British Columbia. Douglas resigned as Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company and retained the position of Governor only.

In 1861, the House of Assembly passed a petition, sent to the Duke of Newcastle, seeking funds to extinguish Aboriginal title in which they stated their belief that "the extinction of Aboriginal title is obligatory on the Imperial Government"..."

(Culhane, 1994; Ch. 3, Sect 3.0: THE COLONIAL PERIOD IN BRITISH COLUMBIA)

The second set of pivotal events occurred in the in the 1860's. These were the acceleration in non-Aboriginal settlement within *Kwakwaka'wakw* territory, the onset of smallpox epidemics and the establishment of salmon processing on Cormorant Island which would become the only village of the Nimpkish Band. Prior to 1860 there was little permanent non-Aboriginal settlement in *Kwakwaka'wakw* territory and none on Cormorant Island.

"Previous to the European settlement on Cormorant Island, it was used by the Kwakwaka'wakw people as a summer fish camp, berry picking ground and stop-over when they were travelling between villages." (Speck, 1987:7).

While Aboriginal communities had traded food products, principally salmon with ship-borne traders for decades direct European exploitation of the salmon resources began with early attempts by the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Rupert to establish a trade in Aboriginal-supplied dried and salted salmon products. These efforts were largely unsuccessful. The first completely European attempt at salmon trade near Alert Bay probably occurred between 1862 and 1870.

> "The origins are obscure, but Spencer and Earle were probably the founders of the first saltery on the then-uninhabited Cormorant Island [or *Yalis* as it is known to the *Kwakwaka'wakw*]. They chose this site over the mouth of the Nimpkish River in response to the absence of good deep-draft boat landing sites in the river estuary. The Spencer [and Earle] business plan was simple and straight-forward. He [they] would utilize primarily the Nimpkish salmon stocks, principally sockeye, which were until this time the exclusive property of the Nimpkish Band. He would use Indian labour to construct and operate his facility. He would sell his product in the expanding, industrialized British marketplace. If he could combine these factors, he stood to generate a personal profit." (Gillis, 1983:7)

In order to operate the facility they needed a readily available and inexpensive labour force, namely the Aboriginal population. To persuade the Nimpkish River Aboriginal people to settle in the new town of Alert Bay, the two partners had the Church Missionary Society move there and build a mission house. Up to this time, *Kwakwaka'wakw* employees would from time to time "down tools" because their laws and customs required that they participate in important ceremonials. Some of these would last for several days, or even for weeks if travel to distant villages was needed. The mission's mandate was not only to control spiritual aspects of Aboriginal life but also to alter the work habits of the people and to instill the European concept of "work ethics". In the years following the successful relocation of the Nimpkish to Alert Bay, a school, the administrative headquarters for the Department of Indian Affairs, and the provincial police station were established. Alert Bay thereby became the "...economic, administrative, educational and

religious centre of the colonial regime within the Kwakwaka'wakw region." (Culhane-Speck, 1987:79).

British Columbia did not join Confederation until 1871. During the two year period of negotiations over union, concern was expressed by both Ottawa and the colonial powers in London that British Columbia did not have a process in place for the extinguishment of Aboriginal title and the acquisition of lands for use by settlers. Clause 13 of the Terms of Reference for the union stated:

> "The charge of the Indians, and the trusteeship and management of the lands reserved for their use and benefit, shall be assumed by the Dominion Government, and a policy as liberal as that hitherto pursued by the British Columbia Government shall be continued by the Dominion Government after the Union.
>
> To carry out such a policy, tracts of land of such extent as it has hitherto been the practice of the British Columbia Government to appropriate for that purpose, shall from time to time be conveyed by the local government to the dominion government in trust for the use and benefit of the Indians on application of the dominion government; and in case of disagreement between the governments respecting the quantity of such tracts of land to be so granted, the matter shall be referred for the decision of the Secretary of State for the Colonies."

Responsibility for Aboriginal affairs was thereby transferred from the Provincial to the Federal Government.

The *Indian Act* was passed in 1876. The principal purpose for the Act was to serve Federal policy which "assumed, and sought to promote, the eventual disappearance of Indians as a distinct people." (Speck, 1987:7). The *Indian Act* established a foundation in British law to legitimize the process of colonization served by appropriating Aboriginal land and resources. The potlatch, embodying as it did all aspects of *Kwakwaka'wakw* society

including resource and land ownership, was considered the main impediment to these objectives.

> "Not only were potlatches offensive to the Protestant Ethic but they were also the forums in which the indigenous land tenure system was perpetuated by the means of the passing on from one generation to the next, through names, ownership and rights to land and resources ... the existence of the potlatch ran counter to assimilationist goals at their very core." (Culhane-Speck, 1987:80).

The process of establishing reserves was included in the *Indian Act* which sought to bring all aspects of Aboriginal life under government administration. The *Indian Act* also delegitimated traditional chiefs and systems of law. In 1881, the first Indian Agent arrived in Alert Bay with the power to enforce this legislation. Enforcement included

> " ...confinement to reserves under the direct surveillance of government agents, compulsory education by missionaries, the prohibition of alcohol, and in 1884, the banning of the potlatch." (Culhane-Speck, 1987:79).

Banning the potlatch was outrageous to coastal Aboriginal peoples, as potlatching was the embodiment of their entire culture. The anti-potlatch amendment was followed by an additional amendment making it illegal organize, meet or collect funds in support of the growing need for settlement of Aboriginal Title issues.

> "...This became Section 141 of the *Indian Act*, following Section 140 that outlawed potlatching. The official explanation, and the one accepted by both federal and provincial governments, was that this clause was necessary to protect impressionable Indians from exploitation by white lawyers....
>
> Among British Columbia Indians the amendment is remembered much more bitterly,.... In Indian memories section 141 is usually linked with the potlatch prohibition, and the combination of the two produces the still common belief, ... that any gathering of Indians or any discussion of land claims was

illegal without the permission of a missionary, Indian agent, or police official. Until this section was [3]amended in 1951, no such public, legal activity did take place." (Culhane, 1994)

Potlatching continued after the prohibition. Numerous charges were brought against potlatchers. However, rather than eliminating the perceived threat, all the prohibition succeeded in doing was driving the potlatchers to greater secrecy. Important dances, songs and other elements were lost through this oppression, but to this day, the *Kwakwaka'wakw* people continue to dance, feast and potlatch.

The Joint (Federal/Provincial) Indian Reserve Commission was established in 1876. Commissioners arrived in *Kwakwaka'wakw* territory shortly thereafter and began their work that would continue for 30 years. The key guiding principal used by the Commission for the allocation of reserve lands was that as long as *Kwakwaka'wakw* access to resources, particularly their fisheries was safeguarded, there was no need for large land areas in reserves. It resulted in the allocation of over ninety reserves among then over 20 *Kwakwaka'wakw* bands, totalling approximately 16,500 acres. Most of the lands allocated by the Commission were of little use even as fishing stations as well as being considerably smaller than that being granted to settlers. Furthermore, the Commission's work resulted in the transformation of former *numaym*-owned lands into lands that were now held in common at the band level. Although *Kwakwaka'wakw* initially accepted these allocations of reserve lands because they were always guaranteed the undisturbed continuation of their resource rights, it was soon apparent to all that the amounts of land allocated were insufficient to for people to make a living.

Over time, these guaranteed rights were progressively eroded by other government department policy and new legislation. All the while the *Kwakwaka'wakw* continued to demand recognition of their Aboriginal title. A Royal Commission was instituted In 1913 to address the issue of lands reserved for the Indians. *Kwakwaka'wakw* Chiefs had the

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[3] Sources differ on this matter. While Culhane (1994) suggests that sections 140 and 141 were amended, Speck (1987) states that "the potlatch law was simply not included" in the revised *Indian Act* of 1951.

opportunity to state their concerns about the suitability of existing reserve lands as well as to assert their claim to their traditional territories. As one Chief stated,

> "I have prior and better rights [to the land] than the white people who come and claim it. I have heard of the law, and I am told by people who know the law that no one can take another one's land away from him for nothing, and I trust that I will get all that I want because the Government has never taken it away from me; I have never signed any paper giving it to the Government, or for the Government to do anything like that with it."

Concerning the sizes of individual reserves, another Chief said,

> "...The people cannot make their living on this land because it is not big enough for the use of my people and myself." (Quoted in Speck, 1987; 9)

The results of the Royal Commission were released in 1916.

> "The... report recommended that about 47,000 acres of generally speaking good land be taken from the Indians, and about 80,000 acres of generally speaking poor lands, be given in their place... In monetary terms, only $444,838 worth of lands were added to existing reserves whereas $1,522,704 worth of land were cut off." (Speck, 1987:12).

Throughout this time of contact, introduced epidemic diseases, principally smallpox, reduced the *Kwakwaka'wakw* population in staggering numbers (Table 1). Existing estimates of pre-contact *Kwakwaka'wakw* population levels are disputed by many, and are probably low. Some contend that disease derived through contact with ship-born explorers and traders had already decimated populations before the first estimates were made. Also, it is unlikely that those making the estimates were aware of all of the people inhabiting outlying villages and seasonally-occupied resource harvesting sites. Table 1 therefore gives a suggestion of the magnitude of the population decline, not reliable absolute values.

Table 1. Population decline and growth in British Columbia, 1835-1980

YEAR	*KWAKWAKA'WAKW*	SETTLERS
1835	10,700	UNKNOWN
1885	3,000	15,000
1929	1,834	694,300
1949	1,961	1,200,000
1961	2,500	1,398,000
1980	3,648	2,571,200

(Adapted from Gillis, 1983.)

The population reduction exerted a strong negative influence on the highly structured *Kwakwaka'wakw* society. Cultural and social values suffered. Society assumed successive levels of disorder with the loss of many high ranking *numayms* and important individuals within *numayms*. Population reduction parallelled the generation of new wealth through direct employment and business opportunities with the Europeans. Lower-ranking individuals thereby had access to wealth that was formerly unobtainable.

> "With the availability of wealth from sources outside the Indian society, low ranking individuals and numayms could now successfully challenge for high position on the basis of wealth alone. There was a new mobility within the once structured and stratified society. Rights to harvest food resources may have changed hands, but the intimate knowledge of the biology of the resources was to some extent lost." (Gillis 1983:6).

Reliance on the newly introduced European values and economic structure continued to develop. Responsibilities for the resource abated as knowledgeable *numaym* members perished from disease and alternate means of economic support became available.

In 1881, the already established fish saltery in Alert Bay was converted into one of only twelve canneries in British Columbia. Spencer continued to operate the facilities using primarily Nimpkish labour until he was bought out by the British Columbia Packers Association of New Jersey in 1902. This purchase occurred at the beginning of the period

of corporate take-over and consolidation that saw B.C. Packers Corporation eventually emerge as the dominant economic power in the British Columbia commercial salmon industry.

In addition to the Alert Bay cannery which was initially intended to exploit the abundant Nimpkish river sockeye salmon stocks, two other major facilities were established in the region, at Glendale Cove and Bones Bay. Initially, mainly Aboriginal labour was employed to exploit Aboriginal-owned resources for the benefit of the settlers' business interests. Short term economic gain accrued to Aboriginal communities through fishing and processing employment. The levels of Aboriginal employment at the canneries is not reliably known. However, by 1884 the proportion of Aboriginal to non-Aboriginal employment was likely similar to the total British Columbia provincial ratio. "In the total processing industry in 1884 there were 1280 Indians, 1157 Asians (mainly Chinese), and 273 Caucasians (managers, supervisors and mechanics) employed." (Gillis, 1983:10).

During the early part of the cannery period, virtually all raw salmon was supplied to the canneries by Aboriginal fishermen. This salmon was initially caught using traditional methods such as traps and weirs. Gillnet boats soon began to displace traditional methods. The federal Department of Fisheries thereafter perceived traditional Aboriginal fishing methodology as a threat to conservation. They destroyed the traps and prohibited Aboriginal people from using them. *Numayms* were thereby dispossessed from their formerly owned fishing stations and methods. The wide-spread use of net boats for fishing located the fishery away from the owned and defended traditional fishing stations. This displacement gave non-Aboriginal fishermen of both European and Asian descent access to fishing as an occupation. The proportion of non-Aboriginal fishermen supplying fresh salmon to the canneries increased dramatically.

While Aboriginal people continued to supply fish to the processors, the licences were owned by the canneries. The early canneries maintained control of the fishery and assured a supply of raw fish by

> "...providing nets, gear, ships provisions, and monetary advances at the beginning of the season in exchange for retirement of debt based on fish landings. The `cannery' period lasted from about 1900 to 1930. New canneries were built and were productive and profitable. During this period, the canneries completely dominated the salmon fishing industry." (Gillis, 1983:13).

By the 1930's the alienation of the salmon resource from Aboriginal ownership and control was largely complete. Ultimately, economic expediency prompted the processors to move their operations to locations that they perceived as advantageous. With the depression in the 1930's, B.C. Packers and other large processors that had bought up small independent companies along the coast, closed them and consolidated their operations into their large canneries in the south. For several years *Kwakwaka'wakw* people were transported from Alert Bay and surrounding villages to work in the Lower Mainland facilities. As south-coast based skills developed in the non-Aboriginal community and became generally available, this practice was abandoned. Alert Bay and neighbouring villages settled into the depression of the 1930's.

> "Sources of income on which Indian communities had come to depend vanished, plunging Indian communities into economic hardship. In doing so, they [the dominant fish processing companies] did not leave anything on which local economies could base a recovery. Processing licenses, ownership of fishing vessels, and fishing rights went south with the processors. Indians were left with a few scattered fishing jobs..." (Gillis, 1983)

Fishing was and is a way of life, and not just an economic pursuit for Nimpkish fishermen. This was reflected in the diversity of fishing licenses that were acquired and maintained since the 1930's. Instead of one salmon license, *Kwakwaka'wakw* fisherman held several licenses for species other than salmon. Gillnet boats, and later the much larger seine boats, also became important for gathering many marine species for domestic requirements. Subsequently, due to the decline in fish stocks reflected in reduced catch

statistics, DFO (then, Department of Fisheries and Oceans) considered introducing limited entry licensing and a "Fleet Rationalization Process".

The notion of Fleet Rationalization was conceived by the Sanford Evans Commission of 1917, (Fraser, 1977). It was discussed in several studies and commissions over the years, but was not fully explored and elucidated until Sol Sinclair released his report in 1960 (Sinclair, 1978). Following the election of a Liberal majority government in 1968, the Hon. Jack Davis, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans of the day, introduced the "Davis Plan", which took effect during the 1969 fishing year.

The Davis Plan, under the epithet of "Fleet Rationalization", had the noble purpose of rectifying the problem of "too many boats chasing too few fish", theoretically serving conservation objectives while increasing the catch available to the remaining boats. Under the plan, the number of vessels fishing salmon would be reduced simply by limiting the number of licenses that the Department would issue. The mechanism employed was based on the catch landed by each vessel. Boats that caught more fish retained their licenses while those that caught less were "dropped" from the fleet. Diversified Aboriginal fishermen stood to be pushed out of the salmon fisheries unless they could compete with the high production levels of single-purpose, mostly non-Aboriginal vessels. The result was an absolute reduction in number of Aboriginal commercial salmon fishermen. In addition, the now limited number of salmon fishing licenses acquired value. Anyone wishing to enter the fishery had to purchase not only a boat and net but also one of a limited number of licenses. The single-purpose vessel owners, mainly the large processing companies, realized an unearned benefit. Limited entry licensing also marked the transition from Aboriginal ownership of the salmon resources to effective ownership by those who owned commercial fishing licenses, as each license represented a right to compete for a portion of the harvestable surplus. The Davis Plan led to a rapid growth in the capitalization and efficiency of the fleet that remained, as had been predicted by Sinclair (1978) and others. In many cases these vessels were "rental" boats owned by the large companies yet operated by Aboriginal crews. Many licenses and vessels were retired through government "buy-back" programs. The companies enjoyed Federally instituted financial compensation benefits under the Davis Plan and its offspring for the retirement of usually old and obsolete

vessels while the large number of Aboriginal fisherman who rented and operated those boats lost their jobs.

In this section we have summarized a few of the numerous and always unfavourable changes to Northwest coast Aboriginal and Nimpkish society that resulted during the onset of European immigration and settlement. While the deaths of more than eight out of ten people from introduced disease was the single greatest loss to the *Kwakwaka'wakw* and Nimpkish culture and economy, and parallels any holocaust in recorded history, that devastating loss is beyond mitigation. The common thread that runs through the other aspects of contact is the progressive and continuing process of the alienation and erosion of Aboriginal lands, resources, culture and political autonomy. In particular, guaranteed unencumbered access to resources has been substantially degraded over the past several decades.

British Columbia's coastal Aboriginal people have developed several initiatives since 1960 in the interest of gaining recognition for Aboriginal rights. Methods used have included both direct negotiation and court action. A few of these are discussed in more detail in the following section. The most recent is the B.C. Treaty Commission process established in 1992. Regardless of the intent of this new process, the foundation of unobstructed access to historically-owned resources on which the Douglas Treaties of 1851 and the reserve lands allocation processes in *Kwakwaka'wakw* territory were based, must be recognized and respected. The result of the negotiations must account for these and related understandings and agreements.

3.0 Contemporary Community Profile

We have chosen the contemporary period to include approximately the past 20 years. This has been the period of greatest progress in terms of Federal and Provincial government acknowledgement of the unjustifiable treatment afforded First Nations peoples. During this time most of Canada's Aboriginal people have at least started the process of assessing and asserting their autonomy and seeking the re-patriation of lands and

resources. The Nimpkish Band is one among several that have been particularly active in this regard.

3.1 Geography

Alert Bay is one of several small communities found adjacent to the Northwest coast of Vancouver Island. It is near the centre of the *Kwakwaka'wakw* traditional territory as shown in Figure 1.

Alert Bay is an Aboriginal/white community located on Cormorant Island (Figure 2). Cormorant island is located approximately three km north of Vancouver Island and 10 km east of Port McNeill. Alert Bay's nearest neighbouring community is Sointula, formerly a Finnish political refugee settlement, located a few kilometres to the northeast on Malcolm island. Cormorant Island is bordered by Cormorant channel on the north, Broughton Strait to the west and south, and Pearse channel to the east. Port McNeill provides the public sea link for the British Columbia Ferry service and the island highway. The ferries run several times daily between the three communities; Alert Bay, Sointula, and Port McNeill. Broughton Strait joins Queen Charlotte Strait to the north and Johnstone Strait to the south. These straits comprise the North Vancouver Island sections of the inside passage sea route that links Vancouver with the northern British Columbia coast and Alaska. Alert Bay was once the principal port, and hence the economic centre of the North Island region. This status declined in the 1970's and 1980's in response to the economic expansion of Port McNeill logging, Port Hardy mining, commercial air traffic to Port Hardy, and the construction of a paved highway link to southern Vancouver Island.

Alert Bay lies in the middle of a principal migration route for all five species of Pacific salmon. Salmon migrate past Alert Bay to and from the Fraser River, and several other smaller, but productive salmon rivers. Crab, abalone, clams, kelp, cod, halibut and herring are among the wide variety of marine species to be found here.

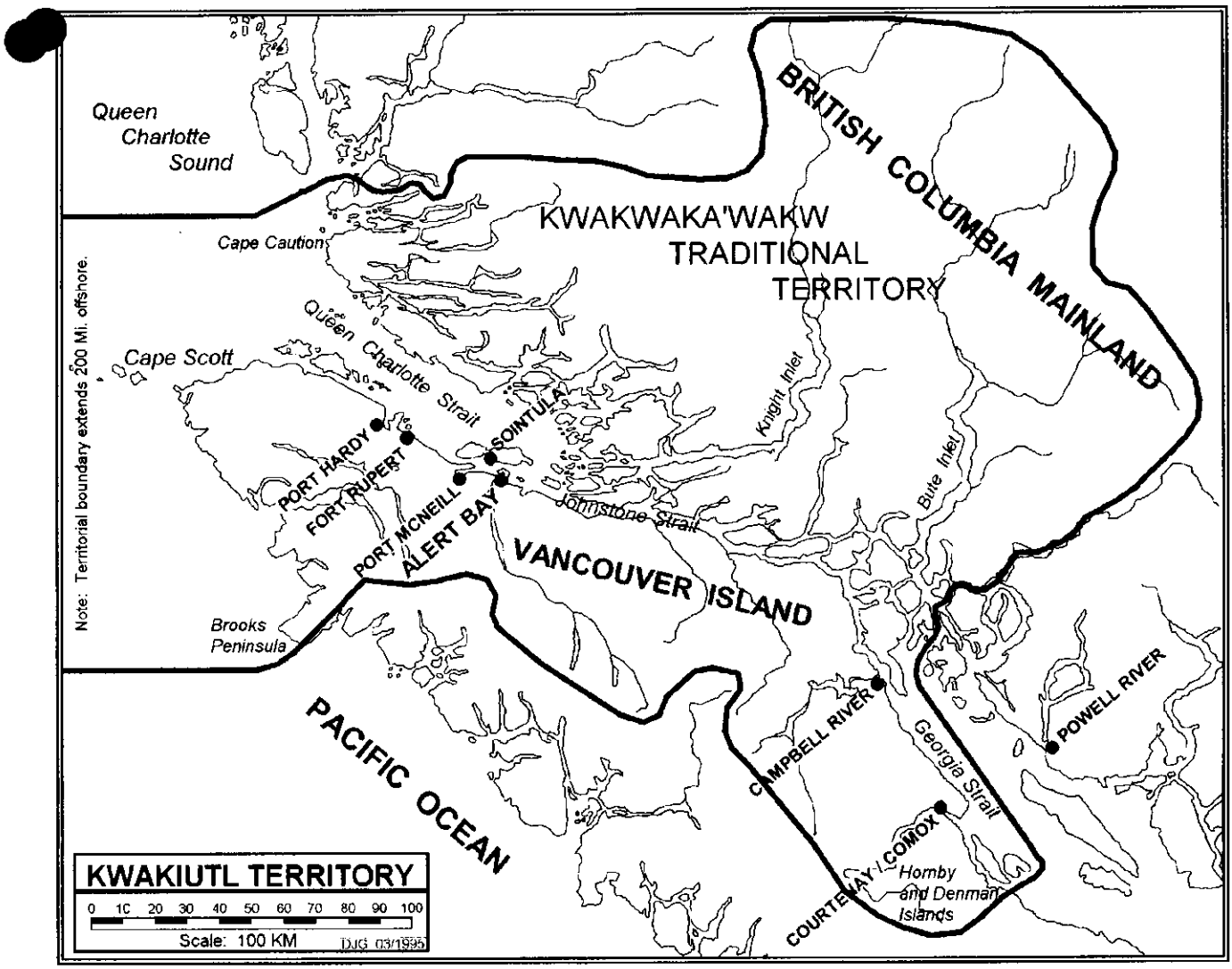

Figure 1. The *Kwakwaka'wakw* Traditional Territory

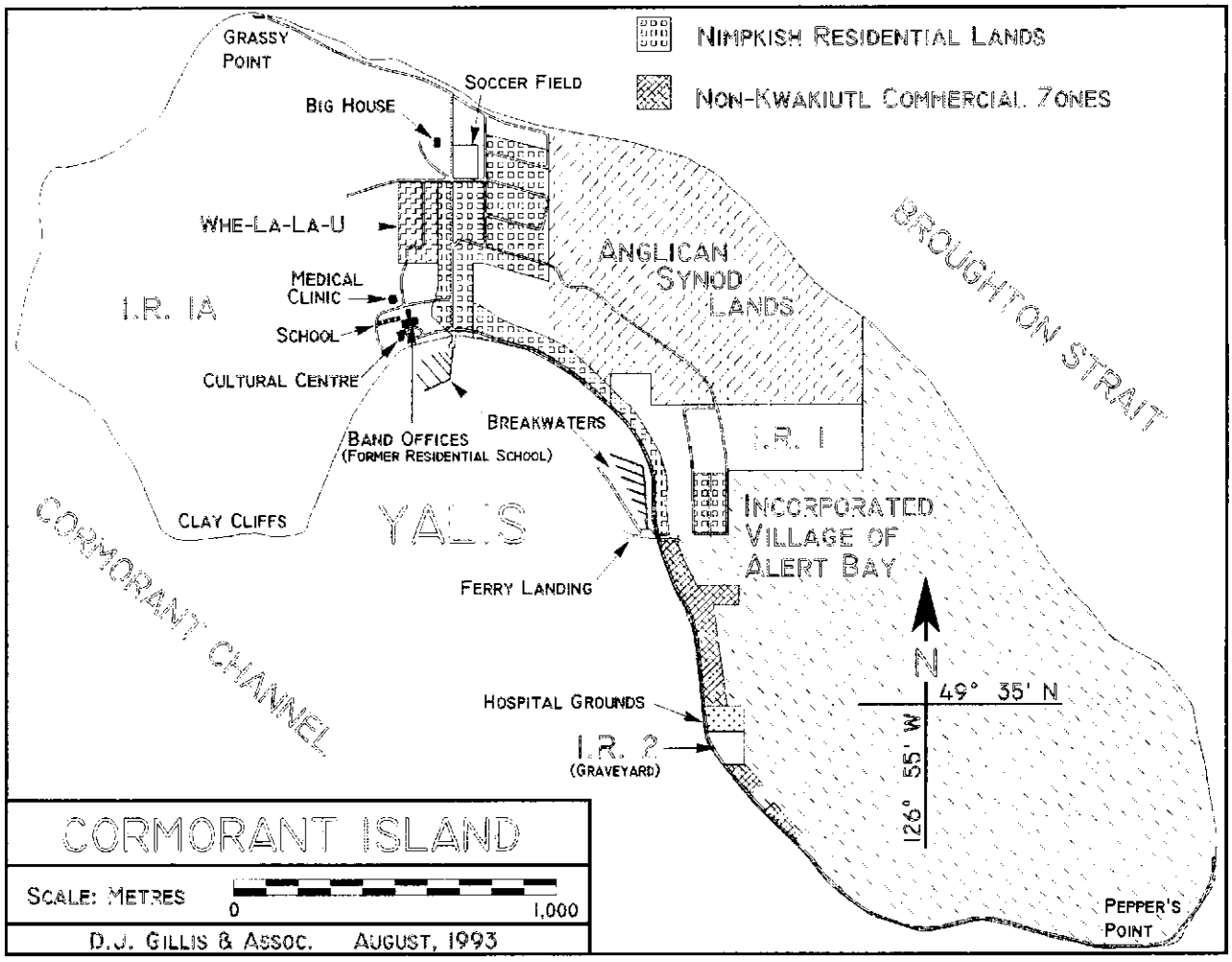

Figure 2. Cormorant Island

Cormorant Island's land area comprises 320 hectares. The island is approximately four km long and 0.8 km wide. The inner crescent forms the bay known to the *Kwakwaka'wakw* as *Yalis* (Figure 2). The bay forms a harbour that is sheltered from the prevailing winter southeasterly gales. Three discrete communities are clustered together on the island, the Nimpkish Band, the Whe-la-la-U, and the incorporated Village of Alert Bay, known locally as the "white end". The more northerly section consists of two reserves, the Nimpkish and the Whe-La-La-U. The Whe-La-La-U reserve contains members of *Kwakwaka'wakw* bands from the surrounding villages of Gilford Island, Kingcome River, and the now-vacant village of Turnour Island. Whe-La-La-U residents are economic refugees arising from the loss of their historic land bases and the on-going reduction in the Aboriginal participation in the commercial fishing industry. This reserve occupies 14 acres within the Nimpkish reserve, IR 1A. The Whe-La-La-U reserve is residential and is governed by the Whe-La-La-U Area Council. The principal Nimpkish reserves are numbered IR 1 and IR 1A . They comprise 243.2 hectares. These reserves serve as the contemporary permanent settlement for people of the Nimpkish Band. They are separated by the Anglican Synod Lands which date from the initial colonization of Cormorant Island, including the process whereby the Nimpkish were originally lured into living permanently on the island. The more southerly section of the island comprises the Incorporated Village of Alert Bay. Reserve IR 2, the principal Nimpkish graveyard, lies within the municipality area. The municipality houses mainly the non-Aboriginal population who provide most goods and services for all communities on the island. The Aboriginal population (approx.870) out-numbers the white population (628) and hence consume the larger proportion of these services. All areas fall within the administrative boundaries of the Mount Waddington Regional District.

The Nimpkish Band's historic land and marine base included the Nimpkish River watershed and the Bonanza River (both on Vancouver Island), Cormorant Island, the Pearse and the Plumper island groups, and the adjacent straits and marine waters. The Nimpkish also have eulachon fishing rights at the head of Knight Inlet derived from agreements between bands (Weinstein 1991). The Nimpkish land base was reduced through the Reserve Commission's allocation process, and further eroded by the dictates of

the McKenna-McBride commission (1913) to a total area of 450 hectares. The current Nimpkish reserve names and areas are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Nimpkish reserve names, numbers and areas

Reserve Name	Reserve Number	Area, (hectares)
Alert Bay	IR 1 and 1A	243.2
Nimpkish	R 2	0.08
Cheslakee	IR 3	117.8
Ar-ce-wy-ee	IR 4	16.6
Otsawlas	IR 5	21.5
Ksui-lak-das	IR 6	26.7
Kuldekduma	IR 7	21.9

Three of these reserves comprise approximately 156 hectares within the Nimpkish Valley. They were created by the Commission to serve as fishing stations, for which purpose many were ill-suited. Neither did they consider the need for habitat beyond reserve boundaries to serve conservation needs. Little regard was given to land-based resource needs such as requirements for cedar, hemlock, alder, yew, spruce and other wood products; berries, herbs, medicinal plants; historic trade routes; or broadly-based hunting and trapping requirements. The Nimpkish leaders of the day could not foresee that the settlers and their political and economic masters would cut down all of the useable cedar, kill-off the elk, pollute the salmon-bearing rivers with silt and logging debris, imbalance their watersheds' hydrological processes, or that the log drives on the lower Nimpkish River would scour centuries-old cultivated and maintained salmon spawning gravels and juvenile rearing pools. Nor could they foresee that their children, grand-children and great grand-children would be prosecuted and sometimes jailed for harvesting and trading in their traditional resources as they always had, or that they would have to rely on the charity of logging companies and governments for cedar for arts and potlatch regalia, or that they would have to struggle perpetually to prove their rights to, and then harvest even their personal- and family-use food resources.

Aboriginal Title is embodied in the *Kwakwaka'wakw* and hence Nimpkish tenet of "*Aweetna-K'ula*", or "we are one with the land and sea we own". Today, it remains central to the relationship between *Kwakwaka'wakw* and the lands and resources that support human life itself. The land, sea, resources and human life are therefore equally importance under *Aweetna-K'ula.* From the Nimpkish perspective, it follows that "land claims" or land and resource re-patriation initiatives is fittingly discussed under the general heading of geography.

In 1974 the Nimpkish Band made a declaration of sovereignty over their historic region which included the Nimpkish River watershed and adjacent marine territory. The Nimpkish watershed is integral to the self-concept of the Nimpkish people, for it was the place where the creator put them and where the European settlers first met them. The Nimpkish claims were integrated into the Land Claims Declaration formulated by the Kwakiutl District Council (KDC) in 1982/83. Figure 1 shows that area within which all *Kwakwaka'wakw* claims fall. *Aweetna-K'ula* is the heart and soul of these claims both historically, and within the formal declaration and subsequent filing of comprehensive land claims in 1986. While the Federal Government has validated the claim, it has not yet entered into negotiations for settlement. The lack of settlement has meant ongoing conflict with governments, and where possible "co-management" of resources in co-operation with governments under interim agreements.

The contemporary claims process requires organization primarily at the "nation" rather than the band level. While the KDC is a council of *Kwakwaka'wakw* First Nations, each *Kwakwaka'wakw* Nation has the same rights of self-determination within their respective territories. Allied with this is inter-nation, or inter-tribal protocol on how to manage the overall territory's resources. The Musgamagw Tsawatainuk Tribal Council (MTTC) is a council of *Kwakwaka'wakw* tribes who do not belong to the KDC. The MTTC focuses more on re-enforcing *Kwakwaka'wakw* resurgence and is founded on more traditional values and alliances between tribes. The MTTC united with the KDC in 1984 to collaborate on the eventual submission and negotiation of a comprehensive *Kwakwaka'wakw* land and resource claim. Their is general agreement among all *Kwakwaka'wakw* tribes on working towards resolving disagreements. This unification

illustrates how inter-council differences are secondary to the larger issues. Aboriginal title is the paramount concern for all *Kwakwaka'wakw* First Nations.

In September 1992 representatives of the federal and provincial governments, and the First Nations' Summit, signed an agreement creating the B.C. Treaty Commission which would serve as a watchdog over and facilitator of the process of treaty making. This new initiative seeks to put aside legal issues concerning title to land and resources recognizing them as mutually unresolvable, and to begin afresh to negotiate modern treaties. The KDC and MTTC are jointly participating in the B.C. Treaty process, and are currently in stage two, (preparation for negotiation) of the six stage protocol.

Fishery Resources

Under *Aweetna-K'ula* fish, particularly salmon, is inseparable from the land, sea, and other resources. Fish[4] was harvested by *numaym* members for every-day domestic use, for use during feasts and potlatches, and for trade with neighbouring numayms, bands and nations. In the fur trade and early colonial periods, fish were traded and sold to traders and settlers. Under the rationale of recognizing the close link between Aboriginal people and fishery resources, the Federal government in 1888 established the notion of "food fish". According to the new regulations, first nations were theoretically given first consideration to harvest salmon and other seafood species that were surplus to spawning requirements, but the fish they took could not be sold, only consumed. The notion of "food fish" is therefore historically quite recent.

Aboriginal people have always insisted on exercising historic resource rights. This has always included both the right to harvest and the responsibility to conserve. An example of this was the Nimpkish-initiated closure of commercial fishing in Area 27 in 1977 to protect the migrating Nimpkish sockeye stocks that had become dangerously depleted (Weinstein, 1991). Further, their on-going participation and lead in initiatives such as the

4 When *Kwakwaka'wakw* use the word "fish" without reference to other species, they mean "salmon", and usually "sockeye salmon".

Salmonid Enhancement Project continue to reflect Nimpkish concerns for resource conservation, exemplified in the following communication:

> "The Nimpkish people's efforts to protect their traditional lands and waters are well documented and known to Fisheries and Oceans and other agencies. The Nimpkish are known as leaders in salmonid enhancement. The Nimpkish Valley is the largest sockeye river in the region and the valley has become the recipient of one of the most active programs of environmental management. The Band has reversed the decline of sockeye, initiated a major salmon enhancement facility at Cheslakee on the river, and have conducted a unique resource inventory program. The Nimpkish First Nation has reached out to a number of user groups and agencies at all levels of government to stimulate co-operative protection for the watershed. In the past year major progress has been made in upgrading and expanding the Cheslakee Hatchery, and compiling inventory data collected to date. There is a sense that the time is right for concerted action based planning and management." (The Kwakiutl Territorial Fisheries Commission, 1992 release.)

'Food fish only' rules were implemented by Ottawa in 1888 thereby affirming the alienation of Aboriginal people from the commercial elements of their fishery resources, and legislating coastal people into poverty. From then on, the food-fish rules made a captive labour force of all Aboriginal fisherman on the coast. If they wanted to continue to fish commercially, they had to get a license, and back then only the canneries issued the licenses. Through subsequent government policy and regulations supported in part by recent court decisions, Aboriginal fishing rights have been defined and restricted to "fish for food, ceremonial and societal purposes".

Fisheries and Oceans is currently seeking to further restrict Aboriginal fisheries. Formerly, a band member had the personal choice whether or not to fish. Fisheries and Oceans is now promoting the issuance of communal licenses to be administered by band councils. It would then be the band's decision who fished the communal license. The

Nimpkish Band Council opposes this proposal, since it both takes the choice away from individual band members, and is directly and indirectly subject to Fisheries and Oceans regulation.

From the Aboriginal perspective fishing has never been, and is not currently restricted to fish for food, ceremonial and societal purposes. Rather, fishing is a food gathering process not restricted to salmon alone. All aquatic and marine species fall under Aboriginal fisheries. Trade and sale of fishery products within and between bands, as well as with the non-Aboriginal society, has always been a part of the Aboriginal fishing process. Under Fisheries and Oceans marine resource allocation priorities Aboriginal food fishing is second only to conservation, and is followed by allocation to commercial and sport fisheries. However, as a result of the rapid decline of salmon stocks in the late seventies that parallelled ongoing increases in commercial fishing efficiency. The urgency and need for effective resource management increased. Fisheries and Oceans sought to identify the numbers of fish used by each household on reserves and to allocate "food fish" accordingly. In the absence of the settlement of Aboriginal title issues, most bands, including the Nimpkish have been resisting surrendering this information. From the Aboriginal perspective, Fisheries and Oceans further compromised their fishing rights in this process. (Native Brotherhood of British Columbia, 1981)

Through the 1980's and 1990's, British Columbia First Nations sought resolution of resource and land elements of Aboriginal Title through the courts. The two most relevant of these are the "Sparrow" case which was appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada and the *Gitksan* and *Wet'suwet'en* case during which broadly based Aboriginal title issues were debated in the most lengthy and costly land claims case in B.C. history. In 1990, the Supreme Court of Canada under the "Sparrow Decision" held that Aboriginal peoples have the right to fish for food, ceremonial, and societal purposes.[5] The 1991 decision in the

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[5]. On June 25, 1993, the British Columbia Court of Appeal released its decisions in eight related Aboriginal fishing rights appeals. The Court held, in five of the cases, that fish caught in Aboriginal fisheries could not be sold commercially. These rulings maintained the prohibition of commercial sales of Aboriginal fishery products first instituted in 1888. (McCarthy Terault, Aboriginal Law Group, July 1993).

Gitksan and *Wet'suwet'en* case dealt a severe blow to Aboriginal title issues. Chief Justice McEchern held that

> "It is the law that Aboriginal rights exist at the "pleasure of the Crown," and they may be extinguished whenever the intention of the Crown to do so is clear and plain...The plaintiffs' claims for aboriginal rights are accordingly dismissed. (Reasons for Judgment, Delgamuukw v. R., 1991. p. ix)

It is generally held that the results of these decisions has little to do with the validity of the claims being made. Rather, the decisions demonstrate the inability of the courts of a colonizing power to come to terms with the consequences of its actions during the process of colonization. The general outcome of the cases has been a recognition by both sides of a need for greater emphasis on negotiation rather than litigation. The specific outcome was the subsequent establishment of the B.C. Treaty Commission process. The actual effects on fishery resource issues was to modify existing programs and initiatives into a single program, the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy.

Following Sparrow, in 1992, Ottawa began its Aboriginal Fishing Strategy (AFS). The Nimpkish Band has been involved with this program and its predecessors since the start. However, the evolution into AFS, reflected in Fisheries and Oceans draft policy and fishing regulation, constituted a deviation from its earlier commitment to Aboriginal participation in the fisheries in its entirety. Their current strategy is based on the narrowest possible interpretation of the Sparrow decision's "food fish" definition. (The Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy, Fisheries and Oceans releases 23/02/93 and 04/93). This re-emphasis on Aboriginal food fisheries, which currently comprises about three per cent of the harvestable surplus of Pacific salmon, has served to reinforce the alienation of *Kwakwaka'wakw* from the fisheries in favour of the commercial interests of the colonizers.

In spite of the best efforts of the Nimpkish and other First Nations, Aboriginal fisheries remain under assault. While the Fisheries and Oceans resource allocation hierarchy remains "conservation followed by Aboriginal, commercial and sport fisheries", the 1993 manifestation of the AFS appears to use the first salmon allocation priority

(conservation) to restrict the second (Aboriginal fisheries) as a result of pressure from the third (commercial and sport fishing interests). The AFS no longer serves the rationalization of Aboriginal claims to fishery resources as was intended. It has become a low cost but high profile way for the federal government to appear to be addressing Aboriginal resource issues while alienating as few other stake-holders as possible.

The B.C. Fisheries Survival Coalition was formed in the summer of 1992 in response to Fisheries and Oceans recognition of the long-standing commercial aspects of *Sto:Lo* fisheries on the lower Fraser river and to the establishment of the AFS. This lobby group initially consisted of non-Aboriginal commercial fishermen but was soon joined by some sport-fishing business interests. The purpose of this group was and is to prevent what they call "the commercialization of Indian food fisheries". They fear that the Aboriginal fishery three per cent share of the resource will increase at their expense. They also hold that Aboriginal people are incapable of managing and regulating their own fisheries. The Coalition and their corporate sponsors currently have Ottawa's ear. Their activities consist largely of misinformation campaigns and media events. They have already negatively impacted on several Aboriginal fishing initiatives. Their activities continue. The full measure of their impact has yet to be felt.

3.2 Demographics

Cormorant Island is home to approximately 870 status Aboriginal people. Over 100 years ago, this community was the commercial centre for the area. Its strategic location in the fishing industry, and later as a logistical hub for the logging industry, attracted large numbers of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Government officials encouraged settlement on the island by several other regional bands in order to facilitate administration and delivery of DIA services. As a result, three identifiable communities developed on the island; the Nimpkish Band, the Whe-La-La-U ("gathered together" in English), and the non-Aboriginal municipality.

The Nimpkish Band is one of the largest in British Columbia with 1,324 members in 1991. The Nimpkish Band owns the reserves on Cormorant Island. Of the 1,324

registered members, 717 are living on these reserves. An additional 59 registered members of other bands live on these reserves and receive services from the Nimpkish Band administration. Residents of the Whe-La-La-U are *Kwakwaka'wakw* from the surrounding villages of Guilford Island, Village Island, New Vancouver, Nuwitti, Kingcome, Turnour Island and others. There are 179 registered status people, primarily from the bands listed above, living on the Whe-La-La-U.

The combination of non-Aboriginal depopulation in the municipality and a shortage of on-reserve housing has led to a number of families temporarily residing in the municipality until the Band housing stock can catch up with the back-log. There were approximately 25 families (78 members) of several bands in this situation in 1990. (McKerracher, 1991:5) The population pyramid in Figure 3 shows the age and gender distribution of the on-reserve population of the Nimpkish Band and Whe-La-La-U. Figures for status Aboriginals living in the municipality are not shown but are known to exhibit similar characteristics. McKerracher's (1991) study outlined four significant features of the population pyramid:

a. Almost 40 per cent of the population is 19 years old and under.
b. The large proportion in the 25 to 34 age group is reflected in the bulge in the five to 14 group.
c. The small population proportion in the 15 to 24 group is reflected in the decline presently being experienced in the 0 to four age category.
d. It can be expected that, as the five to 14 group moves into their reproductive phase in about a decade, there will again be an echo boom.

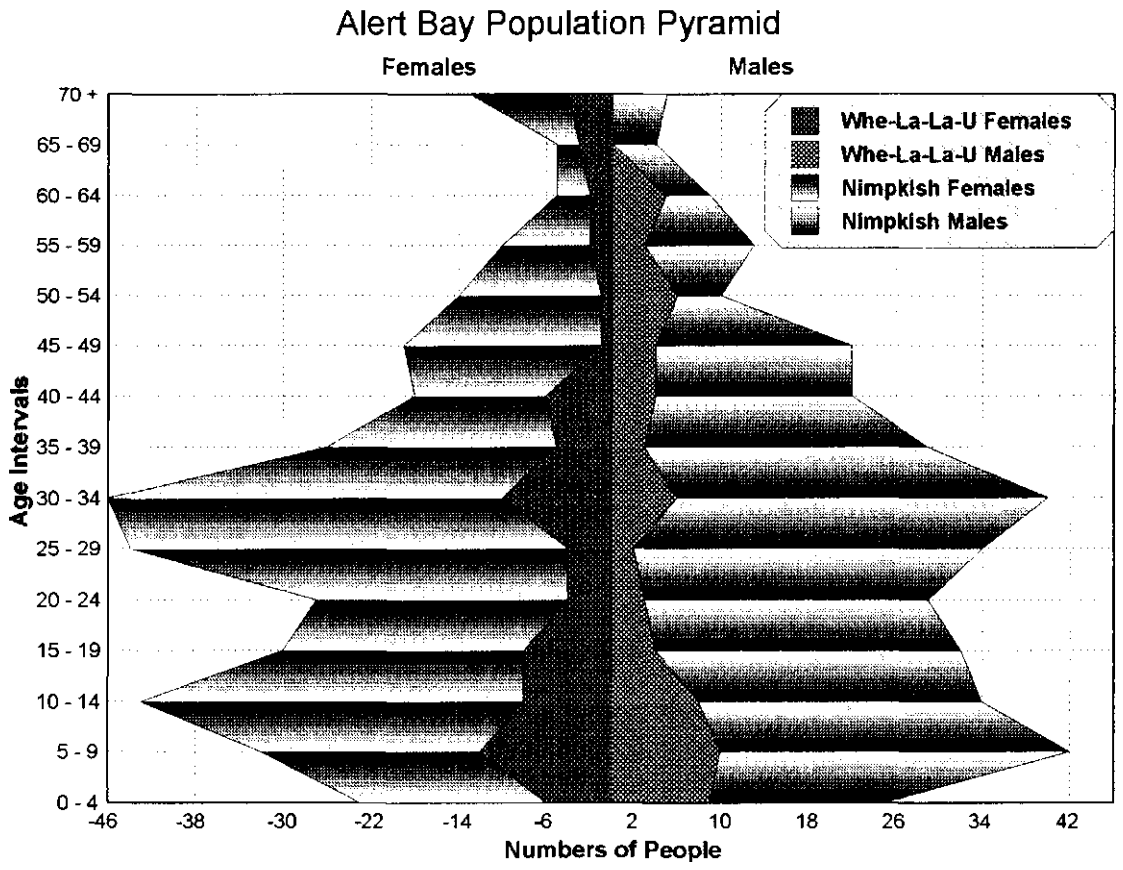

Figure 3. Alert Bay Population Pyramid

lots. The related infrastructure will be the focus of the Band's capital program resulting in 22 new housing units to be constructed by the 1995/96 fiscal year. There are 62 families on the waiting list.

When the above factors are considered, the average annual growth rate for the period 1993 to 2000 is projected at 1.5 per cent per year. This trend is consistent with national trends for on-reserve population growth (McKerracher 1991:10).

The Aboriginal population of Alert Bay is stable but growing. While many Nimpkish people are prepared to move elsewhere to find employment, many are not. There is a need for employment and business opportunity in and/or near the community.

Primary and Secondary Education

Education is inseparably linked to the capability of Aboriginal communities and individuals to develop viable businesses and secure satisfactory employment in the context of contemporary Canadian capitalist society. While emphasis is commonly placed on the training components of Aboriginal economic development initiatives, job-specific training is often encumbered by the low level or poor quality of basic education that the prospective workers and managers have received. The process of Aboriginal economic development must therefore address the need for high quality elementary, secondary and post-secondary education if the development initiatives are to succeed. Education not only prepares youth for the "working world", but also shapes children's perceptions of themselves and the world around them. "Schools function as mediators through which social and cultural knowledge is transmitted to shape the society in which they exist." (Maeba, 1993). Further, success in school gives people the self-confidence often required to take on the new challenges that economic development initiatives offer.

In the late 19th century, the education system responded to the changes that evolved in the structure of an emerging industrial nation. The schools produced human resources to maintain and enhance the nature of economic development of the day. The reform movement of the sixties injected issues of educational equality and relevant school

curriculum into the public forum. This movement focussed on changing the power relations within the schools so that parents and students could participate in making decisions regarding curriculum and administration. In the years following the de-commissioning of the residential schools, many First Nations saw a need to introduce accurate historic and relevant cultural elements into their curriculum. These movements met with resistance from the descendants of the now-dominant settler population. The reasons why the Nimpkish Band struggled to establish their own community school are summarized as follows:

> "We are not alone in what we are moving towards - Indian Control of Indian Education. The amount of money [transferred] from the Federal Government to the Province of British Columbia for the purpose of educating our children has largely been misspent. The failure and drop-out rates, not only on our own reserve, but in most Indian communities over the years leads to only one conclusion - The system is not working for us, and we must work towards providing a good alternative - The Nimpkish Band School. Parents of our school children are encouraged to become involved in the operation of our classrooms, so that ours can become a real community school." (*T'lisalagi'lakw* School Newsletter, 1978)

T'lisalagi'lakw School had its origins in the mid 1970s in response to the dissatisfaction of some parents with the public elementary school administered under School District # 85. Education was included as one of three main priorities in the NIDA plan (discussed subsequently) which was presented to and accepted at a General Meeting of the Nimpkish Band, held in November, 1975. In March 1977, the Nimpkish Education Committee was incorporated as the Namgis Education Society, under the BC Societies Act. Classes started with four classrooms in September, 1977. *T'lisalagi'lakw* offered the same core subjects as in the public schools but worked towards making these subjects relevant to Aboriginal life and culture in Alert Bay. The *Kwakwaka'wakw* history and culture became the substance of the core curriculum. It was supplemented with specific training in cultural matters and the *Kwakwala* language. Due to the high quality and curriculum content it

offers, it has since become the largest elementary school on the Island. For these reasons, several of Alert Bay's non-Aboriginal families send their children to *T'lisalagi'lakw* School.

The statement of philosophy as outlined in the *T'lisalagi'lakw* School Staff Policy Manual (1991) shows that the original reasons for establishing the school have not changed:

> "*T'lisalagi'lakw* School seeks to meet community needs by providing the best possible learning and teaching environment. Through a program aimed at excellence, each child will achieve his/her maximum intellectual, cultural, social, and physical growth, thus preparing him/her for responsible decision making."

The school is funded mainly by Indian Affairs with a small percentage coming from the provincial government. It is administered by the Nimpkish Band through an elected Education Board consisting of one member from the Whe-La-La-U Area Council, three from the Nimpkish Band, and one appointed by the Nimpkish Band Council. A chairperson, vice-chair, and secretary are appointed by the Board. The main responsibility of the Education Board is outlined in their Terms of Reference: "The Board shall be concerned with the delivery of educational services and programs at all levels in accordance with Band policy and the T'lisalagi'lakw School Policy Manual".

T'lisalagi'lakw School has a current enrollment of 135 students in Nursery School, Kindergarten, and Grades 1 through 7. The school enrollment has increased steadily since its establishment, and is projected to continue this trend (Nairne, 1985, and McKerracher, 1991). The school currently occupies eight portable classrooms and two additional small trailers. There are no gymnasium, central meeting area or administration offices. The Nimpkish Band has recently received approval for the design and construction of a new school building in accordance with Indian Affairs "School Space Accommodation Standards". The new school is currently under construction and should be completed within 16 to 20 months. First classes are planned to start in September, 1995.

The provincial Alert Bay Elementary school has not fared as well as *T'lisalagi'lakw* School since 1977. The School District 85 facility (Alert Bay Elementary) is run by a regionally elected School Board. The board consists of members from the mining, logging and pulp mill communities of Port Hardy, Port McNeill and Port Alice, and other smaller communities on northern Vancouver Island. Alert Bay Elementary has community representation through a Parents Advisory Committee which assists the school, but has no direct authority. The fundamental difference between the two schools lies in the fact that *T'lisalagi'lakw* philosophy and curriculum is based on "Indian control of Indian education". The provincial school continues to serve the agendas of the larger constituency.

Alert Bay Elementary has experienced a decline in enrollment as that in *T'lisalagi'lakw* has increased. In 1985 Alert Bay Elementary had approximately one-half of the students it was designed to accommodate (Naire, 1985). In 1986/87 there were only 45 students of which 30 to 35 were Nimpkish Band members. In 1988 it had only three teachers and 1 administrator (Perry, 1988).

Offering high school services to Alert Bay's Aboriginal youth has been an on-going problem. For several decades, students from Alert Bay have commuted by ferry to Port McNeill on Vancouver Island to attend secondary school. The main consequences of this three hour daily commute to North Island Secondary School (NISS) are the inability of students to participate in extra-curricular activities, a lack of parental and community involvement and increased absentee rates. It seems likely that the lack of secondary school services in Alert Bay is the main factor contributing to high drop-out rates among Nimpkish youth.

NISS has developed a reputation of racism towards its Aboriginal students. While racism in schools occurs in all communities in British Columbia, it seem particularly prevalent in the schools of British Columbia's resource extraction-based small communities. Some people have reported subtle and blatant racist acts perpetrated and condoned by both teachers and non-Native students at NISS. For example, at a Halloween school function in the recent past, staff and student organizers collected a number of rusted out stoves and broken fridges, placed them in the activity area and posted a sign, "The

Reserve" (key informant interview: 25/08/93). One of our informants formerly worked as a Native counsellor at NISS. When this person requested information on how some of the Native students were progressing in their classes, a number of teachers did not co-operate. Rather they told the counsellor "there were more important issues to deal with" (key informant interview: 24/08/93). These kinds of incidents have occurred frequently enough to raise concern over the appropriateness of the learning environment at NISS for Aboriginal students. The racial attitudes of some non-Aboriginal students and staff at NISS has contributed to drop-out rates.

The Nimpkish Band and the Nimpkish Education Board formerly offered a secondary level program up to grade 9. The program was cancelled in the fall of 1993 due to a lack of both facilities and funding. However, the new *T'lisalagi'lakw* building has been designed to allow for expansion. Some parents would like to see the new school expand to offer secondary level education. Unfortunately, the enrollment may be too small to justify this level of expansion. In a 1988 study, only 19 of the 32 Nimpkish students enrolled in high school attended NISS. This level was down from 25 in 1984/1985 when there were 66 youths of secondary school age on the Nimpkish reserves, giving an enrollment of about 38 per cent (Perry, 1988).

Another reason for not offering high school grades at *T'lisalagi'lakw* is that there are insufficient numbers of students to justify establishing a range of employment-oriented electives. One parent, also a member of the Education Board, made the following related point:

> "When it comes to electives, we may not be able to offer the kinds of electives as the provincial schools, things like auto-mechanics, or the kinds of sewing and cooking classes you get in high school. But look what we can offer... we could do wood-working, make masks, build a smoke-house, sew button blankets, make bannock. If the will was there, electives would not be seen as an impediment to expanding our school. It seems as if people are just scared to do things different than the white man's way but that is the whole point to having a school like *T'lisalagi'lakw*."

Many parents send their teens down-island, to Campbell River or Victoria, for their high school years. As another parent commented, "It's no different from the way things were with the Residential School. To get our kids educated we have to send them away from home, but then we have no control over their education or upbringing...Nothing's really changed!".

During our household questionnaire process subsequently discussed, we determined the mean grade level achieved by band members at about grade 10.[6]

a number of concerns over education were outlined by community members, teachers, Board members and Band Council members during numerous interviews and informal discussions. These are summarized as follows:

1. There is a need for stronger and more consistent administration at *T'lisalagi'lakw* school. In the past, principals stayed only one or two years. This lack of continuity affected staff morale and failed to provide the students with a leadership figure with whom to identify. Several informants recommended that the Education Board clearly outline their expectations respecting school administration. Liaison between the school administrator and the Board should be strengthened and maintained to assure that the goals, objectives and philosophy of the school are addressed.
2. Substance abuse issues need to be addressed within the school. It has been suggested that the Health Centre play a more active role in providing related resources.
3. There is a need for more teacher aides in the band school. There are currently only two teacher aides to assist 8 classrooms, and a total of 135 students.

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[6]. Additional grade-level achievement by age categories are given in Table 14, Ages and education levels of those included in the questionnaire can be found in section 3.9, below..

4. Special needs children need to be recognized as such and given the extra attention needed.[7]
5. Parent participation needs to be actively encouraged by the staff and administration of the band "community" school. In accordance to the founding principals, curriculum must come from the expectations and values of *all* members of the community.
6. There is a need for secondary school services in Alert Bay. In the interim, steps need to be taken to mitigate the periodic racism apparent at NISS. NISS teachers and administration need to be held accountable for the quality of education given to their Aboriginal students.

In summary, high quality elementary and secondary education remain indispensable to the future of Alert Bay's Aboriginal community, particularly in relation to economic development and employment opportunities as they presently exist, or as they may develop in the coming years. Addressing elementary and secondary school requirements is the essential first step before success can be expected in training programs focused on specific technological or managerial skills. The curriculum should continue to incorporate *Kwakwaka'wakw* history, perspectives and values. Planning should begin now to expand the newly planned school to include high school classes at least to the grade 10 level.

Post-Secondary Education

Post-secondary education services are delivered in Alert Bay through North Island College. The Nimpkish Band has always recognized the importance of college services, and has given space to North Island College in the old residential school building. The Alert Bay Centre also serves the surrounding area including the communities of Sointula, Kingcome, Gilford, and several logging camps in the area. The philosophy of the college is

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7. One parent described her frustrations as her child was continually being chastised for "not listening". It was later discovered that the child had a hearing impairment. The teacher was replaced during the school term but failed to inform the new teacher of the child's special needs. The error was unfortunately repeated by the replacement teacher (key informant interview: 13/08/93).

embodied in their "vision" and "mission" statements found in their 1993 - 1994 calendar, as follows:

> "North Island College will be a responsive, community focused college, providing comprehensive education and training to adults in its region and demonstrating educational leadership in the diverse communities it serves. The College will be recognized above all else for its commitment to quality and excellence and to the goal of lifelong learning."

It is generally agreed that the work being done by North Island College is very helpful to the community. The North Island College administration recognized this in their 1992 five-year plan,

> "...it is essential that the work being done by North Island College be maintained and if possible expanded. It is the only formal post-elementary schooling on Cormorant Island. It is almost unanimously recognized as a positive, constructive force in the community and its value could even be greater in the future." (North Island College, Alert Bay Centre Five Year Plan, 1992)

The principal strength of North Island College from the perspective of Alert Bay's Aboriginal community is delivering courses "on site". The Alert Bay Centre feels that the success of North Island College programs in small communities can be exemplified by the success of the College here in Alert Bay. Many innovative educational programs have focused directly on community needs were initiated in Alert Bay over the past 15 years, including the Aboriginal Design and Carving Program, the Fisheries Guardian, Aquaculture, Early Childhood Education, Fishing Master program, Band Administration Training Program, Forestry and Resource Management, a Teacher Training Program in cooperation with Simon Fraser University, Mechanics courses for fishermen, Net Mending, *Kwakwala* Language, and First Nations Literacy. This Fall, (1993) the Alert Bay Centre will offer the following courses and programs; Human Services Worker Program, English upgrading,

English 125 and other University Transfer Courses, Adult Basic Education and Computer Training and Commercial Fishing-related Courses.

The Alert Bay Centre Advisory Committee developed out of the need for the Centre to have a formal mechanism to facilitate community input to North Island College planning. The Committee is comprised of members from throughout the community. The Committee developed a three to five year educational plan for Alert Bay In April 1982. The plan includes four main areas of programming: Native Studies, Adult Basic Education, Vocational Training, and University Transfer. The Committee determined that in order to make the educational plan a success, there must be secure long-term planning and funding. In reality, program funding has been arranged almost entirely through Request for Additional Courses (R.A.C.)[8] or other temporary vehicles. The struggle for College funding stability insulated from outside political influence has become a persistent problem for the Advisory Committee.

In May, 1993, the College Board of Governors informed the staff of the Alert Bay Centre that cutbacks would be instituted at the Alert Bay Centre. In response, the Committee chairperson wrote the Minister of Advanced Education appealing the decision, as follows:

> "What the effect of these cutbacks are for Alert Bay is plain to see. There will be no support staff for two days per week. There will be no student advisory or planning time available because teaching time has been reduced drastically. Student support will be minimized as the main effort will be directed to the reduced teaching time. Unlike other campuses we have no student counsellors or student advisors. These functions will be reduced to the point of non existence. Our instructors normally provide all these services

[8]. R.A.C. funding originates from both provincial and federal sources. Under this program, North Island College must demonstrate a sufficient need (enrollment numbers) for a specific course. This is followed by negotiation and decisions regarding course funding. District Advisory Board R.A.C. proposals are usually for programs or courses of less than one year duration and are approved on an annual basis. The nature of the R.A.C. program make it impossible to plan effectively or integrate approved courses with other related training.

> as a normal part of their role...That we are alarmed by the trend towards centralization is understated. We have seen the College move more and more towards the larger and larger campus with the gobbling up of precious resources required in the small Communities."

These recent cutbacks and the trend to centralizing North Island College are making it increasingly difficult for North Island College to maintain consistency with their mission statement. Further, the new College administrator has shifted the focus more to university transfer programs rather than on the vocational needs of smaller communities. To their credit, the Alert Bay College staff are struggling against these trends by maintaining the training relevance to the community that has been developed over the past two decades.

Some additional training is given by the U'Mista Cultural Society. The Society has been instrumental in developing *Kwakwaka'wakw* cultural education programs both in *T'lisalagi'lakw* school and at the Cultural Centre itself. The objectives of this society are to preserve and promote *Kwakwaka'wakw* culture and language. In order to accomplish these aims the Society offers instruction in language, art, dance and cultural history. A series of 12 *Kwak'wala* language books and a *Kwakwala* teacher training program have been developed. Current plans include outreach services to satisfy the needs of other *Kwakwaka'wakw* villages.

Ultimately, North Island College is unable to provide the full range of specialized training programs that may be desired by only a few students. Travel to institutions outside the community has often been necessary. Many Nimpkish people have done so and have earned a variety of degrees and professional certificates. The numbers of Nimpkish Band members attending post-secondary institutions since 1989/90 are given in Table 3. Female Nimpkish Band members seeking advanced education out-number males by about three to one.

Table 3. Nimpkish Band members enrolled in post-secondary education

PROGRAM	89/90	90/91	91/92	92/93
University Transfer	3	2	8	2
University/ College Entrance Program	3	0	2	6
Bachelors Degree, Certificate, or Diploma	47	79	34	27
Masters Degree	3	0	14	16
Doctorates Degree	1	1	1	1
Total Female	47	69	46	39
Total Male	10	13	13	13

(Source: Nimpkish Band Data, 1993)

Some Band initiatives require specific specialized training. Among these is the Nimpkish salmon enhancement program for the Nimpkish valley, including operation of the Nimpkish hatchery facility. Some on-the-job training is provided, yet there is a clear need to boost education levels. According to the Nimpkish Hatchery manager, the future requirements for the employees should be at least grade 12, with a basic knowledge of biology and chemistry. (Key informant interview: 12/07/93). While some additional training may be provided by North Island College in Alert Bay, and by Malaspina College in Nanaimo, there is a clear need for local, job-specific training, as identified in a 1993 Provincial study,

> "The delivery of education and training to the more remote coastal communities is inadequate and requires upgrading, especially to assist First Peoples fishery co-management initiatives and in the development of sustainable management practices along the coast." (S.P.A.R.K. 1993).

Several forestry training programs have been offered in the community in the past. MTTC and North Island College organized a three month course in the fall of 1984. They trained 19 people in basic silviculture. Most former students have been employed in contract work while others have taken higher training in forest management. Marlita Forestry Company has offered various courses in Survival First Aid, Fire Prevention, Saw

Maintenance, Accident Prevention, and others. As part of a push for centralization from the Provincial government, a Vancouver based company, Lorax Inc., has been awarded a substantial contract with the Ministry of Forestry to provide province wide training programs. The concern in the community over this approach was expressed by Hopwood (1986),

> "In terms of training and technical transfer the problem is one of programs being designed 'downtown' and being delivered in inappropriate venues from the perspective of community participation and program success."

Another concern voiced frequently in the community is that training programs are of no use unless employment follows. "What's the point of getting job training if there aren't any jobs once you're finished?"

In the fine arts, at least two carving programs were active in Alert Bay in the 1980s. They were initiated independently by the Nimpkish Band Council and the MTTC. Both programs were run by one or more master artists. The most recent was initiated in 1992 by the MTTC. A large canoe is currently being carved under this program. Carvers in training usually number between five and seven in each group. The students are given access to studio space and tools in the basement of the Nimpkish Band Council offices, and exterior space beside the U'Mista Cultural Centre. Artist training programs have been among the most successful of Alert Bay's training programs. Nearly all those who took the programs now earn at least part of their livings from the production and sale of *Kwakwaka'wakw* art.

To conclude, while it may be unrealistic to expect the full range of post-secondary educational requirements to be addressed in Alert Bay, North Island College should be encouraged to continue its innovative approach to providing specific vocational needs and up-grading requirements. In addition, introductory-level under-graduate university courses should be initiated on a rotational basis such that a student may achieve the first two years of a university degree in stages over a reasonably short period. Funding stability is a persistent problem. In order for North Island College to continue to provide relevant

training in Alert Bay, long-term planning must be supported by funding that is isolated from outside political expediency.

3.3 Economic Development/Employment Goals and Objectives

The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs turned over the former St. Michael's Residential school building with its associated property base to the Nimpkish Band on April 1, 1975. It is now known as *Namgis* House. Concurrently, the Nimpkish Integrated Development Approach, (NIDA), was developed by Nimpkish Band members and the Band Council. The NIDA plan was the principal social and economic development plan produced by the Nimpkish Band. It was originally a five year plan based on an integrated approach to community and economic development. The plan was prepared in April of 1975, updated periodically and implemented over a nine year period. The plan has not been extended.

> "The NIDA plan focused on enhancing economic opportunity, social contact, and cultural resources to stimulate a joint and comprehensive community effort for the benefit of the entire community. Band ownership or control of NIDA projects was a desired goal from the start in order to move towards the zone of greater self-sufficiency and of self-funding whenever possible." (Key Informant Interview).

The Nimpkish Development Corporation (NDC) was established after 1984 to help co-ordinate these efforts. The general purpose of the NDC was

> "... to provide business advice and financial incentives to enable the Band and Band members to participate more actively in the local regional economy and over the years become more active participants in the markets and business opportunities surrounding their communities. However, it must be appreciated by all parties that this will be an evolutionary process." (Nimpkish Development Corporation, prepared for the Nimpkish Band Council, 1984).

The Band Council appointed members to the NDC's governing board that had skills and knowledge related to the various projects. However, organizational problems soon developed in the relationship between the Nimpkish Band Council and the NDC. The problems encountered related to political perspective of the Council contrasted with the purely economic perspective of the NDC, even though the goal of facilitating economic development was shared. The differences resulted in the Nimpkish Band Council retained the right to veto NDC decisions, thereby not granting the NDC full authority in seeking to fulfill their mandate. Further, there were questions over liability. The problems were never fully resolved. The Nimpkish Development Corporation is currently dormant. Former directors have taken on other management positions within the community and elsewhere. (Key informant interview: 20/07/93).

The principal projects planned and initiated under NIDA are identified in Table 4. Various of these projects both pre- and post-date the establishment of the NDC.

Table 4. NIDA economic development projects

Successful	Unsuccessful	Never Established
Community net loft (operating as public works storage space)	*Namgis* House Laundromat	community owned cannery
Marina development (ongoing)	*Namgis* House cafeteria	Shipbuilding
Fisheries protection contracts (Guardians program)	*Nagilas* Lounge	-Integrated small boat fishing fleet concentrating on: Crabs, Clams, Prawns - associated small scale processing
Salmonid Enhancement Project	Oyster-culture project	Herring Roe on Kelp
	Nimpkish shipyard	
	Salmon farming	

Elements common to the successful projects include the occurrence of necessary skills in the community; the availability of appropriate training programs through North Island College and elsewhere; the adequacy and security of funding; and their relatedness to fishing and marine resources. Active participation in marine resources-related projects

exemplified the importance of "a sense of place" associated with responsibility for territorial resources.

> "Traditional values...in terms of the understanding that this is *Kwakwaka'wakw* territory, and that we want to access and manage the resources within this territory - yes, these are still our values. Its reflected in our claim, its reflected in the Kwagiulth Territorial Fisheries Commission, its reflected in *Aweetna-K'ula*, and in the fisheries we carry out every year." (Key informant interview: 26/07/93).

We interviewed several individuals who were directly associated with the projects in order to gain some understanding of the principal difficulties encountered with the unsuccessful projects. The reasons were as varied and often unique to specific projects.

For most projects, training for management and workers was not adequately addressed at the implementation stages. In instances where training was considered, the low level of basic education was not taken into account. For example, it was impossible to train a person in the details of the physical and chemical requirements of salmon in hatcheries and marine cages or how to calculate feed requirements when they had only grade 10 level science and mathematics.

Obtaining proper licences or permission for some projects posed unnecessary difficulties. This was particularly the case with projects involving marine resources. For example, due to the introduction of limited-entry licensing, herring spawn-on-kelp licenses are no longer issued by Fisheries and Oceans. They must be purchased on the open market. Spawn-on-kelp licenses are rarely, if ever available for sale. One was offered several years ago for $1,000,000, clearly beyond the financial scope of the Band. While salmon farming is a licensed activity and licenses are still being issued, salmon farming remains costly to capitalise. The Nimpkish Band has long sought to pursue "ocean

ranching"[9] as an alternative to salmon farming. Even though ocean ranching is less capital-intensive than farming, and the process is consistent with Aboriginal traditions and culture, Fisheries and Oceans will simply not allow it occur.

Most projects experienced a variety of financial problems, from under-estimation of financial requirements, to failure to recognize the long start-up and time required to realize a return on investment for projects such as salmon or oyster farming. Funding agencies sometimes set unrealistic time-frames for self-sustainability. Time frames were based more on political expediency or accounting cycles rather than on actual project development time requirements and biological cycles. Projects were often given one chance to succeed. If economic viability was not achieved on the first try, the project was terminated. Often, innovative projects did not "fit" the qualifications criteria of the funding agencies. In these instances, projects were well-planned and thought-out, but not fundable under the various sets of criteria. These projects would be modified to fit the criteria, and in so doing, their potential economic viability was lost. Other reasons given to us included:

a. Some projects failed to address geographic remoteness and related transportation difficulties;
b. Development projects focussed primarily on production. Marketing was not often adequately addressed;
c. Lack of proper incentive systems; Workers, management and consultants should have been given base pay with a performance-based bonus;
d. Lack of perseverance; Most ventures experience financial losses during start up and initial operational phases resulting in discouragement;
e. Funding scheduling was not often synchronized with expenditure requirements often leading to lost opportunity;
f. Funding agency criteria required changing key elements of projects to meet external funding program requirements;
g. Access to funding was not secure over time.

[9] Under ocean ranching, salmon eggs are collected, fertilized and incubated, juvenile fish are reared for several weeks then released to forage on their own in the Pacific Ocean. Adult fish are harvested as they returned to their parent rivers.

h. Consultants created unrealistic business plans.

I. The large scale NIDA projects such as the Nimpkish Oyster Project should have been labelled experimental from the start.

Sources: Waldman (1991), and Key Informant interviews: 20/07/93, 26/07/93, 02/08/93 and 04/08/93.

To summarize on a more general level, the principal problems associated with unsuccessful projects include the unavailability of adequately trained and experienced managers (such people could be found but were already gainfully employed, or already running their own successful business); the slowness of the development period for some projects and related problems with adequate and timely funding; and the lack of sufficiently large local markets for some products and services. Most projects were encumbered to some extend by the lack of appropriate separation between politics and business (discussed above). Economic development funding has been diminishing in recent years. In response, the Nimpkish Band is now focusing on micro-developments and small entrepreneurial projects. No major projects, except participation in the *Aweetna-K'ula* Management Project (discussed subsequently) are currently under way.

Although most of the NIDA projects did not achieve economic viability in the usual sense, significant unforseen benefits occurred at the individual level. The projects necessitated training and education. Many of the people trained for various positions went on to work at other jobs. For example, 16 people were trained during the salmon aquaculture project. Twelve of these now hold key management positions in such areas as the Nimpkish Health Centre, in the Nimpkish Salmon Enhancement Program, in the MTTC, and elsewhere. (Key informant interview: 04/08/93). Several people underwent training in preparation for operating the Nimpkish Shipyard project. Four of these now work as skippers and engineers in the commercial fishing fleet.

Currently there are four principal elements under the Nimpkish economic development program. These are the Assistant Band Manager/ Economic Development Officer's position, the net-loft/ breakwater, the tobacco outlet and Occupational Skills Training. The Assistant Band Manager/ Economic Officer is responsible for all operating

programs as well as initiating, managing and evaluating economic development initiatives. The Net-loft/ Breakwater offers Band fishermen storage space and a work area for their fishing gear as well as low-cost moorage. The Net-loft/ breakwater project is, for the most part, subsidized by the Band for the benefit of band commercial fishermen. The breakwater also offers moorage to transient commercial and recreational mariners. The tobacco outlet sells tax exempt cigarettes to registered Aboriginal people. The Nimpkish Band levies a small charge for this service to offset freight, administration and overhead cost. The Occupational Skills program is offered to band members who wish to pursue specific occupational training or upgrade existing skills. This program provides short-term funding and is not considered a post-secondary program. The Assistant Band Manager/Economic Development Officer, in consultation with the Band Manager and a member of Council, is responsible for this program.

In the course of conducting this study, we sought to determine individual career goals and the priorities people wanted for economic development initiated by the Band Council. We accomplished this using a household questionnaire process. 53 per cent of those questioned responded. Most of those who did not respond were already gainfully employed. 38 per cent of respondents sought careers in some aspect of the fishing industry. The rest sought careers in a wide variety of areas. We assessed development priorities using a point score system. Development in the areas of salmon fishing and other marine resources-based fields received 53 percent of the total available points. This area was followed by arts development/marketing and tourism which received 17 and 13 per cent of points respectively. With the exception of the education category that was strongly favoured by youth, responses were generally similar among age categories and between genders. (See section 3.9)

While the individual career interests of Nimpkish Band members is diverse, the directions that band members would like their leadership to pursue is clear. The Nimpkish Band Council and staff should pursue the economic development in the areas of both salmon and non-salmonid marine resources with equal vigour, followed by arts development and tourism. The Council should use the information gained during this

study, combined with past experience with the NIDA plan and the problems with the NDC, to conduct a planning process and establish a new community plan.

3.4 Internal Influences on Economic Development

It is apparent from the history of the Alert Bay Aboriginal community, the results of our household questionnaire, and discussions with community members, that commercial fishing and related support and service businesses will continue to be the lead elements of the community's economy through the 1990s. However, many current fishermen remember when the Alert Bay fleet was five times the size it is now. The economic effects of the attrition that has occurred in the Nimpkish-owned and/or operated fleet have never been fully mitigated. The on-going shrinkage of the fleet has lead community members and leaders to speculate on the economic future of Alert Bay. Differences of opinion concerning the future path of Alert Bay's economic development became apparent during several informal interviews with fishermen and other band members. In addition, we found that some differences were associated directly with the consequences of the colonization process. We further explore several elements of the ongoing dialogue in this section.

Dispute Resolution

Aboriginal band-level political structures in Canada, their means of election and their mandates remain a construct of the Federal Department of Indian Affairs. Elected members of the Nimpkish Band are predominantly male. Most are associated directly with the commercial fishing industry. Members of the prominent *Namgis* families continue to have some representation on Council and in important band positions. As such, the current political structure bears some resemblance to the traditional *Kwakwaka'wakw* political hierarchy. However, it is only a resemblance. The potlatch system still embodies the social hierarchy and traditional political structure, but has little to do with the day-to-day operation of band business. The traditional methods for resolving disputes were processes embraced in the potlatch system of governance. Currently, disputes involving councillors and band employees are resolved through consultation of the Band's strict conflict of interest guidelines and ultimately through an established grievance procedure. Community members whose *numaym* may be under-represented on Council have little opportunity for

the resolution of disagreement, except by persuasion during informal discussions, direct representation to Council, speeches at general meetings, or through the ballot box at election times. (Nimpkish Band Personnel Policy Manual, 05/06/1991. Key informant interviews: 09/08/93, 24/08/93). Some examples of ongoing disagreement in the community follow.

Formerly, action has been launched at the grass roots level in the absence of initiation by the elected leadership. Examples were the public inquiries into Alert Bay's health-care for Aboriginal people in the late 1970's (Culhane-Speck, 1987) and the 1990 road-blockade[10] to both protest municipal road allowance infringements on the Nimpkish graveyard and show solidarity with the Mohawks during the Oka crisis (Key informant interviews: 26/07/93, 20/08/93). The health-care inquiries led to the creation of the Nimpkish Health Centre. The blockade led to road re-location and a $300,000 compensation settlement from the provincial government. Both actions influenced outside government awareness and precipitated action.

Because of the commercial salmon fishing orientation of most Councillors, much of their development effort over the years has been oriented in that direction. This emphasis seems appropriate given the high level of reliance on this industry. However, cumulative community interest in the development of alternative fisheries, arts development and marketing and tourism outweighs interest in commercial salmon fishing. Many informants expressed concern that the latter interests are not being adequately addressed by Council. Although this matter is not a hotly disputed issue in the community, it was a commonly discussed topic during this study.

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10 Alert Bay's main road extends along the shore from one end of the island to the other. In the vicinity of the hospital grounds, the municipal portion of the road crosses IR 2, or the Nimpkish graveyard. Permission from the Band was never sought by the Municipality to build this road. During road building and subsequent maintenance, workers encountered human remains. The Nimpkish Band has always made its displeasure with this situation well-known. This culminated in the road-blockade referenced in the text. The result of the blockade, in addition to the compensation, was the re-location of the road over the beach area, thus removing it from IR 2.

There is currently a debate in the community over "cultural" tourism. Proponents hold that the rich legacy of *Kwakwaka'wakw* dances and songs include many that are not owned by any specific *numaym*. The Paddle Dance, the Welcome Dance and others held in common could therefore be displayed for tourists. Their display could form the nucleus of a lucrative tourist business that would also include interpretative talks and discussions of other cultural elements, the display and sale of fine arts, museum tours, and salmon barbecues on the beach. All agree that most dances are the highly-valued property of particular *numayms* or societies, and their performance and display are under the strict control of their owners under Potlatch custom. Traditionalists hold that even those dances that are apparently held in common have variations in their associated songs and music, regalia, and other constituents and are therefore unique from one *numaym* to the next. Consequently, they are not "held in common" and not appropriate for display to tourists. The divergence therefore occurs between the advocates of cultural resurgence with its related need to honour the historic foundations of its many elements, and the proponents for profiting from the growing opportunities in cultural tourism. There is no formal mechanism for resolving this or similar conflicts. The polemic continues.

Enduring ambivalence remains between the Nimpkish membership and residents of the *Whe-La-La-U* reserve lands. The roots of this friction lie in the process by which the *Whe-La-La-U* reserve was created by Indian Affairs without consultation or the permission of the Nimpkish leadership. *Whe-La-La-U* members hold that because Cormorant Island was used by several bands as a stop-over during travel, and because there was never a permanent settlement on the Island, it was thereby open to settlement by other *Kwakwaka'wakw*, regardless of band affiliation. Its establishment induced a lasting dichotomy. "With all the island's around here why couldn't they have set somewhere else?" (Key informant interview: 03/08/93) The friction recently re-surfaced in a dispute over paving the road in front of the world's tallest totem pole and the ceremonial big house. *Whe-La-La-U* representatives held that the Nimpkish should pay half the cost of the paving because the road lay on land of both reserves. The Nimpkish Band did not agree. At this writing, the conflict remains un-resolved and the road unpaved.

While internal conflicts do occur over economic development issues, they seem to occur with no greater frequency than they do over other issues. With the exception of conflicts within the Band Council and administration which are addressed by consulting the Band's conflict of interest guidelines or instituting the incorporated grievance procedure, there is no formal dispute resolution process. Rather, many issues tend to merge after a time into the environment of general discussion and debate. We found that the lack of a good resolution process tended to impede progress In many instances.

Conflicts over economic development and other issues could be successfully addressed through the institution of a formal dispute resolution process. While we feel comfortable in this recommendation, we as not as comfortable about proposing the form it should take. Some suggestions mentioned to us during this study include a referendum process incorporated into band general meetings; changing the nature or make-up of the Council so that it was more representative of the varied interests in the community; and establishing a Council of Elders that could render decisions about various disagreements by interpreting them from a traditional perspective. A Council of Elders would therefore function as does a senate, or court of appeal in the contemporary context.

Gender Issues

[11]Fishie, fishie, in the brook,
daddy caught it with a hook,
mommy cooked it in a pan,
baby ate it like a man!

[12]Men don't cut fish!

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11 A nursery rhyme commonly heard in Alert Bay in the 1970's and early 1980's.

12 An admonishment given one of the male authors by another man while rendering apparently inappropriate assistance during a food-fish salmon canning operation in 1979.

In contemporary North American society, the above verse and admonishment are usually labelled sexist. However, they accurately reflect some elements of the gender-based division of labour in the day-to-day functioning of historic *Kwakwaka'wakw* society. While there have been many changes in the vocation-associated relations between the genders in Alert Bay over the past several decades, it would be inappropriate to draw rigid comparisons between conditions in Alert Bay and those in the larger society. We sought to discuss this issue with several women. We were sometimes told "Women don't have it so bad here. We have a choice of either living at home and raising our families, or finding a job or a career." Other informants made the following points:

a. Women are not currently represented in the "power" positions in the Nimpkish Band Administration. The Chief, the majority on Council, the Band Manager and Assistant Band Manager are all male. However, women are represented on council and occupy important professional, executive and administrative positions in the Band administration, school, health centre and Tribal Council. We were reminded several times of the "power behind the throne" phenomenon, where men may occupy most of the elected positions but the women in their lives influence their decision-making more than the men may realize.

b. Women currently out-number men enrolled in post-secondary education by about three to one. (See Table 3.) The numbers of women represented in the community's executive, professional and managerial positions parallels their educational achievement. This is a continuing trend that will likely result in an increase in the numbers of women employed in influential positions in the community over time.

c. When preparing for potlatches and other ceremonials, younger *numaym* members often need to consult with elders on protocol issues, determining appropriate names for un-named children, *numaym* and individual status in the potlatch social structure, and several other related matters. As most of the senior elders are women, they are the ones who are most often consulted. They are

therefore the custodians and teachers of important elements of the culture - a crucial expertise in these times of cultural rediscovery and resurgence.

We concluded that gender relations will continue to evolve to the satisfaction of the Alert Bay Aboriginal community, but not necessarily at the same pace or within the same elements as those in the dominant Canadian society. There was no indication that the Nimpkish Band membership would benefit from dedicated outside influence in this regard.

Informal and Underground Economies

Underground and informal economies are common in most communities in Canada. They have been implicated in sheltering income and business activity that would otherwise be subject to scrutiny, regulation and taxation. We are not able to report any reliable economic data concerning these activities in Alert Bay. Rather, we discuss some of these activities and the positive and negative influences they have on Alert Bay's Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Sport recreation in Alert Bay is intended primarily for the youth. a drop-in centre caters to the social needs of elders in the community. Daily bingo and the bars are among the few recreational opportunities for most of the adult population in the intermediate age group. Revenues raised through bingo afford significant benefits to the community. Substantial funds are raised for charitable causes, sports teams and community events. Attending bingo is a happening in its own right. Bingos constitute important social events for the community. However, bingo also has one or more significant drawbacks[13]. The lack of other recreational outlets leads to high bingo attendance. While many people can afford a night at bingo, may others cannot afford the $20 to $40 that is usually spent. This is particularly true for those with dependents and on fixed incomes. The notion of gambling

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13 'Bingo orphans' are a growing concern in Alert Bay. When parents leave to play bingo, some children are left home alone. This occurs with alarming frequency in some instances. (Key informant interview: 13/07/93) If bingo is to continue to be a recreational/fund-raising endeavour in this community then a night-care/babysitting service must be available and utilized. (Waldman, 1991, and Key informant interview: 20/07/93).

addiction was raised by several informants. It is unclear if the attraction is to the gambling itself or to the social aspects of the bingo evening. As one informant put it only partly in jest, "If a potlatch and a $1,000 bingo were held on the same evening, then the potlatch would be poorly attended!"

Substance Abuse

The pattern of alcohol and drug abuse in Alert Bay reflects that endemic to Canadian society. Like the larger society, bootleggers and drug dealers supply part of the demand. If there is a positive side to this issue, it is that those involved in the trade are making a living. However, this element is invalidated by the profoundly negative effects of substance abuse on the community. Several informants identified the negative influences as follows:

a. There is a strong relationship between incomes in the community and substance abuse. In bad fishing years, or in those when individual incomes decline for other reasons, substance abuse increases. While some hold that stronger enforcement[14] is the answer to substance abuse (Waldman, 1991), it is clear that improvements to the communities substance abuse problems cannot realistically be expected under current economic circumstances.

b. Substance abuse is expensive for the individual to maintain, especially when one's income is derived from an ever shrinking summer season of fishing, or based on a fixed income from UI or SA. Expenditure on alcohol and drugs removes cash from

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[14] Why are known bootleggers and drug dealers in Alert Bay rarely reported and arrested? There are both historic and social responses to this question. Alert Bay, like most Aboriginal communities throughout Canada, have come to view outside authority with suspicion and distrust. During the 1920's, enforcement of the federal anti-potlatch laws further entrenched this distrust. (Cole and Chaikan, 1990) The enforcement also exacerbated community division between those who supported the Potlatch system and those who had come to opposed it on missionary-encouraged religious grounds. During those times, potlatching was sometimes exposed to the authorities by informants. The resentment felt towards 'tellers' continues today and, in the contemporary context, deters exposing of drug-dealers. (Key informant interview: 13/08/93) By exposing illicit activity, a 'teller' implicates not just an individual, but also his/her *numaym*. In a small community where extended families overlap and 'everyone knows everyone', any action against an individual becomes quickly known through gossip and idle chatter. Repercussions on the 'teller' and his/her family can occur with surprising speed.

the local economy that would otherwise circulate to the benefit of others. (Key informant interviews: 20/ 07/93; 13/08/93)

The Traditional Economy

Kwakwaka'wakw maintain that the right to fish is a function of Aboriginal title and that the right belongs to all Aboriginal people at the individual and *numaym* levels, not collectively at the Band or Nation level. Recent court decisions held that Aboriginal people have the right to catch and use salmon for "food, ceremonial and societal purposes". "Food" means fish that is consumed at regular or celebratory meals by householders and occasional guests. "Ceremonial" means fish that is used for special occasions - potlatches, feasts or large dinners for the family, community, groups of guests to the community, and the like. "Societal" means fish that is given away to those unable to fish, such as elders or widows and to family members not living in the community. It also includes fish traded for other goods such as eulachon grease or a television set, or services such as "a case of fish to fix my car", or even sold for cash. The court decisions have recognized the source of these rights and most of the elements. However, they have not yet recognized the commercial aspects.

In the following sections, we discuss some elements of the traditional economy. The context is contemporary.

Salmon Fisheries

Two species of Pacific salmon are favoured by the Nimpkish and are actively fished. These are sockeye and chum salmon. Sockeye is by far the more important of these. Dedicated fisheries are rarely mounted for the other three species. The Nimpkish Band has two main salmon 'food' fisheries, one each located in the Nimpkish River and in Johnstone Strait. The Nimpkish River fishery opens for sockeye in June and lasts through July into the first weeks of August. Sockeye here are caught using drag seines or by making round-sets using a gill-net from an open boat. Timing of fishing in Johnstone Strait is determined by the schedule of commercial openings. Here, sockeye are caught using a seine boat and a commercial salmon seine net, or using a gillnetter. For the 1993 season,

the Nimpkish Band set a limit for the Nimpkish River of 5000 sockeye. An allocations agreement between Fisheries and Oceans and the Kwakiutl Territorial Fisheries Commission was completed on August 6, 1993. The allocations[15] negotiated for Johnstone Strait were 75,000 sockeye, 10,000 pink; 2,500 coho, 35,000 chum, and 2,000 chinook.

According to Food Fish Guidelines[16] established by the Nimpkish Band Council, 10 per cent of the catch must go to elders and widows. With the exception of a few that are eaten fresh, the remaining 90 per cent is preserved and kept for personal use as well as given to relatives and friends. The total catch and distribution must be reported to the Food Fish Monitor at the Band Council Office. Distribution data must identify both fish species and the recipients. Since much of the fish is canned and frozen, its use and distribution can take from months to years.

Eulachons and *g'leena*

Some Nimpkish *numayms* own eulachon fishing rights in Knight's Inlet, which is located approximately 130 km from Alert Bay. Eulachons are small smelt-like fish that are caught by the ton in late March and April. Some are eaten fresh, others are smoked and dried for later use. Most, however, are used to make eulachon grease or "*g'leena*". *G'leena* is rendered from the eulachons by heating them in a large cedar box after they have been allowed to decompose for several days. *G'leena* is a highly valued delicacy. It is eaten as a condiment with clam or fish chowder, dried fish, potatoes, salads and other foods. It is often the prize for a charity raffle, or given to important guests at potlatches. *G'leena* is also highly valued for its medicinal properties.

The process of making *g'leena* takes about a month, and is a costly undertaking for a *numaym*. Organizing an expedition requires purchasing groceries for four to 10 people

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15 Shellfish and ground-fish allocations were also negotiated for the period of May 15, 1993 to June 30, 1994. (Allocations Agreement between the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Kwakiutl Territorial Fisheries Commission, 06/08/93; and the 1993 Aboriginal Communal Fishing Authority for All Species, DFO, 05/93).

16 Food Fishery Guidelines for the Nimpkish River, Nimpkish Band Council, 1993.

for a month, arranging for transportation to Knight Inlet (about 80 nautical miles by water), small boats, nets, bottles, rendering equipment, camping supplies and equipment, and numerous other supplies and materials. Often, deals are made over borrowed equipment and other needs, such as "2 gallons to borrow your outboard motor". a family often finds that much of their production is committed before the first gallon is made. Usually, some *g'leena* is sold when the expedition returns to cover the cost of expedition expendables such as fuel, groceries and ammunition. The usual price is $100 to $150 per gallon, depending on its quality. (Key informant interviews: 17/07/93, 20/08/93)

Elk

Recent rulings in the provincial court of appeals in the R. v. Alphonse case, have favoured Aboriginal hunting rights on unoccupied Crown lands. This has been extended to private lands.[17] These rulings effectively recognize Nimpkish historic hunting rights for deer and elk in the Nimpkish watershed. Wild meat is a highly valued part of the *Kwakwaka'wakw* diet. While the harvesting of deer and elk by the Nimpkish is currently quite low when compared to historic levels of use, an increase is likely following these recent rulings.

Contemporary Wild Food Use

The traditional Kwakiutl diet consisted of terrestrial and marine plants and animals. Historically, a healthy environment provided *Kwakwaka'wakw* with a large variety and abundance of food species. We used a questionnaire process to collect information regarding contemporary wild food use by households (See Section 3.9).

Currently, all households use at least some traditional foods one day a week or more. The maximum reported was 5, with a mean of 2.3 days per week. As all traditional food species are seasonal, this estimate is averaged over an annual period. All traditional foods are seasonal.

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17 Court of Appeal for British Columbia (1993) Reasons for Judgment, in *R. v. William Alphonse*, Vancouver Registry No. CA 010153. *R. v. Bartleman* [(1984), 12 D.L.R. (2d) 73 (B.C.C.A.)]. Assembly of First Nations, Office of the B.C. Regional Vice-Chief, Memorandum 07/08/93.

Salmon, principally sockeye and chum salmon, are the most important foods. While 59 per cent of households obtain enough or more than enough salmon for every-day food needs, 41 per cent responded that they did not. About half did not obtain enough for ceremonial purposes while fully 78 per cent did not obtain enough for societal purposes. Access to boats and nets within a particular family is the principal impediment to obtaining enough salmon.

While most traditional wild foods are still consumed by most band members at potlatches and other ceremonials, we were struck by the relatively few other species that are still used regularly in the household. Clams, crab and seaweed are still consumed by many, but historically important and highly prized species such as abalone, eulachons, herring eggs, and others are rarely obtainable today. Reasons given for not obtaining enough of these non-salmon species included resource depletion by commercial and sport fishermen for many species, and the shortage of boats required to harvest the wild foods. Everyone asked would use more traditional food if it was obtainable.

Nimpkish reliance on the traditional economy is reflected in their food consumption. While the average household currently consumes traditional foods at approximately 1/3 of meals, the foods consumed are primarily the protein constituents. Most other dietary elements are store-bought. If traditional elements comprise about half the calories consumed at traditional meals, then reliance on traditional foods declines to about 1/6.

We sought to discuss the issue of the sale of salmon for cash with several informants. We were told that very few Nimpkish people sold fish. We found that no-one was prepared to discuss the amount of fish or the number of people involved. Because the sale of fish is inextricably linked with Aboriginal title issues, the sale of fish is a matter for negotiation with other governments rather than for disclosure to a Commission researcher who was, at some level, an agent of the non-Aboriginal governments with whom they will be negotiating.

Potlatching

Potlatching continued underground in Alert Bay during it's period of repression. Since it's decriminalization 1951, there has been a continuing resurgence in potlatching. Various *Kwakwaka'wakw numayms* hosted 10 to 12 potlatches in Alert Bay in 1992/93. Even thought it has lost much of its former practical political function, the potlatch still embodies important elements of the social and economic aspects of the community. There are important differences between western capitalist society and that embodied in the potlatch;

> "The association of wealth with prestige, is common to both Northwest Coast and western societies. In both cases wealth and its acquisition occupy a large share of peoples thoughts. In western society prestige rests on accumulation, on 'making money', or on its mere possession, on being 'a millionaire'; in Northwest Coast society prestige was enhanced not by the accumulation or possession alone but by the distribution, even destruction, of wealth..... What was valued was not wealth but rank, privileges, names and crests, all of which endowed prestige and which were proclaimed, validated and upheld by the giving away of wealth in a measure befitting the status of the claimant. Paradoxically, 'to give away wealth' was thought to be wealthy, though not in any material sense." (Cole and Chaikan, 1990)

This is an important distinction not often considered by the more conservative proponents of contemporary capitalism. Understanding this distinction will take the reader a long way towards realizing that capitalist economics may not be the only economic system that has a chance of success in West Coast Aboriginal society, or even in non-Aboriginal societies. It seems that capitalism was predated by a quite different system by several thousands of years, and was successful over a much longer time. The difference was best articulated at a potlatch given in Alert Bay in 1994. As is the custom, several Chiefs made speeches near the completion of the potlatch thanking the host and addressing other matters they felt to be important. One of these addressed the non-Aboriginal people in attendance. Part of his speech is paraphrased as follows:

> "I notice that there are lots of white people in the audience. You are all welcome here. But I want you to notice something. When we Indians attend one of your functions like a performance at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre in Vancouver, or something else, you charge us money for it, and sometimes quite a lot. When you come here to our potlatches, we welcome you. We share our family's songs and dances with you. You watch us give names to our children and give speeches. We feed you - three different times this evening! We even give you a place to sleep, if we can. Then we give you gifts and money for coming to this place and witnessing these things. That is the difference between you and us. That is the difference between white people and Indians."

Significant amounts of money and other resources are required for a *numaym* to hold a contemporary potlatch. Accumulation often begins a year or more before the event. Financial and food resources are required to feed guests before, after and during the potlatch, to accommodate out-of-town guests, to pay artists to carve new masks, make new button blankets and produce jewellery and other goods for "special" gifts, and to assemble large accumulations of goods to be given away in validation of the events witnessed at the potlatch. While the principal male member of the numaym, or chief is usually responsible for much of the accumulation, significant contributions are always made by other *numaym* members. In the past gifts were generated from the host's territorial resources. Traditional gifts such *g'leena*, button blankets, silver jewelry, sacks of flour, art, and many others are still given, but most gifts today are practical consumer goods. Members of other high ranking *numayms*, visiting nobility, and elders receive more and better gifts. The total cost for an average potlatch may range from $15,000 to $25,000, although some potlatches given by very wealthy *numayms* may exceed this level. This amount represents business generated and benefit distributed both within and outside the Alert Bay Aboriginal community. (Key informant interviews: 24/08/93, 20/08/93, 18/08/93)

In summary, we found that many elements of Alert Bay's traditional economy, such as eulachon fisheries, trade in *g'leena*, the use of and trade in salmon and other food resources, the economy of the potlatch, and others all function in the absence of outside

government interference. These constituents of the economy function exceedingly well by providing widely distributed benefits. However, outside influences remain in many important areas that were an integral part of the traditional economy. Most of these influences relate to maintaining contemporary economic control of historically *Kwakwaka'wakw*-owned resources. For example, the arbitrary ban on the sale of "food fish" is completely inconsistent with the importance of fishery resources in *Kwakwaka'wakw* society. While colonizers justify maintaining their control in the interest of conservation, the real effect of the ban is to alienate *Kwakwaka'wakw* from the economic aspects of their fisheries by assigning them to the colonizers. The ban cannot be justified on "conservation" grounds any more than the criminalization of the potlatch in the 1920's could be justified under an assimilationist rationale and agenda. *Kwakwaka'wakw* including Nimpkish always have and likely always will trade and sell fish both within and outside the Aboriginal community. Recognizing and restoring the economic aspects of these rights will go a long way to re-establishing the economic well-being of Aboriginal people generally, and especially those for whom fisheries constitute the dominant element of their economy.

The Government of Canada should not interfere with the remaining elements of the internal economies of the Aboriginal people of Alert Bay. They should re-examine the motivation underlying their "food fish" policy and "conservation" mandate. They should then work to restore the *Kwakwaka'wakw* fisheries to their prior state, including economic aspects. Finally, in recognition of the societal and individual damages consequential to their current policy, the Canadian Government should seek to mitigate by aiding Aboriginal people in gaining access to boats and gear for use in domestic and commercial fisheries, by implementing rigorous sport and commercial closures for those species that have been depleted by those users, and by initiating intensive restoration programs for depleted species and the habitat that supports them.

3.5 Opportunities

Under this section, we present the current Nimpkish employment in existing business and professions. The degree of reliance on social assistance is estimated from

Band records. Current status and future prospects for expansion and added Nimpkish employment are given where appropriate.

Commercial Fishing

While Nimpkish consider themselves to be a fishing nation, only about 29 per cent[18] of households derive their primary income from commercial fishing. Approximately 160 people work on 32 seiners and 14 gillnetters. Total crew sizes for the fleet fluctuates from season to season and within each season. The average size of a seine boat crew is five and of a gillnet crew is one or two. The vessels are variously owned outright by their operators, owned by large companies who use Nimpkish fishermen to operate them either on a "lease" or "employee" basis, or are under financial arrangements with the Native Fisherman's Association (NFA - a financial offspring of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia). a few of the seine vessels are owned by non-Aboriginal people who hire Nimpkish and other *Kwakwaka'wakw* as crew. While all of the vessels are licensed to fish salmon under "a" or "a-I"[19] licenses, a few are also licensed to fish herring during the March roe-herring fisheries.

The frequency, duration and location of 'openings' allowed by Fisheries and Oceans depends on the expected returns of salmon, the results of test fishing, hailed catch numbers from the fishing grounds, and landings reported by packers and processors. In a usual season, some Nimpkish fishermen begin to fish the waters around Prince Rupert in late June and early July. Rivers Inlet and Smith Inlet are usually the next to open. By early August, Queen Charlotte Strait and Johnstone Strait open. Most Nimpkish rely on these latter two areas to make up the bulk of their season. The fleet follows the openings as they progress towards the south. The Fraser river and the Canadian sections of the Straits of

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18 Estimated from questionnaire results.

19 The a-I license is an artifact of the fleet rationalization and limited entry licensing developed by DFO in the 1970's and 80's. a-I licenses may only be owned by or sold to status Aboriginal people. Annual license fees paid to DFO are lower for a-I licenses, but they have the same fishing rights as a licenses. An 'A' licence can be converted to an 'A-I'. The reverse conversion is not permitted under Fisheries and Oceans regulation. An 'A' licence therefore has a larger market and a much higher market value than an 'A-I'.

Juan de Fuca usually open in September. Occasionally, late chum salmon openings can occur at several locations in October/November. The fleet returns home at the end of the season.

The herring season is opened in March and April. People who own herring licenses either fish them or lease them to other fishermen or to the large fishing companies. Roe-herring fishing can be very lucrative, but it is also very risky. Licences are issued for specific coastal regions. Openings are short. Often a seine boat will make only one or two sets for the whole season. a gillnet vessel may be able to fish for only a few hours. If substantial amounts of fish are not caught, the season may yield no income at all. Leasing-out of licences is a common practice, as the lease income is guaranteed and personal financial risks during the fishery is not incurred. Today, many owners pool their licences. In a pool agreement, two or more owners agree to share risk, revenue and packing costs. (Key informant interviews: 10/08/93,10/08/93).

Most Nimpkish commercial fishermen work through an accounting vehicle, the Nimpkish Fisheries Company. This on-reserve business was established to enable Aboriginal fishermen to take advantage of tax provisions in the *Indian Act* where Aboriginal people do not pay tax on income earned on reserve lands. By this process more money remains in fishermen's hands and by extension, within the community. This situation may change following William's v. R., (1992).

> "The Supreme Court of Canada decision in 'Williams' is a major change in the interpretation of section 87 of the *Indian Act*. The decision greatly restricts the exemption by establishing a `connecting factors' test. Most of the tax planning resulting from the 1983 decision of 'Nowegijick' is now ineffective, and many Indians who previously assumed that their earnings and purchases would be tax exempt will again be paying tax" (The Native Entrepreneur, Aboriginal Peoples Business Association, Winter, 1992/93).

The total fishing income processed through the Nimpkish Fisheries Company for the 1991/92 fishing season was $1,402,603. Included in this total are 24 non-Aboriginals who earned $143,056, and 121 Aboriginal fishermen who earned $1,259,547. Approximately five to 10 per cent of these earnings were derived from the herring fishery. If the Canadian government applies the Williams decision to Nimpkish fishermen, the loss to the local economy will be substantial. (Key informant interview: 11/08/93) Even though one vessel-owner reported a fishing income of $40,000, most were crew on seine or gillnet vessels and reported average annual incomes from fishing in the range of $8,000 to $12,000. This is consistent with incomes processed through the Nimpkish Fisheries Company where the average Aboriginal fishing income was $10,400 for the 1991/92 season.

Most Nimpkish fishermen, especially those who work as crew on vessels owned by others, cannot make a reasonable living from fishing. They must therefore rely on additional sources of income to survive the year. The most common of these is Unemployment Insurance (UI). Fishermen therefore have two objectives during the fishing season. The first is to catch as large a share of the harvestable surplus as possible, and the second is to work during at least 10 weeks in order to qualify for UI[20]. The usual period during which UI was received was 24 weeks.

Aweetna-K'ula

The Aweetna-K'ula Management Project, was set up to supply support biologists and technicians to assist *Kwakwaka'wakw* First Nations in developing their marine and aquatic resources projects. The Alert Bay office opened in September, 1992. Three full-time equivalent positions were funded. Aweetna-K'ula's supervisor and comptroller are not Nimpkish Band members. Working under the governance of the Kwakiutl Territorial Fisheries Commission, Aweetna-K'ula has submitted project budgets and proposals to Fisheries and Oceans on behalf of six *Kwakwaka'wakw* bands. The Nimpkish Salmon

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20 All but two of the 14 fishermen in our questionnaire sample reported at least some income from unemployment insurance.

Enhancement Project (NSEP) is among these. It includes continuation of the Nimpkish Fisheries Guardianship program.

Funding negotiated with Fisheries and Oceans under their Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy has been cut back from that proposed and agreed to in principle for the 1992/93 fiscal year. The cut-back is due in large measure to the effects of the non-Aboriginal Fishermen's Survival Coalition lobby (discussed earlier) and to other factors. The remaining funding will be divided among all the proposed and operating projects as fairly as possible. Cut-backs to the Nimpkish Salmon Enhancement Project will result in the loss of employment for six people. Completion of the Cheslakee hatchery[21] will be delayed.

After six years of petitioning, in 1983 The Nimpkish Band succeeded in gaining an agreement with Fisheries and Oceans for the Nimpkish Guardianship Program. The program's purpose was to monitor fisheries habitat problems, help deter salmon poaching within the Nimpkish watershed and enforce existing regulations and laws when poachers were found. There was ongoing disagreement between the Nimpkish and DFO over responsibilities and jurisdictional issues. Consequently, the program was never fully funded. Even when the program was funded, guardians were often not given the resources needed to effectively do their jobs. Most of their time was spent assisting Nimpkish salmon enhancement staff with escapement estimates with some limited watershed patrols during the peaks of the runs. The actual funding for 1993 is half the estimated requirement. This will mean the loss of one of the three guardian positions, an employment period cut from eight months to six, and a further loss of resources such as vehicles and boats. The current modified plan calls for guardian time to be split between monitoring the Nimpkish River, assisting in stream clearing programs and assisting with the Nimpkish estuary crab fishery study. (Aweetna-K'ula Management Project 1992 Co-Management Summary.)

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[21] The primary reason for upgrading the hatchery was to mitigate the loss of coho and chinook stocks from small creeks and rivers throughout the *Kwakwaka'wakw* territory. These stocks have declined in response to dedicated sport fisheries and as a consequence (by-catch) of commercial fisheries. Consequently, planned and urgently required initiatives in the *Kwakwaka'wakw* territories will be at a standstill placing salmon stocks from the smaller streams at considerable risk.

Federal funding for the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy is diminishing. The present cut-backs fit a pattern that has developed over the past several decades. The origins and consequences of the 'funding/cutback' cycle as it applies to fisheries and other issues are discussed in more detail in section 3.7, below. For Nimpkish River projects, it means diminished chances for success, and less than anticipated re-employment.

In response to these funding problems, Aweetna-K'ula has been exploring other ways to address its mandate. Assistance is being sought from logging companies for the use of equipment to aid in research and data collection within watersheds where they hold logging tenures. A royalty strategy is also being considered for application to Aboriginal fishermen. This system has been successfully applied to sport fisheries by the Haida in the Queen Charlotte Islands where the revenues are channelled back into enhancement projects. For Aweetna-K'ula, a user-pay strategy is in its very early stages of consideration. (Key informant interview: 05/07/93)

NERP

The rapid decline in Chinook and Coho stocks during the late seventies gave rise to the Federal Government's Salmonid Enhancement Program (SEP). From the Aboriginal perspective, the program had little to do with "enhancing" the salmon resource and everything to do with mitigating the damage done by over-fishing, inappropriate fishing strategies, and habitat degradation associated with logging practices and development. The Band therefore chose to name its "salmonid enhancement" work in the Nimpkish watershed The "Nimpkish Ecological Restoration Program", or NERP. It is now known as the "Nimpkish Enhancement and Restoration Project" with the same acronym. NERP has been in operation since 1978. NERP's global objective has been to rehabilitate the Nimpkish Valley's salmon stocks. Early elements of the program involved conducting resource and habitat inventories throughout the watershed. This was followed by habitat restoration work and the establishment of hatchery facilities.

> "Operation of the hatchery at Willow Creek began in 1979 with the first release of 46,000 sockeye fry and 58,000. chum. ...NERP was releasing

> between 2 and 3 million [sockeye] fry at the peak of the program during the mid-1980's as well as 250,000 chinook, 50,000 coho and 900,000 chum... For sockeye, the NERP hatchery program was only half of the SEP effort. The other half came through DFO's Lake Enrichment Program. Limnological studies conducted by NERP and DFO had indicated relatively low rates of primary productivity in the Nimpkish Lake. Nutrients were added to Nimpkish Lake beginning in 1982 as a means to increase the food supply of sockeye fry, with the expectation that an increase in food would lead to higher rates of juvenile survival and/or greater size which, in turn, would lead to higher rates of oceanic survival." (Weinstein 1991).

The original Willow Creek hatchery is now closed and a larger modern facility is under development at Cheslakee near the mouth of the Nimpkish River. Expansion has been under way since 1992. In addition to addressing the incubation need of the Nimpkish River, the facility will also be used to satellite chinook eggs from Knight and Kingcome inlet rivers. The targeted production is 2,500,000 Chinook, 500,000 Coho, 2,000,000 Chum, and a future production of 3,000,000 Sockeye. Previously discussed funding cutbacks means that the hatchery will not meet its production targets as scheduled, and will not support the number of employees intended.

Forestry

The Intertribal Forestry Association of British Columbia (IFABC) was formed in 1986. The IFABC membership includes the majority of bands and tribal councils in B.C. The association's mandate was formalized in 1987; "...to protect maintain, enhance and develop First Nation forestry resources for the use, benefit and enjoyment of First Nations of today and tomorrow, and to establish and fulfil the rights and responsibilities of British Columbia First Nations with regard to First Nations Forestry resource." The Association's office is located in Kelowna. A large majority of its governing board comes from interior bands. Coastal bands hold that the nature of the coastal forests, and consequently the needs of coastal bands differ markedly from those of the interior. Therefore, their interests are not

fairly represented. Plans are currently underway to form a Forestry Association of Coastal Tribes. (Key informant interview: 26/08/93)

The original Forest Resource Development Agreement (FRDA) did not include provisions for Aboriginal forest lands, so after a lobbying effort by the Canadian Forest Service (CFS) and the Aboriginal leadership, the Indian Forest Lands Component of FRDA was formed. This component provided $7 million of federal money for "integrating land-use planning of federal lands and providing employment opportunities for Canada's native people." (IFABC Position Paper on FRDA II, 1990).

> "IFABC recognizes that FRDA has been instrumental in creating opportunities for the Indian people of British Columbia in the timber management field, and that forest resources management offers unparalleled cultural revitalization opportunities for the Indian people." (IFABC Position Paper on FRDA II, 1990).

Hopwood (1988) reviewed the FRDA Indian Forest Lands Program in April, and summarized a number of complaints about the program. Some of them were repeated by the MTTC Forester during a subsequent interview about forestry projects undertaken in *Kwakwaka'wakw* territory. These included:

a. Program criteria are to rigid and do not include multi-use forest management opportunities which tie into traditional Aboriginal resource philosophies,
b. Band administration often won't enter into a long term investment because of other immediate needs,
c. The forest management plans are essentially "outside" plans imposed on the Aboriginal people who don't have the expertise or trained personnel at the local level

The main barrier to working with FRDA is that the tribes and councils do not have enough trained personnel to do the kind of work necessary. Last year, the money set aside in the MTTC forestry program for training was allocated to the carving program (discussed subsequently).

In the summer of 1984, 12 people received forestry-related work experience through the Canada Works Program. Utilizing these resources along with some additional outside technical assistance, a number of activities were launched. These included resource inventory, spacing, training, development of woodlot license applications and some preliminary identification of possible development opportunities. For reasons discussed in the previous section, program funding was discontinued. However, two spacing contracts were won in 1984. Both the contracts were successfully completed and constituted the beginning of a successful track record. One key to success was training and professional management through companies like West coast Land Use Consultants. They developed a program whereby funding was provided by Canada Job Strategy to employ Band members to work with Tree Farm License (TFL) Holders.

Marlita Forest Company

In 1985, 19 people participated in a training program under the MTTC initiative in forestry development and planning called the Demonstration Project. In 1986, West Coast Land Use Consultants moved to Victoria and Marlita Forestry Company, a Native owned company based in Alert Bay, was formed to take-over. Marlita's owner and the manager were two of the original 19 people who participated in the MTTC training program. As always, there has been a noticeable reduction in federal program funding since this company started. Although the Provincial Ministries of Social Services and of Forestry have addressed some of the shortfall, provincial funding excludes the Native employment component because people living on reserves are under federal jurisdiction. The provincial government has sought to address this problem under a new initiative, the Forest Workers Development Program (FWDP). FWDP is part of Building our Future (BC21), a new initiative intended to standardize all training and employment practices throughout the province. One of its goals is to provide contracting opportunities for Native groups which reside in the Port McNeill district. The Ministry of Forestry has set aside $300,000 for this local contracting component. This initiative was implemented in July 1993. Aboriginal people working for Marlita Forest Company await further developments.

There are currently 25 active employees working for Marlita. Seven are Aboriginal people. All are male. However, 90 per cent of the employees were Aboriginal for one recent slash burning contract. A fire-fighting crew of 40 was used in one shift. Of these, 32 were Aboriginal, 12 from Alert Bay. Similar employment numbers and ratios were found in recent spacing contracts. (Key informant interview: 16/07/83)

One important obstacle to efficient utilization of current forest resources and program expansion is adequate transportation. Although based in Alert Bay, Marlita Forest Company does most of its contracts in outlying areas, principally on Vancouver Island. Work scheduling is encumbered by the timing of the ferry schedule, and the long commute to Port McNeill. Hopwood (1986) described the problem thus:

> "...the lack of a flexible, water-based transportation system creates serious difficulties... the recent high number of people involved from the Nimpkish Band in forestry has led to people trying to move their families out to Port McNeill for what amount to short term jobs. ...These individuals and the Nimpkish Band are concerned about the social impact on the community if such a pattern becomes entrenched. Given that the future prospects for forestry related work off-reserve are almost all on Vancouver Island for the Nimpkish, improved transportation is going to be needed."

Other forestry initiatives

a variety of directed work contracts have been awarded. Band members conducted spacing and girdling work with Canadian Forest Products, Interfor and the Ministry of Forestry. This short-term contract work was conducted under MTTC initiatives. The MTTC has done some work through the Forest Resource Development Agreement, employing 10 to 15 people. Contract agreements provided about $90,000 of funding while the Tribal Council supported the effort with another $30,000. According to the Tribal Council's Forester, the 1992-1993 year was successful:

> "We exposed more than 25 people to different phases of forestry work. We completed more than 25 hectares of spacing, 50 hectares of sanitation cutting, and surveyed about 300 hectares...Besides earning money, there are other benefits [from doing this work]... First, some individuals are gaining new skills or improving themselves... Another benefit is visibility. There is an old motto in common law called 'Use it or lose it'. Along with sea and rivers, we are now being seen working our land resources. Not only does this establish ownership through use, it will aid us in lands claims resolution. Finally, individual knowledge of the territory and its resources will improve." (Key informant interview: 20/07/93).

In 1993 the Ministry of Forests has offered the *Kwicksutaineuk* Band through the MTTC a Direct Award Contract for spacing about 16 Hectares on Gilford Island. Canadian Forest Products also offered the MTTC a 20 hectare spacing contract in the Nimpkish Valley. The combined value of these two contracts is about $40,000. These contracts provide 16 jobs for about 25 days. There have been assurances from the Ministry of Forests and the companies of additional contracts when the first two are completed.

The Nimpkish Band has control over merchantable timber on reserves with a value estimated at almost $700,000. However there are currently no timber sales or forestry operations in the area. The Nimpkish Recreation inventory, completed In June, 1993, provided an inventory and assessment of recreation features and values within the Nimpkish reserve. The purpose of the recreation inventory was to provide a current recreation features inventory data base to assist with forest management planning and in particular to contribute to the development of the integrated resource management planning process. In the past, only fishing and forestry were considered when integrated resource management was discussed. Now, recreational land use and tourism are being viewed as economically viable ways of using the land, especially with the growing popularity of "eco-tourism".

Concerns have been raised that prices received for logs from reserve lands are well below the usual market price. If all Kwakiutl First Nations tribes co-operated, a data base

containing information on log values on international markets, booming, towing, and scaling costs could be maintained. This would enable tribes to realize a larger economic return. Waldman (1991) suggested that this marketing problem could be addressed by hiring two planners;

> "One planner would be responsible for all the operational concerns. He/she would work with the individual tribes in developing crews, and obtaining the necessary equipment. Another forester could be hired exclusively for marketing forestry products and services. This person would ensure that all contracts are bid upon, track market prices for forestry products and services, and ensure that the best prices are obtained."

To summarize, some of the forestry-related problems experienced by the Nimpkish Band, and other bands, included the following:

"1] Funding had been insufficient for the required long term forestry management program.

2] Training programs do not consider regional differences. Training for the programs should be done on sight, and should be appropriate for the local environment.

3] Lack of a flexible, water-based transportation system can lead to people moving their families out to Port McNeill

4] Difficulties in securing or retaining expertise.

5] Community attitudes that prefer fishing over forestry " (Waldman 1991)

Art Production and Marketing

Pacific Northwest coast art is known and admired throughout the world. The style conforms to rigid traditional rules yet these rules are pushed to their limits as artists seek new expression within traditional bounds. Nimpkish and other Alert Bay artists cover the artistic spectrum from wood carving and jewellery-making to painting and print making.

Traditional *Kwakwaka'wakw* culture did not include a category called fine art. Rather, the intricacies of the art forms reflected the complexities of *Kwakwaka'wakw* culture and history. Certain masks, crests, names and dances belonged to different families and were considered family property. Traditionally, canoes, house-front poles, memorial poles, bentwood boxes, cedar woven blankets and inscribed coppers were produced for the *numaym*. Utilitarian items such as spoons, feast dishes, and halibut hooks were often carved with the crests and ancestor figures of the *numaym* that owned them. It was not until contact with the European traders that West Coast First Nations started to trade crafted items for their artistic rather than their cultural or utilitarian value. Iron for tools, traded from the Europeans at about the same time, increased the total output and intricacy of the art that artists were able to produce. *Kwakwaka'wakw* trade in art did not develop, to any large extent, until the early twentieth century. (Key informant interview: 14/07/93)

While Aboriginal people themselves currently comprise the largest market for many types of art, especially those such as certain masks, button blankets and gift items used in Potlatches and other ceremonials, Victoria and Vancouver are the market centres for the sale of high value art such as carved silver and gold, large masks, bent boxes, and monumental works.

The Island Centre (a general store in Alert Bay) is an Aboriginal-owned and operated grocery and retail store, It has the potential to become an important art retailer. The Island Centre exhibits *Kwakwaka'wakw* art in its second floor gallery. Only local artists are given display access. The Island Centre hopes to expand its display space and establish workshop for artists. (Key informant interview: 15/07/93) Two additional minor art gallery/tourist shops are also found in the municipality. Art for sale in these shops comes mostly from ex-local artists now working in Victoria and Vancouver. The municipality's Library/Museum sells dolls, wall plaques and key chains. The Drug store and a small tourist shop sell silver jewellery on a small scale. One small shop in Sointula, on Malcolm Island, buys art from Alert Bay's artists, but their stock consists of small items for tourists who spend very little. Many artists sell directly from their homes. Better-known artists

work on personal commission. Well-known artists make monumental pieces on commission, and often hire others as assistants.

The U'Mista Cultural Centre

The U'Mista Cultural Centre (UCC) was built in Alert Bay in 1980. It was created to house some of the potlatch paraphernalia seized during the 1920's enforcement of the anti-potlatch laws, and since returned. The UCC is an autonomous society governed by a 10-member board. It was designed to be a focal point for the rediscovery and resurgence of *Kwakwaka'wakw* culture. Here, history could be viewed in a museum context. Children could use the facility to learn the songs and dances associated with the re-patriated artifacts. (Key informant interview: 06/07/93)

Consistent with its mandate, the UCC also runs a small gift shop where high quality *Kwakwaka'wakw* art is sold. a share of the revenues are used to help pay the operational costs of the Centre. The demand for art works, especially masks and silver jewellery has outgrown the gift shop's available space. One proposed remedy is to expand the market, not the space. This approach would require the production of an internationally distributed catalogue, combined with a co-operative of contributing artists. Given the stature of West coast Aboriginal art, this form of marketing is viable. The Cultural Centre would act as a broker, thereby guaranteeing the authenticity of the work for the buyer. Contributing artists would be required to work on commission, with some proceeds going back into the centre to pay the brokerage costs, catalogue costs, and operational costs of the centre. Providing work space for contributing artists is forming part of the planning process for this initiative.

Twenty-four artists currently sell to the UCC. About seven of these derive all of their income from art production, although not all of this production is sold through the UCC. There are at least another 20 who work independently both part-time and full-time within the community, with a great variety in the volume and media in which they work. There may therefore be a pool of about 40 artists available to contribute to the proposed international marketing initiative. (Key informant interview: 06/07/93)

Although art production and marketing are alive and well in Alert Bay, there is considerable potential for increasing both the numbers of working artists, and the amount of income each can earn. In combination with tourism, discusses next, the potential for economic benefit to Alert Bay's Aboriginal communities is considerable. The key appears to be aggressive and organized marketing. We recommend that existing internal institutions in Alert Bay including the Nimpkish Band Council, the MTTC and the UCC focus more attention on the promotion and development of the arts and artists in Alert Bay.

Tourism

People still remember the days when the cruise ship passengers would off-load for a couple of hours and wander around the village without any real knowledge of or respect for the culture or community: "Hey, a little Indian girl... I'll pay you fifty cents if I you let me take your picture!" (Source: Childhood experience of one of the authors.)

The tourism industry has grown considerably on North Vancouver Island and in Alert Bay since the paving of the highway between Campbell River and Port Hardy in 1980. There is a Ferry terminus that connects Port McNeill on Northern Vancouver Island to Alert Bay. There is an air-strip on a plateau on Cormorant Island, although it has a short, dirt runway, and is not often used by tourists. Improvement of the Island Highway between Campbell River and Nanaimo to freeway standards has been planned, and is scheduled to be completed by 1996. This will further increase the number of visitors to North Vancouver Island and Alert Bay. Some general trends in tourism are making Alert Bay and surrounding areas a prime destination. Numbers of visitors to the North Vancouver Island area for 1988/89 and their principal activities are given in Table 5, below. Adventure Tourism is emerging as an important area in the industry. "Expanding at 15% per year in B.C., adventure travel generated $135 million dollars in 1986. This places B.C. as the market leader in North America." (Waldman 1991). The majority of visitors to the North Island fit into the adventure travel segment of the market.

Table 5. Selected visitor activities on Northeast Vancouver Island

ACTIVITY	VISITORS
Cruise Tours	11,800
Freshwater Fishing	92,000
Saltwater Fishing	108,800
Fishing Lodges	9,500
Camping	40,800
Whale Watching	8,000
Kayaking	2,000
TOTAL	**272,900**

(Source: Mossop 1989)

Alert Bay offers a number of facilities, activities and features for visitors, including the U'Mista Cultural Centre, whale watching, nature tours, the Alert Bay Art Gallery, sport-fishing charters, the world's tallest totem pole, Kwakiutl art, the ceremonial big-house, the Nimpkish graveyard with its numerous totems, historic sites including the old Anglican Church, the Museum, St. George's Chapel, Gator Gardens Ecological Park and campsite, a motel, an Inn, a senior's hostel, and camping grounds. (Recreation Inventory, MTTC 1993) While many of Alert Bay's attractions relate directly to Aboriginal culture and history, currently neither the MTTC or the Nimpkish Band are actively promoting Aboriginal-based tourism development. The main reason that little has been done in this area is that these organizations' time is fully occupied with fishery issues and forestry development. Further, there has been no direct funding to date to address tourism in the business development context.

The U'Mista Cultural Centre is the only developed tourist attraction located on reserve lands. (Recreation Inventory, MTTC 1993) In 1992, 5,900 tourists visited the centre, approximately 5,200 of these during the summer months. Many came from Alberta, Quebec, California, Oregon, and Germany. On average, $19.50 was spent per person at the museum. With this level of revenue, the museum must look to other sources for funding and support. These sources include Cultural Services (Provincial), Museums Assistance Program, Job Development Program, other grant funding, general membership,

private donations, and sales through the gift shop. There is a need for the provision of additional services with related facility expansion and increased employment. However this may not be possible due to the shortage of revenue and funding. Current employment opportunities at UCC are given in Table 6.

Tourism is growing steadily in Alert Bay. According to Waldman (1991), there were 1,400, 2,700, 3,200, and 5,100 tourist visitors to Alert Bay in the years 1987 to 1990 respectively. Almost all of these arrived by car-ferry from Port McNeill. While there is a steady stream of large tourist ships that pass by Alert Bay each summer, nearly all cruise by without stopping. Often, a narration is given on the ship's P.A. system "...and on the right we can see the tiny fishing village of Alert Bay. Notice the Indian graveyard with all the totem poles ...", loud enough to be heard by every resident on the island. Waldman (1991) pointed out that an effective plan for tourist development would incorporate stop-overs by tourist ships.

> "Various cruise line [operators] have commented that passengers wish to experience more native exhibits of song and dance. Some lines are now including activities such as paddling a 36 foot Ketchikan canoe, river rafting, whale watching, and sport fishing. In addition, they [passengers] are always eager to purchase Native arts and crafts." (Waldman 1991).

A number of tourism-related problems have been encountered by the Nimpkish Band and other institutions in Alert Bay. For example, the Broughton Archipelago Marine Park was established by Provincial and Federal governments without the knowledge or consent of the Nimpkish Band Council or the MTTC. This park is located east of Alert Bay at the south end of Queen Charlotte Straits. Consisting of more than 300 small islands in a total area of 11,500 hectares, the area is very significant to Aboriginal values and history. Initially, the Council wanted to reverse the decision to establish the park, however an agreement was reached whereby the Council would be included in the on-going dialogue with the Federal and Provincial governments concerning the future establishment of such parks. To this time, nothing further has come of this process. Unauthorized recreational use of outlying reserve lands including those in the new park appears to be steadily

increasing. User groups include ocean kayak tour groups, whale watching/nature tour groups, the yachting community, and individual or informal users. Complaints have been made about tourists scavenging for artifacts around village and grave sites.

The combination of tourism, forestry and fishery interests in Alert Bay poses a unique set of conflicts. There is a concern that the tourist industry threatens commercial fishing jobs through sports fishing. Forestry may be encumbered through the tourist opposition to clear-cut logging practices. Also, many long term residents maintain that only the traditional resource- based industries of fishing and logging are required to sustain the community. Further, there is a concern that the generally lower paying jobs of the tourist industry and their seasonal nature may adversely affect the standard of living. Some people are concerned that, as tourism in Alert Bay is directly linked to the Aboriginal culture, tourism would mean selling off the culture without any knowledge or respect given by the buyers.

Like the marketing of Aboriginal art, there is considerable potential for Aboriginal-based tourist enterprise in Alert Bay. The Nimpkish Band Council, the MTTC, and the membership generally, should together produce a tourism development plan that is economically viable, but more importantly, consistent with the various views concerning the display of *Kwakwaka'wakw* cultural elements. As a start, such a plan could incorporate arts marketing and lectures/discussions concerning the history and culture of the community. This could eventually be expanded to include dance performances for groups of tourists such as may be expected should tourist ships be persuaded to make a stop-over. Sport-fishing, scuba diving, eco-tourism, whale-watching, and several other elements could eventually be incorporated. While the organization of some elements such as dance performances or museum tours should more properly be the responsibility of the Band Council or the UCC, other elements such as sport-fishing and the like seem more appropriate for inclusion in private business.

Current Aboriginal Employment In Alert Bay

In this section we give employment statistics for the services and business sectors in Alert Bay. Tables 6 and 7 summarize the data.

Table 6. Current Aboriginal employment in Alert Bay's services sector

SERVICES	Number Employed and Employment Type	Gender	Training and Education
St. Georges Hospital	6 full time, 1 part time, 2 casuals	All female	2 Nursing assistants with Licenses for Practical Nursing(LPN). All employees must have grade ten or equivalent.
RCMP	1 full time, currently on leave	1 male	RCMP training in Regina
B.C. Ferries	4 full time, on shift	? male	On the job training
Fisheries and Oceans	0	0	0
Coast Guard	0	0	0
Alert Bay Public School	0	0	0
North Island College	1 full time, 3 part-time in 92 (dependant on funding and course demand)	All female	1 in Office Administration 1 Master's in English 2 Bachelor's of Education
U'Mista Cultural Centre	5 full time, 3 summer students, 1 part time	8 Female, Aboriginal	training relative to position, i.e. curator and shop manager
Canada Post	1 full time, for 16 years	Female/ applying for status	unknown

Table 7. Current Aboriginal employment in Alert Bay's business sector

MAJOR BUSINESS EMPLOYERS	Number Employed and Employment Type	Gender	Training and Education
Island Centre	12 full time/part-time and seasonal	7 Female 5 Male (owners included)	on job training
Nimpkish Hotel	4 full time	4 Female	on job training
Canadian Fabricators	3 or 4 seasonal	All Male	welding, hydraulics, pipefitting etc.
Much Video	2 full time	Female	on job training
Alert Bay Drug Store	1 full time	Female	on job training
Alert Bay Foods	1 part-time	Female	on job training
Bill's Cafe	4 full time	3 Female, 1 Male	on job training
Marlita Forestry	up to 25, seasonal	Male	on job training
Popovich Gas Station	1 part time	Female	on job training
FDX Taxi	3 shiftwork	1 Male, 2 Female	class 4 driver's licence
Orca Inn	1 full time	Female	on job training

We were unable to interview representatives from every business in Alert Bay. Consequently, the data given is an approximation of Aboriginal employment in Alert Bay's

businesses and services. With the exception of Marlita Forestry and Canadian Fabricators, most of these positions are filled by women. Training for most positions is on the job. The lack of Aboriginal employment in the services sector is apparent. In total, Approximately 60 to 70 Aboriginal people work full or part time in the positions listed in the previous two tables. That number is one-third of those working directly in commercial fishing. Generally speaking, men go fishing and women stay at home or work in community-based jobs.

The total number of people employed directly by the Nimpkish Band Council are given in Table 8. The data includes those employed in the Health Centre and in *T'lisalagi'lakw* school. Again, most employees are women.

Table 8. Total employment by the Nimpkish Band Council

TOTAL	Female	Male	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal
10 Councillors	3	7	10	0
70 Employees	51	19	59	11

The Nimpkish Health Centre was established in 1983, largely as a result of the Goldthorpe inquiry into health care in Alert Bay (See Culhane-Speck, 1987). It is funded by Health and Welfare and is operated by the *Namgis* First Nation Health Board. The Board meets regularly to administer the overall affairs for the Health Centre. Since 1991, the Board has consisted of one Nimpkish Band Councillor as Chairman, one Nimpkish Band Councillor as Alternate, one appointed by the Education Board, one appointed by Whe-La-La-U Area Council, one appointed by the MTTC, one appointed *ex officio* from St. Georges Hospital Board and two at large Nimpkish Band members who reside in Alert Bay. Employment at the Centre is given in Table 9.

Table 9. Nimpkish Health Centre employment

Position	Gender/Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal	Training
Director/ Administrator	Male/ non-Aboriginal	Health Administration
Medical Services Director/ Physician	Male/ non-Aboriginal	Doctorate Degree
Community Health Director	Female/ Aboriginal	
Social Services Director	Female/ Aboriginal	Master of Social Work
Drug and Alcohol Coordinator	Female/ Aboriginal	Master of Social Work, Alcohol and Drug Counsellor Certificate
Hilikalas Family Service Coordinator	Female/ non-Aboriginal	Master of Social Work
Administrative Assistant	Female/ Aboriginal	Office Administration Training
Health Centre Receptionist	Female/ Aboriginal	Office Administration Training
Physician Receptionist	Female/ non-Aboriginal	Office Administration Training
Patient Travel Clerk	Female/ Aboriginal	Office Administration Training
Nurse	Female/ non-Aboriginal	Registered Nursing Certificate
6 Alcohol and Drug Counsellors	2 Male/ non-Aboriginal, 4 Female/ Aboriginal	Alcohol and Drug Counsellor Certificate
2 Community Health Representatives	Female/ Aboriginal	Human Service Worker Program
8 Human Services Workers	Female/ Aboriginal	Human Service Worker Program
Dental Therapist	Male/ Aboriginal	Dental Therapy Training
2 Cooks	Female/ Aboriginal	Human Service Worker Program
2 Night Attendants	Male/ Aboriginal	Human Service Worker Program
Health Centre Cleaner	Female/ Aboriginal	on the job training

(Source: Nimpkish Health Centre Data, 1993) Total: 34 employees.

One of the objectives of the centre has been to hire all Aboriginal staff members, but this has yet to be achieved. There are currently 34 full time, four part-time employees, and two to three people on stand-by. Of the 34 employed, 90 per cent are from the community, and 85 per cent of them are Aboriginal. Most of the non-Aboriginal employment falls in the administrative areas. In addition, the Health Centre Director/Administrator is non-Native, as is the entire Medical Services staff.

The employment profile at *T'lisalagi'lakw* School (Table 10) is similar to that at the Health Centre. Of the eight normal class-room teachers, four are Aboriginal and female. All or the teachers of Aboriginal culture are Aboriginal. The principal is not. There are 20 positions in all. Most of the key positions at the school require at least four years of post-secondary education.

Table 10. *T'LISALAGI'LAKW* School employment

Position	Gender/Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal	Training
Education Director/ Principal	Male/ non-Aboriginal	
8 Teachers	4 Female/ Aboriginal, 2 Female/ non-Aboriginal, 2 Male/ non-Aboriginal	B.Ed. or B.A. and Professional Development Program Certificate
2 Teacher Aids	Female/ Aboriginal	relevant work experience
Language Teacher	Female/ Aboriginal	relevant work experience, fluent in *Kwakwala*
Nursery Teacher	Female/ Aboriginal	Early Childhood Education Certificate
Learning Assistance	Male/ non-Aboriginal	
Cultural Coordinator	Female/ Aboriginal	relevant work experience
Dance Coordinator	Female/ Aboriginal	relevant work experience
Dance Instructor	Male/ Aboriginal	relevant work experience
Secretary	Female/ Aboriginal	relevant work experience
Bus Driver	Male/ non-Aboriginal	Class 4 Driver's Licence
Librarian	Female/ non-Aboriginal	

(Source: Nimpkish Education Board Data, 1993)

We attempted to estimate the per cent of the on-reserve Aboriginal population who rely on Social Assistance (SA) payments for at least part of their income. We found that SA statistics have not been maintained in a form that allows easy extraction of this information. The SA records include all Aboriginal people on the island wether they live on-reserve or not. They do not differentiate band membership. We intended to present three snap-shots of reliance on SA at approximately five year intervals. We found that the form in which the data is kept has changed more than once over the past 15 years, making accurate comparisons impossible. The estimates in Table 11 assume that each cheque written supports two people for one month. The estimates for 92/93 are supported by data collected during our household questionnaire survey.

Table 11. Estimated reliance on social assistance

Year	89/90	90/91	92/93
On-Reserve Population	770	863	879
Per Cent on SA June to November	16 %	26 %	27 %
Per Cent on SA December to May	17 %	21 %	23 %

3.6 Internal Institutions

In this section, we discuss the community's political and economic institutions and identify their responsibilities relative to economic development.

Musgamagw Tsawataineuk Tribal Council (MTTC)

The Kwakiutl District Council (KDC) was formed during the process of the devolution of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) starting in the late 1970s. The KDC's principal function was to disburse some of the funding and services to bands formerly administered by DIAND. The MTTC was formed in response to inter-band disagreements over the process whereby the funding and services were allocated. It became an independent tribal council in 1978 but did not function as an effective political body until the early 1980's. Since 1988 its membership has consisted of *Namgis* (Nimpkish, Alert Bay), *Kwa-wa-Aineuk* (Hopetown), *Tlowitsis-Mumtaglia* (Turnour Island), *Kwicksutaineuk* (Gilford Island), and *Tsawataineuk* (Kingcome). These bands still occupy their traditional village sites except the *Tlowitsis-Mumtaglia* (Turnour Island) and Nimpkish. The MTTC offices are located in Namgis House in Alert Bay. Currently, some *Kwakwaka'wakw* bands are affiliated with each tribal council.

Similar disagreements have occurred among current MTTC member bands. The Nimpkish Band disassociated from the MTTC for a brief time for this reason. They later rejoined the MTTC with the condition that Indian Affairs flow through dollars went directly to the Nimpkish Band. Flow through dollars are used for housing and vital services. Service Delivery Unit funds and economic development resources remain subject to MTTC allocation arrangements for proportional distribution to all member bands. (Key Informant interview: 19/07/93)

The MTTC is governed by an Executed Board consisting of the five Chiefs of the affiliated Bands. The Board of Directors consists of all five Chiefs and councillors from each band. The Finance Committee consists of representatives from each bands. They make their recommendations to the Executive Board and the Board of directors regarding all financial matters.

The MTTC employs two people in their Economic Development Department, an Economic Development Officer and Assistant Development Officer. Their mandate is to provide development-related services to the bands and individual band members on a project by project basis. They provide members with information, advise, and report monthly to the Office Manager, Executive and Board of Directors, from whom they also take their instructions. The funds used to operate this department derive from Advisory Services of the Department of Indian Affairs. a comptroller and assistant are also employed in the MTTC administrative structure. The Economic Development Officer and her assistant receive no specific instructions to address the needs of specific gender or demographic groups. (Key Informant interview: 04/08/93)

Nimpkish Band Council (NBC)

The Nimpkish Band Council is an elected body representing the registered members of the Nimpkish Band. The council derives its mandate from the *Indian Act*. The NBC offices have been located in *Namgis* House, formerly St. Michael's Residential school, Since 1975. The representatives include one Chief Councillor and nine other councillors, three of whom are women. a Band Manager and Assistant Band Manager work in full time positions as Band employees. The current Assistant Band Manager is also the council's Economic Development Officer. Four Councillors are elected annually. a Councillor is elected for a two year term. a Councillor cannot be a paid employee of the band. All band members 18 years of age and over are eligible to stand for election and to vote. Council maintains a working relationship with the Alert Bay Village Council arising from shared concerns such as the issue of recreational facilities for youth on Cormorant island. Nevertheless, the Nimpkish Band Council functions autonomously. (Nairne, 1987). Once elected, one or more councillors are given areas of specific responsibility. These areas include day-to-day band business affairs such as public works, personnel committee, housing and the like, and band initiatives such as land claims, economic development, and several others. Assigned councillors act as the principal liaison between Council and band employees conducting the work under each portfolio.

The Manager is the lead administrator for the band. He is responsible for the supervision and coordination of band programs and ensures that programs are properly administered. He assists Council in developing long term programs and goals. The Assistant Band Manager is responsible for all economic projects as well as initiating, managing and evaluating new economic development initiatives. The Assistant Band also acts for the Band Manager in his/her absence (Economic Development Program, NBC brief, 1993). There are no specific committees or mandates under economic development to address specific gender or other demographic categories.

The Native Brotherhood of British Columbia (NBBC)

An office of the NBBC is located in Alert Bay. Although a principal representative organization for Aboriginal fishermen in the past, the NBBC has been less prominent in recent years. The principal impact of the NBBC on the Alert Bay community in recent years has been the establishment of the Native Fishermen's Association (NFA). The NFA gives loans for the purchase of fishing vessels by Aboriginal fishermen. In Alert Bay, seven gillnetters and two seiners have been financed using NFA loans. One of the loan conditions is that the vessels must come with an A-I licence (See Footnote 19). IF an A licence is associated with the vessel being purchased, the licence had to be converted to an A-I. If the conversion is necessary under the loan agreement, the value of the licence depreciates significantly, and the NFA-assisted purchase becomes a very poor investment.

The NBBC has focussed on the federally licensed Aboriginal commercial fishery while placing less emphasis on traditional Aboriginal fisheries. Those with whom we discussed this issue would like to see the NBBC function more as a coast-wide coordinating body. As such, a more cohesive First Nations' voice could be applied to both political and economic aspects of Aboriginal fisheries.

The gender bias of the NBBC has not gone un-noticed over the years. While there is also a Native Sisterhood, it functions more as an auxiliary to the Brotherhood. This arrangement may have served Aboriginal British Columbians well in the past when the gender-based division of labour and responsibility was more traditional. However, some

changes will be required if the NBBC is to maintain its relevance in the 1990s and beyond. (Key informant interview: 12/08/93)

The Northern Native Fishing Corporation (NNFC)

The NNFC came about as a result of B.C. Packers desire to liquidate over 100 gillnetters located primarily in Prince Rupert. The NNFC was formed to purchase the vessels and then re-sell them to Aboriginal fishers. Like the NFA, the NNFC offers loans to fishermen for purchasing boats. Unlike the NFA, the NNFC sells the boats, but not the associated licences. The purpose for this approach is that the fisherman is required to sell the boat back to the NNFC when he/she decides to sell, and the boat may then be re-sold to another Aboriginal fisher.

Kwakiutl Territorial Fisheries Commission (KTFC)

The KTFC represents 15 *Kwakwaka'wakw* First Nations, who's home waters encompass the area identified in Figure 1. The member bands are *Namgis* (Nimpkish), *Kwakiutl*, *Tlowitsis*, *Kwa-wa-Aineuk*, *KwicksutaineuK-Ah Kwaw-Ah-Mish*, *Twataineuk*, *Gwasala-Nakwaxda'x*w, *Tanakteuk*, *Quatsino*, *Tlattlasikwala*, *Kwiakah*, *Mamaleleqala*, *Qwe'Qwa'Sot'Enox*, *Comox*, Cape Mudge, and Campbell River. Any co-management programs in which that the Nimpkish are involved under the KTFC must fulfil the objectives of their 15 members and maintain credibility amongst all other user groups of the resource. The objectives of the KTFC are to benefit the resource, to provide meaningful Aboriginal employment, to benefit other user groups and to become self sufficient. Tied to these objectives is the desire to create an integrated resource management plan with the co-operation of the DFO and all other user groups. (Key informant interview: 14/07/93)

3.7 External Governments and Institutions

In the course of seeking to establish for themselves a meaningful place in contemporary Canadian society, British Columbia's Aboriginal people have become involuntary pawns in a larger political process. This is not a process of mitigating Aboriginal

problems, but is a one of partisan power politics, of position in popularity polls and of getting elected. Under our Canadian democratic political system, mitigating Aboriginal problems is not an end in itself, rather it has become a means to the political end of maintaining power. a destructive 'funding/cutback' cycle inevitably results, as follows. The cycle starts when politicians and their parties seek to be seen initiating and implementing programs to assist Aboriginal people when the general public demands it. Promises are made to Aboriginal communities. Planning takes place. Budgets are established. Specific projects are initiated. The cycle is completed when the same politicians and their parties perceive a need to be seen cutting costs in the interest of reducing the deficit (or whatever the current campaign happens to be). The same Aboriginal programs are among the first to be cut-back, suspended, eliminated, or otherwise altered as to render them ineffective. The cut-backs are announced to the Canadian public from a government, ministerial or departmental level. They are never identified as cuts to specific much-needed Aboriginal initiatives, as doing so might engender bad spin. Affected Aboriginal people constitute a relatively small proportion of the electorate. Making the announcements in this way is therefore politically safe. Seeming to be fiscally responsible by controlling social spending, politicians gain additional favour with the larger non-Aboriginal electorate. Even though most Aboriginal initiatives are well-meaning and sometimes well thought-out and planned, at least by the Aboriginal leadership and bureaucrats involved, related political commitments are never long-term. They rarely extend beyond the term of the government of the day. Further, plans and programs often do not fit will with funding criteria set up under government programs, as often such programs were established to serve the much different needs and perspectives of the non-Aboriginal community. Aboriginal program objectives and other details must frequently be changed from their original conception to fit the criteria. Doing so debilitates the project or program. Even when a good fit is found between planning and funding, both the funding criteria and related government policy may change without notice. From the Aboriginal perspective, the combined result of the funding/cutback cycle and the fit problem is a never-ending series of programs that may have had a chance of success in the beginning, but are crippled before their completion so that they have no chance of success. Politicians then point to another failed Indian project when other Aboriginal problems are identified as needing mitigation and related funding. Considering these factors, when Aboriginal initiatives and projects succeed it is more often

in spite of rather than as a result of the efforts of the governments of the day. In addition, it has led to the widely-held view that most federal programs focused on Aboriginal economic development are designed to fail from the beginning.

The relationship between the Nimpkish Band and external governments and institutions has it roots in the British version of the colonization process, and remains to this day paternalistic in nature. For Aboriginal peoples throughout Canada this relationship was and is defined from the top down. For the Nimpkish and other B.C. coastal people, several consequences of the relationship related directly to funding and inter-governmental relations serve to encumber economic development initiatives. These include, but are not limited to the following.

a. Economic development is inextricably linked to issues of Aboriginal title and the ongoing land claims process. Key band personnel must therefore seek to build on their existing economic bases while also seeking to negotiate with governments over Aboriginal rights issues. Both the general economic development initiatives of governments and the venue for Aboriginal title negotiations shift from time to time. Progress in both areas is thereby impeded. (Rudnicki, 1992)

b. Section 29 of the Federal *Indian Act* holds that reserve lands are not subject to seizure under legal process. As a consequence, lending institutions cannot accept as security, for mortgages or commercial loans, band-occupied lands nor any buildings or other assets fixed to these lands. Band members have Certificates of Possession but these are of little value for the purposes of securing loans. Goods sold pursuant to Conditional Sales Contracts may still be seized on reserve lands upon default of payment. Yet, the widely held view of conventional lenders, as well as the bands themselves, that debt financing, even though Conditional Sales Agreements exist, is just not available. The result of this legal environment is a dependence on the federal government and their revenues for economic development on reserve lands.

c. The provincial Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs offers one program associated with Aboriginal economic development. This is the First Citizen's Fund (FCF). The FCF was originally designed to assist or supplement other funding sources. It offered grants for small business, Aboriginal friendship centres and small bursaries for post-secondary students. Otherwise, there are no provincial dollars dedicated to Aboriginal economic development. Currently, the process for accessing provincial funds is ineffective. Economic development proposals are sent to the Aboriginal Relations and Initiatives division, within the ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. Proposals are then left in the hands of bureaucrats from this division. Their task is to use their contacts and inter-ministerial committees to highlight the proposals (Aboriginal Relations and Initiatives, Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, B.C. government, phone interview with Dan Cummings, 8/12/93). Even though much work is done on such proposals, there is no policy concerning their fate. They rarely result in operating projects.

d. Although the last twenty years have seen a necessary shift to a stronger federal commitment towards Aboriginal self-government, the power to create or terminate projects still remains vested in federal officials. Due to the consequences of Section 29 of the *Indian Act*, the lack of conventional lenders has left bands with little but government funding options, the majority of which are federal. Each funding program has requirements for accountability by the recipients. Many of the Nimpkish Band projects have had monthly accountability requirements to different groups. This strategy has handicapped the ability of some projects to succeed because judgment of projects is vested in many groups who are usually too widely separated both geographically and philosophically. Further, the process of addressing funding program criteria that leads to project restructuring often necessitates a larger pool of management and labour for a project to.

We have chosen to compare a successful with an unsuccessful Nimpkish economic development project to illustrate these points. The two projects are the Nimpkish Oyster Project (NOP) and the Nimpkish Enhancement and Restoration Project (NERP). Both projects were started under the NIDA plan discussed above.

NERP and NOP

The two projects differed in their economic objectives. NOP was a two-phased project. The first of these was growing oysters at Booker Lagoon, about 15 nautical miles from Alert Bay. The second was the establishment of oyster processing at Alert Bay. NOP was therefore a conventional profit-oriented business. In contrast, NERP was intended to mitigate declines in a common property resource. If the salmon stocks continued to decline as they were then fisheries would diminish. Thus losses to the Canadian economy could be expected directly, as well as through unemployment and welfare costs and the cost of re-training and mitigative economic development costs. Success for NERP could be measured in terms of reversing the decline in the salmon stocks, with consequent economic benefits for the Canadian economy through commercial and sport fisheries. NERP was not a business in the conventional sense.

Following successful oyster growth experiments in Booker Lagoon in the late 1970s, and studies conducted by Edwin Reid and Associates Ltd. and Robin Smith Consultants Ltd., (Nimpkish Band Council, NOP files 14/05/82), it was shown that an Oyster growing and processing operation was biologically and economically feasible. Initial funding was sought and subsequently approved through three sources. These were the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Local Employment Assistance Program (LEAP) through CEIC, Special ARDA and the provincial First Citizens Fund to implement the Nimpkish Oyster Project (NOP).

NOP qualified for grant funding from each of these sources in November, 1982. The funding came in increments. Each funding grant had different timetables for payments. Related payments were slow to be processed in Ottawa and slow to arrive in Alert Bay. For example, under LEAP criteria, money had to be utilized for employment assistance and not for capital costs. Special ARDA funds could be applied to capital costs, initial working capital, opportunity and feasibility studies, planning and preparing the project, and training of disadvantaged people as employees, and supervision and management. However, payments from Special ARDA would not commence until one year after the operation was started. The rationale was that costs associated with the initial operational year should be covered by the local participants as a demonstration of commitment. Through extensive

lobbying and meetings with MPs, MLAs, and bureaucrats by the Nimpkish Band Council, the Special ARDA one year criterion was removed. In its stead, the NOP manager had to submit copies of all order of business receipts and cheques to Special ARDA in Ottawa. Start-up costs could not be covered through the First Citizens Fund. Therefore bridge financing was provided through the Nimpkish Band Council (Key Informant interview: 17/08/93, and NOP records, 1982-87).

During this critical start-up period, the NOP project manager was responsible for reporting requirements to the Economic Development Committee of the Band Council, CEIC, the North Island District Advisory Board, First Citizens Fund and to Special ARDA. Beside this administrative load, the manager had to prepare the work site and manage the field crew. Oysters spawn seasonally. There was a four month spawning window to be met if the project was to start as planned in the 1983 season. The funding agencies paid every attention to their project approval requirements and timing, and to their accounting cycles and reporting requirements. In spite of numerous petitions and appeals, they never seemed to comprehend that it was the timing dictated by nature that had to be addressed. If this was not done, then there was no point in seeking to address their criteria. Thus, specific actions necessary for even initiating the Oyster farm were critically encumbered by the political and bureaucratic considerations that demanded justifications for every step in the project. The amount of oyster spat actually seeded at the farm site was much reduced from that planned. Further, while the manager's time was consumed by dealing with politics and paperwork, the field crew was left unsupervised. These and related problems resulted in a high turn-over of both crew and management.

NERP, on the other hand was successful from the start. Weinstein (1991) noted that "The success was partly due to both parties (Band and DFO) sharing similar basic objectives, and the operation of the program requiring a commitment of long-term funding and planning." NERP began its first years of operation in 1979 and 1980 with budgets from the Salmonid Enhancement Program of $265,815 and $488,885 respectively. (Nimpkish Band financial records, 31/04/79, 31/04/80)

Even though both NOP and NERP sought and received the best available technical advice, there were some unforseen technical and environmental setbacks with both projects. For NOP, oyster spawning, rearing, and grow-out technology was evolving rapidly and required adaptation to specific farm sites. The principal problem encountered in doing so was heavy barnacle sets on the juvenile oysters that competed for food and smothered the oysters. The barnacles both reduced oyster growth rates from those found during the biological feasibility studies, and killed some oysters outright thereby reducing inventories. For NERP, there were floods at the newly-established Willow Creek hatchery site resulting in the destruction of equipment and a considerable loss of incubating salmon eggs. As NERP was not profit-oriented, re-building, and eventually re-siting the hatchery could mitigate the problem. However, for NOP, the losses served to weaken conventional economic viability. While NOP's eventual failure was attributed in part to these problems, NERP continues under the Aweetna-K'ula Management Project with funding slightly over $200,000 for fiscal 1992/93 (Nimpkish Band records, to March 31, 1993)

LEAP was restructured in 1985. The restructuring involved changes in its criteria. NOP thereby became ineligible under the new criteria, and funding was terminated in October of 1986 as a result of the recommendations of Bruce Parisian, of CEIC. Those recommendations were forwarded to NOP's other funding agents. Special ARDA and the First Citizens Fund's representatives thereby became leery of continued project support (Nimpkish Band Council, NOP files 09/09/86). NOP continuation was discussed at the North Island's District Advisory Board's[22] September meeting. From the minutes of this meeting it is apparent that Nimpkish Band representatives found the funding withdrawal a "complete turn around", "a slap in the face". (North/West Coast Island District Advisory Board minutes, 09/09/86). LEAD funding was terminated at the worst possible time, the beginning of phase two, or the building and operation of the processing plant.

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22 The District Advisory Boards (DAB) were created In the mid-eighties under the authority of CEIC and integrated into the structure of the LEAD program. They were a response to a federal policy shift towards improving the regional nature of decision-making. (Key informant interview: 06/08/93)

B.C. Research[23] was contracted to undertake a full review of NOP following CEIC guidelines. They found that the project's commercial viability was good, if reliable seed supplies could be secured and labour productivity enhanced (Brown and Gordon, 1986). The findings of the B.C. Research report helped to neutralize negative bureaucrat positions. The report and the efforts of the Nimpkish Band Council led to the resumption of LEAD funding to March 1987, which was the full term of the LEAD funding contract. By 1988, the processing plant was still not on line and NOP expenses exceeded revenues. Covering these costs required harvesting oysters and selling them unprocessed to a company in Comox, B.C.

Funding for the Processing plant was planned to be generated through a joint venture between Terrace Bay Resources and the Nimpkish Band Council. Attempts to raise the money by Terrace Bay Resources was slow and their knowledge on mariculture was limited (Chief Councillor, letter to Program Officer, Employment Development Branch, 23/06/93). In 1987-88, the Nimpkish Oyster farm and the Nimpkish Processing Plant came under the management of the Nimpkish Development Corporation. The joint venture with Terrace Bay Resources collapsed and the Development Corporation was unable to find other sources of capital. Finally, a major loan was secured from the Indian Economic Development Fund under the Department of Indian Affairs to aid in the construction of and capital equipment for the Processing Plant (now known as Nimpkish Sea Products). With the development impetus now on the plant and Council funds over extended, NOP's finances were further limited. Farm operations suffered.

Management success for the two projects has differed markedly. NERP's manager had his introduction to fishery technology through the Nimpkish salmon farming initiatives and related training programs in the mid 1970's. Most of his formal training was received through North Island College and Malaspina College in Nanaimo. He was initially hired as a general labourer. Since becoming manager in 1981 He continues his commitment to the expansion and further success of NERP. He has developed a core crew that has remained

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23 B.C. Research is a highly respected scientific research company located on the campus of the University of British Columbia. Their expertise includes both the physical and biological sciences.

the same for the last decade. Such management reassures DFO that continued funding will be efficiently and effectively utilized. NERP now stands as one of the most successful salmonid enhancement projects in the province.

Similar strong management did not develop with NOP. The first manager was from the community but the next two were Euro-Canadians from outside the community. The first manager was able to initiate farm operations, but became increasingly embroiled in the politics of the project's investors. Subsequent managers had to devote even more time to political elements. Their supervisory responsibilities suffered and workers became alienated. In the process of securing related financing and building the processing plant, someone forgot to count the oysters. Consultant reports of the time gave unrealistic inventory estimates, growth rates, and commercial sales. (Vigers, 1985) The Band and NOP's manager did not heed the related advice of one local marine biologist (Berry[24], 1988). Farm operations and the processing plant collapsed.

In summary, NERP continues to succeed because of consistent funding and training, and shared objectives between NBC and DFO. Strong management developed from these factors and became perhaps the leading element in the project's success. NOP's funding agency commitment was inconsistent from the start. The complexity of economic and political control over the project discouraged the evolution of strong management. The lack of long-term shared objectives between the Nimpkish Band Council and federal funding agencies led to the demise of NOP. To much emphasis went into the processing plant by 1988 rather than into running the oyster farm efficiently.

An additional set of issues often encumbers B.C. coastal Aboriginal economic development initiatives. These are federal-provincial jurisdictional issues. For example, biologists recognize six species of salmon. Five of these come under federal jurisdiction, while one is considered a "provincial fish". Most other marine species are federal, except

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[24] Mike Berry has worked with both NOP and NERP. He believes that oyster farming is still economically viable in booker Lagoon, perhaps more now than before. Scientific knowledge about oyster farming has greatly increased. Past mistakes with funding, labour and management provide valuable lessons and an excellent guide for the future.

marine plants, clams and oysters that are provincial. While a reserve may have a river running through it is a federal responsibility, the Province maintains that the river bed and the water itself are not a part of the reserve, rather they are owned by the Province. The list goes on *ad nauseam*. These jurisdictional divisions and the problems they cause are incomprehensible from the Aboriginal perspective that recognizes the interdependence and common origins of both physical and biological environmental elements. Bands often encounter related difficulties when seeking either federal or provincial financial support for projects that span both jurisdictions. Often, promising applications are rejected or simply not dealt with because of the unresolvable nature of jurisdictional issues.

The Nimpkish and other bands will continue to seek employment for their membership by identifying and pursuing often very innovative economic development programs. Doing so is indicative of an on-going Aboriginal commitment to improving self-sufficiency and working towards economic independence. Federal and provincial assistance in this regard is both appropriate and appreciated. However, federal and provincial agencies must respect the capability of Aboriginal peoples to identify and pursue developments that are appropriate for their communities. They must acknowledge Aboriginal capability to identify and pursue necessary worker training and to develop effective management. They must adopt a long-term strategy rather than insist on approaches that require viability within time periods or accounting cycles that ignore biological events, seasonal cycles or growth period requirements. They must not impose unrealistic requirements on projects that often can be met only by changing the fundamental nature of the project thereby imperiling its prospects for viability. Further, once agreements with agencies are reached, band-initiated projects must be held immune from the whims of federal and provincial politicians. Above all, an atmosphere must be established whereby agency funding criteria, scheduling, and accounting/reporting requirements serve the initiative, and not the reverse.

3.8 Infrastructure and Access to Capital

In the past, Alert Bay was the major port and service centre of the North Vancouver Island region. The community has developed all the modern services and amenities

including a ferry service that runs several times daily to Northern Vancouver Island; the North island highway connecting North Vancouver Island to the south, then by ferry again to Vancouver; small plane airport; docks, floats and breakwaters to service the commercial fishing fleet and transient vessels; postal service; hospital and health centre; RCMP detachment; schools; telephones; television; high quality and abundant water; sewers, garbage service; and even a budding recycling business.

The institutional elements are largely in place to locate, access and administer capital for Nimpkish economic development initiatives. Both the MTTC and Nimpkish Band Council employ economic development officers to perform these tasks. Under this section, we identify the principal funding sources for development projects in Alert Bay. We found that all funding agencies are given to excessive use of acronyms. To aid the reader, we have tried to limit their use, and to use bold text for frequently used program names.

First Citizens Fund: ANTC and ACCs

The provincial **First Citizen's Fund** (FCF) was restructured in late 1989. This program is intended for Aboriginal business initiatives that are unable to obtain funding from conventional sources. The fund now offers loans up to $75,000. The applicants must supply 10 per cent of the equity to illustrate commitment to their business. When 50 per cent of the loan and 50 per cent of the interest is repaid, then the rest of the debt is treated as a grant. The repayment period cannot exceed ten years. The provincial government contracts the **All Nations Trust Company** located in Kamloops, B.C. to review proposals and business plans. They determine if the projects are viable and therefore eligible. The **All Nations Trust Company** then sub-contracts to various **Aboriginal Capital Corporations** to supply the loan monies to applicants. **Aboriginal Capital Corporations** exist in Bella Bella and Prince Rupert but not in either Alert Bay or Port Hardy. (All Nations Trust Company phone interviews: 13/08/93).

The problem with this funding relationship is that the **All Nations Trust Company** is located in the interior of B.C. The differences between the interior and the coast makes it difficult for people from the interior to judge coastal project viability. The remedy for this problem is to further regionalise this program so that institutions similar to the **All Nations**

Trust Company operate in the coastal region and therefore have a more informed perspective from which to judge project viability. Through our discussions with a former loan applicant, we found that the eligibility criteria were unrealistically stringent. The applicant felt that the tough standards were a result of the pressures on the **All Nations Trust Company** to succeed. (Key informant interview: 17/08/93)

Other, informal provincial funding is occasionally available through ministerial channels. At present, the Kwakiutl Territorial Fisheries Commission is negotiating with the **Ministry of Agriculture and Food** and the **Ministry of the Environment, Land and Parks** for funds to support specific Aweetna-K'ula projects. Agreements are still pending (1994). There is a need to formalize some of these now-informal processes. Doing so would allow the applicant to be fully aware of ministry requirements, and would remove the problem where support could be withdrawn on political or bureaucratic whim. (Key informant interview: 06/08/93)

Canadian Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy (CAEDS)

This program is administered by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Aboriginal Economic Programs Branch of Industry, Science and Technology Canada; and **Canada Employment and Immigration Commission** (CEIC).CAEDS was created to be a one window approach to federal funding.

> "The key goal of the current initiative, developed in 1989, is to provide long-term employment and business opportunities to Canada's Aboriginal citizens by giving them the means to effectively manage their own businesses and economic institutions, and to establish meaningful job training and skill development programs." (Prudhomme, 1993)

The one window approach is an attempt to eradicate some of the barriers to Aboriginal economic development as exemplified by the Nimpkish Oyster Project previously discussed. The one window is also a method of centralizing the federal channels for Aboriginal economic development funds. To be eligible for **CAEDS** program loans under

umbrellas such as the **Aboriginal Business Development Program** (ABDP), 10 per cent applicant equity is required. Generating the necessary equity has always been a problem due to the isolated locations of Aboriginal communities, federal control over reserve lands and related lack of commercial lending options. A comprehensive list of these programs and respective federal department sponsors are given in volumes one and two of Prudhomme's (1993) Government Assistance for Canadian Business.

Canadian Job Strategy and Pathways to Success

The **Canadian Job Strategy** (CJS) was created by the federal government in 1985. It is not dedicated to Aboriginal initiatives. **Canadian Job Strategy** puts a new emphasis on job-oriented skills development with special attention being paid to women, Aboriginal peoples, visible minorities and persons with disabilities. **Canadian Job Strategy** was initiated through, and sponsored by CEIC. **Pathways to Success** programming through the CEIC came into being In 1990. With **Pathways to Success**, the focus on a one window approach was continued. The key element in **Pathways to Success** has been the evolution of the **District Advisory Board** (DAB). **District Advisory Board**s first came about through CEIC policy shifts in the mid-eighties. Discussions on the Nimpkish Oyster Project (section 3.7) illustrates the early **District Advisory Board** effectiveness.

Program structure relative to Alert Bay is as follows. Policy and funding dollars flow from CEIC to two destinations; Canada Employment Centres; and **Canadian Job Strategy**. Under **Canadian Job Strategy**, the Aboriginal Program officer functions as liaison between CEIC and the next level, the **District Advisory Board**. Alert Bay's **District Advisory Board** is called the **North Vancouver Island District Advisory Board**. All *Kwakwaka'wakw* are represented within this **District Advisory Board** by representation from the KDC and the MTTC. Policy and funding dollars and split at this level between the KDC and MTTC initiatives.

Under policy established in 1990/91, there are plans to create a system whereby **Regional Aboriginal Management Board**s (RAMBs) nominate up to two representatives for the **National Aboriginal Management Board** (NAMB) and are themselves composed

of representatives from each **Local Aboriginal Management Board** in the regions. **Regional Aboriginal Management Boards** support and adapt regional training and employment programs as they apply to **Local Aboriginal Management Boards** and provide a coordinating forum for policy affecting Aboriginal programs and services. Planned **Local Aboriginal Management Board** responsibilities will include;

a. Establishing and communicating local Aboriginal labour force development priorities, approving and allocating funds from the planned **Local Aboriginal Management Board** budget for local training, employment services ,labour market operations and related human resource development plans and projects from Aboriginal sponsors, groups or organizations based on established **Local Aboriginal Management Board** training and employment priorities and EIC (formerly CEIC) program criteria and policies,

b. Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of its labour market initiatives within the **Local Aboriginal Management Board** area.

c. electing at least one representative to the **Regional Aboriginal Management Boards**.

(Aboriginal Management Boards, Pathways to Success brief, EIC 1993)

The increasing shift towards regional focus seems appropriate. **District Advisory Boards** are being transformed into training associations with direct control over received allocations (Key informant interview: 15/08/93). However, policy control remains with EIC for defining program criteria. The problem of tailoring the project to fit the funding criteria remains. The criteria are still determined from the top down. Devolution here means Aboriginal control over received allocations with the added feature of a monitoring and review process via **Local Aboriginal Management Boards**. Additional information about all **Pathways to Success** programs is available through EIC.

Unemployment Insurance DUs

Amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act (1990) now provides for UI funds to be applied to **Developmental Uses** (DUs). **Developmental Uses** includes work

sharing, job creation, training, income support for trainees and self-employment assistance. The basic requirement is that the individual must be eligible for or be in receipt of UI benefits and must be referred to a **Developmental Uses** activity by an agent authorized by Employment and Immigration Canada (EIC). Policy regarding **Developmental Uses** flows from EIC to Canadian Employment Centres which are responsible for Unemployment Insurance. (**Developmental Uses** of Unemployment Insurance; guide for Aboriginal Management Boards Handbook, National Aboriginal Management Board 1992)

The collapse of the East Coast fisheries and the general recessionary climate within Canada was the impetus towards the UI Act amendments and subsequent EIC **Developmental Uses** programming. In Alert Bay, the seasonal nature of the workforce, especially the commercial fishers, generates little incentive for use of these UI programs. Although the commercial fisheries continue to decline, those who fished last year will go again next year. In this way, the situation here differs from that on the East Coast. Retraining aspects of this program do not fit the Alert Bay situation, yet EIC has shifted a considerable portion of their funds towards them. UI-sponsored job creation projects allow workers to use existing skills to participate in projects that must not duplicate existing jobs. Such projects offer more potential in Alert Bay. A boat maintenance project has been set up on southern Vancouver Island, and is a good example of a service that provides significant benefit for a fishing community. (Key informant interview: 06/08/93) The requirement in Alert Bay is for funds to be re-allocated from re-training to fill existing job vacancies, as it is currently used elsewhere in Canada, to job creation.

INAC-MTTC 'Flow Through' and SDU Revenue

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada provided additional funding through **Service Delivery Unit** (SDU) funds in 1989. Those funds were used by the MTTC to create an economic development officer and an economic development assistant officer positions. Since that time, flow through and **Service Delivery Unit** dollars have been steadily decreasing. In May 1993, the MTTC's Board of Directors made the decision to decentralize

all flow through and **Service Delivery Unit** funds to each member band on a *per capita* basis. As a result of cuts and decentralization, funding the economic development officers have shifted MTTC Advisory Services. Funding remained the same for the fiscal years 91/92 and 92/93. From the fiscal year of 92/93 to 93/94, $20,000 in **Service Delivery Unit** funds and $34,828 in flow through funds have been cut, representing a decrease of approximately 24.5 per cent. (Key informant interview: 9/08/93, and MTTC operating plan for 1993/94) For the Nimpkish Band, the decrease from the 92/93 budget is approximately 16 per cent. The Nimpkish Band used their economic development funding for the following;

a. employed a full time person as an Economic Development Officer
b. developed a youth centre on Nimpkish reserve
c. negotiations for hydro-electric development
d. negotiations to develop the Nimpkish breakwater
e. negotiations to construct a new Salmonid Enhancement Facility.
f. assisted band members with **Occupational Skills Training** (OST)
g. assisted several band operated projects with start up funds
h. negotiations for funding FRDA II on reserve lands
I. secured a Challenge 1993 program for summer students
j. secured a CJS General Project for four participants to conduct an Inventory Analysis of the Nimpkish watershed
k. secured funding for a Land Claims Researcher
l. representation on the District Advisory Board
m. attend other meetings representing the Nimpkish Band's business interests.

To summarize, Alert Bay's Aboriginal communities have several funding options at their disposal for economic development applications. Each program has its own criteria. Some of these are flexible, others very rigid. Making use of the programs will require a commitment to a continuing bureaucratic process. If we have learned the lessons of the recent past, the funding agencies will come and go. Those that persist may often transform in unpredictable directions with uncertain frequency. The enduring common element among them is that they originate at the top for delivery at the bottom. Nevertheless, the efforts of both federal and provincial funding agencies to seek ways to better serve the

economic development needs of the Aboriginal communities are to be applauded. Efforts at regionalising the delivery of programs is particularly appreciated. However, we expect little real improvement in benefit until the paternal, or top-down nature of the relationship between the agencies and Aboriginal people are removed.

3.9 Questionnaire Results

We were initially advised that we should collect some of the information to be used in this report using focus group methodology. Further, that a questionnaire process could not be accommodated in the time and budget constraints of this project. This advice was well taken. However, in order to adequately address some of the questions posed during this study, particularly under the goals and objectives of the Nimpkish Band, a questionnaire process was needed.

The questionnaire was drafted in late July and early August, 1993. Nimpkish Band personnel contributed to its preparation and eventual approval. The survey was conducted at the household level. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. a "Household General Form" addressed household reliance on the traditional economy while an "Individual Form" dealt with several questions about each household member. Summer is the busy season in Alert Bay. Assembling all household members in larger households during this time would have been impossible. Therefore, the survey was designed such that the interviewer to collect all of the information, both general and individual, by interviewing only one of the senior householders. Mechanisms were employed to maintain confidentiality. Questions related to "reliance on the traditional economy" were restricted to traditional food use because a larger examination of the "Potlatch" institution would have been unreasonably time consuming. Quantitative date relating to the use of salmon and other traditional foods is considered sensitive because the Nimpkish and other bands are currently in negotiation with Fisheries and Oceans on this very issue. We therefore limited our food-related questions to qualitative data only.

We sampled approximately 24 per cent, or 35 of the 145 on-reserve Nimpkish households. The household list was numbered sequentially from 1 to 145. a simple random sample of the households was selected. Eight spares were selected in the event

that some members of the main sample were unable, or unwilling to participate. All eight spares were eventually required. While much of the information collected was qualitative and therefore not easily analysed using routine statistical methods, the random nature of the sample selection process enabled the assumption that the questionnaire summary results closely reflect actual data for the on-reserve Nimpkish membership.

The survey was conducted between August 9th and 13th by two highly regarded band members. The interviewers were instructed about the survey content and protocol before interviewing began. Each then conducted a practice interview to resolve any content or protocol problems, and to develop a consistent approach. Following the survey, the interviewers reported that the survey process went very well. Most people were happy to have the opportunity to contribute to the study. However, a few households declined to participate while some others were unavailable. In spite of the anonymity of the survey process, some people declined to give information they considered to be sensitive. Many reasons were given. Most related to a mistrust of governments, and the use to which they may eventually have for the collected information. This mistrust is founded on decades of distressing experience, and particularly on the process by which the Canadian Government used informants to identify, prosecute and imprison those who continued to "Potlatch" after the institution was outlawed in the late 1800's.

Some of the information collected during this process has been incorporated into the body of the report. Other data, particularly tabular data, is given here and referred to from other report sections.

Reliance on the Traditional Economy

a total of 105 people resided in the 35 households in the sample. The number of residents per household ranged from 1 to 8, and averaged 3.0.

While several species of Pacific salmon are consumed by all households, The other foods mentioned and the number of households that use them are listed below. While most of the foods listed are consumed by most band members several times per year at

potlatches, feasts and other ceremonials, the list in Table 12 represents foods consumed in the household at regular meals.

Table 12. Traditional foods, other than salmon, consumed regularly

Food Item	Households	
	Number	Per cent
Clams (usually butter clams)	30	86 %
Seaweed (*Porphyra sp.*)	20	57 %
Crabs (dungeness)	18	51 %
Venison	9	26 %
Eulachons (candle-fish)	8	23 %
Grease (rendered from eulachons)	7	20 %
Herring eggs	5	14 %
Cod (includes several species)	5	14 %
Prawns and shrimp	4	11 %
Halibut	4	11 %
Abalone	2	6 %
Moose	2	6 %
Barnacles	1	3 %
Cockles	1	3 %
Mussels (blue and California)	1	3 %

Twenty-seven households (77 per cent) responded to the question concerning the utilization of more traditional foods if they were obtainable. Twenty-six of these (96 per cent) responded positively. Only one responded negatively. It is interesting to note that none of the interviewees indicated that they continue to use terrestrial plants such as berries, nettle shoots, crab-apples and other food and medicinal plants that were once commonly used. Both interviewers were surprised by the lack of diversity and low levels of use of traditional foods.

To assess the responses to the requirements for salmon for food, ceremonial and societal purposes we compared the numbers of households who responded "Not enough", "About enough" and "More than we need", respectively. The results are shown in Table 13.

Table 13. Household salmon requirements

Usage	Response						n
	Not enough		About enough		More than needed		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Food	14	41	18	53	2	6	34
Ceremonial	17	50	17	50	0	0	34
Societal	21	78	6	22	0	0	27
TOTALS:	**52**	**55**	**41**	**43**	**2**	**2**	**95**

Individual General Information

Table 14 summarizes the demographic data and education levels for the people in the sampled households. We noted the low numbers of people in the 10 - 18 and 19 - 27 age categories. We have been unable to find a satisfactory explanation for this. To determine mean grade levels, we assigned numbers to post-secondary education. For example, if a person completed grade 12, and went on to complete a 4-year university degree, his/her grade level was 16.

Table 14. Ages and education levels of those included in the questionnaire

Age group	Gender		No. of	Education:	
	M	F	people	Mean level	(n)
0 - 9	11	14	25		
10 - 18	4	6	11		
19 - 27	4	1	5	9.4	(5)
28 - 36	11	9	19	11.2	(18)
37 - 45	9	4	14	9.8	(12)
46 - 54	3	7	11	8.3	(9)
55 - 63	3	4	7	9.3	(7)
64 - 72	1	2	4	8.3	(3)
73 - 81	0	1	1	6	(1)
82 +	0	1	1	3	(1)
TOTALS	**46**	**49**	**98**	**9.9**	**(56)**

Occupations and Incomes

a total of 56 of the people surveyed were both in the employable age grouping of 19 to 64 and responded to the "primary occupation" question. Of these 56, 24 per cent relied

on Social Assistance (SA) payments to earn part or all of their annual income. About half of the SA recipients in the sample were either single parents supporting children, or had received an incapacitating injury earlier in their working lives.

46 per cent of the respondents derived their incomes from occupations other than fishing or SA. We included Home-maker in this category, even though this occupation does not normally generate a household income. Reported occupations and incomes were highly varied. Full-time professional incomes ranged between $38,000 and $49,000. Part-time service industry primary incomes were as low as $5,000, while most full-time service industry and trades incomes ranged from $18,000 to $30,000. Only three people reported an association with the forestry industry. One was still logging, the second had recently retired, and the third left the industry for unspecified reasons. Several people, especially those receiving SA, or at low income levels for other reasons, declined to give income-related information. We cannot therefore determine a reliable estimate of average on-reserve income as a calculated average would be higher than the true value by an undeterminable amount.

Six people reported incomes from secondary occupations. The secondary incomes ranged from $600 to $9,000. Three of the six listed carving as a secondary occupation.

34 of the 35 households gave sufficient information for an adequate assessment of household occupations. 15 of these households, or about 43 per cent had one or more fishermen contributing to the total household income. Twenty-three households gave sufficient information to estimate gross household incomes. They ranged widely from $3,600 for a single-person household receiving SA to $92,000 for a household with one fishing and one professional income. The average household income was approximately $21,000. Two biasing factors influence this estimate. Households supported wholly by SA are under-represented in the sample. This suggests that the estimate may be biased high. However, we have found several instances where individual incomes are under-reported. We believe that the two influences more-or-less balance, and that the estimate may be reasonably reliable. Extrapolated to include all 145 households, the total gross on-reserve income is approximately $3,045,000.

Goals and objectives

The question concerning aspirations (career goals) received a poor response. Only 39 people of a possible 73 over the age of eight gave relevant information. Most of those who did not respond were already gainfully employed. We can therefore interpret the responses as the aspirations of un- or under-employed people seeking a career or a career change. Fifteen of the 39 respondents (38 per cent) are seeking employment in the fishing industry. Two each would like to make their living in the tourist and arts development and marketing sectors. One seeks a logging career. Nineteen (49 per cent) are looking for alternative careers. The career choices mentioned include home-maker, carpentry, small business, business management, anthropological research, medical professions, janitor, computer programming, office work, cooking, and veterinarian. Low education levels and lack of locally available education and employment opportunities were given as the principal impediments to people pursuing their career goals.

Interviewees were asked to prioritize their response to the question concerning the economic development initiatives of the Nimpkish Band Council. They were asked to assign '1' to their first priority, and so on, to a maximum of 3 responses. To assess the responses, we reversed the numerical order of preference, and used the assignment as a point score. For example, if a response was '1' to the salmon fishing sector, a point score of '3' was assigned, and so on. The categories offered cover the principal economic sectors found currently and under development in Alert Bay. The results of the assessment are given in Table 15. Scores are broken out by key demographic categories. Point scores are converted to per cent scores to facilitate comparison between the categories.

Table 15. Economic development preferences

Sector	Point Scores									
	Youth 9 - 18		Men 19 - 54		Women 19 - 54		Elders 55 +		TOTALS	
	Score	%	Score	%	Score	%	Score	%	Score	%
Commercial Salmon Industry	11	21	56	31	30	24	17	21	114	26
Other Marine Resources	11	21	52	29	32	26	23	29	118	27
Arts Development/Marketing	9	17	27	15	26	21	14	18	76	17
Tourism	9	17	18	19	13	11	15	19	55	13
Logging/Forestry	0	0	11	6	6	5	3	4	20	5
Education	8	15	13	7	10	8	7	9	38	9
Recreation	5	9	2	1	4	3	0	0	11	2
Small Business	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
Hunting	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	0	3	1

The clear preference for Nimpkish Band's economic development initiatives falls in the areas of commercial salmon fisheries and the development of viable fisheries for other marine species. Preference for these two categories was nearly equal, except for the elders category who showed a preference for the latter. Marine resources were followed by arts development and marketing, and tourism which were similarly equally weighted except by women who showed a clear preference for the former. Logging and forestry received only about five per cent of the points for all groups except youth who gave no points to this sector. Education, recreation and hunting, are not, strictly speaking, economic sectors. They were however the principal items written in on the 'other' line provided on the questionnaire. Education received about nine per cent of the points in all groups except youth, where it received 15 per cent of the points. While education can be considered a career goal itself, the link between education and success in any chosen career is apparent.

4.0 Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Findings and recommendations are included at locations in the body of this report that is consistent with their context. We summarize them here for emphasis, to suggest methodology for implementation, and to aid the reader.

Generally, we found that the *Kwakwaka'wakw* and its member Bands originally had a well developed and complex economy. It was based on an abundant, but patchy distribution of resources. The success of the economy was based on a highly ordered society known today as the potlatch system, and on ownership of the resources and/or the rights and locations to harvest them. Societal structure and the economy were destabilized by devastating losses to introduced disease and later by the dedicated assimilationist actions of colonizers and by governments who represented their interests and those of the British Crown. It follows that **successful economic development will require restoring alienated lands and resource rights**.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge

We found that the relationship between the *Kwakwaka'wakw* and their marine resources developed over about 10,000 years, and that during this time, a system was developed that provided for the long-term sustainability of resource use. Further, contemporary management of the same resources has paid little attention to the former successful model. A general decline in the abundance of all species has parallelled the change to current practices. We recommended that **the long-evolved resource management model and conservation practices developed by the *Kwakwaka'wakw* and other coastal nations should be studied and understood, then applied in the contemporary context.**

The process for accomplishing this task must begin with accepting that current resource management practices are not effective when compared with those of the past. Establishing a process for leaning from past experience should be preceded by agreements between federal and provincial resource managers and First Nations. Some traditional elements may be easily identified and fit well with contemporary perspectives

and processes. An example of such an element is the local control and management of local stocks. The notion of commitment to place (Kew and Griggs, 1991) will play an important role here.

Other traditional elements will be quite different. For example, much traditional knowledge is still retained within the oral tradition. While First Nations may give it equal weight with written accounts, the relative value of the oral tradition is often lessened when scientists compare it to physical measurement and numeric data recorded in writing. They commonly refer to the former as anecdotal information. Without abandoning the scientific method, some modification of ideology will be needed in this regard. Other elements of traditional knowledge may be more difficult for contemporary managers to accept. Having a sense or feeling about the relative health of a resource exemplifies these aspects. The sense may be articulated, and based on knowledge passed down through the oral tradition, but often can't be proven in the scientific context. Traditional management may also be divided into active and passive elements. For example, a traditional fishery or fishing area may be passively abandoned for a time due to reduced catch per unit effort. Alternatively, harvesting pressure on a stock or at a location may be actively limited in the interest of conservation and to assure consistency of supply from season to season.

Without conducting the studies, it is premature to suggest **implementation plans**. However, they **should recognize the Aboriginal contribution by benefiting primarily Aboriginal people**. Implementation should be conducted gradually to enable full assessment of their benefits, and so that the existing structure of the fisheries and its current stake-holders do not suffer from sudden disruption.

Promises

The history of the relationship between European colonizers and First Nations has resulted in the alienation of rights and dispossession from lands. This process was initiated by the acceptance of undertakings that *Kwakwaka'wakw* would retain unencumbered access to, and use of their resources. These rights have been eroded over the years to the point where they are a vestige of their initial conception.

It is apparent that **the settlement of Comprehensive Claims is central to the economic recovery of the *Kwakwaka'wakw* bands**. British Columbia's coastal Aboriginal people have developed several initiatives since 1960 in the interest of gaining recognition for formerly promised rights. Methods used have included negotiation, direct action and court action. The most recent of these is the B.C. Treaty Commission process established in 1992. Regardless of the intent of this new process, **the foundation of unobstructed access to historically-owned resources on which the Douglas Treaties of 1851 and the reserve lands allocation processes in *Kwakwaka'wakw* territory were based, must be recognized and respected. The result of the pending negotiations must account for these and related understandings and agreements**.

Education

In the past, the Nimpkish Band recognized the inadequacies of the provincial school system in addressing the perspectives and needs of Aboriginal people. They therefore established their own school which has grown to be the best attended and most relevant elementary school on the island. A new school building is currently being built to replace the existing portable facilities.

As is the case elsewhere in Canadian society, **high quality elementary and secondary education remain indispensable to the future of Alert Bay's Aboriginal community, particularly in relation to economic development and employment opportunities as they presently exist, or as they will likely develop in the coming years. Addressing elementary and secondary school requirements is the essential first step before success can be expected in post-secondary training programs focused on specific technological or managerial skills. The curriculum should continue to incorporate *Kwakwaka'wakw* history, perspectives and values. Planning should begin now to expand services at the new school to include high school classes at least to the grade 10 level. Both Federal and Provincial governments should support the Band's lead and initiatives respecting education matters.**

Support should take the form of acceptance of direction planned by the Nimpkish Education Committee, as well as funding to support related initiatives.

While it may be unrealistic to expect the full range of post-secondary educational requirements to be addressed in Alert Bay, **North Island College should be encouraged to continue its innovative approach to addressing specific vocational needs and up-grading requirements. In addition, introductory-level undergraduate university courses should be initiated on a rotational basis such that a student may achieve the first two years of a university degree in stages over a reasonably short period**. Funding stability for the College is a persistent problem. In order for North Island College to continue to provide relevant training in Alert Bay, long-term planning must be supported by funding that is isolated from outside political expediency. There are **federal/provincial jurisdictional issues** associated with Aboriginal training and other post-secondary education. These issues **should be resolved to expedite long-term planning and funding security**.

Future Development

While the individual career interests of Nimpkish Band members are diverse, the directions that band members would like their leadership to pursue is clear. **The Nimpkish Band Council and staff should pursue the economic development in the areas of both salmon and non-salmonid marine resources with equal vigour, followed by arts development/marketing and tourism.** The Council should use the information gained during this study, combined with past experience with the NIDA plan and the problems with the NDC, to conduct a planning process and establish a new long-term plan for economic development. No-one knows better than the Band leadership and membership what directions the plan should take. There is therefore no need for Government participation or influence in the planning process. Once established, **the plans should be supported by federal and provincial governments without seeking to modify** them in light of what bureaucrats or politicians perceive that they should be doing *for* Aboriginal people.

Dispute Resolution

While internal conflicts do occur among band members over economic development issues, they seem to occur with no greater frequency than over other issues. With the exception of conflicts within the Band Council and administration which are addressed by consulting the Band's conflict of interest guidelines or instituting the incorporated grievance procedure, there is no formal dispute resolution process. We found that the lack of a good resolution process tended to impede progress in some instances.

Conflicts over economic development and other issues **could be successfully addressed through a formal dispute resolution process**. While we feel comfortable in this recommendation, we as not as confident about proposing the form it should take. Some suggestions mentioned to us during this study include a referendum process incorporated into band general meetings or elections; changing the nature or make-up of the Council so that it was more representative of the varied interests in the community; and establishing a Council of Elders that could render decisions about various disagreements by interpreting them from a traditional perspective. While it is entirely the business of Council which method to adopt, if any, **the notion of a Council of Elders has the greatest appeal to the authors**. Such a council could be informal, or alternatively, formally established by election or by some other method. Decisions rendered by the council could be advisory in nature with the band leadership basing their decisions on their advice. In this instance, the Elders Council would function similarly to a senate. Their advice could alternatively be conclusive, in which case the Elders Council would function as does a Court of Appeal.

Gender Issues

We found that women in *Kwakwaka'wakw*, and hence Nimpkish, society experience most of the problems associated with gender as do women in the larger Canadian society. We found no gender-related problems attributable directly to being Nimpkish or *Kwakwaka'wakw*. **We concluded that gender relations will continue to evolve to the satisfaction of the Alert Bay Aboriginal community, but not necessarily at the same**

pace or within the same elements as those in the dominant Canadian society. There was no indication that the Nimpkish Band membership would benefit from specific outside influence in this regard.

Traditional Economies

We found that many elements of Alert Bay's traditional economy, such as eulachon fisheries, trade in *g'leena*, the use of and trade in salmon and other food resources, the economy of the potlatch, and others all function in the absence of outside government interference. They provide for widely distributed benefits. However, outside influences remain in many important areas that were an integral part of the traditional economy. Most of these relate to obtaining and maintaining economic control of historically *Kwakwaka'wakw*-owned resources. For example, **the arbitrary ban on the sale of "food fish" is completely inconsistent with the importance of fishery resources in *Kwakwaka'wakw* society.** While colonizers justify maintaining their control in the interest of conservation, the real effect of the ban is to alienate *Kwakwaka'wakw* from the economic aspects of their fisheries by assigning them to the colonizers. **The ban cannot be justified on conservation grounds any more than the criminalization of the potlatch in the 1920's could be justified under the colonizers assimilationist rationale and agenda**. *Kwakwaka'wakw* including Nimpkish always have and likely always will trade and sell fish both within and outside the Aboriginal community. **Recognizing and restoring the economic aspects of these rights by decriminalizing them will go a long way to re-establishing the economic well-being of Canada's Aboriginal people generally, and especially those for whom fisheries constitute the dominant element of their economy.**

The Government of Canada should not interfere with the remaining elements of the internal economies of the Aboriginal people of Alert Bay. They should re-examine the paradox underlying their "food fish" policy as it relates to their "conservation" mandate. They should then work to restore the *Kwakwaka'wakw* fisheries to their prior state, including economic aspects. The Canadian Government

should seek to mitigate societal and individual damages consequential to their current policy by aiding Aboriginal people in gaining access to boats, gear and licenses for use in domestic and commercial fisheries; by implementing rigorous sport and commercial closures for those species that have been depleted by those users; and by initiating intensive restoration programs for depleted species and the habitat that supports them.

Economic Assistance

Aboriginal people have participated in good faith in numerous development-oriented funding programs in the past several decades. It is unfortunate that the good faith has not been reciprocated. Rather, funding programs have been initiated then cut back with ebb and flow of political expediency. In addition, funding programs have often been established with little regard to the nature of the programs and projects they will eventually address. This has resulted in a fit problem between projects and funding programs, where a project's viability must be jeopardised by tailoring it to fit the funding criteria. These factors have led to the widely held belief that Aboriginal economic development projects are designed to fail from the beginning.

In spite of these difficulties, the Nimpkish and other bands will continue to seek employment and business opportunity for their membership by identifying and pursuing often very innovative programs. Doing so is indicative of an on-going Aboriginal commitment to improving self-sufficiency and working towards economic independence. Federal and provincial assistance in this regard is both appropriate and appreciated. However, **federal and provincial agencies must respect the capability of Aboriginal peoples to identify and pursue developments that are appropriate for their communities. They must acknowledge Aboriginal capability to identify and pursue necessary worker training and to develop effective management. They must adopt a long-term strategy rather than insist on approaches that require viability within time periods or accounting cycles that ignore biological or seasonal cycles or other aspects of the real world. They must not impose unrealistic requirements on**

projects that often can be met only by changing the fundamental nature of the project. Further, once agreements with agencies are reached, **band-initiated projects must be held immune from the vagaries bureaucratic or political expediency. Above all, an atmosphere must be established whereby agency funding criteria, scheduling, and accounting/reporting requirements serve the initiative, and not the reverse.**

While it is tempting to propose a design for the delivery of federal assistance to Aboriginal economic development initiatives, no one design could address the diversity of backgrounds, situations, and aspirations found in Canada's First Nations. It follows that the central feature of any such program, if it is to be successful, will be flexibility in all its elements. If such a program was to be successful in addressing Nimpkish projects, it would recognize the risk and long lead time associated with developing innovative programs. It would accommodate biological cycles and other time-related natural phenomena. It would address training requirements both to adapt members of the existing work force to new occupations and to train prospective new employees at a much earlier stage in the education process. It would address the need for the band to hire the best available outside expertise on a temporary basis, particularly during early project stages. Although the need for accountability is acknowledged, no reporting or accounting requirements or criteria would be allowed to unfavourably affect project viability. The program would assist the Band in overcoming federal/provincial jurisdictional issues that would otherwise jeopardies success. And finally, once committed to the Band project, the program would remain committed without regard to the outside political environment at the time when the project is initiated, or as it may change as the project proceeds.

In closing, we submit a general finding of the authors. For one of us, conducting this study was the first prolonged direct association with Canada's First Nations after earning a degree in Anthropology. For another, this study marked 13 years of experience and study starting with attending *T'lisalagi'lakw* school during its first three years of operation. For the third, it marked 19 years of economic development work with the Nimpkish, other *Kwakwaka'wakw* bands, and Bands from several other nations whose home is British Columbia's west coast. While we are generally optimistic about this Royal Commission process, and eagerly await its outcome and eventual implementation, we have realized for

some time that **nothing can be accomplished under the current authoritarian relationship between Ottawa and Canada's Aboriginal people. We recommend without reservation that this relationship be abandoned in favour of an equal and equitable alliance between nations.**

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