

**RESTRICTED**

**STATUS REPORT  
ON WILDLIFE RESOURCES  
IN BRITISH COLUMBIA  
IN RELATION TO  
THE INDIAN PEOPLE  
OF THE PROVINCE**

*Prepared For*

**DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS  
AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT**

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*Environmental and Resource Management Consultants. Vancouver, B.C.*





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by  
HOWARD PAISH & ASSOCIATES LTD.  
Environmental and Resource Management Consultants



MARCH 1973

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## INTRODUCTION

This report sets out the results of a study undertaken on behalf of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development "to investigate the status of wildlife resources in British Columbia in relationship to the Indian people of the province."

The main purpose of the study was to provide a status report on the administration and management of wildlife resources as they involve Indian people and to undertake a base-line inventory of trapping, game guiding, sport fishing activity and domestic use of wildlife resources by Indians.

On the basis of the assessment of existing administrative and management responsibilities and on the basis of the inventory information, the study called for the outlining of more detailed investigations that might be needed to establish policy guidelines for the Department of Indian Affairs for the management of wildlife resources as they involve Status Indian people.

For an overview study of this type where a status report is being prepared on a complex topic that has been changing quite drastically in recent years, important facets of information come to light as the study progresses. Through maintaining a close contact with the Vancouver

Introduction (cont'd.)

office of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, we have been able to keep the study program flexible enough to take advantage of new and more useful directions that the study could take, that were not anticipated when the original terms of reference were drawn up.

The terms of reference for the study called for four major areas of investigation.

- A. Wildlife resource administration
- B. Trapping
- C. Big game guiding, outfitting and sports fishing.
- D. Study requirements needed to establish policy guidelines related to wildlife and sports fishery resources.

The study results are organized under these four main headings and are preceded by a general section on the study methods that were adopted.

Since the first section of the study results will deal with the present administration of wildlife resources as they relate to Indian people, we will include at that point some general material that would otherwise have been incorporated in an introduction.

## STUDY METHODS

In the assembly of inventory-type information and information that would indicate the study requirements that would be needed to establish policy guidelines with respect to wildlife resources as they relate to Indian people, the initial emphasis was placed on an overview of existing administrative arrangements. Specifically this involved:

- A. A review of the history of D.I.A.N.D. involvement in wildlife programs in British Columbia.
- B. Examination of pertinent file material, earlier studies etc., available in D.I.A.N.D. Vancouver offices.
- C. Discussions with provincial fish and wildlife branch officials responsible for fur management programs and big game guiding.
- D. Discussions with the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs.

On the basis of these preliminary discussions it was felt that the first approach to gathering detailed information would be to meet with appropriate Fish and Wildlife Branch and D.I.A.N.D. officials in the areas where the heaviest interaction between wildlife and native people exists (primarily the Kamloops-Cariboo region and the Prince George region for the B.C. Fish and Wildlife Branch) - in short the bulk of the province north of the 53rd degree of latitude. In a preliminary

Study Methods (cont'd.)

study of this type it was possible on the basis of early information to determine those parts of the province where the subject matter of the study had highest priority. While the study called for a regional assessment it was agreed in consultation with the study supervisor that, at this stage, on-site discussions in every region would add little to the information that could be obtained directly from Conservation Officers.

Meetings were held with the Department of Indian Affairs officials in Vernon, Kamloops, Williams Lake, Prince George, Hazelton, Terrace, Prince Rupert and Vancouver. Meetings were held with regional staff of the Department of Recreation and Conservation and a majority of the Conservation Officers responsible for detachments where Indian involvement in wildlife resources was significant.

Existing records and files were examined in detail and methods of recording information were carefully noted with a view to determining the best means of obtaining more specific statistical information both for the purposes of this study, and for further work that the department might wish to initiate in this field.

Discussions with Indian people, the Fish and Wildlife Branch, the Department of Indian Affairs and other people with an interest in the problem were wide-ranging and aimed at obtaining information that would be applicable at both a local and province-wide level.

Study Methods (cont'd.)

The results of these meetings were reviewed carefully and it was felt that the best source of more detailed specific information would be through Conservation Officers of the Department of Recreation and Conservation who are responsible for keeping detailed local records. They also seem to be the best source of local "grass-roots" knowledge that can best be obtained by people working close to the kind of problems that the study sets out to appraise. A questionnaire (Appendix I) was mailed to all B.C. Conservation Officers.

Once the questionnaires (on which 100% return was obtained) were appraised, further meetings were held with representatives of the B.C. Fish and Wildlife Branch, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs prior to the writing of this final report.



A. WILDLIFE RESOURCE ADMINISTRATION

The terms of reference called for:

"the contractor to provide a review, regionally of the manner and effectiveness in which the Department of Indian Affairs is currently involved as a Department in the administration, management and organization of Indian people in the wildlife resources of trapping, game guiding, outfitting, sport fishing where applicable as well as Indian dependence on wildlife for food."

The time deadlines and budget for the study would have been completely expended had we concentrated on this facet of the study in every district. Instead we concentrated on those parts of the province where trapping, big game guiding and Indian interaction with wildlife were most significant. It was recognized that in taking this approach some local problems, beyond the scope of this study, would be missed. However, it should be stressed from the outset that the study did not set out to resolve particular problems, but rather to establish a broad base within which specific problems can be realistically assessed and solved.

On the basis of our review of records kept by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development regional offices, the B.C. Fish and Wildlife Branch, regional and local Conservation Officers'

Wildlife Resource Administration (cont'd.)

records, the following conclusions were reached.

(i) The Fish and Wildlife Branch provide the most accurate and up to date records of trapping and guiding activity from a resource administration standpoint. Records may vary from region to region and among conservation officer detachments, but for the most part - and this is particularly true in the areas where the subject matter of this study is most appropriate - trapline administration records are as up to date as can reasonably be expected. Mapping of these traplines has been undertaken in most instances, and in the case of the Prince George region, covering the most significant single region within the province, the records are maintained and mapped at the regional office. A certain amount of leg work would be involved in providing up to date status records and maps for all traplines in the province, but this would be a straight forward assignment and could be undertaken with relatively little difficulty.

Big game guiding records, with respect to territory boundaries and success records are kept by the Fish and Wildlife Branch.

Records of the issuance of food permits are also maintained by Conservation Officers, and some Conservation Officers are initiating follow-up programs to determine the utilization of these food permits.

Wildlife Resource Administration (cont'd.)

(ii) The records in the D.I.A.N.D. offices relate more to specific problems that individual Indians encounter with respect to trapping and guiding problems. Records of specific problems over trapline tenure and trapline transfer, records of financial assistance for game guiding operations and similar "people-oriented" matters understandably dominated the regional D.I.A.N.D. records.

Obviously time did not permit, nor did the study requirements call for, a document by document assessment of files; however, registration records of traplines by bands and by agencies were generally available, and these, cross-checked with the Department of Recreation and Conservation records, could lead to an accurate updating of trapline ownership and guide territory aspects of wildlife resources as they relate to Indian people.

(iii) A wealth of information is available in the Vancouver office of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and local information is available at some regional offices that we visited. This material indicated considerable efforts over the past 20 years, at least, to set up a sound wildlife program. However, outside of the Vancouver office, major involvement in wildlife programs does not appear to have been a high item of priority.

This is not really surprising since other more immediate and



Wildlife Resource Administration (cont'd.)

more measurable aspects of resource use, particularly in the light of programs geared towards encouraging Indians to participate more actively in white society, naturally de-emphasize the Indian's interaction with wildlife. Wildlife resource management has not rated particularly high in the overall priorities for development in B.C., because for a long time wildlife has been taken for granted, and it is not surprising that the same kind of response is apparent in D.I.A.N.D. priorities.

As we shall indicate in a later section of the report, shifting social priorities and new economic potentials related to wildlife and outdoor recreation suggest a change in emphasis.

(iv) The keeping of parallel records by the Fish and Wildlife Branch and D.I.A.N.D. has been made particularly difficult by the different boundaries of the administrative units of the respective departments. For the purposes of this study, and we would strongly suggest that for the purposes of any immediate follow-up, the Fish and Wildlife administrative boundaries are most appropriate for obtaining information on everything to do with the actual resource base and Indian involvement in it. It would be a relatively straightforward, although somewhat time-consuming assignment, to relate information from one set of geographical boundaries to another. For the purposes of this study we have arranged statistical information to coincide with the Game

Wildlife Resource Administration (cont'd.)

Management regions, (groupings of game management areas) adopted by the provincial Fish and Wildlife Branch.

(v) As we have already indicated, we have not attempted to make a detailed review of the records at each D. I. A. N. D. office but have concentrated our efforts on those districts where the subject matter of the study has highest priority.

Our earlier remarks on the general status of information maintained at regional offices applied to all of the D. I. A. N. D. offices that we visited. The Prince George office however, perhaps because of a personal interest by Mr. McIntyre, seemed to enjoy the closest liaison with the provincial Fish and Wildlife branch and seemed to be best equipped to deal with the administration, management and organization of wildlife resources in relation to Indian people.

(vi) The mobility of D. I. A. N. D. staff between regions has not made the establishment of consistent wildlife programs within regions particularly easy. Most of the D. I. A. N. D. officials with whom we discussed the problem were interested, but probably because of an apparent low priority for wildlife programs within the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, they seemed quite happy to let the provincial Fish and Wildlife Branch carry the bulk of the immediate administrative responsibilities with respect to wildlife resources and Indian people, and

Wildlife Resource Administration (cont'd.)

leave other problems to the B. C. / Yukon regional office.

It should also be noted that an understanding of wildlife resources administration and a capacity to project future trends in the field calls for specialized knowledge, and again it's quite understandable that with specialists available in the Fish and Wildlife Branch the bulk of the responsibility should have been left with that department. Again we noted that in the D. I. A. N. D. district offices where personal interest in wildlife resources by D. I. A. N. D. staff was apparent, there was more appreciation and concern for wildlife programs. It should be stressed however, that specialized problems such as fur marketing and the establishment of reliable game guiding operations, as two specific examples, call for specialized skills. It is perhaps expecting a little too much of local staff to be able to deal with both the problems and the commercial opportunities in this specialized field, particularly when the bulk of the administrative responsibilities are already being taken care of by another arm of government.

More specific comment on this aspect of the problem will be made in dealing with specific sections of this report on trapping, big game guiding and dependence on wildlife for food.



B. TRAPPING

The terms of reference called for the consultant  
"to undertake on a regional basis a preliminary assessment  
of the status of traplines held by Indians in British Columbia  
to include:

- (i) an indication of the percentage of the total number of traplines held by Indians and a broad estimate of the number who are actually trapping and the number of dependents involved.
- (ii) a broad assessment of their current state of use.
- (iii) an assessment of the total number of traplines held by Indians in British Columbia on a regional basis.
- (iv) a broad appraisal of the value of these traplines.
- (v) a broad appraisal of the potential use of these traplines."

As we have indicated in the study method section we have been able to obtain statistical information from the Conservation Officers and the information required in questions (a), (b), and (c) is detailed in tabular form and will be the subject of comment later in the section.

Some general comments on the background to trapping must be made, however, in order to place this statistical information into some sort of perspective.

Trapping (cont'd.)

Without going into a detailed history of trapping in British Columbia the registered trapline system was established in the late 1920's primarily as a conservation measure rather than an administrative measure. Fluctuations in fur prices over the years, coupled with increased opening up of the remote areas of the province and the availability of alternative employment opportunities, has meant that trapping has become increasingly less important as a means of livelihood in the province. Compulsory school attendance also had an effect on the mobility of the family - and mobility was essential to trapping. This probably applies to Indian trappers more than to white trappers.

In administrative terms, as far as the B.C. Fish and Wildlife Branch is concerned, again trapping has become a less important function than it was when the registered trapline concept was first introduced. Other priorities in public demands have resulted in a shift in emphasis by the Branch.

During the past twenty years many dramatic changes have taken place in resource development in British Columbia. Hydro electric development, increasing land settlement, accelerated forestry and mining developments and the opening up of new transportation corridors have all led to a reduction in total wild land area and the inevitable impact upon wildlife both through loss of habitat and disruption. While fur-bearers

Trapping (cont'd.)

have been mentioned frequently in the sporadic and relatively superficial assessments that have been made of environmental impact of these other resource development activities, the main emphasis has been on other forms of wildlife. These accelerated resource development programs have removed a substantial number of traplines from production (whether they were trapped or not) and have changed many others.

Most of the wildlife management activity in the province has, until quite recently, concentrated on big game animals because this is where public interest was highest.

The provincial fur biologist position is primarily an administrative function, and few management funds are allocated to research on furbearing species, or for any serious approach to applied management of furbearers. In view of the comparatively lower interest in fur species as compared to big game species, this is not surprising.

One noticeable shift in trapline use is the increasing emphasis on trapping as a hobby activity. This appears to apply to both Indian traplines and white traplines. The advent of the snowmobile, making it much easier to travel a trapline route, probably contributed to this.

While it is difficult to draw the line between part-time or hobby trapping



Trapping (cont'd.)

and full-time trapping, it would appear from our discussions with Conservation Officers and from their comments on their questionnaire returns that the trend towards part-time and hobby trapping is increasing.

A further complicating factor that makes trapline administration and the obtaining of adequate statistics difficult is the fact that Indians are not required to report their fur take; consequently information on the current state of use of the traplines and on estimated income from these traplines are at best informed estimates.

\* \* \*

A final and critically important aspect of trapping and trapline ownership that must be considered in this study is the cultural significance of the trapline to Indian people. The trapline is far more than an economic asset. In many instances Indian trapline registrations follow traditional family and tribal hunting area boundaries and, to the owner of that line, it implies far more than the simple ownership of the right to trap. A detailed analysis of this aspect of trapline importance would be a complete study in itself, but it must be stressed to underscore the fact that to look upon traplines in economic terms alone is inadequate.

\* \* \*

Table I gives a statistical breakdown on the questions posed in the terms of reference on a regional basis.



TABLE I

## TRAPPING

	Region I GMA 1. <u>Vancouver Island</u>	Region II GMA 2, 3, 4. <u>Lower Mainland</u>	Region III GMA 12, 13, 14, 15. <u>Kamloops Region</u>	Region IV GMA 5, 6, 7, 8. <u>Okanagan</u>	Region V GMA 9, 10 11. <u>Kootenay</u>	Region VI GMA 16, 17, 18, 19. <u>Cariboo- Chilcotin</u>	Region VII GMA 20, 21, 22. <u>Prince George Region</u>	Region VIII GMA 23, 24, 25. <u>Skeena</u>	Region IX GMA 26, 27, 28. <u>Northern B. C.</u>	TOTAL <u>                    </u>
Total Number of Trapslines.	345	164	37	75	116	505	443	625	434	2,653
Number of lines held by Indians and Indian Bands	222 64%	63 38%	25 67%	26 35%	21 18%	371 73%	238 54%	469 75%	228 66%	1,663 63%
Estimated % of Indian lines currently being used	No Estimate	Very Low	20%	Very Low	20%	No Estimate	45%	50%	30%	
Estimated % of white lines being used	85%	20%	80%	50%	40%	50%	85%	70%	50%	



## 1. STATISTICAL INFORMATION

This statistical information has been gathered from questionnaires circulated to all Conservation Officers in the province. The actual figures relating to the number of traplines and the numbers held by Indians and Indian bands are taken directly from records. Naturally there will always be some discrepancy in numbers since traplines are changing hands and records cannot always be quickly updated, particularly with respect to Indian traplines.

The figures on estimated use of the traplines are estimates based on the experience of the local Conservation Officers. Estimates of the Indians' use of their lines are difficult to obtain since Indians are not required to file returns on their trapping success.

It can be seen that the total number of traplines in the province is 2,653; of these 1,663, or 63%, are held by Indians or by Indian bands.

It is extremely difficult to estimate the total number of dependents involved at this level. The 1,663 figure is not an accurate assessment of the total number of families involved since that number also includes band lines which may support a number of trappers. In addition there are trapline partnerships and other arrangements that could only be established by a more detailed examination.

Statistical Information (cont'd.)

The estimate of the current state of use of Indian traplines ranges from "very low" (less than 10%) to approximately 50%. It is interesting to note the comparable figures for white trappers which range from 20% to 85%.

Information was sought on the actual value of fur trapped and estimates varied substantially, again, because Indians are not required to report their fur take. Obtaining information from fur buyers would be a very painstaking job since many fur deals are simply spot cash sales, and such an approach would be well beyond the scope of this study.

Estimates of average annual gross income from trapping varied widely from detachment to detachment but ranged from zero to a maximum of \$300. These figures are for average annual gross incomes from trappers actually trapping in a given detachment. The average annual income range from trapping for white trappers operating within detachments ranged from a low of \$75 to a high of \$1,200. Again it must be stressed that these are averages. Several well-substantiated reports indicate that trapping incomes in excess of \$10,000 will be obtained by some individual Indian and white trappers during the current trapping season.

a. Trapline Values

The registered trapline gives a trapper a user-right to trap fur-bearing animals subject to existing regulations on that line. Obviously the amount of fur that can be trapped from a given trapline will depend on the physical and natural features of the line that contribute to the production of fur-bearing animals. In addition to the productive capacity of the line the value of a trapline would also depend upon its relative accessibility and assets - cabins, marked trails, etc.-associated with it. With variables of this type it should be clear that any attempt to apply an arbitrary value to traplines simply by multiplying the number of traplines in the province by a set amount is a serious over simplification and could be misleading.

Compensation figures established for the loss of traplines flooded by the Peace Reservoir project range from a low of \$200 to a high of \$4,600 for a single trapline. An average figure seemed to be in the order of \$2,000 to \$2,500. These lines would have been river bottom lines in good fur-producing country. The valuation for these lines was based on the amount of trapline flooded, productivity of the line, the loss of tangible assets, the number of beaver seals requested over one year and the loss of well-kept trails. It was estimated that a line which had an annual sustained yield of 60 beaver was considered to be worth \$5,000 with no other fur included.



Trapline Values (cont'd.)

This system of evaluation used the beaver as the yardstick, and this might not be appropriate in the light of the present high fur values for other species such as wolverine and lynx.

In addition to compensation for flooded traplines it has been possible to get some verbal information on the value of traplines that have changed hands in recent years. A concensus of opinion among Conservation Officers with whom this point was discussed suggests that the \$2,500 average set as a compensation figure would be a fair price for an average trapline (if such a thing exists).

Using the \$2,500 figure as an average value of a trapline and multiplying this by the total number of traplines held by individual Indians and by Indian bands we arrive at a figure of \$4,157,500 for the province. The terms of reference called for a broad appraisal and this is an appraisal based on the likely current market values of lines. More detailed investigations of the basis for valuing a trapline and an assessment of the value of the line based on an anticipated sustained yield of fur would be alternative methods of arriving at a very broad general figure. However, we have indicated that the most realistic approach would have to take into account the different types of lines being valued, and if an economic approach to trapline assessment is being seriously considered, a more sophisticated assessment of values based on actual line capability would be required.

b. Potential Trapline Use

Unpredictability has historically been the major characteristic of the fur market and predictions on future trapline use must be considered bearing this in mind. The ultimate criterion for economic trapping is the viability of the fur market, but the future of trapping will be affected by more than economic factors.

The trend towards an increasing level of resource development in British Columbia will inevitably lead to a reduction of the total amount of habitat available for fur-bearers; however, since we are probably not trapping anywhere near the sustained yield capability of most traplines this may not be a particularly significant factor. However, the availability of new jobs brought about by new resource developments will increasingly make existing approaches to trapping less attractive.

The second factor that must be borne in mind is the campaign that is now being waged against the leg-hold trap. The international humanitarian movement has been relatively successful in halting the traffic in the hides of a number of endangered species and has more recently been successful in Canada with respect to the Gulf of St. Lawrence seal hunts. A major campaign is now being waged against the use of the leg-hold trap. While rational opponents to the leg-hold trap will not argue against trapping "per se", many of the people

Potential Trapline Use (cont'd.)

opposing the leg-hold trap are simply opposing the killing of wild animals. The present sharp increase in fur prices might quite possibly be a response by the international fur trade to possible future fur shortage resulting from limitations on trapping.

Few can argue with the basic humanitarian argument against the leg-hold trap. Politicians are already coming under pressure to oppose its use and under these kinds of pressures they will likely provide the financial support that will lead to the production of a reliable humane trap. The introduction of such a trap would involve capital for the replacement of existing traps and, equally important for people unaccustomed to change, difficulty in adjusting to newer and more difficult - and to a trapper more dangerous - form of trap.

These have been negative arguments. On the plus side there is the fact that fur prices have gone up rapidly during the past year and this trend may hold for several seasons.

Part-time trapping and hobby trapping are still likely to continue and these are important ways of maintaining important aspects of a lifestyle while still enjoying some of the prosperity that expanding resource development brings.

A further positive factor is the possibility of integrating traplines

Potential Trapline Use (cont'd.)

with a broader approach to outdoor recreational use. Trails and cabins can perform more than one function. The idea of "selling" trapping as a recreational pursuit for visitors may or may not be appealing, but trapping as part of a total, well-planned and well-conducted winter wilderness holiday package could be important.

One key purpose of this overview study is to identify future areas that need a more detailed examination. The whole question of better trapline organization, the consideration of more commercially-oriented trapping being conducted through the Indian bands, the possibility of establishment of an Indian fur marketing cooperative and the possibility of undertaking training programs to enable Indian people to become more efficient trappers are worth considering.

In summary, unpredictability has been the watchword for the trapper and there are both positive and negative factors that still have to be weighed in considering potential future use of traplines. On the positive side are the present upward trend in fur prices, the possibility of integrating trapping activity with other winter recreational activities and the possibility of a more business-like approach to the commercial aspects of trapping. On the negative side are possible limitations on trapping for humanitarian reasons and the impact that increased resource development programs might have on traplines. Equally important are the

Potential Trapline Use (cont'd.)

cultural implications of trapline use in a society where the "white" way of doing things is constantly impinging on a traditional lifestyle.

A trapline represents an important symbolic link with the land.



C. BIG GAME GUIDING, OUTFITTING AND SPORTS FISHING

The terms of reference for the study call for:

"an overview assessment on a regional basis of Indian involvement in big game guiding and outfitting with particular reference to:

- (i) Big game territories currently held by Indians and an estimate of their status, present and potential operation, use, value and potential.
- (ii) Employment opportunities afforded to Indians by big game guiding; a general assessment of income derived by Indians from this source, and an assessment of the potential for future employment or participation in this field."

While this section of the report is entitled "Big Game Guiding and Outfitting", it should be recognized from the outset that outfitting does not apply only to big game guiding; as we shall point out later in this report, there is a potential for catering to outdoor recreationists other than big game hunters that will eventually outstrip the traditional big game guiding activity.

The non-resident hunter in British Columbia is required to use the services of a licensed guide. The province is divided into territories

Big Game Guiding, Outfitting and Sports Fishing (cont'd.)

within which the guide-outfitter who holds the territory has the exclusive right to guide non-resident hunters. It is possible to obtain a tenure on the guiding territory for periods of from 7 to 15 years, which, in effect, means that the territory itself is looked upon by guides as a saleable asset. The holding of a guiding territory does not give the license holder exclusive hunting rights in the area with respect to B.C. residents; neither does it legally prevent any other person with a legitimate trade license from outfitting resident hunters or outfitting non-resident tourists.

Some big game guiding is still carried out under a "block" system that is being phased out. Under this arrangement a number of guides share a block of land as a territory and make arrangements among themselves on their activity within that block.

Virtually all of the remarks made earlier about the impact of accelerated resource development on fur-bearing animals applies to big game animals, and in most instances, in a far more serious manner. The larger animals are more readily affected by drastic changes in their habitat and by extensive human encroachment.

A major conflict is also shaping up between the resident and non-resident hunting use of wildlife resources. There has been relatively uneasy cooperation between the guides and the resident sportsmen for some

Big Game Guiding, Outfitting and Sports Fishing (cont'd.)

years, during which time both groups have tried to concentrate on their common interests rather than their differences. However, with increasing affluence and mobility leading to more B.C. hunters becoming interested in trophy species, competition is building up, and permit systems are anticipated that will inevitably mean that there will be fewer animals available for non-resident hunters who provide almost the entire income to big game guides.

A 1968 report on the economics of big game hunting in British Columbia indicated that total revenues from big game guiding in all of British Columbia in 1966 were a little under 2.4 million dollars and the current profit per guide operator was estimated at a little over \$1,500 with close to 25% of the guides showing an actual loss. Average total investment per big game outfit in the province was estimated at \$8,089 with a total investment in all outfits in the province of a little under 4 million dollars.

The average daily income for guide operators (not assistant guides) was only \$12.76 per day!

The authors of the report concluded that almost 2/3 of the total number of guide operators could have earned more by devoting their labour, capital and other resources to other occupations, and that "the guiding

Big Game Guiding, Outfitting and Sports Fishing (cont'd.)

industry as a whole is in an extremely unhealthy economic condition'.

It must be stressed that these comments apply to the traditional big game guiding operation.

## 1. STATISTICAL INFORMATION

The statistical information on guiding territories and on the numbers of Indians employed as assistant guides and estimates on other numbers of Indians employed in guiding operations were obtained directly from the Conservation Officers. Information on incomes was derived from discussions with several guide outfitters, on the basis of information from other investigations that we have undertaken, and from Pearse-Bowden's 1968 publication "Non-Resident Big Game Hunting and the Guiding Industry in British Columbia".

The information on the numbers of people involved in the guiding industry is set out in Table II.

There are substantial differences between guiding territories and their potential in different parts of the province and it is important to consider statistical information in this light. Again, the scope of the study called for an overview assessment, not a detailed assessment of each operation which would ultimately be necessary.

It can be seen that a little over 10% of the guiding territories within the province are actually held by Indians - a very low percentage compared with trapping. It should also be noted that 2/3 of the guides operating within blocks are Indians. The comparison of these two figures is interesting, since the block system is being phased out because of its inefficiency, and individual guiding territories command a good level of



TABLE II

BIG GAME GUIDING

	Region I GMA 1. <u>Vancouver Island</u>	Region II GMA 2, 3, 4. <u>Lower Mainland</u>	Region III GMA 12, 13 14, 15. <u>Kamloops Region</u>	Region IV GMA 5, 6, 7, 8. <u>Okanagan</u>	Region V GMA 9, 10, 11. <u>Kootenay</u>	Region VI GMA 16, 17, 18, 19. <u>Cariboo- Chilcotin</u>	Region VII GMA 20, 21, 22. <u>Prince George Region</u>	Region VIII GMA 23, 24, 25. <u>Skeena</u>	Region IX GMA 26, 27, 28. <u>Northern B. C.</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Total Number of Territories	1	-	14	8	40	80	104	21	53	321
Number held by Indians	0	-	1	0	1	18	7	0	7	34
Number of Blocks	0	6	4	4	0	2	4	6	1	27
Indians Guiding in Blocks	0	-	1	1	0	8	0	9	0	19
Number of Indian Assistants	0	-	1	-	5	94	43	15	124	282
Estimated Number of Indians in non- guiding Positions	0	-	-	-	2	8	32	8	65	115



Statistical Information (cont'd.)

management on the part of the operator if they are to succeed.

Estimating the value of a guiding territory in a general way is every bit as difficult as trying to assess the value of a trapline. The availability of game, access (particularly with respect to B.C. residents leading to competition for available resources), the condition of trails, the outfit, and the reputation of the outfitter are all variables that affect the price of a guiding territory.

A number of guide territories have changed hands in recent years and there has been a wide variation in values. High quality guiding territories in northern B.C. have changed hands recently for figures in excess of \$100,000. Of this total, between 30% and 50% has been in the form of tangible assets such as outfitting equipment, land, and horses; the balance has been for goodwill and the value of the territory. This latter value of course can be drastically affected by other resource activity, particularly the construction of access roads opening the areas up to resident hunters.

Guiding territories in the Prince George area have changed hands at prices in the \$15,000 to \$30,000 range, again the same proportion tied up in fixed assets. Territories in the East Kootenay and Cariboo, where public access has made competition with residents inevitable, territories have changed hands for little more than the value of the tangible assets.

Statistical Information (cont'd.)

It can be seen from this that the actual value of each guiding territory must be specific; however, detailed assessments of Indian guiding territories, as there are only 33 of them in the province, would be quite straightforward. As far as we can ascertain about a third of the territories are being operated as reasonably viable economic units, with only two or three of them to our knowledge considered as really successful guiding operations. We would estimate on the basis of preliminary information that we have gathered primarily from other work that we have undertaken, and a close association with the guiding industry, that there are two territories held by Indians in northern British Columbia that could likely be marketed in the \$100,000 range. There are probably another half dozen that could be valued in the \$30,000 to \$50,000 range.

The present operation of guiding territories varies drastically from guide to guide. Guiding territories have to be run as well-planned business operations if they are to be successful and this has been the weakness of a number of the guiding outfits operated by Indians. As guides, many operators perform well, but business entrepreneurship, ability to promote the operation, understanding of the market for guide services, etc. seem to be sadly lacking except in a few noticeable instances. In some cases bookings are handled by white resort operators and the Indian territory holders are for all practical purposes employees on their own operations.

2. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The figures indicated that some 282 Indians are employed seasonally as assistant guides, with an estimated 115 employed in connection with guiding operations as wranglers, cooks, etc.. On the basis of discussions with guides and outfitters and on the basis of other investigations that we have made we would estimate that while incomes could range from a few hundred dollars to as high as \$4,000 to \$5,000 for senior employees, an average in the order of \$1,200 for a hunting season would be realistic.

There are some obvious problems associated with this. There is relatively little incentive for a good employee to consider guiding as a major source of income, and a major problem in the guiding industry is maintaining continuity. As other employment opportunities of a more sustained nature become available, able people will leave the guiding industry.

Training programs originally initiated by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development concentrate mainly on training employee guides, and do a good job on upgrading them as employees.

There is little doubt that many big game guiding operations are heavily dependent upon Indian help, and it seems regrettable that in view of the Indian's capability in this field there cannot be a greater return to him. This is a rather harsh judgment, but there is little doubt that a number of white guide outfitters have become wealthy on the basis of

Employment Opportunities (cont'd.)

guiding activities dependent in part on Indians who still continue to work for little more than subsistence level incomes. It should be pointed out that the white operators have provided the entrepreneurship initiative and management that was necessary to capitalize on this basic resource, but it is also obvious that the people who have provided much of the labour force have obtained little long term benefit for their contribution.



3. THE FUTURE

The potential value of outfitting territories will obviously be affected by the establishment of permit systems that would limit the entry of non-residents. However, to date, game guiding has been predicated almost entirely on the non-resident hunter, and future success will lie in the capacity of the guiding industry to adapt to a new clientele. There will be far more B.C. residents and far more non-hunting clients.

Since the whole rationale for outfitting has been geared towards big game hunting, activity has been concentrated in a short 2 to 3 month season, and employment opportunities, of course, have been limited to this season with little incentive for anyone to consider year round employment opportunities for the full crew. A totally different approach to capitalizing on the year-round recreational and educational potential of territories would lead to a more even employment opportunity throughout the year. In our estimation, a future for outfitting that is geared more to providing year-round seasonal employment rather than a high income for an employer-operator is worthy of very serious consideration.

Naturally such a programme would require initiative by the Indian people to map out the strategy for such a future. Financial, management and training assistance would be essential - long term goals would have

The future (cont'd.)

to be set - but the challenge for the Indian people to gain a fair reward from an industry that is so heavily dependent on them is worth serious consideration.

4. SPORTS FISHING

Indian involvement in sports fishing outfitting is very limited.

The statistics that we were able to obtain on sports fish guiding list only an estimated 15 Indians involved directly in sports fishing with only two of them as guides. (These figures are probably very low estimates.)

There are several major reasons for this.

Catering to sports fishing in B. C. is mostly a service activity providing accommodation, boats and support services, then leaving the angler to his own devices. This kind of service demands capital and business know-how rather than specialized guiding skills. The more specialized skills and services required in big game guiding are not necessary for most sports fish angling at present, since angling relies on the skill of the angler more than the knowledge of the game and the country that makes the guide essential in big game hunting. For the most part, the angler who could afford guide services probably knows enough about angling to take care of himself once he is in the right place.

Getting him to the right place is one key to future economic benefits to sports fishing outfitters. To date most services to anglers have been based on lodges, cabins, etc.. The provision of outfitting services combining local knowledge of angling with the provision of accommodation as part of a total package should be explored. This of course will necessitate training programs to ensure that guides are aware of and able to cater to the needs of the sports fishermen. Such programmes may be difficult to initiate.

5. DOMESTIC USE OF WILDLIFE

The issuance of permits for Indians to take big game animals for food is increasingly being questioned as the economic value of wildlife as a source of tourist revenue becomes more apparent.

We recognize however, that there is a strong cultural tie in the hunter providing food directly, and that the issue of a check for groceries rather than a permit to take a big game animal may be begging the question. It should be pointed out, however, that in many cases if a person needs a permit to kill an animal in order to survive he probably needs far more than that animal - if sheer physical survival is the issue.

Records indicate an average of 1,100 permits are issued annually for Indians to take a big game animal for food. No consistent records are kept of the degree to which these permits are used.

The figures should be weighed against a number of comments that we received from many sources during the study. The major points raised were:

\* Many permits are taken out in heavily populated areas such as the Lower Mainland with little actual use likely being made of them. The obtaining of the permit as an end in itself seems to be as important as using it.

\* In the remote areas of the province, where a food animal may really be a necessity, a permit is somewhat academic. Distances and time being what they are, a family would have starved waiting for a permit.

Domestic Use of Wildlife (cont'd.)

\* There is a need for much more liaison between local Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development officials, Band Councils, and the B.C. Fish and Wildlife Branch in the issuance of food permits. It has been pointed out that there may be conflicts between the Indian bands themselves with respect to the way in which permits are issued and used.



#### D. FURTHER STUDY REQUIREMENTS

The terms of reference called for:

"the contractor to outline in detail the further study requirements that would be needed to establish policy outlines for the involvement of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in wildlife based activity for Indians including fur resource management, techniques and marketing as well as big game guiding, outfitting, sports fishing and the domestic utilization of the resource in British Columbia."

Essentially this section of the report constitutes the conclusions that can be drawn from the information that we have recorded in our "inventory". In order to suggest more specific detail studies that might be needed some basic points of policy have to be assumed. In developing this section of the report we are assuming:

\* That it is desirable to ensure that the Indian people are able to use wildlife in such a manner that it provides them with maximum economic benefits while safeguarding cultural values attached to the trapline and hunting ground.

\* That maximum benefit from Indian involvement in trapping, guiding and outfitting should go to the Indian people.

\* That any programme developed should recognize the responsibilities and wishes of the Province which is responsible for the resource, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development which is responsible for administration on behalf of Indian people, and most important of all the Indian people, through the tribal councils, who benefit or suffer from the

Further Study Requirements (cont'd.)

results of management programmes.

The further study recommendations are dealt with under the headings of trapping, guiding and outfitting, and general administration.

Obviously the three points are interrelated, particularly insofar as specific suggestions on trapping, and guiding and outfitting relate to administrative responsibilities.

TRAPPING

It is assumed that the basic policy objective for the administration of Indian traplines would be to increase the economic return from traplines to Indians while safeguarding traditional rights associated with the trapline.

Study requirements would fall under four interrelated headings; inventory, management, marketing and training - all aimed at establishing the feasibility of making the whole approach to trapping more business-like while safeguarding traditional values.

Inventory

Increased economic returns from traplines will likely be dependent on more efficient line utilization. This will involve a higher level of management. Both of these factors will depend on a better and more systematic understanding of the actual traplines held by Indians and Indian bands.

Further Study Requirements (cont'd.)

Inventory of existing lines simply for the sake of keeping better administrative records is rather pointless; inventory must be directed towards getting information that leads to some programme of action.

Existing lines could be inventoried with respect to location, ownership and assets from existing information. British Columbia Fish and Wildlife Branch records could be cross-checked with Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development records and an inventory of lines under any choice of geographic boundaries could be produced.

This project could be undertaken by well-supervised summer or temporary help, provided a standard inventory system were established. It could commence on a pilot basis in one region and be expanded as needed.

Management

Once basic inventory information is available attention should be directed to the actual capability of the lines to produce fur, by considering the basic productive capacity of the line and the capability of the trapper.

Consideration should be given to consolidating lines into band lines or partnerships on an area-specific basis.

A special study requirement in each region would be to assess the cultural and traditional significance of the lines. This will vary from area to area and from line to line. Sound commercial trapping should not be inconsistent with the maintenance of traditions.

Further Study Requirements (cont'd.)

The administration of Commercial Fisheries Resources for Indians in the province for example could serve as a useful guide that might apply to the fur industry.

Marketing

Consideration should be given to some form of centralized marketing for fur. This would not only lead to better returns for the trapper but could enable the trapper to keep in far closer touch with the market and adjust his activity accordingly. Experience in other jurisdictions should be considered. Existing market procedures in this province could be assessed and consideration should be given to evolving new procedures.

A marketing and management programme would demand a constant assessment of future trends in the fur industry. It would also require consideration of a fourth phase of the study - training requirements.

Training

Consideration should be given to establishing training programmes to meet any policy established as a result of changes in management and marketing.

Earlier portions of this study have already indicated likely future changes in trapping methods regardless of any change in D.I.A.N.D. policy. Adequate lead time is essential if any such training programmes are to succeed.

Further Study Requirements (cont'd.)

GUIDING AND OUTFITTING

It is assumed again that the basic policy objective for the administration of Indian involvement in guiding and outfitting would be to increase the economic returns to Indians from such activity, while safeguarding traditional and legal rights associated with guiding territories.

This section is broken down under the basic headings of inventory, management, marketing and promotion, and training.

Inventory

An inventory should be made of existing Indian guide territories in order to establish their potential for management as viable competitive economic units. This would have to be on a territory basis and would require some specialized skills. Although a fairly standardized approach to assessment could be evolved, the emphasis would have to be on potential rather than past performance. Assessment should include:

- \* Basic capability of the area for supporting
  - big game guiding
  - other recreation activity
- \* Assets of the territory; cabins, equipment, horses, etc.
- \* Capability of the operator
  - past performance
  - client satisfaction



Further Study Requirements (cont'd.)

- security of tenure
- bookings
- ability to adapt to new conditions

\* An assessment should be made of what, if anything, is required in the way of capital assistance, management assistance, promotion, etc. that the territory or operator would require.

Management

A serious assessment should be undertaken of the potential for existing guide territories and for the possible acquisition of new territories.

Traditionally, guiding territories have been managed with a view to maximizing a single activity - big game hunting.

A pilot study of one or more territories (we have some specific territories in mind) could be initiated to assess the possibility of providing more sustained year-round employment by considering a broader base of activity relating to other facets of outdoor recreation such as education, natural history groups, wilderness travel, and winter recreation.

These activities appear in brochures advertising outfitting services, but rarely has much thought gone into systematically examining the potential for a good mix of these activities to add even a month onto what is essentially a fixed overhead for a big game operation. There really has been little incentive for outfitters to undertake this because the successful

Further Study Requirements (cont'd.)

ones have been doing well on big game hunters alone, and those who lack the entrepreneurial ability to do well on a big game guiding territory would probably lack the initiative and management skills required to make the broader type of operation succeed.

Assessment should be made of individual management needs for guide operations with a view to providing management skills, or at least good coordination through Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development or through the Indian organizations. It is very apparent that the real success of a guiding and outfitting operation is as dependent on good management as it is on the basic capability of the territory. Several excellent big game territories in B.C. (held by both Indian and non-Indian outfitters) are failing because of poor management rather than lack of wildlife. The possibility of combining some operations to offer a broader range of services should be seriously considered.

Marketing and Promotion

The guiding and outfitting business is highly competitive and, even in the case of well-established outfits, good advertising is essential. Obviously there must be something good to advertise, but the whole approach to advertising something "special or different" that the Indian outfitter can offer should be considered.

Further Study Requirements (cont'd.)

Brochures and correspondence that we have seen suggest following traditional routes that for B.C., at any rate, are out of touch with reality. For example, most B.C. guides have long given up on the "free-loader" trip to outdoor writers as a means of promotion.

Serious consideration should be given to the feasibility of setting up a central promotion and booking agency that could market package outdoor trips, capitalizing on the assets of several different guiding territories.

Any moves away from the traditional big game base (and in our opinion this is where the future lies) would demand a careful assessment of the market and the marketing and promotion requirements.

Training

A serious appraisal of the training needs of Indian guide outfitters is needed. Our examination of D.I.A.N.D. records confirms that the provision of capital and the training of employee-type help is not enough.

Training programmes, including internships with existing guides and an assessment of the existing training programmes, should be investigated with a view to providing the basic management skill, the lack of which seems to be the main failing in present guiding operations.

Further Study Requirements (cont'd.)

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

\* A more detailed assessment is required of the actual inter-relationship between the Fish and Wildlife Branch and D.I.A.N.D. and the relationship of both to the Indian people. This present study has only considered some of the actual administrative arrangements for both D.I.A.N.D. and the B.C. Fish and Wildlife Branch in so far as they affect Indian people. Both agencies would have to agree on some joint policy objectives in the development of new policy for D.I.A.N.D., and it must be recognized at this point that the relative priorities for the agencies could well differ.

\* D.I.A.N.D. and the Indian tribal councils (perhaps through the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs) should seriously consider the whole potential for major investment in the outfitting industry to the extent of buying out existing territories, and retaining some of the white guides as interim managers and training officers.

\* Food Permits. The B.C. Fish and Wildlife Branch, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Band Councils should carefully reconsider the whole question of the issuance of food permits. The present system does not seem to be particularly satisfactory for any of the parties and a review of the system would appear to be in order.



APPENDIX I

Assessment of Dept. of Indian Affairs Involvement  
in Wildlife and Sports Fish Management

QUESTIONNAIRE

No. 1. Does the subject matter of this study as outlined in our introductory memo apply to your detachment?

Yes  No

(If the answer is "No"; thank you for answering this question - there is no need to answer any further questions.)

Trapping

No. 2. What is the total number of traplines in your detachment?

No. 3. How many of these traplines are held by individual Indians?

No. 4. How many are held by Indian bands?

No. 5. Of the Indians holding traplines now, how many are actually trapping?

No. 6. Of the white trappers holding traplines, how many are now actually trapping?

No. 7. What are the major fur bearing species trapped in your detachment?

Appendix I (cont'd.)

No. 8. What is the average annual gross income from trapping to each Indian trapper in your detachment?

\$

No. 9. What is the average annual income from trapping for white trappers operating in your detachment?

\$

Big Game Guiding and Outfitting

No. 10. How many guide territories are there in your detachment?

No. 11. How many guide blocks?

No. 12. How many territories are held by Indian outfitters?

No. 13. How many Indians are operating as guide outfitters within guide blocks?

No. 14. How many Indians are employed as assistant guides in your detachment?

No. 15. How many Indians do you estimate to be employed as wranglers, cooks and in other jobs associated with guiding in your detachment?

Sports Fishing

No. 16. How many small game or fishing guide licenses are issued in your detachment?

No. 17. How many such licenses are issued to Indians?

Appendix I (cont'd.)

No. 18. How many sports fish camps owned by and operated by Indians in your detachment?

No. 19. How many Indians are employed in sports fishing camps in your detachment?

Subsistence Food

No. 20. What is an estimate of the average number of permits issued to Indians to take game animals for food purposes in your detachment each year?

Other Comments