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**Meladine River Park Master Plan Tourism,
Tourism - Keewatin Region
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E. YAXLEY.

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MELIADINE RIVER
TERRITORIAL PARK MASTER PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DECEMBER 1991

PREPARED FOR: DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

PREPARED BY: AVENS ASSOCIATES LTD.
EDA COLLABORATIVE INC.
DANIEL BRUNTON CONSULTING SERVICES
DRS CONSULTING



SUMMARY

The Hamlet of Rankin and the Government of the NWT have agreed to establish a new Territorial Park near Rankin Inlet. The park is about 10 km northwest of Rankin Inlet. The park plan is developed on both sides of the Meliadine River. The Hamlet Council, in consultation with the community residents, approved a Master Plan for the park. The Master Plan shows that some areas of the park will be very carefully protected. Other areas will be developed with facilities that will improve recreation and tourism.

The need for a park at the Meliadine River has been discussed for years. The area is unique for many reasons and its protection and use are critical issues that need to be addressed. The proposed park contains over 45 archaeological sites and has been promoted as the most easily accessible area to view such sites in the territories.

While these natural and archaeological resources offer visitors and residents unique attractions, the past use of the area has been unmanaged and disruptive. The need to protect the natural resources, with a managed plan that allows continued use, is supported both by the community and the Government of the N.W.T. This plan recommends access limits for trucks and ATV's, developed areas for recreational use, restrictions on permanent structures in the park, establishment of a park boundary and proposed improvements to some roads, trails, interpretive facilities and day use sites.

The park has not been officially established yet. There is a need for further negotiations with the Federal Government concerning the transfer of land for a Territorial Park. However, the official approval of Hamlet Council and the support of the Tungavik Federations of Nunavut will hopefully mean that this park can be established officially.

This report is a summary of the Meliadine River Territorial Park - Master Plan. It explains why people decided to have a park in the Meliadine Valley, how the park should be managed and what types of facilities could be built. For more information about the park there is a technical report that explains all of the park information in detail.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Meliadine River Territorial Park Master Plan team would like to thank and acknowledge all of the people who assisted in the project. We gratefully acknowledge the assistance and input of the Park Subcommittee members and Marla Limousin, Senior Administrative Officer, of the Hamlet. (Rankin Inlet)

Paul Kaludjuk	Mayor
Jack Kabvitok	Deputy Mayor, Park Sub-Committee
David Oolooyuk	Councillor, Hunters and Trappers Association, Park Sub-Committee
Tom Thompson	Councillor, Park Sub-Committee
Marla Limousin	Senior Administrative Officer, Hamlet
Thomas Tiktak	Tungavik Federation of Nunavut
Alison Wynn-Barr	Keewatin Travel, Keewatin Chamber of Commerce
Al Everard	Teacher, Scout Leader

Assistance from the following Government of the Northwest Territories is also gratefully acknowledged.

Jimm Simon	Economic Development and Tourism, Yellowknife
Lorraine Pye	Economic Development and Tourism, Rankin Inlet
Susan Makpah	Economic Development and Tourism, Rankin Inlet
Otto Olah	Economic Development and Tourism
Paul Erikson	Department of Public Works, Rankin Inlet

A special thanks to all the people who attended the public meetings and took the time to comment on the plans.

1.0 BACKGROUND - WHY DO WE NEED A PARK?

The Meliadine River Valley has been used for centuries, throughout the year, for hunting, fishing and camping. Ancient camping sites still exist in the area and remain as popular camping sites. Because the area is so popular, there are a lot of problems. Some of these ancient camping sites are being destroyed. Modern all-terrain vehicles drive along the esker to go camping and fishing and these vehicles are destroying the natural beauty of the valley. Rankin Inlet also uses the area for gravel which leaves permanent scars on the land. Some people using the land are leaving their garbage.

Making the Meliadine River into a park will protect the valuable archaeological and natural beauty of the area. The area deserves protection and making it into a park insures that our children can enjoy the area forever. Making the area into a park will NOT stop fishing, hunting, berry picking and camping.

Making the Meliadine River into a park will help stop people from damaging the land. Managing the area as a park will stop the activities which are destroying the area, so that you can fish, hunt, pick berries and camp in the Meliadine River, forever.

Making Meliadine River into a park will encourage tourists to come to the area which will be good for local businesses. Developing and operating the park will also create some jobs for the people in the area.

2.0 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES - WHAT IS THE PARK FOR ?

The three major park goals and objectives are:

- To protect and conserve the natural and cultural resources
- To improve the economic situation in the Keewatin and Rankin Inlet
- Provide other benefits in the community, not just economic spin-off

3.0 PLANNING PROCESS - HOW WAS THIS MASTER PLAN DEVELOPED ?

The process of talking to the people and finding out about the land is summarized in this section. The Park Master Plan was developed through a process which considered many factors. The first step was to interview the people in the community who use the land and know what needs to be protected. They are the ones that know the area the best. They are also the ones who will use the park the most. The people in Rankin Inlet also had some concerns about the park and the park planners needed to know what they were. People wanted to have a park, but they also wanted to keep their rights to hunt and fish and pick berries. The land also needed to be studied in order to plan the park. This was done to decide what areas needed to be protected and what areas could be most suitable for recreation and tourism.

The Government of the Northwest Territories hired Avens Associates in November of 1990, to determine whether there was a need for a park in the Meliadine River area. Karen LeGresley, of Avens Associates, travelled to Rankin Inlet to meet with the community in December 1990. She met with the Community Land Identification and Negotiation Team, Keewatin Inuit Association, Keewatin Chamber of Commerce and local tourism operators to determine what the communities concerns were about having a park and where the park should be.

The planners took the information about the land and the information that the people of Rankin Inlet had given them. They used this information to develop options for where the park boundaries could be.

In February 1991, several park boundaries were presented to the people in the Hamlet. The planners also met with the Hunters and Trappers Association and the Park Sub-Committee. The community was asked to pick which boundary option they liked the best. Everything inside the park boundary would be protected and inside the park boundary, some activities, such as, mining gravel and driving everywhere, would not be allowed.

In April 1991, the planners presented the boundary options to the Hamlet Council, with a recommendation that Option "C" the largest boundary option, be approved. Council agreed and approved the proposed park boundary. The community selected the boundary option which protected the most land.

After the Hamlet approved the boundaries, the park planners began to plan what was going to happen inside the park and take a more detailed look at where the boundary should be. In July 1991, archaeologists, biologists and landscape architects visited the park site to gather information about the park. They needed to know exactly where the important natural and historical features were so the development they were proposing would not destroy anything. They also wanted to develop an appreciation for the interconnections between everything natural and the cultural features.

This included identifying the ancient campsites, looking at the plants in the area, making a lists of the animals and birds in the area, looking at ways that people use the land and mapping the areas that man has not respected.

The Project Team worked with Jimm Simon, Tourism and Parks, Government of the Northwest Territories, to develop several options for how the park could be developed. Karen LeGresley and Ted Muller presented the proposed park development plan to the Park Sub-Committee. The preliminary Master Plan display was left in the community so the residents could review the plan at their leisure.

The community reviewed the plan and in October 1991, the park planners returned to the Hamlet to listen to the community's issues regarding the plan. The preliminary plan was revised to address the community's concerns.

The Master Plan establishes the park boundary and sets the limits for using the park. Not all uses are permitted in every area of the park. The Master Plan also describes the facilities that are being proposed for the park.

The Hamlet Council suggested a name for the park and other members of the public also suggested names. When the area becomes a park, the Territorial Government will consult with the community further before choosing a park name.

4.0 PARK BOUNDARY - WHERE WILL THE PARK BE ?

A preliminary park boundary was approved by Hamlet Council in April, 1991. The preliminary boundary proposed a large park on both sides of the Meliadine River. Changes were made in the Master Plan to the preliminary park boundaries that addressed the communities concerns.

The community did not want the gravel pit to be included in the park. The community also felt that the land around lakes and rivers, that are on the park boundary, should be included in the park. This will help to control the shore, as well as, the water bodies.

The park boundary is described on the Context Map.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - DID THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE HELP PLAN THE PARK?

The people from the Hamlet were very involved in developing the plan. A park Sub-committee was established to assist the planners with the plan.

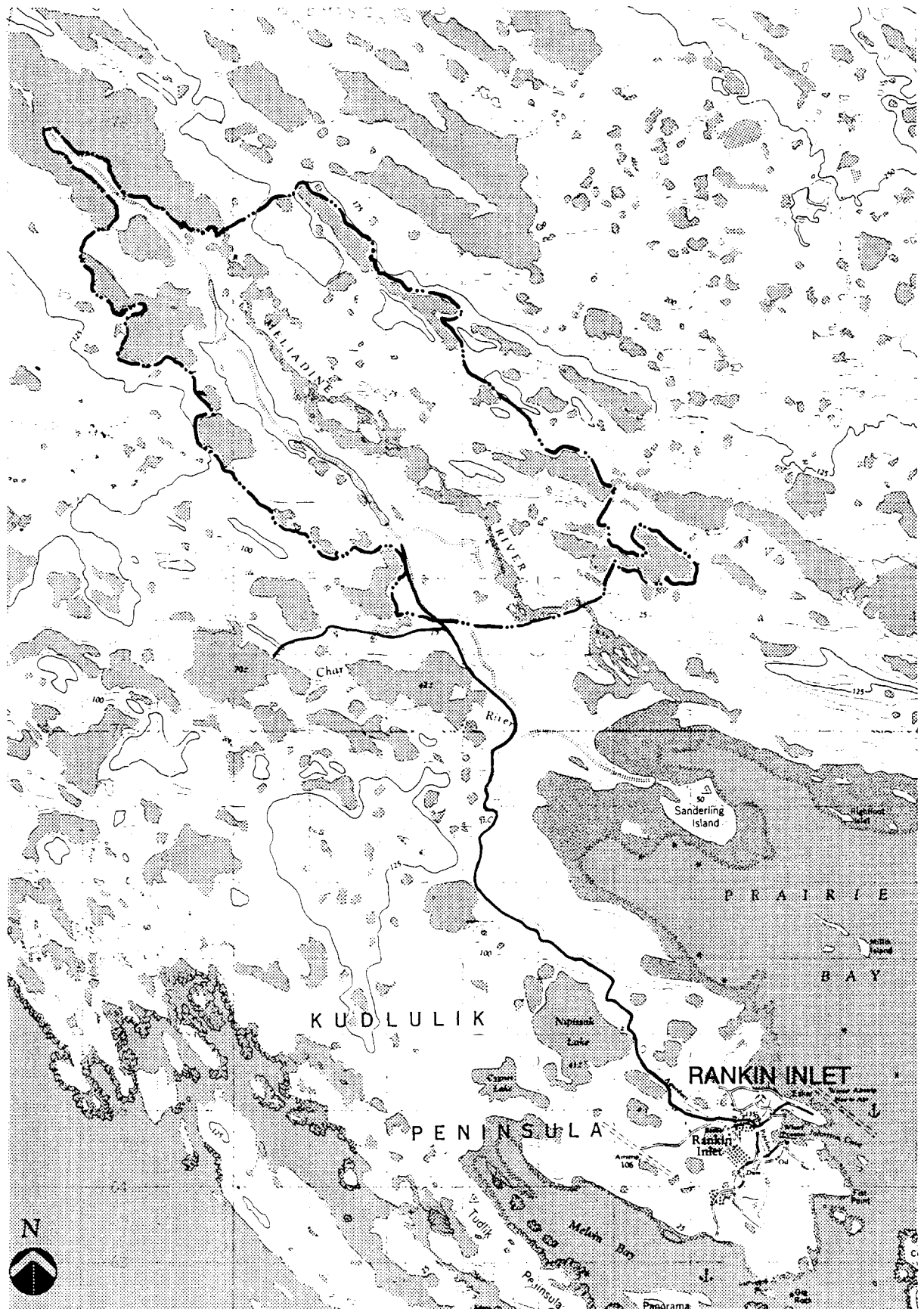
The park sub-committee included:

Jack Kabvitok	Deputy Mayor
David Oolooyuk	Councillor, Hunters and Trappers Association
Tom Thompson	Councillor

The preliminary boundary options were presented to the community in February 1991. The boundary options were also on display in the Hamlet office.

An open line radio show was held by the Hamlet, in March 1991. The community phoned in with their concerns. Most of their concerns related to hunting and fishing rights, and the right to pick berries.

The preliminary Master Plan was on display in the Hamlet office, and two public meetings were held in September and October, 1991 where people came to comment on the plan.



Metres 1000 500 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 Metres

SCALE



PARK BOUNDARY

EXISTING ROADS

CONTEXT MAP

6.0 ARCHAEOLOGY - WHAT ARE THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES THAT NEED TO BE PROTECTED?

One of the main reasons that a park was developed in this area was to protect the many and significant archaeological resources. The team archaeologist, Douglas Stenton identified a total of 49 archaeological resources, in the park. Most of the sites are burials, caches and tent rings.

The most significant archaeological resource is Ijiralik which is in the middle of the proposed park and is one of the main reasons the park is being developed. Ijiralik has been known to tourists and archaeologists for a long time and is a popular stop on Rankin Inlet tours.

Ijiralik is a Thule structure dating between the 14th and the 17th Century. These are large, complex Thule-era sites along the lower course of the Meliadine River contain hundreds of features including semi-subterranean Thule house ruins, tent rings, qarmats, caches, burials and kayak stands.

Evidence of earlier occupations by Arctic Small Tradition peoples has also been found in the study area, with Pre-Dorset and Dorset evidence, as well.

The existing archaeological features and sites are described on the Existing Conditions Map.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

PLAN 1:50000 L.C. 4000 400 500 1000 2000m

MELIADINE RIVER PARK MASTER PLAN

RANKIN INLET, N.W.T.



Northern Territories Economic Development and Tourism

Project Team:

AVENS Associates Ltd.

EDA Collaborative Inc.

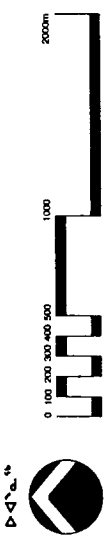
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LEGEND

- PROPOSED PARK BOUNDARY
- ROADWAY, TRAIL
- ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE LOCATIONS
- VIEW POINTS
- EXISTING CABINS / TENT FRAMES
- OLD TENT FRAMES
- 2 METRE CONTOUR INTERVAL
- WINTER TRAIL ROUTE



7.0 BIO-PHYSICAL INVENTORY - WHAT ARE THE NATURAL FEATURES OF THE PARK?

The team biologists, of Daniel Brunton Consulting Services, studied the plants and bird-life in the park study area. They used existing data during the boundary study and travelled with the Project Team to the area, in July 1991.

The Peregrine Falcon nesting areas are the most important habitat in the park area. The Peregrine Falcon nests in the bluffs on both sides of the river.

The geology of the area is also a significant feature of the park. Most of the park is covered by various types of glacial deposits. The Meliadine Esker is the most predominant glacial feature. There are very few bedrock outcrops in the park. The largest is opposite Ijiralik and is about 47m above the river valley.

The important bio-physical elements are described on the Habitat Map and the land is described on the Terrain Map.



8.0 MANAGEMENT - WHAT WILL I BE ALLOWED TO DO IN THE PARK?

Some places in the existing park are essentially natural and undeveloped. Other areas have been used extensively and have been developed for recreational use. Some places in the park are very special and should not be disturbed, while development in other areas will not harm the natural landscape.

Four different management zones have been proposed which respect the ability of different areas to withstand development. The facilities that are allowed will vary from area to area. The activities that are allowed will vary from area to area.

HABITAT MAP

MELIADINE RIVER PARK MASTER PLAN

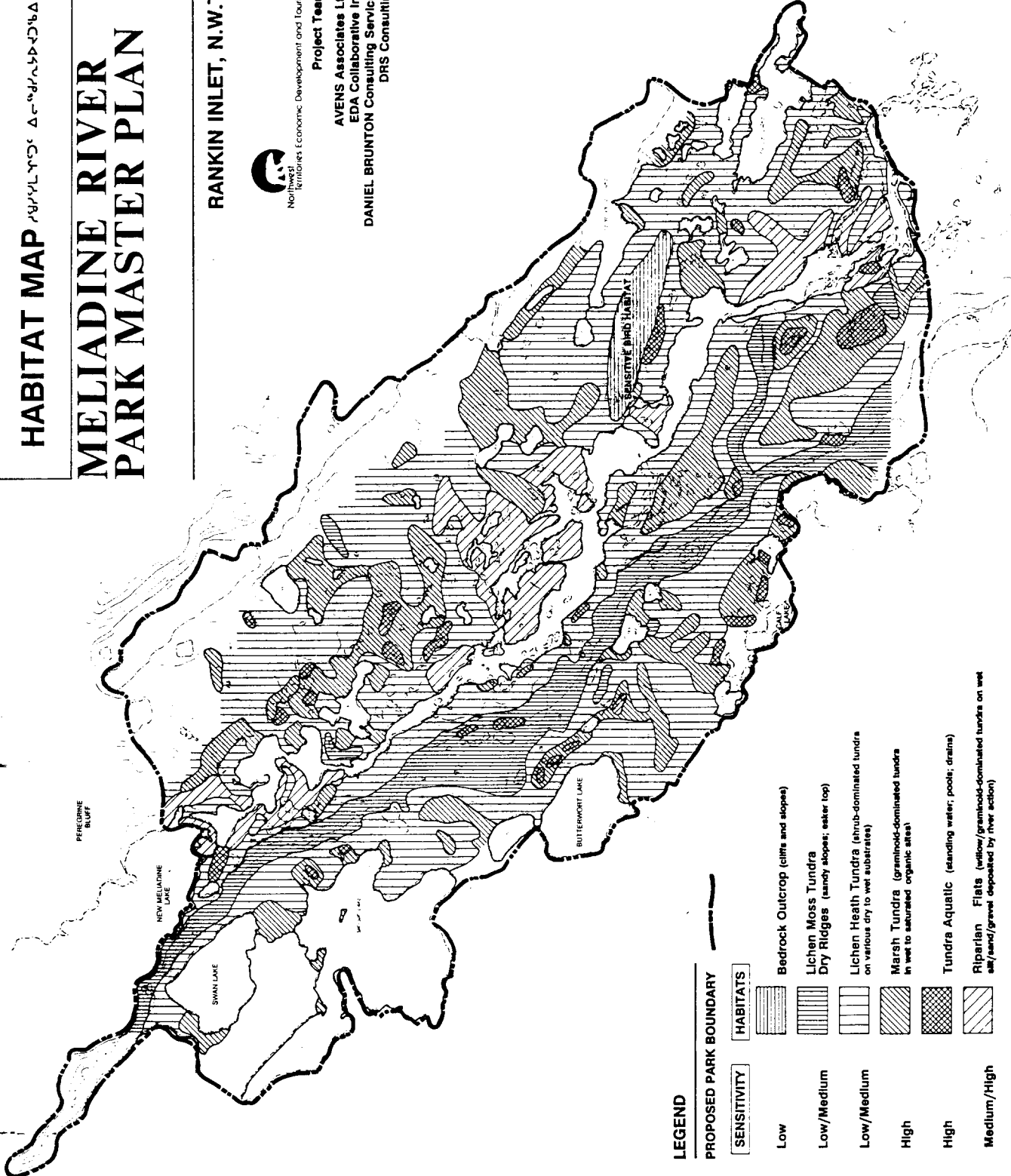
RANKIN INLET, N.W.T.



Northern Territories
Economic Development and Tourism

Project Team:

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EDA Collaborative Inc.
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DRS Consulting



LEGEND

PROPOSED PARK BOUNDARY

SENSITIVITY

- Low
- Low/Medium
- Low/Medium
- High
- High
- Medium/High

HABITATS

- Bedrock Outcrop (cliffs and slopes)
- Lichen Moss Tundra
Dry Ridges (sandy slopes; ester top)
- Lichen Heath Tundra (shrub-dominated tundra
on various dry to wet substrates)
- Marsh Tundra (graminoid-dominated tundra
in wet to saturated organic sites)
- Tundra Aquatic (standing water; pools; drains)
- Riparian Flats (willow/graminoid-dominated tundra on wet
silt/sand/gravel deposited by river action)



DATE: JANUARY 2007

TERRAIN MAP

Δ'ϰ'ϰ'ϰ'ϰ' ϰϰϰϰϰϰϰϰ

MELIADINE RIVER
PARK MASTER PLAN

RANKIN INLET, N.W.T.



Northwest Territories Economic Development and Tourism

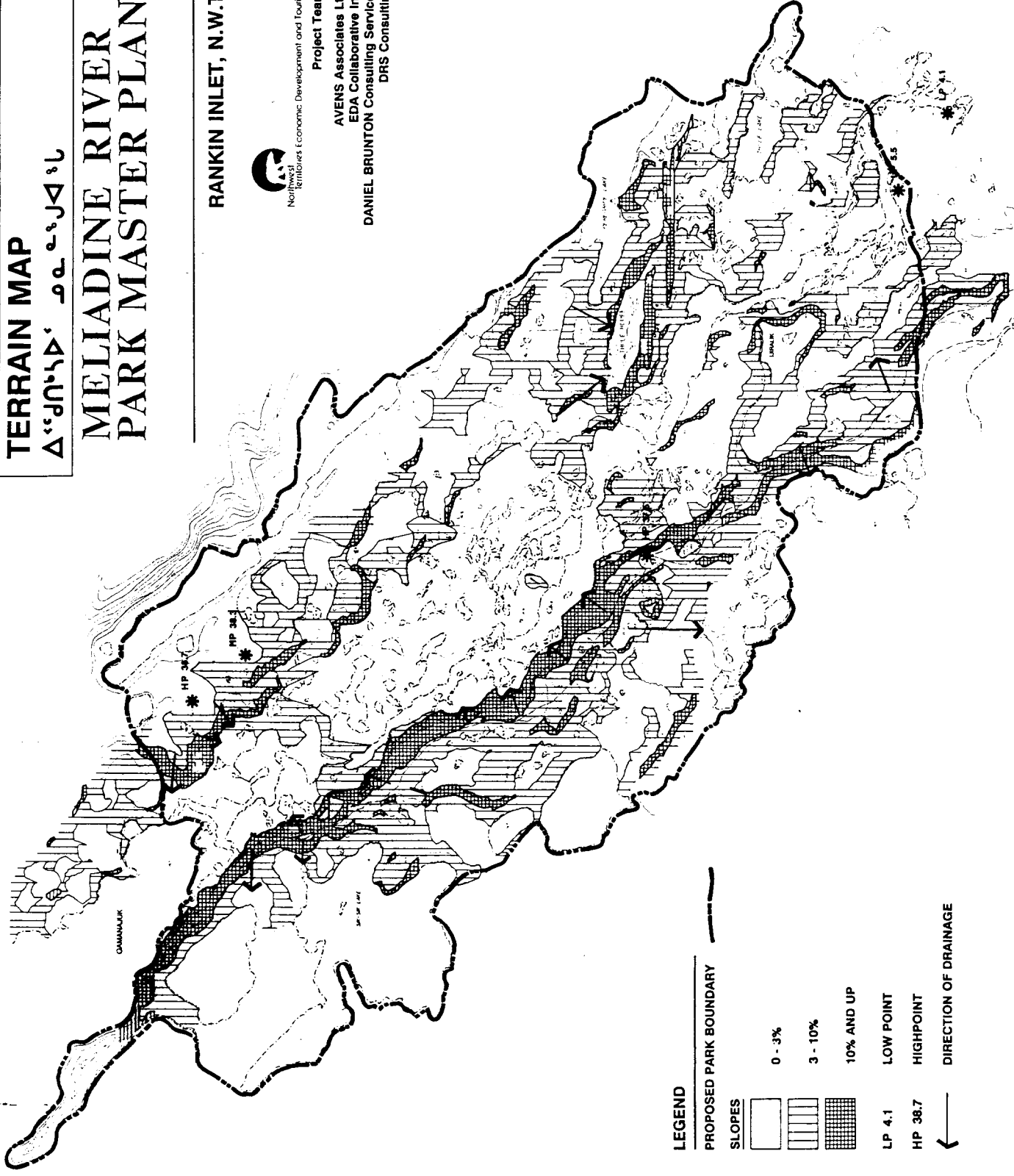
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DRS Consulting



LEGEND

PROPOSED PARK BOUNDARY

SLOPES



0 - 3%



3 - 10%



10% AND UP

LP 4.1

LOW POINT

HP 38.7

HIGHPOINT

DIRECTION OF DRAINAGE



Δ'ϰ'ϰ'ϰ'



PLAN: 1:10000 (A1)

Preservation Zone

Areas in the park that need the most protection and are presently relatively undisturbed will be included in the preservation zone. These areas include natural areas and areas that are needed for wildlife habitat. Development of any type will not be allowed in this area and human use will not be encouraged.

Conservation Zone

Areas in the conservation zone are also special natural areas, but some development, such as trails, will be allowed. Any development in this area will be along the trails. The construction of roads and structures will not be allowed in this area. The area will be managed for recreation and interpretation purposes.

Controlled Recreation Zone

Limited facility development will be allowed in the controlled recreation area, including picnic areas, campsites and interpretation. This area would be used the most by groups, for special gatherings such as community or elders picnics. Management practises will include registration for use of the facilities and ongoing maintenance and interpretation.

Open Recreation Zone

Areas in the Open Recreation Zone would be the most developed area in the park. This would be the only zone in the park where roads would be built to provide access to day-use facilities. People using this area would not be required to register and the area would be maintained regularly.

Management Zones are described on the Management Zones Map.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The Management Zones are one part of managing the park. There are other ways the park will be managed to meet the three park objectives that were supported by the people. The main management issues were fishing, hunting, berry picking, cabins, tent frames and camping.

Fishing

The Park will not change the existing fishing regulations. People will be allowed to fish according to Federal regulations which are administered by the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The use of ATVs for fishing will be restricted to the trails, except for setting nets when the ground is frozen.

Hunting

There will be no changes to the hunting regulations for General Hunting License holders, who are primarily aboriginal residents. Non-General License Holders, who are generally not aboriginal, will NOT be allowed to hunt inside the park boundary.

All Terrain Vehicle use off the trails for hunting will not be encouraged. General Hunting License holders will be allowed to use their ATVs to pick up game that has been shot.

Berry Picking

The park will be open for berry-picking and general nature exploration. Berry-pickers will have to stay on the roads and trails if they are travelling by vehicle or ATV.

Cabins, Tent Frames and Camping

No permanent cabins or tent frames will be allowed inside the park. The exception will be the park facilities that Economic Development and Tourism builds. The Hamlet will speak to the existing tent frame and cabin owners about the removal of their structures.

Camping in tents, without frames, will be allowed almost everywhere in the park, except:

- In the preservation zone
- Where it would interfere with the normal park operations
- Where it would be harmful to the land ie. Camping will not be allowed at Ijiralik

Future Management Issues

The community will continue to be involved in how the park is managed. The Territorial Government needs work with the community to make detailed park management rules for how the park will be run.

9.0 PROPOSED FACILITIES - WHAT COULD BE BUILT IN THE PARK?

ELDERS PICNIC SITE/GROUP CAMPSITE

Picnic site and camping for community groups such as scouts, school groups etc. as well as visitors.

outhouse, garbage collection
individual tent pads for separate tents
tent frames
walking path to river
open meeting area
group fire pit
wind shelter

IJIRALIK

Ijiralik is for historical /cultural interpretation

interpretive trail
tent frame for interpretive presentations to groups
service cabin
parking area

SANDY LAKE DAY-USE AREA

A high use picnic site and beach area

outhouses, garbage collection
picnic tables
improved roadway/parking
beach area upgrading

GAVIA LAKE INTERPRETIVE TRAIL

For interpretation focused on the tundra

trail markers
interpretive reststops/viewpoints

SECONDARY PICNIC SITES

Smaller picnic area on the lake near the ridge of esker

outhouses, garbage collection
picnic tables

ESKER RIDGE INTERPRETIVE TRAIL

For interpretation focused on the geology of the park

trail with markers
interpretive rest stops/viewpoints

PROPOSED FACILITIES PLAN

MELIADINE RIVER PARK MASTER PLAN

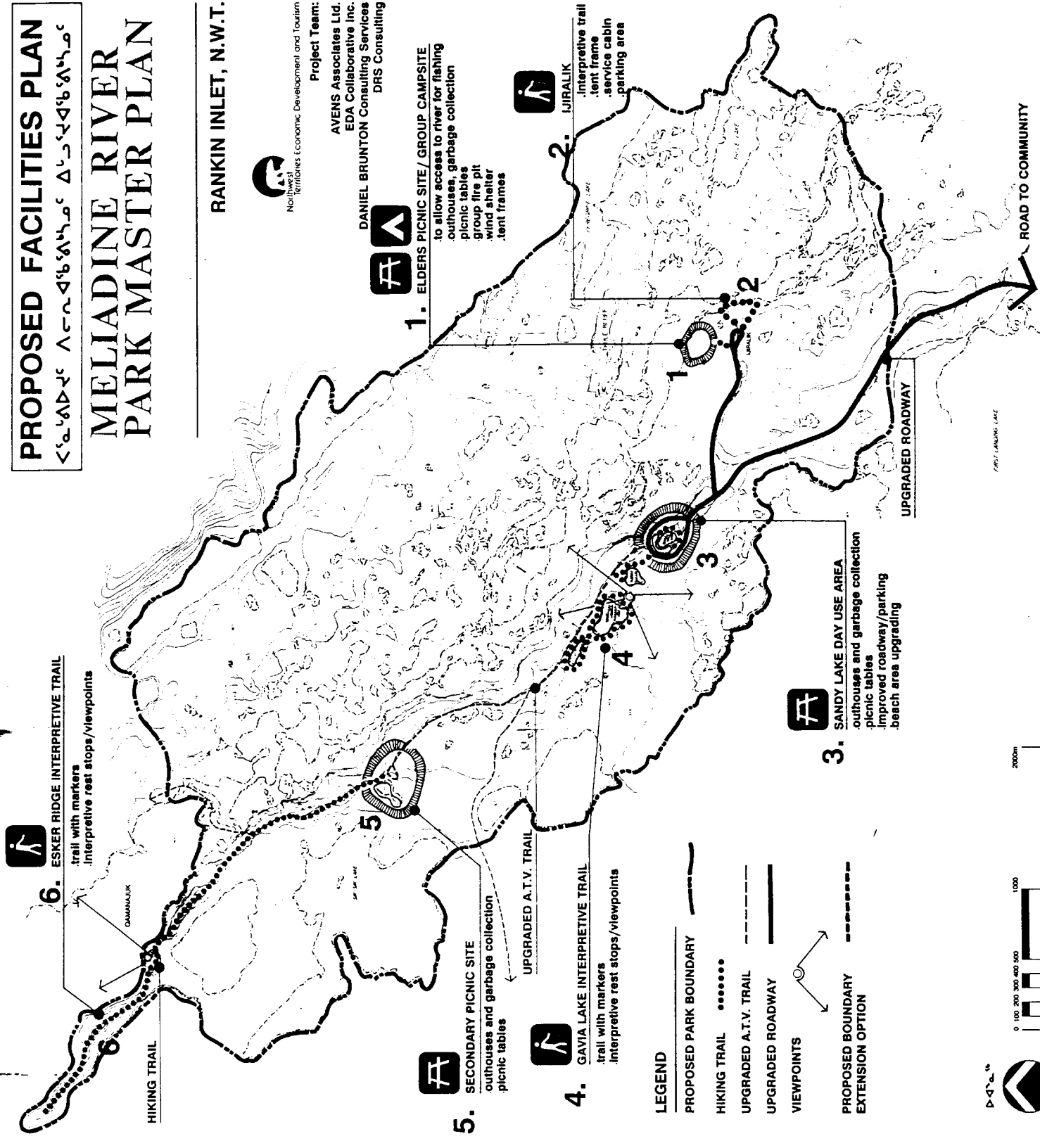
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6. ESKER RIDGE INTERPRETIVE TRAIL
trail with markers
interpretive rest stops/viewpoints



HIKING TRAIL

GAMMANUK

5. SECONDARY PICNIC SITE
outhouses and garbage collection
picnic tables



UPGRADED A.T.V. TRAIL

4. GAVIA LAKE INTERPRETIVE TRAIL
trail with markers
interpretive rest stops/viewpoints

3. SANDY LAKE DAY USE AREA
outhouses and garbage collection
picnic tables
improved roadway/parking
beach area upgrading

UPGRADED ROADWAY

ROAD TO COMMUNITY

LEGEND

PROPOSED PARK BOUNDARY

HIKING TRAIL

UPGRADED A.T.V. TRAIL

UPGRADED ROADWAY

VIEWPOINTS

PROPOSED BOUNDARY
EXTENSION OPTION

0 100 200 300 400 500 1000 2000m

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10.0 IMPLEMENTATION3

Land Transfer

The land in the park is currently owned by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. application will need to be made to transfer the land to the Commissioner of Lands for the Territorial Government so that the land can be dedicated as a Territorial Park.

Proposed Development Plan

The park could be developed over a period of five years. The total construction cost of developing the park has been estimated at \$1,448,600.00. Using a five year development period the park could be developed with the following schedule;

Phase One:

Before construction can begin in the park detailed plans need to be prepared for all of the facilities in the park. After the plans are finished, construction can begin on developing interpretive facilities at Ijiralik.

The Territorial Government already has a lease on the land at Ijiralik, so construction at this site would not be delayed by the land transfer.

Detailed Design (entire park)	\$30,000 - \$40,000
Interpretation (entire park)	\$40,000 - \$50,000
Facilities at Ijiralik	\$20,000 - \$35,000

Phase Two:

Elder's Picnic Site	\$20,000 - \$35,000
Sandy Lake Facility	\$25,000 - \$35,000
Gavia Lake Interpretive Trail	\$10,000 - \$15,000
Trail Lookout Signage	\$20,000 - \$25,000

Phase Three:

Road to Sandy Lake	\$640,000 - \$660,000
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Phase Four:

Road to Ijiralik	\$240,000 - \$260,000
Esker Interpretive Trail	\$ 10,000 - \$ 15,000
Trail Lookout Signage	\$ 20,000 - \$ 25,000

Phase Five:

All Terrain Vehicle Trail	\$325,000 - \$350,000
Secondary Picnic Site	\$ 10,000 - \$ 15,000

Total Estimated Capital Budget:	\$1,410,000 - \$1,560,000
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Operations and Maintenance

Staffing

A park administrator may be hired seasonally to manage the park. The park administrator could also act as the park warden and would be responsible for enforcing the park rules. This person could also give information to the tourists about the park and could give lessons about the park to the schools and people visiting the park.

The park administrator would also register visitors and rent equipment such as tents to visitors. Maintenance in the park could be done by someone who had a contract with the park administrator to manage the park.