Growth In Northwest Territories Tourism Facilities

Type of Study: Analysis/review
Date of Report: 1987
Catalogue Number: 11-38-11

GROWTH IN NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

TOURISM FACILITIES

World Class
Adventure

Northwest
Territories

Growth in Northwest

Tourism Facilities

Summary - For the period 1975 to 1987 the number of NWT tourism facilities - hotels, motels, lodges and outfitters - grew considerably. There has been steady growth in the hotel sector so that now virtually every community has an accommodation facility. The most spectacular growth has been in the number of outfitters, enterprises well suited to individuals or small groups wishing to participate in the tourism industry.

Department of Economic
Development and Tourism
Government of the Northwest
Territories
February, 1987

Growth in NWT Tourism Facilities

Introduction

As an historical perspective and as an indicator of the response to many tourism programs and efforts it is worthwhile tracking the growth in the NWT tourism/travel industry. This has been done in other reports for indicators such as the number of visitors, expenditures, sales of sport fishing licences, etc. In this report the growth in the supply side is examined i.e. the facilities that tourists/travellers use.

Purpose

To tract the growth in tourism/traveller facilities, specifically
- hotels and motels
- lodges
- outfitters.

Methodology

The following inventory is compiled from the annual issues of the Explorers' Guide, the comprehensive guide book to NWT tourism facilities and services. The categories of hotels and motels, lodges and outfitters are those defined by the Tourist Establishment Regulations; and, the categories are described as:

- hotels and motels including a few tourist homes. These establishments are nearly all located in communities, operate year round and provide accommodation for all types of travellers.

- lodges including sport fishing lodges and naturalist lodges. These establishments are nearly all located outside of communities, operate for the summer months only and exist to support various outdoor recreation activities (mostly sport fishing). Lodges have permanent sites and buildings. Some lodges have outposts which are intended as alternate accommodation and alternate recreation sites for guests of the main lodge; and, thence they do not have separate guest-bed allocations. Outposts are usually minor establishments and they are not included in the inventories.

- outfitters including sport fishing outfitters and general touring outfitters but excluding very local communities tours, hunting outfitters and guide-only services. Outfitters provide a package of services including equipment, transportation (air, boat, dog team, etc.), food and guiding within an assigned area. Outfitters do not have permanent sites or buildings for the accommodation of guests.

In a few cases a single owner may operate more or less separate businesses and the inventories reflect the multiple businesses.

In addition to sport fishing and general touring outfitters there are sport hunting outfitters. Trend data for these is not given since the types of licences, and zones and ownership patterns are too complicated to yield meaningful results.

The system of travel destination zones is shown in the appendix map. The system came into being in the Explorers' Guide in 1984; but, for the sake of the zone comparisons over a time period, the early Guides lent themselves to analysis as per the zone system.

Table 1

Number of Facilities
- by type
- 1975 through 1987

Year / Type of Business	Hotels and Motels	Lodges	Outfitters	Totals
1987	71	54	82	207
1986	72	54	85	211
1985	66	51	80	197
1984	63	51	62	176
1983	48	47	29	124
1982	48	50	28	126
1981	48	53	31	132
1980	49	49	27	125
1979	49	47	23	119
1978	48	48	19	115
1977	42	43	20	105
1976	44	38	19	101
1975	39	40	13	92

Figure 1

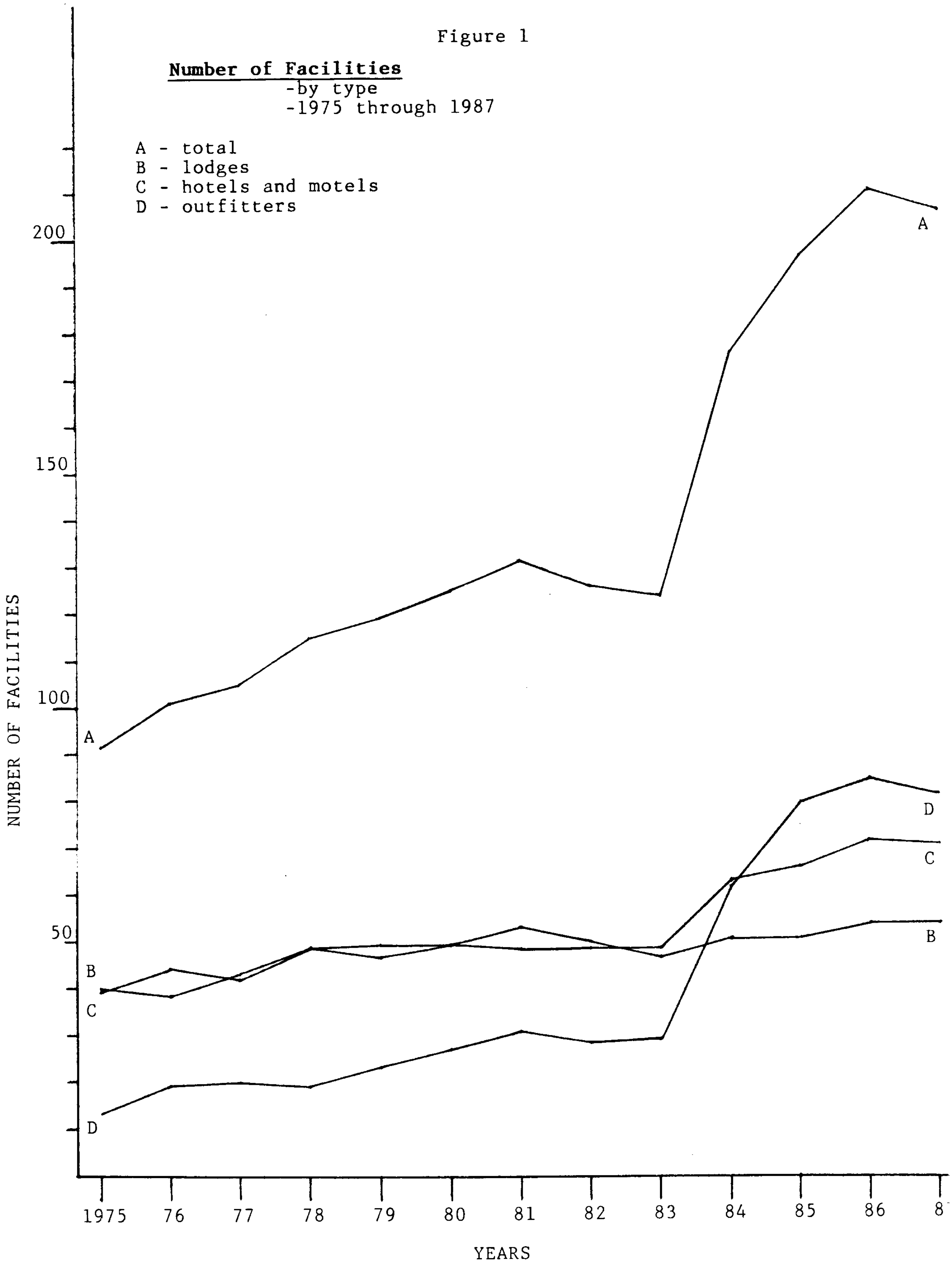
Number of Facilities
-by type
-1975 through 1987
A - total
B - lodges
C - hotels and motels
D - outfitters
200
150
100
50
NUMBER OF FACILITIES
A
B
C
D
1975
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
8
YEARS

Table 2

Number of Facilities
- by type
- by destination zone
- 1978 vs 1987

Facility -Year / Zone	Hotels and Motels		Lodges		Outfitters		Totals	
	1987	1978	1987	1978	1987	1978	1987	1978
Big River	16	15	11	10	12	5	39	30
Northern Frontier	10	6	19	19	17	3	46	28
Western Arctic	14	10	6	3	9	3	29	16
Keewatin	10	4	12	10	13	3	35	17
Arctic Coast	6	4	3	4	7	0	16	8
Baffin	15	9	3	2	24	5	42	16
TOTALS	**71**	**48**	**54**	**48**	**82**	**19**	**207**	**115**

Interpretations

As can be seen from table 1 and figure one the total number facilities available to tourists/travellers has grown over the years, with notable growth from 1984 onwards.

However the growth has not been the same for all types of facilities. The number of lodges has grown slowly reflecting its status as a much more mature sector in the NWT tourism industry. The number of hotels and motels has increased steadily so that now virtually every NWT community has an accommodation facility. The spectacular growth in recent years has been in the outfitter section, largely because of efforts of tourism field staff and secondly because of the ease of entering business as an outfitter.

It should be realized that for hotels and motels and lodges the growth is truly additive to existing inventory. Because of the permanence of the facilities, the businesses of any one year are mostly still in existence in later years, with the addition of newer facilities.

Outfitter businesses are much more volatile and as such the listings of businesses tends to be largely substitutive. Only a few of the outfitters of early years are still in business in recent years. In other words most of the 1987 businesses have been established in recent years. Also a very few outfitters have changed to the lodge category.

Table 2 details the situation for the tourism destination zones with a comparison over a nine year period. There has been growth in all zones for all types of facilities. It is notable that Big River zone has been settled with regard to hotels and motels and lodges while in the other extreme Baffin zone has shown dramatic increases especially in the outfitter sector.

This analysis has dealt only with the simple number of facilities; and, as such, is only an elementary measure of the growth of tourism facilities. It has not dealt with additions and expansions of facilities; and, therefore, to include these situations, the number of rooms available (for hotels, motels and lodges) would be a better measure of growth. However to assemble this data historically would be difficult. Secondly this analysis does not include the improvement in the quality of guest accommodations. Many facilities have been renovated and upgraded over the years and in some cases older lower standard buildings have been substituted by more modern facilities; and these situations are not reflected in the mere counts.

What does the future hold? As pointed out earlier the hotel, motel and lodge sector have stabilized or have reached slow growth stages. The number of outfitters may grow but there will be a large amount of entry and exit from this industry sector. Therefore and returning to table one and figure one it does appear that growth trends, for the number of facilities, have flattened for now and possibly into the future. Meanwhile improvements in the quality of facilities can be expected to continue.

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