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***Rae Edzo Park & Tourism Development
Action Plan***

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Executive Summary

RT & Associates Ltd. was contracted by the GNWT Department of Economic Development and Tourism in December, 1990 to develop an Action Plan for park development in the Fort Rae - Edzo area. The study terms of reference called for an assessment of potential park development sites in the immediate vicinity of these communities and to profile tourism opportunities that would lead to increased tourist visitation and expenditures.

Accordingly, RT & Associates Ltd. carried out an extensive and comprehensive consulting program involving primary and secondary research, consultations with municipal leaders and knowledgeable residents, and physical assessments of the identified park development sites.

During our consulting program our approach was to ensure maximum participation by all major stakeholders. Therefore, we conducted nine separate consultation sessions in Fort Rae, four of which involved the two municipal councils and the balance were with key individuals and business people interested in park and tourism development generally.

From our consultations and research we present our key findings and recommendations:

Evaluation and Selection of Rae - **Edzo** Park Development Sites

As prescribed in the Terms of Reference four separate sites were to be evaluated as

possible future territorial parks. These included:

- The North Arm Territorial Park
- The Edzo Territorial Park
- Old Fort Rae
- The Russell Lake Community Campground

Accordingly, each site was evaluated on the basis of 9 predefined site selection criteria that were developed in response to concerns and issues raised and identified during our consultation process with the community. Specifically, the criteria used in evaluating the sites included:

- 1.) Overall Tourism Appeal
- 2.) Accessibility to the Traveling Public
- 3.) Physiographic Attributes
- 4.) Historical and Cultural Significance
- 5.) Community (Acceptance) Sensitivity Index
- 6.) Compatibility with Community Priorities
- 7.) Potential Conflicting Use
- 8.) Opportunities and Constraints to Site Development
- 9.) preliminary Development Cost Index

During our consultations with Rae - Edzo residents it became evident that of all the sites identified, the North Arm site was the most desirable for future territorial park development in the medium term. With easy access to the Mackenzie Highway, low public sensitivity towards development, limited conflict with existing use of surrounding resources and its medium development cost index, we ***recommend that the North Arm site be designated as the primary target for future territorial recreational park development in the Rae - Edzo area.***

As well, given the relatively low community sensitivity index (towards developing the site) and reasonable access we *also recommend that the Russell Lake community campground be considered as a another territorial recreational park site*. This park would serve two audiences: first and foremost the Russell Lake site would be primarily for community use, e.g., local events and community celebrations, and secondly, for tourism overflow from the North Arm park. The park would also act as an attraction to draw tourists closer to Rae (and the retail services).

As for the Edzo Territorial Park, we recommend the site not be upgraded and considered for closure in the future. The site does not rate highly in terms of tourism appeal, nor does it have much to offer in terms of unique flora and fauna, hiking potential or other appealing natural attributes. The site is also said to be in a mosquito infested area. In summary, the Edzo Territorial Park should not be upgraded and the Department of Economic Development and Tourism should consider closure as other park facilities are expanded.

One of the most interesting and appealing sites from a tourism perspective is the Old Fort Rae site. Of all the sites investigated, Old Fort Rae has an extremely rich frontier history spanning the fur trade and exploration era of the North Arm's transition into the modern age. The site is ideally suited for developing an historical/interpretive park.

However, given residents' strong historical and cultural attachment to the site, and the lack of archaeological information, we do not recommend its development as a territorial park in the immediate future. What needs to be done before future detailed park planning and development can take place, is a thorough investigation of the site's archaeological resources. Included in this investigation should be an assessment of the site's sensitivity to increased traffic. It is for these reasons we *recommend that the Department of Economic Development and Tourism work with the Rae Band*

and Hamlet Councils (and the proposed Tourism and Parks Board) to enlist the support and technical expertise of the Northern Heritage Center to launch a systematic and controlled archaeological evaluation of the Old Fort Rae site. Such a research program could involve training local residents as field archaeological assistants so that increased local participation could be achieved at all phases of the assessment process.

As noted during our consultation process with community residents and municipal leaders, more baseline information on the site must be garnered. This includes data on historical use, grave sites, artifacts and areas of special sensitivity. Without such information it is doubtful that Fort Rae residents would support any of development or public use of the Old Fort Rae site. Also, experience has shown (in the case of the Fort Franklin archaeological investigations) that community participation in this research of this type would accomplish two important objectives. First, it would demonstrate the government's respect to historically sensitive sites. And, it would, through resident participation build a stronger relationship between the community and park proponents.

organizational Structure and Action Plan for Development

Throughout all of our consultations with interest groups in Fort Rae, the issue of local control and increased participation in parks planning and development was central to our discussions. For past park developments Rae people feel they had very limited opportunity to provide input and take an active role in the selection, development and management of territorial recreational parks sites. In particular, members of both municipal councils were concerned about whether their control over adjacent lands would be compromised as a result of further park development. Therefore, as a condition of their support for further park development in the Rae area, both Councils passed motions endorsing the concept of establishing a joint - management structure

in the form of a Tourism and Parks Board, which would allow for their equal and full participation in all facets of tourism and park development. Their view is that park development in the Rae - Edzo area must be a shared and cooperative undertaking, where both the GNWT Department of Economic Development and Tourism and respective community governments can direct and manage future tourism and park activities. *It is for this reason that we recommend the formation of a Rae - Edzo Tourism and Parks Board which would be comprised of representatives from local governments, the GNWT and local tourism operators.*

The primary purpose of the Tourism and Parks Board would be to oversee tourism development generally and to work with the GNWT Department of Economic Development and Tourism in implementing the following Rae - Edzo Park development action plan, elements of which are summarized as follows:

- 1.) Adoption of the Phase One Parks Planning Study
- 2.) Formation of a Rae - Edzo Tourism and Parks Board
- 3.) Land Transfer from the Federal Government to the GNWT
- 4.) Archaeological Assessment of the Old Fort Rae Site
- 5.) Identify Proponents for Park Related Business Opportunities
- 6.) Park Development Strategy Session

Economic Benefits and Business Opportunities

Clearly, given the relatively limited tourism development in the Rae - Edzo area, residents and businesses have much to gain from additional tourist visitation and associated expenditures. For example, recent tourism studies suggest that approximately \$26 million is spent annually by tourists visiting the Northern Frontier Tourism Zone. And, almost all of these expenditures accrue to businesses in Yellowknife. With additional parks and tourism infrastructure we believe that Rae

could capture a percentage of this business. At a 5 percent penetration level, Rae could expect another \$120,000 in meal sales; \$260,000 in accommodation revenues; \$120,000 in arts and crafts; \$210,000 in tour packages, and approximately \$310,000 in sales of tourism related supplies. In total this would mean an additional \$1,030,000 in sales to the community. At 10 percent penetration this would mean, of course, an additional \$2,060,000 in sales for residents and local businesses.

During the course of this assignment we identified 30 distinct and historically significant sites and events that would provide the impetus for local tourism development in the Rae area. Of course, their development would especially depend on the availability of adequate park facilities to attract and accommodate longer staying tourists. In addition, we have identified 17 specific tourism development initiatives (government and private sector) and three new business opportunities that would result from new park development.

In conclusion, we believe for additional tourism development to occur in the Rae - Edzo area, additional attractions, events and facilities will be needed over the medium to long term. In particular, the area desperately needs improved facilities, such as campgrounds and service areas which would promote the Rae area as an interim destination on the route to Yellowknife. Improved facilities would also be conducive in promoting Rae as a tourism destination for Yellowknife residents. Expanding and developing the North Arm site as a "first class" Territorial Recreational Park" would be an excellent starting point for improving tourist facilities in the area. In fact, a full featured expanded park at the North Arm site could be the cornerstone for future tourism development activities which could benefit Fort Rae residents.

Acknowledgements

As a closing comment, we would like to acknowledge the excellent suggestions and

input provided by John B. Zoe, Father Pochat, Joe Rabesca, Moise and Joyce Rabesca, Eddie Rabesca and Eddie Koyena and all the members of the Rae Band and Hamlet Councils. We would also like to thank members of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism who actively participated in the field visits and planning sessions with the Northern Heritage Center staff. Lastly, we would like to thank the Northern Heritage Center staff for their support and on-going interest with this project.

1.0 Introduction

In October 1990 RT and Associates, in association with Nordic Group International, were contracted by the GNWT, Department of Economic Development and Tourism (ED&T) to prepare a Park and Tourism Development Action Plan for the community of Rae Edzo. The terms of reference for the study also required that the resulting plan, received community approval and contained recommendations on the following four sites:

- North Arm Territorial Park;
- Edzo Territorial Park;
- Russell Lake Community Park;
- Old Fort Rae as a potential Historic Park.

As well, the consultants were requested to determine park related visitor centre and tourist information facilities, and to identify potential tourism business opportunities for the private sector.

The objective of the study was to promote an **integrated** tourism activity and destination area by improving and developing compliment visitor attractions and facilities.

2.0 Background

Rae Edzo is an incorporated municipality located between the Alberta border and Yellowknife. Rae Edzo is 111 kilometers from Yellowknife on the North Arm of Great Slave Lake.

The community is comprised of two geographically distinct communities 16 km apart from each other: Rae, the administrative centre with a population of about 1,400; and Edzo, a smaller community of about 200 which holds the elementary and junior high schools.

The population in both communities is primarily Dogrib.

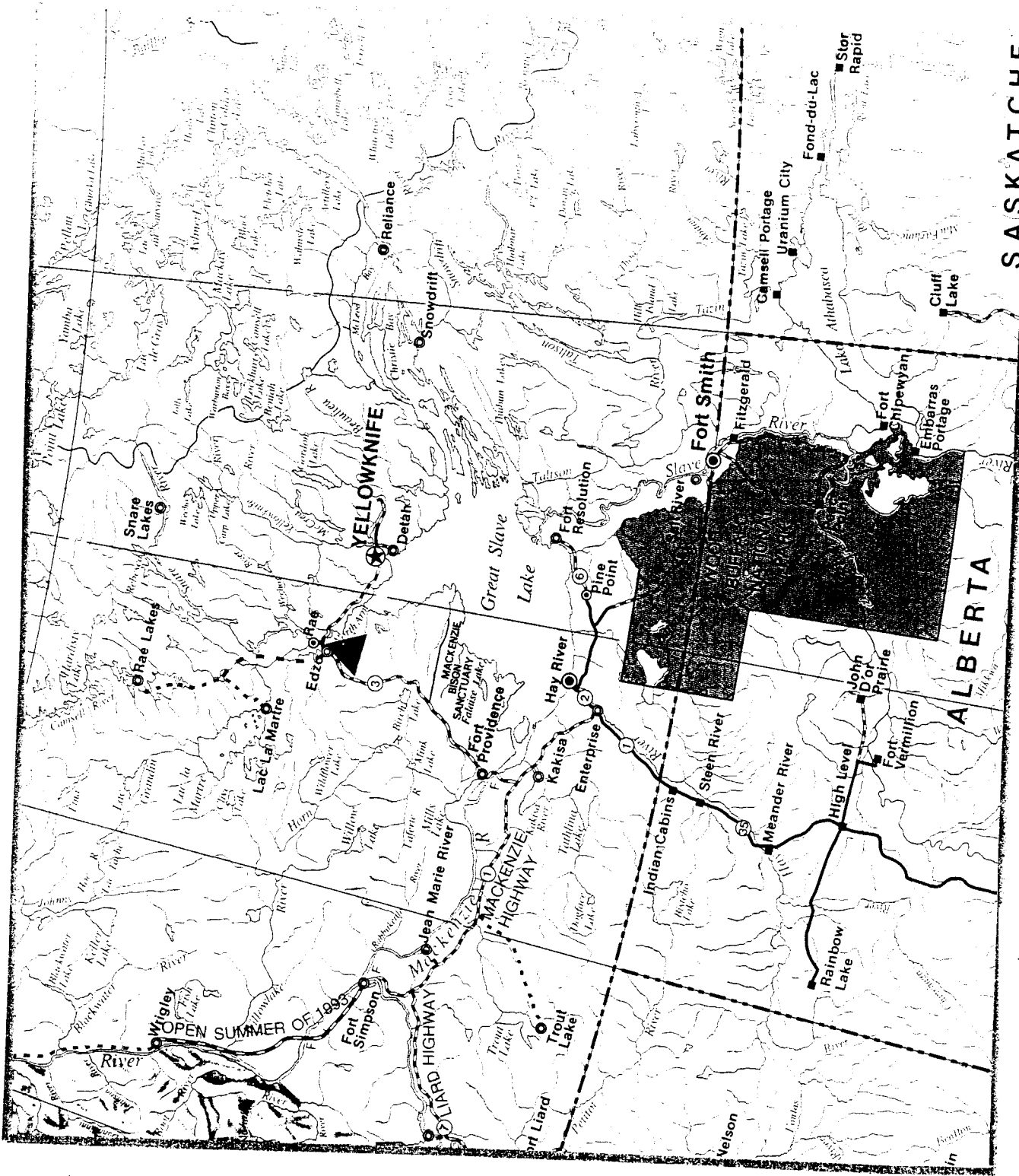
There is a very high unemployment rate, and a rapidly growing population. Local residents and the GNWT are giving a high priority to creating employment in both communities.

In 1989 a regional tourism plan was completed that identified a number of tourism initiatives and opportunities that could be developed to stimulate tourism growth in Rae Edzo. The plan also highlighted park development opportunities in the area. These opportunities required further research and planning before actual site development work could begin.

Accordingly in February 1990 the Rae Edzo Band Council submitted a letter of interest to the Department of Economic Development and Tourism to have more detailed planning work completed.

A preliminary analysis by the department confirmed that opportunity did exist to create an expanded park at North Arm, an improved community campground at Russell Lake, and a potential historic park at Old Fort Rae. However, officials were unable to confirm if there would be broad community support for these developments, when they should be developed, the level of required infrastructure and cost. Department officials also concluded that the potential for other tourism opportunities related to the park development sites should be further investigated.

In response, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism and the Band Council jointly agreed to have a detailed and comprehensive Park and Tourism Development Action Plan completed.



3.0 Methodology and Study Process

Orientation Meeting

The consultants met with the Tourism and Parks Planning Coordinator to:

- review the terms of reference;
- identify key people to contact and documents to review;
- confirm work schedule and expected outputs.

Data Base Assembly and Review

All relevant data, was assembled and reviewed, including the 1989 Rae Edzo Tourism Development Plan, 1989 Visitors Survey, and information related to the physical, historical and cultural aspects of the area. An historical overview of the community was prepared in order to identify historical and cultural themes.

Park Site Research

To become fully familiar with existing conditions of the various proposed park sites, and to assess the current levels of both infrastructure and attractions available in the

area, a detailed inventory was assembled which included existing facilities and land uses, drainage, vegetation, wildlife, access, historical and cultural significance, interpretive potential and development capability.

Community Consultation

To explain the study process and identify major development issues and priorities in the community, a series of eight meetings were held with the Band Council, Hamlet Council, Band Manager, former Land Claims Negotiator, Rae Edzo Dene Band Development Corporation representative, a local outfitter, and resident catholic priest. A meeting was also held with Northern Heritage officials to address issues and concerns from their perspective. As well, a series of informal meeting were held with G. N.W.T. Economic Development and Tourism staff throughout the study process.

Market Assessment

To determine the optimal mix of tourism attractions and services that would maximize community benefits, the size and socio-economic characteristics of the potential market was assessed. This involved determining the numbers, origin, and characteristics of tourists visiting the area; identifying visitor expectations; identifying potential target markets; and identifying potential themes and attractions.

Tourism Infrastructure Assessment and Park Site Visit

The region's tourism infrastructure was also assessed and opportunities and constraints to tourism development were identified. Each of the four park sites was visited to obtain: a physiographic description; a description of park facilities and services in place; current deficiencies and opportunities.

Park Site Selection Criteria, Evaluation and Ranking

Park selection criteria were developed to assist in selecting an optimal site for a Rae Edzo Tourist Park. The criteria are:

- Overall Tourism Appeal
- Accessibility to the Traveling Public
- Physiographic Attributes
- Historical and Cultural Significance
- Community Sensitivity
- Compatibility With Community Priorities
- Potential Conflicting Use
- Opportunities and Constraints to Site Development
- Preliminary Development Cost Index

Based on the above criteria each park site was evaluated and ranked. A matrix was used to summarize all relevant information.

Analysis was undertaken to **confirm** how each site could fit into an overall park development plan for the area.

Park Development Options and Alternatives

Further analysis was undertaken to **confirm** the different development options. The positive and negative attributes of each option were analyzed. The preferred option identified and recommended.

Park Concept Plans

Concept plans for the preferred park option were prepared to include: suggested facilities and programs; operating and capital costs; operational plan; management structure; implementation and phasing. Summary and visual graphics were also prepared.

Identified Tourism Opportunities

On the basis of our research we identified three park related business opportunities which could be developed for the benefits of Fort Rae residents. These included: a Highway Gas Bar and Coffee Shop, a Cultural Village, and a Day Tour Package to the Old Fort Rae site. During our analysis of each opportunity we considered such variables such as potential markets, promotion and marketing requirements, capital costs, and employment income that would accrue to Fort Rae residents. Three identified tourism opportunities related to the preferred park option were analyzed to **confirm** potential markets, promotion and marketing required, capital costs, and jobs and income that would be generated.

Second Round of Community Consultation

Meetings were held with the Hamlet and Band Councils to **confirm** their support for various park development options.

Community Benefits

The level of community benefits for the recommended option was analyzed to **confirm**: park revenue and employment opportunities; related tourism opportunities; and the potential for the park to be a tourism development catalyst in the area.

4.0 Historical Overview

As an introductory note, the following historical overview was prepared largely on the basis of interviews with local residents and on an abstract produced by the Hudson's Bay Archives located in London, England.

The area around Rae-Edzo has been home to the **Dogrib** Indians for centuries. Before the arrival of Europeans the **Dogribs** lived a nomadic existence pursuing caribou and other game in small family groups. There was little contact with Europeans until the latter part of the 1780s when fur traders became active on Great Slave Lake.

In 1796 the North West Company established the first trading post on the North Arm of Great Slave Lake at Old Fort Providence. However, **Dogrib** Indians made little use of the trading post because of the presence of hostile **Yellowknife** Indians who controlled trade around Great Slave Lake.

Peace was finally secured between the two groups in 1829. According to recorded history the **Dogribs** destroyed a large group of **Yellowknife** Indians, almost annihilating the tribe. This broke their aggressive spirit and peace between the two groups was mediated by representatives of the Hudson's Bay Company. **Dogrib** oral history attributes the peace to the **Dogrib** Chief **Edzo** who, by his oratory, shamed and terrified **Akaitcho** and his **Yellowknife** tribe into enduring peace.

The Hudson's Bay Company did not have a presence on the north arm of Great Slave Lake until after it absorbed the North West company in 1821. Two years later Old Fort Providence was closed and the area was left without a central trading post.

Some bands resorted to trading at Fort Simpson, hauling their provisions and furs 15 to 30 days distance.

In 1852 the Hudson's Bay Company established a post at Rae Point. The post was named for Dr. John Rae, an explorer who covered nearly fifteen hundred miles of Arctic coastline while in charge of the Mackenzie River district for the Hudson's Bay Company. Dr. Rae was the **first** far-northern explorer to show that it was possible to live off the land and, more than any other explorer, associated with natives as equals and adopted native ways, much to the chagrin of his Navy superiors back home.

The site chosen for Fort Rae now called Old Fort Rae was near the caribou migration path. It had a bountiful fishery and a good supply of timber for building and fuel. However when the post was established it was situated on a small island. During the 1870's the narrow channel to the east was closed by sediments and encroaching vegetation so that the site is now joined to the mainland.

The original Fort consisted of 3 log buildings; a store, a men's house and a master's house. The post was off the main fur trade route so it received relatively few visitors during its early years but it soon became the single point of trade for the Dogrib nation and the focus of **tribal** rendez-vous at Christmas-New Year's, Easter and in June after the spring beaver hunt. The **Dogribs** called the place "Nishy-Ku" which means Island Hill Post or "Nu-chic" which *means* Mountain Island.

Initially, Old Fort Rae was more important as a provisions post than as a source of furs and for many years it was the best provision post in the Mackenzie district. Each year **Dogribs** brought 8- 10,000 caribou to exchange at the trading post, just as furs were bartered elsewhere. The meat was dried and used as provisions for the York boat crews, carrying trade goods to and from the North and as emergency stores to feed personnel in the other trading posts when fisheries failed. Until the arrival of

steamboats, Old Fort Rae caribou meat was the “fuel” on which the transport facilities on the Great Slave Lake - Mackenzie River trade route were operated.

In most years caribou and fish were plentiful and the provision trade was very good. Fort Rae was able to supply provisions not only for itself but also Fort Simpson and Providence. Other years, when the caribou changed their migration patterns, the Fort had to feed the Indians that usually supplied the Fort. Sickness was also a problem. Fort Rae was spared the scarlet fever epidemic that affected most of the Mackenzie River District in 1865, but reports by the medical officer in 1868-69 indicated that fur and provision supplies were poor because “the Indians at this post are unfortunately always dying off in great numbers. ”

In 1859 the first Roman Catholic missionary arrived. In his first year at Fort Rae, Father Grolier baptized 139 children in the Roman Catholic faith and within five years over 600 Rae Dogribs had been baptized. Within a decade the entire Dogrib nation had been converted. In 1879 the permanent Mission of St. Michael Archangel was built alongside the Hudson’s Bay Company’s trading post with Father Roure as the first resident missionary. The mission also brought the first gardens to Fort Rae, cultivating potatoes, turnips, onions, cabbage, carrots, radishes, beets, and peas in the poor, rocky soil.

1882 was International Polar Year and Fort Rae was selected as one of the sites for meteorological observations because it was the nearest settlement to the magnetic north pole at the time. Careful meteorological, magnetic and aurora observations were taken and compared with other observations made simultaneously at other circumpolar stations.

In the 1880s Caribou began to decline as a commercial resource and Fort Rae became a major station in the musk-ox robe trade. After 1900 fur trapping rose in importance

and Fort Rae's trade included bear, beaver, ermine, fox (silver, cross, red, white and blue), marten, mink, muskrat, otter, wolf and wolverine.

The change to furs seems to have been a gradual one and had a number of causes. The caribou migration route changed and fewer animals came by the fort. Steamboats began to travel the Mackenzie-Great Slave Lake route in 1886 and this, coupled with other improvements in transportation, resulted in the Hudson's Bay Company becoming less dependent on caribou provisions. The missionaries' gardens also lessened the dependence on caribou meat for emergency stores.

There were four distinct groups of **Dogribs** that brought caribou meat and furs to Old Fort Rae. They travelled over the local rivers and lakes to Old Fort Rae during the spring and the fall and returned to their hunting grounds to spend the remainder of the year. The small rivers extending from Mat-km Lake were the principal route of travel from the hunting and trapping grounds of these Indians. The total Dog-rib population at this time has been estimated at 788.

At the turn of the century, free traders began to enter the area and broke the Hudson's Bay Company's monopoly on the fur trade. In 1902 the independent company of **Hislop and Nagle** set up a trading post 18 miles north of Old Fort Rae (the present site of Fort Rae or Rae) at the point where travel routes from traditional hunting areas converged. The new company's location allowed them to intercept the **Dogribs enroute** to Old Fort Rae. With their supply of fur effectively cut off the Hudson's Bay decided to relocate to the new site at present day Fort Rae in 1905 and by 1910 it had once again obtained the greater part of the fur trade.

The mission relocated to the new site shortly after the Hudson's Bay Company moved and a permanent Indian community began to develop around the trading posts and mission. However, the new site was plagued with troubles. In the early 1900s there

was an outbreak of measles that killed one out of every ten band member. In 1910 caribou herds failed to pass by the site and almost all of the Indians were starving. Tuberculosis raged and in 1928 an epidemic of influenza left so many dead that in many camps there was no one left alive to bury them. By 1940 many observers felt that the Dogrib people were on the road to extinction.

In 1900 medical doctors began making an annual visit to the community and after 1910 annual patrols were made by the RCMP. A permanent detachment of police was stationed in Rae in 1927.

Mineral finds on Great Bear Lake in 1930 brought new hope for economic development to Rae. A new airway was needed through the North Arm to the mining area and prospectors and miners stopped off at Rae which had developed into a seaplane base. However in 1935 Yellowknife, the gold boom town, saw development of an Airport and the future mineral developments had very little effect on Fort Rae.

In the early 1940s, residents of Rae lived very much like their ancestors did, trapping furs to purchase western products and hunting and fishing for subsistence throughout the year. Permanent residences were built in the 1940s and the Roman Catholic mission established a convalescent hospital in the community. Expanded health care and medical services have been credited with providing a base for the growth of the native population.

In the 1950s a school was opened and a physician began working at the mission hospital. In 1959 electricity was brought to Rae and the access road to the Mackenzie Highway was constructed in 1960. The population continued to alternate between bush and settlement living until well into the 1960s.

Edzo, 24 km from Fort Rae, was developed in 1965 because the terrain at Rae had

very poor drainage and could no longer provide adequate sanitation as the community grew. It was hoped that the Rae community would voluntarily relocate to Edzo.

In 1971, in order to encourage residents to move to Edzo, the school at Rae was closed and a large new school and hostel constructed at Edzo, under one of the first local Education Societies in the NW'T. However most of the community continues to reside at Rae which provides better water access for fishing and hunting purposes.

Summary

Drawing from the historical background and based on extensive consultations with residents of Fort Rae we have identified the following historical themes that should be incorporated into future tourism plans park interpretation and products for the Rae - Edzo region. The reader should note that while all of the following park development themes apply to all potential park sites in the Rae - Edzo area, they are in the main, a composite of thematic ideas that should be considered for the North Arm Park site and perhaps for the Old Fort Rae interpretive park. As for the Russell Lake site, we feel that, other than being named after Dr. Russell who explored the area in the 1800's, the site does not really lend itself to any significant thematic development. Rather, we consider the site as an overflow option for North Arm tourists and for local outdoor recreational and cultural activities.

From the foregoing historical overview, certain themes emerge for park development in the Rae - Edzo area. First, given Old Fort Rae's rich historical background, we feel that the site would be best developed as an interpretive park with a strong emphasis on the history and culture of local people. As well, proposed expansion of the North Arm should be viewed in the context of an outdoor recreational park, themed as an "access to the Great Slave Lake and Old Fort Rae". In effect, the North Arm site

could be developed as a hub to tourism movement in the general area. As the regional maps show, the North Arm is well situated for developing boat and hiking tours in the general area and for day excursions to Old Fort Rae. Development of the Russell Lake site, however, could be **themed** to reflect the activities of explorers such as Dr. John Rae and Dr. Russell who were instrumental in mapping the Fort Rae area.

A sample of theming elements relevant to all potential park sites in the Rae area are outlined as follows:

- Prehistory before contact with Europeans;
- Fur Trading and transitional period;
- Dogrib hostilities with Yellowknife Indians resolved by great Dogrib Chief Edzo;
- In 1852 Old Fort Rae was established, and was named by Dogribs “Nishy- Ku” or Island Hill Post;
- Dr. John Rae **first** far-northern explorer to show that it was possible for non-natives to live off the land. Associated with natives on equal terms;
- 8,000 to 10,000 caribou bartered annually at Old Fort Rae and used to supply York boat crews on Great Slave Lake and Mackenzie River;

- 1859 the arrival of first Roman Catholic missionary, Father Grolier. Gardens established.
- 1882, International Polar Year
- 1902 Hislop and Nagle establish trading post 18 miles from Old Fort Rae (present Rae site) to compete with H.B.C. Soon after H.B.C relocates to this new site.
- 1905- 1940's caribou herds fail; measles, influenza and tuberculosis epidemics almost wipe out Dogribs.
- Provision of health services, introduction of schools and growth in community.
- 1965 Edzo established, however residents continued to stay in Rae.
- 1991 Rae continuous to grow with a blend of traditional and modern commercial activities.

5.0 Trends in Regional Tourism Travel

Given its close proximity to the Mackenzie Highway system Rae - Edzo is well positioned to take advantage of tourism development opportunities. Unfortunately, because of the lack of infrastructure (parks, tourist services, etc.) it has not captured a large share of the “rubber tire tourism traffic” destined for Yellowknife. We also feel, with good product development and marketing Rae - Edzo could lure a portion of “in-bound” package tour participants to take side trips from Yellowknife to visit the community and participate in organized cultural activities in the area.

As the following discussion shows, some \$25 million is spent annually by tourists in the North Slave Region and virtually none is spent in Rae - Edzo. Clearly, in financial terms the incentive for increasing Rae - Edzo’s share of the market is indeed great. While we feel (with proper facilities) Rae - Edzo could capture a larger share of this market, a mere 5 percent penetration rate would represent an additional \$1.25 million in revenues for Rae - Edzo business people. This, in turn, could help sustain or create new jobs for unemployed people or for people seeking more seasonal work during the spring to fall months.

Recent Tourism Trends in the Northern Frontier Zone

To provide insights about the composition of the tourists traveling by Rae - Edzo we have developed a series of tabulations which show the origin of tourism vehicles crossing the Fort Providence ferry. As well, to highlight trends in tourism traffic over the past four years we have developed tabulations that show the relatively stable market for highway-based tourism development opportunities that could be developed

and promoted by Rae - Edzo residents.

Approximately 89 percent of all tourists (business and pleasure) traveling past Rae - Edzo originated in Canada and of these over half were from the province of Alberta. The following table shows the relative importance of Canadian, American and Offshore "rubber-tire" travelers crossing the Fort Providence ferry and passing by Rae - Edzo.

As an interpretive note to the reader, a visitation index is provided in the following table. This factor is a measure of market draw and was developed by the GNWT Department of Economic Development and Tourism's Marketing Division. As well, the index was developed to normalize their market survey data relative to the populations of each market. The index is calculated by taking the percentage of vehicles arriving **from** a particular market and dividing this figure by the percentage of the total population base the market segment represents. Through this procedure, departmental officials believe a better perspective on the real potential of certain markets can be obtained.

Table 1.0

Origin of Vehicles (1990)
Mackenzie River (Fort Providence)

	(Vehicles)		Visitation Index
	Number	Percent	
Canada:			
Alberta	1,829.00	53.70%	6.50
British Columbia	525.00	15.41%	1.50
Saskatchewan	307.00	9.01%	2.60
Ontario	197.00	5.78%	0.20
Manitoba	84.00	2.47%	0.70
Yukon	29.00	0.85%	10.00
Quebec	18.00	0.53%	0.02
Remainder of Canada	41.00	1.20%	0.10
Sub-total Canada	3,030.00	88.96%	1.00
United States:			
Minnesota	54.00	1.59%	8.50
California	45.00	1.32%	1.10
Washington	39.00	1.15%	5.50
Balance of U.S.	235.00	6.90%	0.70
Sub-total U.S.	373.00	10.95%	1.00
Overseas:	3.00	0.09%	0.00
Total	3,406.00	100.00%	

Source: GNWT Tourism Statistics

From table 1.0, it is clear that some 3,406 vehicles travelled the Mackenzie Highway to or through the Rae - Edzo area. Of these almost 89 percent were from Canada, with about 11 percent from the United States and less than 1 percent from offshore origins. As noted, within the Canadian segment Alberta captured the lion's share of visitation with approximately 54 percent originating from the province. Similarly, Alberta's visitation index was indeed high, given its population base and relative share of vehicles crossing the Fort Providence ferry. Although, the recent survey data does not differentiate between business and leisure travelers, there is no doubt that Alberta does offer considerable potential for continued traffic to the Rae - Edzo area. As the subsequent tables of market data will show, Canadians in general have consistently been a significant component of highway traffic to the region over the past four to five years.

Within the United States market segment, Minnesota, California and Washington were ranked high in terms of their respective visitation indices. In particular, Minnesota ranked a high of 8.5 with Washington a close second of 5.5. Although the total number of vehicles (373) is a small fraction of those originating in Canada, one can assume that all road travelers from the United States came to the region for tourism reasons.

Time Series of Tourist **Traffic** Passing the Rae - **Edzo** Area

Although recent tourism surveys only cover the summer months, annual trends in traffic patterns suggest the tourism market is fairly stable, with slight growth in the Canadian segment, Table 2.0 highlights survey results from 1987 through 1990 and emphasizes the sheer magnitude of potential "purchasers" passing by Rae - Edzo.

Table 2.0

Annual Summer Ferry Crossings at Fort Providence

Ferry Origin	1987	1988	1989	1990
Mackenzie River:				
- Canada	2,983.00	2,895.00	2,956.00	3,030.00
- United States	414.00	342.00	375.00	373.00
- Overseas	11.00	5.00	8.00	3.00
Total	3,408.00	3,242.00	3,339+00	3,406.00

Source: GNWT Tourism Statistics

As the above table indicates, there has been virtually no growth in the “rubber tire” traffic during the summer tourism season over the past four years. Although growth has been limited the numbers do support the strong pull of the Northern Frontier Region in the overall N.W.T. tourism market place. As noted earlier approximately 50 percent or \$25 million is being spent annually in the region (regardless of the limited growth in sheer numbers of tourists). Given that Rae has never sought the tourist dollar, there is indeed potential to develop a series of products that meet tourist expectations for a unique and enjoyable travel experience. To date, most of the tourism revenues have accrued to Yellowknife based operators who have continued to grow and expand.

Also, consumer potential of these traffic figures is further accentuated when one considers the volume of people traveling in the surveyed vehicles during the tourist season. For example, if one assumes that the average party size of 2.5 persons per

vehicle has not changed dramatically over the past four years, one can easily appreciate the significant consumer potential from the above table. Applying a 2.5 party size factor to the above numbers means that over the past four years approximately 33,487 visitors have travelled past Rae - Edzo during the summer months. In 1990 alone, some 8,515 people passed by without spending significant amounts of money on tourism or crafts products in the community.

For future tourism development to be successful in the Rae - Edzo area, infrastructure will need to be improved along with targeted product and market development activities by local business people. The main ingredient will be the extent to which products are matched with tourist expectations along with reasonable prices and good service.

Profile of the Rae - Edzo Tourist

Based on recently completed marketing studies and surveys the modern tourist is no longer the hunter or fisherman that once formed the bulk of tourists visiting the Northwest Territories. Many tourists visiting the N.W.T. and in particular, the Northern Frontier Zone, are more interested in a wider venue including non-consumptive activities, where the tourist can "learn, observe and experience" all facets of their particular destination.

For example, recent travel research reveals the following information about tourist interests and characteristics:

"The most interesting features of the N.W.T. are considered to be the environment, the people, the culture, and specific activities such as fishing and hunting. However, the single most important interesting feature is the scenery and

landscape, with 61 percent of all surveyed visitors. This is followed by the people (23 percent), culture (14 percent), and the nature and wilderness (9 percent)."

Top priorities for Canadian visitors include "visiting, touring and business purposes, while "general touring, fishing and camping" ranked as high priorities for the American segment.

"Of all travelers to the N. W. T., those traveling for business tend to be in higher income brackets than those for pleasure. Nearly half of all business travelers have family incomes in excess of \$50,000 per year. Over 70 percent of business travelers have incomes higher than \$40,000 per year."

Of the pleasure travelers, almost 48 percent have annual household incomes over \$40,000.

"Over 60 percent of all visitors to the N.W.T. are male. The largest age/gender group are males over 55, very nearly matched by males between 41 and 55 and females over 55. Otherwise, however, the number of females is fewer and relatively constant across age groups, except for those over 55 who comprise almost 40 percent of all female visitors."

Of the top twenty destinations, Rae - Edzo was ranked 10th. However, by comparison only 1.2 percent of tourists visiting the top twenty communities in the N.W.T. rated Rae - Edzo as a primary destination, while 47.2 percent rated Yellowknife as a primary destination.

Magnitude of Tourism Expenditures in the Northern Frontier Zone

One of the most important indicators of tourism potential is the amount of money tourists/visitors spend in a particular area or region. From the foregoing we have seen that almost half of the visitors to the north come to the zone and they spend somewhere in the order of \$25 million on travel related goods and services. To further illustrate the importance of these expenditures in terms of market opportunities we present the following table.

Table 3.0

Northern Frontier Tourism Expenditures By
Category
(1989 \$ 000's)

Expenditures:

Transportation	4,001.00	16.22%
Meals	2,468.00	10.01%
Accommodation	5,163.00	20.93%
Souvenirs	2,480.00	10.05%
Tours	4,265.00	17.29%
Other Items	6,289.00	25.50%
Totals	24,666.00	100.00%

Source: GNWT Tourism Statistics

According to the table 3.0, tourists spend approximately 84 percent on local goods and services, with transportation costs absorbing another 16 percent. Within the goods and services categories they spend about \$2.4 million on meals, almost \$5.2

million on accommodation, \$2.4 on souvenirs and craft items, \$4.2 million on tours and about \$6.2 million on other items such as hardware goods and supplies in the zone.

What is really telling from these figures is that while Rae - Edzo is one of the largest native communities in the region, and is strategically located on the Mackenzie Highway system, it has captured virtually none of these business revenues. Once again, in sharp contrast, **Yellowknife** has been the primary beneficiary of tourism trade in the Northern Frontier Zone.

Clearly, with Rae's excellent access, abundance of natural resources and interesting history there should be many opportunities for developing businesses and facilities that would increase the amount of tourism traffic remaining in or near the community and for increasing tourist expenditures on meals, accommodation, tours and related holiday items.

In real terms, capturing 5 percent of the business revenues generated by tourists could mean an additional:

-\$120,000 in meal sales to Rae businesses;

-\$260,000 in accommodation revenues;

-\$120,000 in craft sales for local producers;

-\$210,000 in tour sales in the Rae area, and;

-\$310,000 in sales of supplies to tourists.

For Rae - Edzo residents there is much to gain by developing tourism attractions and events that would encourage road travelers and package tourists to visit the community and enjoy the natural and cultural environment. As highlighted subsequently in this report, the Rae - Edzo area has a unique and interesting history and offers the right mix of geography and culture that many tourists seek in an adventure travel experience.

Within the context of local tourism development, the current planning process can play a significant role in highlighting the important opportunities that could arise from park and tourism development in the Rae area. It will provide the much needed direction for base level infrastructure such as parks and associated amenities. Indeed, given the paucity of tourism related facilities and services in place, a renewed emphasis on park development in the Rae area could act as the catalyst for creating new business and employment opportunities in the community.

Rae Edzo Market Opportunities

A recent tourism study (1989) prepared for the Department of Economic Development and Tourism in Yellowknife indicated that the Northern Frontier Visitors Zone accounted for about 47% or \$25 million of total tourism expenditures in the NWT. Since Rae Edzo is central to the Zone and is almost adjacent to Highway #3 it is well positioned to capture a significant share of this market; in particular with the "rubber tire" traffic that travels the highway and air travelers who enter and leave the NWT through Yellowknife.

The same study also indicated that the most interesting features of the NWT are considered to be the environment, the people, the culture, and specific activities such as fishing and hunting. However, the single most interesting feature is the scenery and landscape (61% of tourists interviewed mentioned these features) followed by the

people (23%), culture (14%), fishing (12%), and the nature and wilderness (9%).

Since Rae Edzo has many of the interesting features identified such as the North Arm of Great Slave Lake, Dogrib people, Dene Culture, sports fishing, caribou hunts, etc., it also has much that would appeal to tourists visiting the NWT.

As such, from a marketing perspective, Rae Edzo would appear to have a good potential market, readily accessible, and a number of "features" that if properly developed, promoted and marketed could draw more tourists to the area.

6.0 Identified Tourism Opportunities

Tourism Opportunities

The recent tourism planning study (1989) prepared for the Northern Frontier Visitors Association and mentioned above also identified a number of opportunities and initiatives for tourism development in Rae Edzo including the following:

Attractions, Tours and Events:

1. Bus Tours and Ground Operator: a ground operator would be based in Rae Edzo to organize sightseeing and recreational activities for motor coach tours traveling Highway #3. The operator would also package other tours involving boat and sightseeing tours of the area; visit to a traditional camp; flight sightseeing of points of interest; or arranging for an escorted walk-about. The operator would be a catalyst for product development in Rae Edzo.
2. Fly-Out/Charter Boat Fishing Trips to North Arm: a local air operator and/or outfitter could offer scheduled fishing packages.
3. Trekking, Hiking and Camping on North Arm: The Rae Edzo and North Arm area could be developed as a hiking and trekking destination under the GNWT's tourism capital plan. The plan could also include a series of campgrounds, picnic sites, lookout and hiking/cross country ski trail in the Mosquito Creek and Norm Territorial Park area.

4. Traditional Trek to Barrenlands and Mesa Lake: with the resurrection of the traditional Mesa Lake and Barrenlands trek in 1988 by a number of residents, and the slashing of portages along the route, there is opportunity for a locally based operator to develop a unique annual escorted traditional trek package.
5. Mackenzie Bison Sport Hunt: a quota of 12 wood bison tags have been distributed to the Dogrib Tribal Council and 16 to Fort providence. Opportunity therefore exists for both communities to work together in promoting and marketing joint bison sport hunts.
6. Happy Daze Winter Carnival: the community could plan the Carnival to coincide with other Zone wide events thus gaining more tourist visitation for the Carnival.

Industry Organization and Resource Management:

7. Rae Edzo Tourism Board: a local tourism board needs to be established to undertake long-term planning and coordination of tourism activities and programs. As well, the board would attract investment, lobby government, provide information, liaise with territorial and Zone officials, and monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of tourism plans.
8. Tourism Awareness: the local board would spearhead local tourism awareness programs.
9. Rae Edzo Beautification: the tourism board, Hamlet, and GNWT Departments would work together to beautify the community.

Industry Support Programs:

10. Guide Training: the tourism board and Regional Tourism Officer need to identify and assess guide training needs.
11. Hospitality and Management Training: new tourism operators would receive business training geared to the tourism and service sector.
12. Historical Interpretive and Community Information Programs: the Hamlet and Band Councils and proposed tourism board would improve the level of information, orientation and interpretive services for tourists visiting the area. This would include staffing the highway information **centre**, introducing community **signage**, and developing community aids such as brochures, portable display, information and orientation maps on community based activities, tours and events.

Infrastructure:

13. Old Fort Rae: the tourism board and Department of ED & T would assist in information planning while the Prince of Wales Heritage **Centre** would be contacted to undertake an archaeological and assessment of the area.
14. North Arm Territorial Park: the services and facilities at the park need to be improved to extend the stay of visitors.
15. Frank Channel **Signage** and Pull-off: proper **signage** and a pull-off area for highway traffic needs to be developed.
16. Russell Lake Campground: improved **signage** needs to be developed as well as

six campsites, improved access and parking space and a dock.

In addition to the above we have identified three other tourism opportunities that would be available for local residents to develop. The three opportunities are described below:

1. Highway Gas Bar/Coffee Shop/Service **Centre**

Currently there is no gas bar or coffee shop along Highway #3 between Yellowknife and Fort Providence. The only exception is in Fort Rae, 11 kilometers off the highway, where there is a gas station and coffee shop. As a result, most of the 8,800 tourists who travel along the highway pass near the community without stopping.

Assuming an expanded - upgraded Territorial Park is established at North Arm there will also be a need for more tourist services on the highway.

In order to capture the highway and North Arm Park markets a gas bar/coffee shop/**service centre** would be established along the highway at the Fort Rae intersection or a site between the intersection and Edzo. The facility would have the following facilities:

- coffee shop with seating for 40;
- four pump gas **bar**;
- retail food outlet;
- information kiosk;
- craft outlet;

- and telephone.

The coffee shop would provide fast foods as well as local country food - e.g. locally caught fish, caribou stew, fresh bannock. The shop would also offer daily specials.

The gas bar would carry four types of fuel: premium, leaded, unleaded and diesel. A range of lubricants, windshield wipers, fan belts, etc. would also be carried.

The retail food store would carry a range of food products that campers and road travelers would want to purchase - canned products, coffee, tea, cereals, milk, juices, packaged meats, cheese, bread, paper products, pampers, bug repellent, etc. A range of cosmetic and toiletry items would also be carried. Magazines and paperbacks would also be available.

An information kiosk would be established in the main entrance area and would be staffed on a seasonal basis. Information available at the kiosk would include: sites and attractions in the area, safety information, North Arm park regulations, available local outfitters and tourist packages. It is expected that the kiosk would replace the existing tourist information facility at the turn-off going to Fort Rae.

A craft outlet would also be established in the complex. The facility would provide tourists with an opportunity to purchase locally made crafts (moccasins, mukluks, gloves, hats) and to see some traditional craft items and historic pieces on display (birch bark canoe, drums, old photographs, possibly some artifacts).

Pay telephones would be available at the complex.

The complex would operate seven days a week and would be open daily from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. The kiosk and craft shop would be operated as seasonal operations.

Market

The complex would cater primarily to road traffic along Highway #3 including bus tours, RV traffic, truckers, and North Arm park users. The complex would also cater to resident and business travel between Yellowknife and Rae Edzo. It is expected that a number of Edzo residents would use the food and gas bar services since neither is available in Edzo.

Since the complex would be situated on Highway #3, and would offer a full range of tourist services (except accommodation) the complex would have a competitive edge over the gas bar and coffee shop in Fort Rae.

Promotion and Marketing

The complex would be designed in order to capture the eye of travelers - e.g. the complex could be designed to incorporate a permanent teepee-like structure; the use of glass and natural wood would also make the complex attractive and appealing. Proper signage would be used to convey a clean, well serviced facility.

Arrangements with bus tour operators would ensure all bus tours use of the complex. Coordination with GNWT and Zone officials would ensure promotion at the NWT-Alberta border crossing and along the highway. Local outfitters and park officials would be encouraged to promote the complex in their brochures and information packages. Truckers would be made aware of the complex through trucking companies and trucking associations.

Capital Costs

The complex would cost an estimated \$600,000 to establish.

Implementation

It is expected that a local entrepreneur or the Rae Edzo Dene Band Development Corporation would develop the complex either alone or in the form of a joint venture with outside investment.

Economic Benefits

The complex would create an estimated six person years of employment comprised of one manager, one gas bar attendant, two coffee shop employees, one retail store employee, one seasonal kiosk attendant, and one seasonal craft shop/mini museum employee.

Wages paid would total: manager \$40,000 plus 5 other employees X \$18,000 = \$40,000 + 90,000 = \$130,000 per annum.

Assuming profits would total \$50,000, the complex would generate total income of \$130,000 + \$50,000 or \$180,000 per annum.

2. Cultural Village

In order to capitalize on the road traffic and the desire by tourists to learn more about the people, a cultural village could be established on a seasonal basis at the North Arm Park.

The village would be themed as an old traditional trading post circa mid 1800's and would include a trading post and two tepees made of caribou skins (one large and one small).

The village would be located in a central area of the park and within walking distance of the camp sites.

The trading post would be a small log building staffed by a non-native who would recreate a scene where a white trader bartered with **dogribs** for caribou. Racks of trading items such as tea, sugar, cloth, etc. would fill the walls. Caribou hides and dried meat would be stacked beside a counter. The non-native would answer questions from tourists and provide historical information.

The large tepees would be fabricated of caribou hides and staffed by a Dogrib husband and wife dressed in traditional clothing. The husband and wife would show tourists how traditional foods were prepared, how clothing was made and worn, they would explain cultural events - e.g. drum dance - and they would discuss the spiritual and cultural aspects of the **dogribs** - e.g. a local **legend** or story would be told. The husband and wife would also answer questions from tourists.

The smaller tepees would be fabricated from caribou hides. The tepees would be used to show tourists how traditional hide tanning was done.

A garden would be established and maintained in the village.

Tourists would be encouraged to take photographs and to talk easily with all staff.

Once a day, in the afternoon, there could be a staged drum dance with a number of drum dancers from Fort Rae performing for tourists. Tourists would be encouraged

to participate in the dance. Afterwards tea and bannock would be served.

Tourists would be charged a nominal amount for the tea and bannock.

The village would operate from July 1 to August 31 and would be open daily from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Market

The village would cater to road traffic along Highway #3, primarily bus tours, RV traffic, and North Arm park users. Tourists passing through Yellowknife by air would also be targeted to visit the village as a side trip,

Promotion and Marketing

The village would be situated in the North Arm Park and would be well positioned to attract all those who visit the park. Signs along the highway would identify the cultural village as an attraction within the park.

Arrangements would be made with bus tour operators, GNWT and Zone officials, local outfitters and park officials to promote and market the village as an attraction in the area. Operators in Yellowknife would also be contacted to consider offering the cultural village and the North Arm park as a side tip.

Capital Costs

The village would cost an estimated \$75,000 to establish.

Implementation

It is expected that a local resident would manage the project under contract with the GNWT.

Operational Costs

The village would create an estimated three seasonal jobs for those staffing the tepees and trading post and four part time jobs for the drum dancers.

Wages paid would total: 3 full time seasonal (3 X \$3,000 = \$9,000) plus 4 part time drum dancers (4X \$20 per day X 60 = \$4,800) or \$13,800.

3. Old Fort Rae Day Trip

A half-day trip to Old Fort Rae would be offered to tourists traveling the highway during July and August.

The trip package would include:

- a 40-minute return boat trip by freighter canoe to Old Fort Rae from Frank Channel;
- a small map and brochure explaining Old Fort Rae, Dogrib history and culture, and important sights to observe.
- at Fort Rae viewing the highest point of land in the area and a traditional stop

point for the Dogribs;

- viewing at close hand the outlines of old structures, unusual plant life, the sacred rock and the opening in the rock where offerings are made.
- having a guided trip so no important sites are disturbed (e.g. graves) as well as the experience of having a local Dogrib outfitter storytelling, relating legends and pointing out natural sites to view.
- an open fire picnic where tea, bannock and caribou would be served.

Market

The package would be offered to road traffic along Highway #3, in particular traffic stopping at the service centre and North Arm park. Tourists passing through Yellowknife by air would also be targeted to consider the package as a side trip.

Promotion and Marketing

The package would be promoted at the service centre and North Arm park. Bus tour operators should be approved encouraged to include the package as a side trip. GNWT officials, Zone officials and park officials would be encouraged to promote the package. Operators in Yellowknife would also be contacted. A brochure and information package could be made available to officials to distribute to tourists.

Capital Costs

A local outfitter is already in business and prepared to offer the package throughout the summer. The only additional costs would be for promotional material estimated to cost in the order of \$5,000.

Implementation

Other residents who own boats and motors might be interested in offering the same package and working with the existing **outfitter** or establishing new business.

Economic Benefits

Assuming the half day package were sold for \$60 per person and one outfitter carried four persons per trip once a day, total revenues would be $4 \times \$60$ or \$240 per day. Assuming costs of \$100 per day, net income would be \$140 per day. Per season revenues would therefore be $40 \text{ days} \times \$140$ or \$5,600 per season.

If three outfitters were to offer the package there would be opportunity to create three seasonal jobs and to create total revenues of $3 \times \$5,600$ or \$16,800 per season.

Summary of Identified Tourism Opportunities

The following is a summary of the capital, income and jobs created with developing the three identified tourism opportunities.

Table 4.0

Summary of Identified Tourism Opportunities

	- (\$000) -		
	Capital	Income	Jobs Created
Service Centre	600	180	6 PY's
Cultural Village	70	13	7 seasonal
Old Fort Rae Trips	15	16	3 seasonal
Total	685	209	6 PY's 10 seasonal

7.0 Rae Edzo: Resource Inventory

Fort Rae is 11 km from Highway #3 and about 100 km from Yellowknife while Edzo is 1 km from Highway #3 and about 115 km from Yellowknife. The two communities are located 16 km apart from each other. Although geographically distinct, the communities are administered by the same Hamlet council and Band administration and are generally treated as one community and referred to as “Rae Edzo”.

Rae Edzo has a total population of 1,525 and is the largest Dene community in the Northwest Territories. According to the GNWT Bureau of Statistics the community has one of the highest unemployment rates (42%) in the NWT.

The few full time jobs that are available in the community are provided primarily by government agencies and local businesses while some seasonal work is available through construction, forestry and trapping activities.

Rae Edzo has a number of well established social and economic organizations including the Rae Edzo Dene Band Development Corporation, the Elder’s Council, Recreation Committee, the Beacho Kho Radio Society and the Rae Edzo Friendship Centre.

Resource Inventory

Rae is located on a rocky peninsula on the southeast shore of Marion Lake which in turn is connected by Frank Channel to the North Arm of Great Slave Lake. The community’s topography consists of hilly outcrops and lowlands of silty clay lake

sediments.

Edzo is located just off highway #3 and across from the North Arm. The community's topography is rough timbered country and muskeg.

The predominant physical feature in the area is Great Slave Lake, one of the largest and deepest lakes in North America. There are also a number of small lakes and numerous waterways that permeate the area.

Rae Edzo is also the home and administrative centre of the Dogrib people.

A total of 30 historical, cultural, naturalist and recreational sites, themes and events have been identified in the Rae Edzo area that would be of interest to tourists. The sites and events are listed below:

1. Mile 142 off Hwy #3: Paleozoic escarpment with fossils. Can be viewed from Frank's Channel bridge.
2. Three miles west of Mosquito Creek: Natural key-hole type arch in the rock. A spiritual place of offering.
3. Whitebeach Point: Approximately one half mile of fine white sand beach.
4. Rabesca Lake: A whirlpool in the lake.
5. Russell Lake: Sinkholes and a cave across from the old airport.
6. Marian Lake: Caves on the west of the lake.

7. Old Fort Rae: on Great Slave Lake a trading post established in 1852 by the Hudson's Bay. The area is also a spiritual site with an old cemetery and special place of offering.
8. Old Fort Island: on Great Slave Lake the remains of old buildings possibly a trading post and more recent camps.
9. Old Trout Rock: on Great Slave Lake an old Dene camp and cemetery,
10. Trout Rock: on Great Slave Lake 10-15 cabins (many still in good shape), some cabins have hand-built chimneys.
11. James Lake: on the south west shore cabins and cemeteries. James-Marion Lake portage has a spiritual place of offering.
12. Wecho River system: on the Mosler/Wheeler Lakes are a number of cemeteries.
13. Marion Lake: at the north end are an old Dogrib village and burial ground.
- 14. Hislop/Wageradi Lakes: old cabins with hand-built fireplaces, camping sites and burial grounds.**
15. Jim DarWish's Trading Post: an old trading post in Rae.
16. Marion, Backwater and Faber Lakes: various legends are associated with the landscape.
17. Mosquito Creek (10 km south of North Arm Park): 8 km of rapids and a pickerel run every spring.

18. Russell Lake Campground: picnic area and boat launch.
19. North Arm Territorial Park: small day-use park with six picnic sites off Highway #3 on Great Slave Lake.
20. Edzo Territorial Park: small overnight-use park adjacent to Edzo.
21. Various Trails and Waterways: Close to Rae Edzo are numerous waterways, skidoo and trapline trails that might also be of interest to tourists.
22. Rae Winter Carnival: held in March includes a dog derby and traditional games.
23. Rae Happy Daze: held in summer includes feasts, Dene games, drum dancing and hand games.
24. North Slave Regional Dene Winter Games: held between March 18-20th includes traditional games and activities in Rae.
25. Traditional Handicrafts: some local women in Rae produce traditional crafts.
26. Dene Legends: most older Dene can relate traditional legends and stories.
27. Dogrib Language: almost all residents speak Dogrib, a unique, native language.
28. Drum Dancing: many feasts and community events include drum dancing and serving tea.
29. Traditional Bush Skills: many residents spend time on the land and have retained bush skills.

30. Dog teams: some residents still use dog teams, although most use snowmobiles.

8.0 Rae Edzo: Tourism Assessment

Tourism and Park Infrastructure

There are two motels operating in Fort Rae; the **Jeik'O** Motel with two convention rooms and accommodation for 32 in 16 rooms; and the Rae Industrial Lodge with 12 self-contained bachelor suites. The Chief Jimmy **Bruneau** School in Edzo also provides dormitory accommodation for meetings and conferences in the community. Meeting space is also available through the Rae **Edzo** Dene Band Development Corporation at the **Nishi Khon** Complex and through the Hamlet Council at the **Khon Go Cho Sportsplex**.

A resident outfitter (**Rabesca** Outfitting) offers fishing, caribou hunting, photography and cultural expeditions on the North Arm. The same outfitter is also in the process of developing a traditional camp facility a quarter mile from Frank Channel that would offer traditional and holistic health packages.

There is also a small church owned sport fishing lodge at Stagg Lake with accommodation for 15 guests. Two other tent camp operations are also being developed by a resident certified guide (**Francis Blackduck**) with Level 1 training; the first camp at **Mattberry** Lake (capacity 6 guests); the second camp (capacity 4) at **Basler** Lake.

In Rae there are two fast food eating establishments with an estimated total capacity of 72. There is also a service station, a building supply/hardware store, three general stores, a post office, medical and policing services and a number of government agencies. In **Edzo** there are no commercial accommodation or retail services

available, although a gas bar/convenience store with crafts is planned for June 1991.

During July and August, a small seasonal tourist information centre operates on the #3 highway outside of Rae.

Rae Edzo has a labour pool of guides, cooking and cleaning staff. One resident is known to have Level 2 guide training specializing in fishing and five other residents have achieved recognition as Level 1 guides.

The community has a full compliment of skilled artists, seamstresses and musicians. Most older Rae Edzo Dogrib retain a wealth of skills and knowledge concerning Dene culture. Well known community musicians, the Rae Drummers, have been internationally acclaimed as has Archie Beaulieu, a local artists. David Gon, a local musician, has also achieved national acclaim.

There are two territorial parks and two publicly used park type sites in the Rae Edzo area:

Mosquito Creek: a publicly used picnic area 15 km south from Edzo that is off Highway #3. The site offers a serene quiet atmosphere with a small flowing creek. The Department of Economic Development and Tourism has provided some maintenance services.

North Arm Territorial Park: a small day-use park approximately 5 km from Edzo with 6 picnic sites, one shelter, boat launch and small sand beach. The site is also just off the highway and offers a commanding view of the North Arm of Great Slave Lake.

Edzo Territorial Park: a small overnight-use park located within Edzo. The site is comparatively unattractive, and often mosquito-infested. A boat launch is situated at

one of the site.

Russell Lake: a picnic area approximately 4 km from Rae. The site is not readily accessible to tourists driving the highway and requires driving into Rae and taking short road. The site offers an undeveloped boat launch, old dock and random campsites.

The GNWT has also recently improved signage along Highway #3 and paved and improved sections of the highway between Rae and Edzo. Further improvements are scheduled in the near future.

Tourism Constraints

A number of constraints have been identified for tourism development in Rae Edzo. They include the following:

- **Poor Infrastructure:** there are no available services (coffee shop, service station, motel) for tourists traveling on the highway between Fort Providence and Yellowknife. The services available in Fort Rae, are also few and not ones that would cause many tourists to drive the extra 11 km to get to unless absolutely necessary. Hours of operation are not posted which tends to deter visitation to Rae;
- **Few Trained Tourism Operators:** aside from the one outfitter, one small lodge and two motels, there are no other tourism operators in the community;

- **Few Packages Offered:** aside from the packages offered by the one outfitter and one lodge, and sports hunting packages offered by operators based out of Yellowknife, there are few packages available to tourists in the area;
- **No Developed Park sites:** none of the existing park sites has been adequately developed to attract tourists and all suffer from major drawbacks: the Edzo site is unattractive; both the North Arm and Mosquito Creek sites are small with few facilities that would cater to tourists; the Russell site is off the highway, difficult for tourists to find, and has no tourist facilities.
- **No Cultural or Historical Attractions:** none of the many cultural historic sites have been developed and promoted as a destination (i.e. Old Fort Rae).
- **Poor Promotion and Marketing:** Rae Edzo has received very little promotion or marketing support, largely because there has been little tourism development and hence little to promote and market.
- **Poor Tourism Awareness and Local Support:** the results of a recent tourism planning study (1989) prepared for the Northern Frontier Visitors Association indicated that the community does not have a good understanding of the tourism industry and tourism is generally not seen as a high priority by most residents. Often tourism is seen as a consumptive industry which competes with local resource harvesting activities.
- **Poor Coordination:** there is no local tourism committee to coordinate efforts and

promote the industry in general. Indeed lack of coordination and cooperation has often prevented proper and timely development - e.g. a community that for many years did not have any commercial accommodation within the space of one year had two facilities.

In spite of the above drawbacks it has also become evident to community leaders that unemployment is increasing in the community and greater priority must be placed on those economic sectors, such as tourism, which have significant potential to generate jobs.

Summary

Rae Edzo's tourism infrastructure is poorly developed, although a number of historical, cultural, naturalist and recreational sites and events have been identified that would be of interest to tourists.

Constraints preventing tourism development in the community include: few trained tourism operators; few tourism packages offered; no developed park sites; no developed historic or cultural attractions; poor promotion and marketing; and poor tourism awareness, local support and coordination.

9.0 Results (Key Indicators) from Community Consultations

To obtain the views of the community on the park and tourism development action plan meetings were held with the Rae Edzo Band Council and the Hamlet Council. As well, interviews were held with a number of select individuals including: Rae Edzo Dene Band Development Corporation officials; a former land claims negotiator for the Band; the Roman Catholic priest; the local tourism outfitter; and the Band administrator. These meetings and interviews were supplemented by discussions with ED & T officials and Northern Heritage officials.

The results of these meetings and interviews are as follows:

Band Council Meeting

Members of the council felt the study process was important and would provide them with valuable information to consider. They added, however, that since the Chief was not in attendance at our last meeting it would be difficult for the council to provide us with a final and definite opinion on site selection, hence opinions expressed would have to be taken as **qualified** opinions until more discussion among council members and the Chief took place.

Members generally felt that the North Arm park could be expanded to Mosquito Creek as long as a woodlot area one mile to the west was not effected. They also felt

development of the North Arm site should be kept close to Great Slave Lake. There were a number of concerns about developing Old Fort Rae into a park, primarily that the site was of major historical and cultural importance and that tourists might destroy graves at the site.

In this regard, we explained that if properly developed tourists visiting the site could be controlled - e.g. proper trail development would prevent tourists from destroying the graves.

We also explained that by constructing a small interpretive/shelter facility at Old Fort Rae three different user groups would benefit: tourists; Rae Edzo school children who could visit the site and learn about their past; and Rae Edzo residents traveling from Rae to Yellowknife in need of a shelter.

Council members supported the concept of developing Russell Lake campground as a territorial - community park. This would result in more government support and investment to develop the park with more infrastructure - e.g. picnic tables, rest rooms, trails.

There was a general consensus to support closure of the Edzo park as it was serving very few people and was a poor site for a park.

Council members asked for more information on the different types of Territorial parks available and rules and regulations that would apply.

Hamlet Council Meeting

Hamlet Council members said much the same as Band Council members.

They needed more time before making a final decision on site selection, therefore their opinions were qualified.

They felt the North Arm site could be developed to Mosquito Creek and turned into a Territorial park with overnight camping made available.

They also felt that Old Fort Rae was of major historical and cultural importance and turning it into a park might not be the best use of the site. As such, they wanted more time to consider the implications of establishing a park at Old Fort Rae.

They supported upgrading the Russell lake site and keeping the site as a community campground while supporting possible closure of the Edzo park.

Members also asked for more information on the different types of Territorial parks in the north.

In regards to tourism, Hamlet council members felt most residents in Rae Edzo were in support of increased tourism development, although currently very few people in the community made money from the industry and most had little knowledge about potential tourism opportunities.

Individuals Consulted

All individuals interviewed felt that the North Arm site should be expanded to Mosquito Creek and overnight camping offered to tourists. They felt the site offered the most advantages: support in the community; adjacent to highway traffic; good scenery.

They also felt the Russell Lake site should be developed as a territorial community park, the Edzo site could be either closed or left as it was, and the Old Fort Rae site possibly developed into a historic park. This should only be done after more research was done by a team comprised of an archaeologist and local young people and community support obtained.

Other comments from individuals were as follows:

The Band Manager said Old Fort Rae had very unusual plant life, plants unusual to the rest of the area, which indicated that missionaries had likely imported a number of plants when they first started gardens. She thought the plant life would be interesting for tourists to see. She also thought the site would have strong educational appeal for students in Rae Edzo.

The Band Manager also thought developing the Old Fort Rae site could be done under a joint control agreement between the GNWT and the Band. The approach would certainly gain more support than if the GNWT were to develop and control the park alone.

The Band Manager also said that there were many other sites in the area that tourists would be interested in visiting including Trout Rock and Old Fort Island. She thought some of the sites could be incorporated into tourist packages thus creating more opportunities for outfitters and the local air charter company (Edzo Air).

The former land claims negotiator emphasized the historical and cultural importance of Old Fort Rae - e.g. Old Fort Rae was the highest point of land in the area; indeed the site was named "Nishi" which meant outcropping of Land. It was also a traditional stopping spot on the way to the East Arm of Great Slave Lake for Dogribs when they hunted caribou. Changes in the waterline are evident on the hill. Plant

life was unusual in the area. There was a special offering rock with a small hole for depositing gifts and offerings that residents visited. He felt the site had much that would be of interest to tourists, however proper development and support of the people would have to be obtained.

The catholic priest felt Old Fort Rae would have to be properly studied. He also felt an archaeological team would have to undertake research to find artifacts and to confirm the location of old buildings and sacred areas. He felt if this were done with local involvement, and development was explained properly to people, then local people would support the project.

The priest also felt Old Fort Rae would be of use for educating children on their history and culture.

The priest said there were other sites in the area that would be of interest to tourists - e.g. an old store built in 1792 located on the portage between Marion and James Lake; some of the original logs used to build the store were still left. The site is only a 40 minute boat ride from the community.

ED & T and Northern Heritage **Officials**

The Regional Park Officer and Headquarters Tourism **Co-ordinator** supported the community opinion that the **Edzo** park site was messy and unattractive. This park is seldom used by tourists or residents. It should therefore be considered for closure or limited to a day use area.

They also thought a boat launch could be established near Frank Channel and the site used as a base for guided tours to Old Fort Rae.

They felt that one drawback to establishing Russell Lake as a park was the gravel pit across from the site which was unattractive. However, a small section of new road could eventually be developed to overcome this limitation. Development as a territorial community park would ensure maintenance and offer an additional tourist destination/attraction nearer to Rae

They felt one theme in developing the tourism and park plan should be the Dogrib culture with Old Fort Rae as a sub-theme.

They said that the preliminary community opinion favoured establishing a visitors centre in the community and keeping Russell Lake “primarily for community recreational purposes.” Possible locations for a visitor centre should be investigated with the community.

Northern Heritage officials said Old Fort Rae would require an impact assessment before any development of the site took place. In this regard, ED & T officials said funds from the department might be obtained to assist in doing preliminary archaeological work and impact assessment. It was also suggested that preliminary work could be started in the summer of 1992, assuming community approval in principle for park development was obtained.

Museum officials said preliminary work in 1992 would take at least two weeks at a minimum cost of \$7,000. In order to have this work done the community should approach the museum to hire local residents to produce an oral history that would identify historical and naturalist sites that would be of interest to tourists.

Summary

The Band and Hamlet Councils and local residents stressed the need to protect and preserve Old Fort Rae. More discussion would be required by both municipal councils before a decision could be given on how to proceed in respect to the area.

Members of both councils and a number of individuals felt that sites in the area should be developed into tourism packages.

Major themes identified were the Dogrib culture and Great Salve Lake. A sub theme was Old Fort Rae. There would be uncontrolled access prior to land claims, if selected.

The community is generally supportive of establishing expanded parks in the area, especially if they offered more and improved facilities for tourists and residents to use, and encouraged greater visitation in the area thus creating more opportunity for residents to earn income. The only concern has to do with the Old Fort Rae site and the possible impact increased tourism could have on sacred areas. There is a need for more information on sacred areas and locations with respect to park options.

Although more discussion is required, there appears to be general support for expanding the North Arm territorial park to the Mosquito Creek area. The park should have expanded facilities including overnight camping, themed building, walking trails, etc. There is also general support for establishing Russell Lake as a territorial community park, and expanding facilities at the site. The Edzo park should be considered for closure or limiting the site to a day use camp.

10.0 Classification of Parks in the Northwest Territories

During our consultations with Rae - Edzo residents and both municipal councils, the issue of park classes and their implications for land use was central to our discussions. At the present time, given impending regional land claims, etc. residents are very cautious about developments that would possibly have an impact on nearby lands and the claims process. In particular, some concern was expressed about the possibility of park development alienating traditionally used lands in the area or reducing or restricting access to Rae people. During our consultations there was a general lack of understanding about the principles for establishing territorial parks and the affects further park development would have on the area and economy.

To assist the Rae Band and Hamlet Councils in understanding the various types of parks and their implication for park development in the Rae area we have prepared an outline of park principles, as prescribed by the Government of the Northwest Territories. These principles are part of an overall park development framework and policy that the GNWT uses to guide the identification of new parks and for the expansion of existing facilities. In general, these principles are to ensure that park development is consistent with the priorities and wishes of residents in the park region and to ensure that development occurs within a consistent, logical and least disruptive framework and in support of the local economy.

Principals

These principles are outlined as follows:

1. **Respect for the Settlement of Native Claims:** The development of existing or future territorial parks shall be consistent with or compliment, all agreements, policies, and legislation related to the settlement of aboriginal claims.
2. **Guaranteed Native Rights for Land Use:** Native people will be guaranteed the right to continue to hunt, fish, and trap in the territorial parks. This guarantee is provided by the Territorial Parks Act.
3. **Parks are to Contribute to Tourism Development:** Territorial parks will contribute significantly to the development and enhancement of tourism, as well as provide recreational opportunities to residents.
4. **Community Participation is Essential:** Territorial parks will be established with extensive community participation and public consultation.
5. **Recognition of Other Agencies:** Territorial parks will be established taking into account and recognizing the role of other federal and territorial departments involved in developing and managing conservation areas.

In addition, the Government of the Northwest Territories operates parks to:

Provide opportunities for tourism and recreation, as well as enjoyment, education, and appreciation of the natural and cultural heritage of the N.W.T.

Create a focus for marketing the natural and cultural heritage of the N.W.T. as

part of the tourism industry.

Offer opportunities for employment and business which take advantage of the skills of native people and are compatible with northern lifestyles.

Undertake or support the development of services, facilities, and/or manage visitors to territorial parks in a manner consistent with the natural and cultural **significance** of the Northwest Territories.

Accordingly, it is within this framework that territorial parks are identified, planned for, and developed.

Territorial Park classification

Under the Territorial Parks Act there are five distinct types of parks that can be developed in the Northwest Territories. These **are** outlined **below**.

Natural Environment Recreation Parks

“Natural environmental recreation parks preserve the natural environment for the benefit, education, and enjoyment of the public. Development is directed and limited to that necessary for the preservation, for public enjoyment of the environment. No private or business development is permitted and no person may acquire the right to occupy the surface of any land.”

Outdoor Recreational Parks

“Outdoor recreational **parks** provide opportunities for outdoor recreational activities to the general public. Development is directed and limited to the provision of

facilities required for those outdoor recreation activities that are suitable to the park. Dwellings are not permitted except where staff accommodations are required for an approved business, such as a tourism facility. ”

Community Parks

“Community parks provide for the enjoyment, convenience and comfort of the traveling public. Development is directed towards the provision of facilities for the enjoyment, convenience and comfort of the traveling public.”

Wayside Parks

Wayside parks provide for the enjoyment, convenience and comfort of the traveling public. A wayside park is a small turn off (with minimal amenities) which can be used by motorists for resting and picnicking. A wayside park is not usually used for overnight camping and long term use.

Historic Parks

“Historic parks provide for the designation and commemoration of historic and archaeological sites and their lands for the education and enjoyment of the public. Development is directed and limited to those measures required to designate, commemorate and explain historic sites while ensuring their protection. As in natural environment recreation parks, no person may acquire any right to occupy the surface of any land in a historic park.

11.0 Site Selection Criteria

To ensure that each identified park site would be evaluated within a consistent framework we have developed the following site selection criteria. Given the wide range of park development possibilities in the Fort Rae - Edzo region, these criteria reflect both the developmental requirements of tourism parks as well as criteria based on local use of the sites, their historical and cultural significance and community sensitivity (gathered during our community consultation phase of the assignment) towards tourism development generally.

On the basis of these criteria we evaluated each site and present a comparative analysis of the results in the form of an evaluation matrix. From this matrix, conclusions and directions regarding future park development options may be drawn.

To ensure that meaningful comparisons could be made between each site we have used a “high, medium and low” scale for each of the following criteria. While not perfect, this approach allows one to easily highlight key indicators and thereby make informed decisions regarding each site’s development potential.

Overall Tourism Appeal

As the primary objective of developing parks in the Rae-Edzo area is to encourage increased local tourist visitation, the overall tourism appeal of each potential site will be an important criteria for park upgrading and expansion in the area. By tourism appeal we mean, how each site fits into the broader context of tourist interests and expectations and general tourism themes that are suggested by conventional market

research.

For example, current market research suggest that tourists visiting the north (and in particular the Northern Frontier Zone) are motivated by the opportunity to view the northern landscape and to meet local people and learn about their culture, history and traditions.

Accessibility to the Traveling Public

After evaluating overall tourism appeal of an area it will be important to ensure that each potential park site is easily accessible to the traveling public. That is, parks should be accessible by road or boat. Where appropriate private outfitters and guides could offer package tours. For example trips could be made to Old fort Rae if approved by Band Council. Also, given the broad range in age of tourists, potential parks should contain a variety of features that would interest the young and accommodate the old.

Physiographic Attributes (Interest Index)

In selecting a potential park site it is also important to ensure that it is interesting to the traveling public. By this, we mean each site should, in some way, represent a unique part of the northern landscape and geography. For example, the North Arm of Great Slave Lake offers not only an excellent view of one of Canada's largest inland bodies of water, but it also is located near the Mosquito Creek geological formation which rises high above the southern shoreline and offers a spectacular view of the northern part of the North Arm and of the many islands that are situated throughout the area.

Historical and Cultural Significance

As most of the current market research indicates, the majority of tourist traveling in the North Slave Region are very interested in observing and learning more about the native people, their history and cultures.

In evaluating potential sites it is important to ensure that strong historical and cultural themes can be developed to round out the tourist's travel experience. For example, because of its early occupation by the **Dogrib** people and traders, the site of Old Fort Rae offers tremendous potential for developing a historic park. Because of its strong historical attributes, Old Fort Rae would rate high on a historical and cultural indice of selection criteria.

Community (Acceptance) Sensitivity Index

Although many possible park sites may have strong tourism appeal, and offer a truly unique tourism experience, the process of park selection and development cannot overlook local sensitivities. It is for this reason we have placed a high priority on local concerns about establishing parks in the Rae-Edzo area.

Compatibility with Community Priorities

Most communities in the Northwest Territories have a general development plan which outlines community development priorities and directions. In the development of a park plan, these priorities must be used as guidelines so potential areas of conflict may be minimized. Future park activities should compliment overall community development.

Potential Conflicting Use

During our site visits and consultations with the Rae - Edzo Band Council and Hamlet, we discussed potential areas of conflicting use for each of the identified sites. Of particular interest and as the extent to which park development could impact on existing uses of the land such as trap lines, traditional camp grounds, and the extraction of fuel wood for the community.

Opportunities and Constraints to Site Development

In evaluating each site we also focused on major opportunities and constraints for park development. As outlined in the section of this report dealing with our field investigations, each site has a number of features that could generate subsequent tourism revenues to local outfitters. As well, given their locations and physical attributes there are a number of constraints that must be assessed in the context of local park development. A scale of high, medium or low has been used to summarize each site's overall development potential.

Preliminary Development Cost Index

Based on an assessment of opportunities and constraints we have developed a preliminary cost index to show the relative costs of future park development in the area.

12.0 Site Investigation and Ranking

As part of the study process, we travelled to the four sites and attempted to document their more salient features from a park development perspective. Using the selection criteria outlined earlier and local knowledge of unique features and habitat, we present a brief profile of each site and comments on their overall suitability for park development.

The reader should note, since all of our work was conducted during the winter months we were not able to accurately detail the geophysical aspects of the sites. Heavy snow cover prevented any preliminary surface mapping and plotting of potential park resources.

Photographs taken of each site are included at the end of the section.

North Arm Territorial Park

The North Arm Territorial Park is located on the Mackenzie Highway at approximately 62 degrees, 43 minutes north latitude and 116 degrees, 04 minutes, 30 seconds longitude. The site occupies about two acres of land and is well positioned with an excellent view of the Great Slave Lake. In fact, it is one of the frost sites which is accessible to the lake for north bound highway travelers.

Although the site has been designated as a Territorial Park, it is extremely limited in size. With facilities to accommodate no more than 20 to 35 people, the site resembles a day use area rather than a conventional park site.

Facilities on the site are extremely limited. They include an older, log constructed kitchen building, approximately 20' by 12', which has a wood cook stove for use during periods of poor weather. Outside, the site resembles a levelled gravel pad with access from the nearby highway. There are at least five concrete fire pits (although in poor condition) which may be used by campers for meal preparation, etc. Outdoor privies limited toilet supplies and **firewood** are provided. Maintenance of the park is provided by a local business person through a service contract with the GNWT Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

To the west there are several natural and man made features worth considering from a tourism development perspective. First, there is a natural trail which follows a high ridge of **boulders** that parallels the lake shore. From this ridge and trail system (which needs additional clearing), tourists could visit a long abandoned log cabin, once used in the summer as a recreational site. The cabin is situated in a large clearing about one third of the way to the Mosquito Creek ravine. If developed and manned by a person knowledgeable of the area's history, flora and fauna, it could be an excellent interpretation center for the tourism season. Further along the trail system there is a series of glacially deposited **boulders** that form a natural boundary between the ridge and the Mackenzie Highway system. This delineation makes the site especially advantageous for walking/hiking trail systems. Several **hundred** yards further, the natural trail system reaches the mouth of the Mosquito Creek, at which point visitors would be able to have a close up view of the high ridges and the creek delta that opens into a marsh land bordering the Great Slave Lake. Here, there are ample opportunities for viewing waterfowl and many different species of shore birds.

To the north (the area recommended for phase I park development: see concept plan in separate section), one finds an area overgrown by scrub brush, with some limited tamarack and black spruce growth. With maximum diameters of 5 inches, these trees do not represent major fuel wood stocks and are therefore not subject to local

harvesting. The trees are an important attribute of the area because they provide a natural delineation between the Great Slave Lake shoreline and the highway. Approximately three quarters of a mile along the shoreline lies a horse shoe shaped base which extends out a sharp point in the lake. From this point one is offered an excellent view of the North Arm as far south as the Mosquito Creek range and as far northeast (on a clear day) as the mouth of Frank's Channel and the north shore of the North Arm of Great Slave Lake.

From a tourism perspective, the general area of the North Arm of the Great Slave has a lot to offer in terms of enjoying nature, hiking, camping and general touring. It offers the road travelers the first real opportunity to experience first hand, the vastness of the Great Slave Lake and the changing geography from the rolling hills which are typically found on this side of the lake to the Precambrian Shield outcropping not far down the highway towards the community of Fort Rae.

To the south, along the lake towards Mosquito Creek there are high bluffs that could provide the genesis of hiking and interpretive trails for tourists. From the top of these bluffs one is afforded a spectacular view of the North Arm and the multitude of small islands emerging from the shallow waters below. As well, in the lower part of this geological structure, visitors could view (at select times of the year - fishing prohibited) the annual migration of spawning pickerel and other species of fresh water fish.

In terms of accessibility, the North Arm site (of all the sites we have examined) is the most accessible to the majority of road travelers on the Mackenzie Highway. The site immediately adjacent to the highway, it has traditionally been known (even before park status) as an egress and resting point for travelers. The site is high in terms of accessibility.

Indeed, the North Arm was and is an area well used by the Dogrib people. However as a destination (by itself), it does not offer any real historically significant attributes. Thus, from a historical and cultural park development theme perspective, we rate the site in the medium range of our site selection criteria.

Although the site may not be truly a historically or culturally significant location, there is reasonably strong community support for further developing the site as a Territorial Park, possibly because of a lack of historical/cultural assets. Given the Hamlet and Band Council's sensitivity over developing Old Fort Rae as a park, the North Arm site is a much more accepted for immediate and higher density tourism use. In fact, given that North Arm has been used as a highway stop over since the Mackenzie Highway was extended to Yellowknife in the late 1950's, the idea of concentrating tourism camping activities in the North Arm area was viewed as positive by the community.

Our consultation indicated that there is some sensitivity towards the notion of droves of tourists roaming at large in Old Fort Rae, disturbing the day to day pulse of the community. Since the North Arm site is some distance from the community, camping, nature touring and cultural interpretation activities could be developed with minimal disruption to the community, while at the same time increase tourist expenditures on local goods and services increased expenditures on community goods and services could be allocated through organized tours from the park site, as well as, from casual visitors. Therefore, we rate the site to have a low community sensitivity index.

With respect to the site's impact on local tourism priorities, there do not appear to be any major conflicts. The only potential area of conflict raised by one Band Councillor was a concern that the North Arm development would impede the community's use of fuel wood stands located about one mile away. Given the

proposed parks distance from the fuel wood area, we do not feel this would be a major constraint to the further development of the North Arm Park. In terms of compatibility with local tourism priorities, we rate the site as having a high chance of success, given it does not appear to conflict with existing land use in the area and its distance from both communities.

In terms of opportunities and constraints for further developing the North Arm Park site, we do not believe there are any major impediments to further development. The site has excellent access to the highway and Great Slave Lake, good bush cover between the highway and (potential) nature trail systems and has a wide range of settings for hiking and exploring nature.

Although it is extremely premature, given the lack of a master plan, to estimate construction costs, we do feel that costs would be moderate compared to other possible sites in the region. In particular, the soils appear to be relatively stable, especially at the higher ridges just inside the forest cover along the highway system. Forest cover is not overly dense and should not pose major problems for clearing and establishing loop roads for campsites in the area.

Thus, from a tourism and outdoor touring perspective we rate the North Arm highly as a potential site for further park, expansion and improved facility development in the Fort Rae area.

Edzo Territorial Park

Of all the potential park sites we visited, the Edzo Territorial Park located at 62 degrees 46 minutes north latitude and 116 degrees 3 minutes longitude is the least appealing from both a tourism and geographic perspective. Situated on the outskirts of Edzo, the park lies adjacent to a small, slow moving creek which passes through

the community and south to the Great Slave Lake. The area is reasonable well cleared, but it is surrounded by muskeg, bog and marshland especially near the creek bed. Given its low lying position and close proximity to the creek it is an excellent breeding site for mosquitos, black flies and horse flies.

Facilities at this sight include: several steel fire pits, an outdoor privy and about six camping stalls for use by road travelers.

Because of its poor location and lack of interesting features, this site has never truly been considered as a good tourism camping park by local residents. According to some Band Councillors, the selection of this particular site was a mistake.

Overall, this site has very little to offer in terms of geography, historical significance, landscape, and general tourism appeal. It is for these reasons that we (along with the Band and Hamlet Council) do not recommended further upgrading or expansion of the Edzo Territorial Park.

Russell Lake Territorial Community Park

The Russell Lake site (62 degrees 51 minutes north latitude and 115 degrees 56 minutes longitude) has been used for many years by local residents as a community picnic area. It has also been used for special events such as treaty days and other community activities. The site is several kilometers from the main community and can be reached by taking a small access road past the local gravel pit and continuing east to a high ridge overlooking Russell Lake.

There are very limited facilities at this site. Near the lake shore there is an old dock (in much need of repair) which was once used to tie up float planes and boats during the summer months. Up on the flat gravel pad (activity site) there are several steel

45 gal. garbage containers. However, there are no stationary fire pits, privies, etc. for use by the public.

The Russell Lake site lies on a high north facing rock outcropping rising about 40 metres above the lake. It offers a good view of the junction between Marion Lake and Russell Lake and an excellent vista of the east shore of the Russell Lake. The site offers limited forest cover, with small diameter spruce and tamarack scattered between outcropping and glacially deposited boulders and gravel beds. This sparse tree cover is typical of the area and offers some protection from north winds blowing off Russell and Marion Lakes.

Given its close proximity to a nearby gravel pit and abandoned airstrip we feel the site has moderate tourism potential. A park at this location would provide tourists with an additional reason for visiting Rae although use will be primarily for community purposes.

Old Fort Rae Historic Site

Of all the sites we visited Old Fort Rae (62 degrees 38 minutes north latitude 115 degrees 49 minutes longitude) is the most unique from a cultural and historic perspective. Given its rich cultural history, its beautiful setting on the North Arm of the Great Slave Lake and the transitional geological structures known in the area, the site meets or exceeds all of the evaluation criteria outlined earlier in this report. The only constraints are access and community sensitivity to park establishment.

From a birds eye view Old Fort Rae appears like a skull shaped rock formation emerging from the mainland by its umbilically shaped neck. Its shape alone suggests a somewhat mystical quality about the island, and serves as a reminder of its spiritual past and significance in local culture and folklore.

To the north side of the Old Fort Rae site, one can view several larger islands in the east bay of the North Arm. As with the Old Fort Rae site these islands are in a transition zone where the older rocks of the **precambrian** shield meet a layer of younger shale like structures formed many years later on the geological time scale. Old Fort Rae itself is also unique because it is one of the few remaining outcropping of shale and sandstone that overlay Precambrian shield on the east side of the North Arm. Typically the eastern shore of the North Arm is primarily composed of older crystalline rocks, such as granites.

Therefore, aside from a historical perspective, Old Fort Rae has much to offer in terms of the geography and land forms. As noted, the geology of the area is so unique that categories of rock formations have been referenced to the formations found in the Old Fort Rae area.

Historically, Old Fort Rae, or "**Nishi Khon**", which means the place where the land rises from the lake, has played a significant part in the Dogrib history culture. The site is considered a sacred ground with many powerful spirits buried nearby the abandoned community. At the top of the high shale and sandstone ridge which runs on a northwest/southwest traverse there is a round hole in the rock which was used by local people as an offering spot to the spirits during hunting seasons and for safe voyages on the Great Slave Lake.

Although we were not able to visit the site in the summer, we were still able to view the layout of the former fort under snow cover. On the west shore Old Fort Rae is overgrown with scrub brush and small willows, making boat landings during the summer months difficult. About 10 yards inland, the site opens to a large clearing which was once the main grounds for the community. Here, the trading post and catholic church were situated along with resident cabins and store houses. Today, one can still view several semi-rectangular depressions in the soil, where underground

store houses were once located. Except for a small white, wooden cross and a 2 foot high white picket fence about 6 feet by 4 feet, there are no man made structures remaining at the Old Fort Rae site. The nearest structure is a small log cabin located about a mile away on the north shore of the Old Fort Rae's peninsula.

From a tourism development perspective the reader should be aware local residents and leaders in Fort Rae are very sensitive about future uses of the Old Fort Rae site, especially if those uses involve additional non-resident traffic to the site. At the present time, Old Fort Rae is used as a stopping off point and shelter for people traveling between Rae and Yellowknife by boat during the summer months. Given its shape, the site offers good protection from the east winds blowing in from the North Arm.

Because of community sensitivity towards developing this site, we feel that considerable preparatory work must be done prior to any decisions being made regarding its establishment as a park. Such work should include: production of a detailed photographic history of the years during which the site was occupied; an archaeological assessment of the site, its artifacts, etc.; and an evaluation of development options based on this baseline information.

Although we feel it is indeed premature to further develop the Old Fort Rae site, we have applied the previously noted site selection criteria so that a preliminary overview of the site's development potential would be created for competitive purposes.

At the direction of the GNWT, Department of Economic Development and Tourism, we have also prepared a concept plan for Old Fort Rae based on present information. It should be noted that this is for discussion purposes only. Assuming the site can be developed without harming burial grounds and other sensitive areas, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, only if community approval was

give, would consider developing firepits, possibly some tent pads and an open shelter for tourist and local use. These facilities would be supplemented by pit privies to ensure proper sanitation, etc.

From a general tourism perspective we rate the site as having high potential for park development. Given its history, geology/geography and close proximity to Great Slave Lake, it is an ideal location for cultural - interpretive development. Also, given its somewhat isolated location, tourism traffic generated by the Mackenzie Highway system is easily controllable, since the only method of accessing the site during the summer is by boat. Overall, Old Fort Rae is an ideal site for future park development in the Fort Rae area.

Regarding accessibility, the site rates somewhat lower, given that it can only be reached by boat during the summer months. Depending on the type of park that may be eventually developed, lacking accessibility may indeed be a positive, not a negative attribute, especially from a community prospective thus, uncontrolled access would be easier to control.

As for physiographic attributes we rate the site as being very high indeed. As a geological transition zone, it has much to offer the inquisitive traveller.

Using our site selection criteria the site is rated as being very high in terms of historical and cultural significance. Given that the site had been occupied by the Dogrib people since the early 1800's and that it was a recognized trading center during the last two centuries, it fits well within a northern frontier context.

Although this site rates high in terms of general tourism interest levels, we would be remiss not to reiterate that there are very strong feelings about how and when it should be used for tourism park purposes. Thus, using our previously noted

community sensitivity index, we rate the site as highly sensitive, which means any plans for development should be developed cautiously and should take into account resident priorities and concerns. At this time we also do not rate the site as having a high compatibility with immediate support from park establishment.

Regarding potential conflicting use of the site, local residents use the site as an egress point during their travels on the lake between Rae and Yellowknife. They also visit the site to pay their respects to friends and relatives buried in the general area of the Old Fort. Given these uses, a lack of community support at this time, the limited information on grave sites and historical artifacts at the site, we feel there is potential for conflict if park development planning proceeds for the site. Although community support for designating Old Fort Rae as a park is not now available, this should not detract from the need for undertaking other park developments, such as at North Arm or Russell Lake.

As far as opportunities and constraints are concerned the only major constraint to developing the site is the lack of archaeological data on Old Fort Rae and the high sensitivity index regarding its development as a park. As noted previously, there is little data on the Old Fort Rae site and local residents are extremely sensitive about encouraging increased use, especially by non-residents not familiar with the area. There is also concern that because of the lack of documentation on the grave sites and traditional use areas, increased visitation to Old Fort Rae could lead to further degradation. Therefore, for the people of Fort Rae, it is important that further study of the site be done before any future park development takes place. Such work would include locating and documenting all known grave sites and buildings, and preparing a detailed social history of Old Fort Rae. During our community consultations it also became abundantly clear that local participation in this research would be critical for their supporting the future development of an Interpretive Park at Old Fort Rae. Although park construction costs would likely be high, given its remote location, we

do not feel development costs would be prohibitive, especially if a historic park were designed in such a way that physical structures were limited in number and size.

North Arm Territorial Park



Existing day use area beach



Existing day use facilities

North Arm Territorial Park

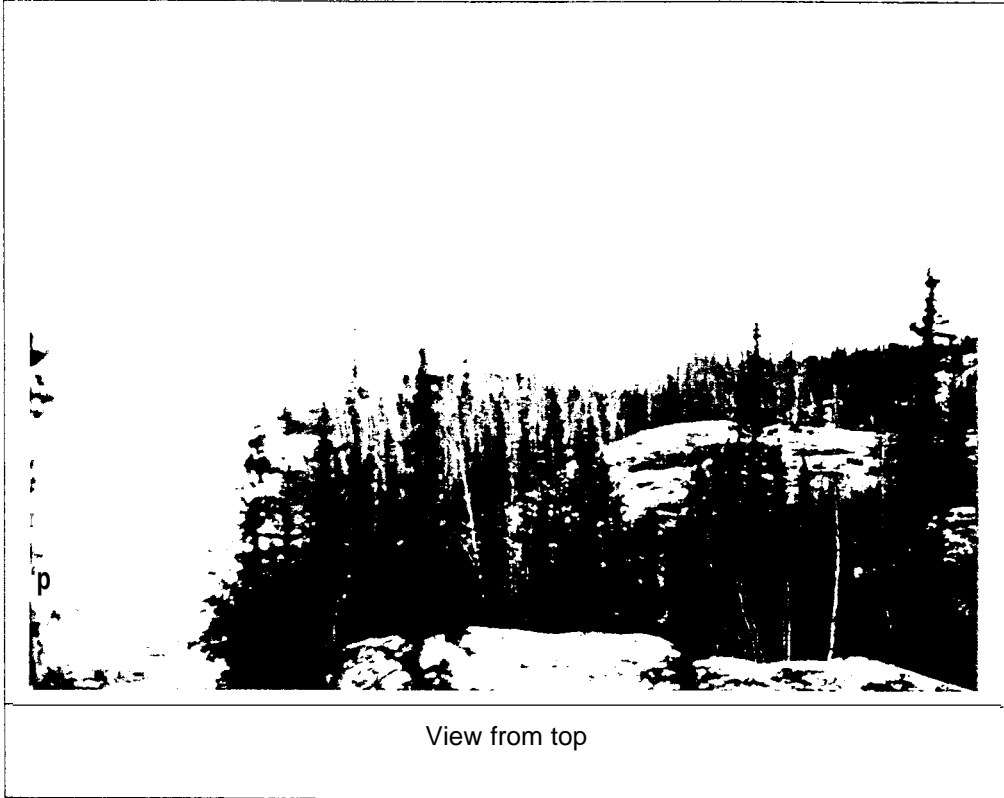


Mosquito Creek area

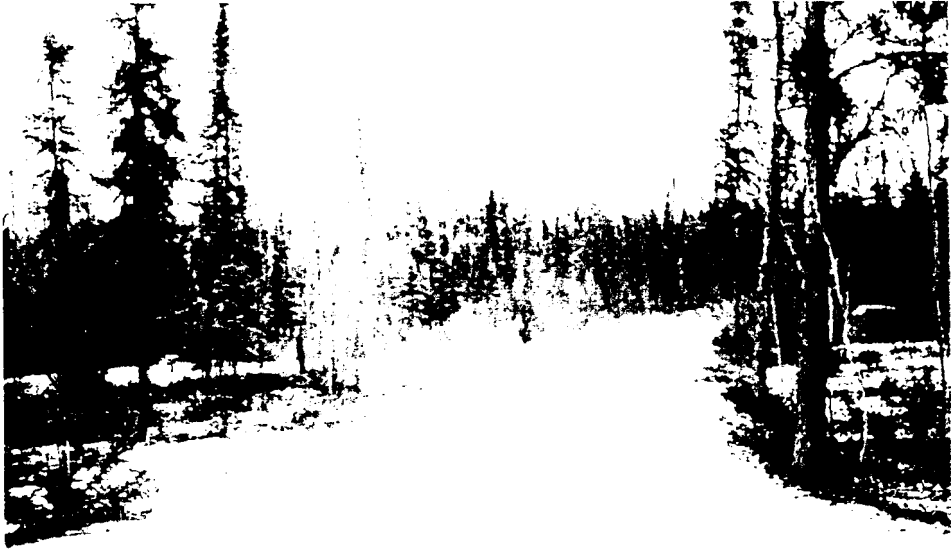


Mosquito Creek area

Russell Lake Territorial Community Park



Edzo Territorial Park



Entrance



Small Creek

OldFort Rae Site



View of Great Slave Lake from center of Old Fort Rae



Willow growth at shoreline

Old Fort Rae Site



Depression in snow indicates abandoned store house

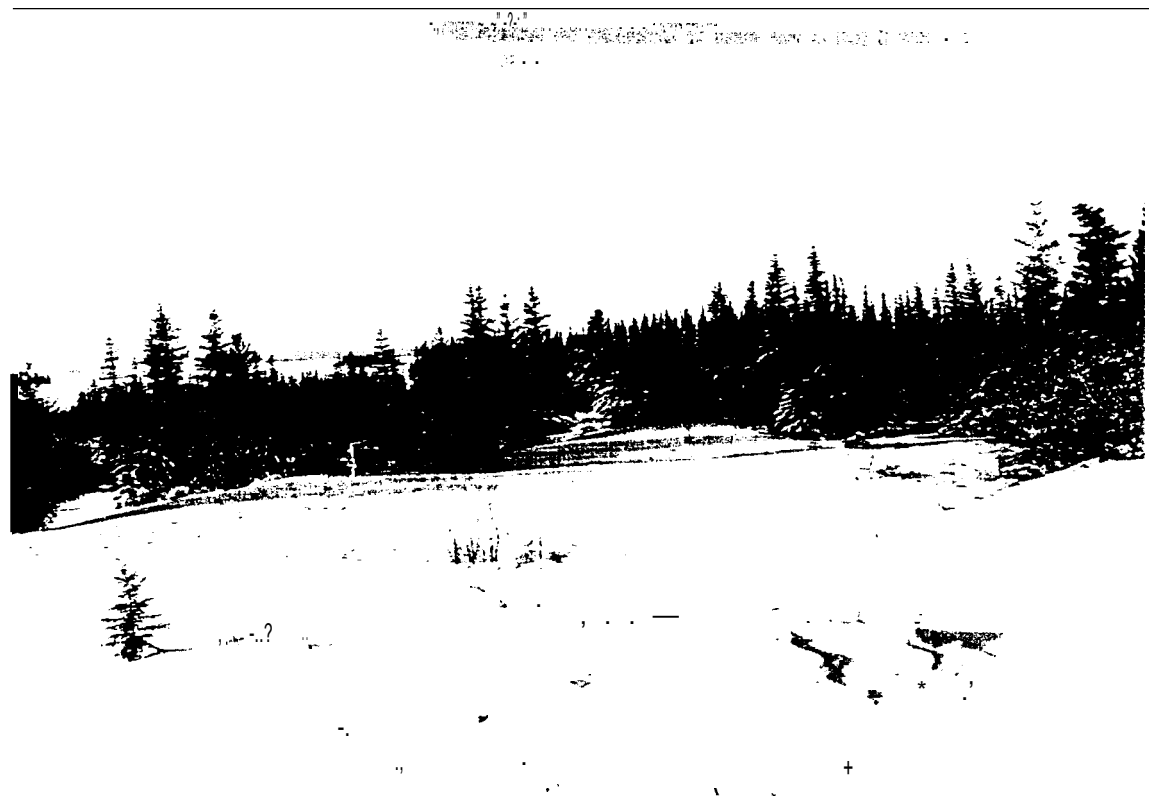


Site inspection team

Old Fort Rae



Clearance where main buildings were located



View from foothills leading to sacred offering site

As we have noted throughout this report community support should be acquired, before any physical planning work is done at the **Old Fort Rae** site, we recommend that the Department of Economic Development and Tourism in conjunction with the Northern Heritage Center develop an archaeological program for further studying the area. Here, we recommend that an initial archaeological profile be developed which would add to the overview of Old Fort Rae's history, provided in this report its unique geological and geographical setting and inventory artifacts that are remaining from human occupation over the past two centuries. We recommend this work actively involve residents from nearby Fort Rae and **Edzo**.

Once the initial archaeological profile is completed we suggest that representatives from the Department of Economic Development and Tourism and the Northern Heritage Center meet with the Rae Band and Hamlet Councils and community interest groups to discuss their findings and to outline possible historic park development options at that time. Because of the many presently unknown variables we feel there is insufficient information about the site to responsibly develop a park concept at Old Fort Rae. Indeed, this view is fully supported by both the Rae Band and Hamlet Councils. (See section on community consultation)

Table 5.0

Matrix of Park Selection Criteria

Site Selection Criteria	North Arm Site	Russell Lake	Old Fort Rae	Edzo Park
Overall Tourism Appeal	High	Medium	High	Low
Accessibility to the Public	High	Medium	Low	Medium
Historical Significance	Medium	Medium	High	Low
Community Sensitivity Index	Low	Low	High	Low
Compatibility With Community Priorities	High	Medium	Medium	Low
Potential Conflicting Use	Low	Low	Medium	Low
Constraints to Development	Low	Low	Medium	High
Development Cost Index	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low

Although the Russell Lake rates “medium” on the Tourism Appeal Index, we feel that it should be developed as a **community/territorial** park to accommodate overflow from the proposed North Arm Park expansion.

13.0 Park Site Concept Plans

The following section outlines concept recommendation for developing the three parks in the area: the North Arm, Russell Lake and Old Fort Rae.

In presenting the concept we have attempted to recognize the distinct differences between the sites, yet allowing for a mechanism that shows the interrelationship that unites the historical, cultural and physical features of the area.

Rae **Edzo** Parks

First, our plan calls for the expansion of the North Arm Territorial Park, which means there would be no change to the status of the park, except for an expansion of park boundaries and a substantial increase in park amenities, including better camp sites, a new hiking trail system, with look-outs on the Great Slave Lake and an information/interpretive center at the park entrance. Technically, the park would be a territorial outdoor recreational park for use by the traveling public and nearby residents. We envisage control over the park's management and operation would be a shared responsibility between the Rae local governments and the GNWT Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

Second, we recommend that the Russell Lake campground be expanded established as a community territorial park. Here, we envisage further development of amenities, such as hiking trails, construction of a central activity center, designating look-outs towards Russell Lake, clearing of an area for field games and cultural events, better and more sanitation facilities.

The key difference between the Russell Lake site and North Arm would be a heavy emphasis on community use. Principally, the Russell Lake site would be for community use, although tourist use would not be restricted and would be promoted to attract tourists closer to Rae's retail establishment- Also, with a territorial park designation, the GNWT would be able to further invest in the site. Without territorial park status, resources for further developing the site would be limited to what could be garnered from the local municipality. Thus, there are some distinct advantages of

territorial park establishment at the site.

The reader should note, that establishing the Russell Lake site as a territorial community park does not mean the community would lose control over its use and management. As we suggest elsewhere in this report, there are avenues for joint management and control for territorial parks with nearby native communities.

In fact, in the **Dene/Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement In Principle**, there are provisions to protect native communities' use of and access to lands selected for territorial park development. Specifically, section 13.0 dealing with wildlife management and harvesting protects access by native people to parks lands (except for conservation areas) and section 17.1.1 which deals with the establishment and operation of protected areas sets out the **framework** under which native rights regarding territorial parks are protected.

The last park development suggested in our plan is the establishment of an historic park at the Old Fort Rae site sometime in the future.

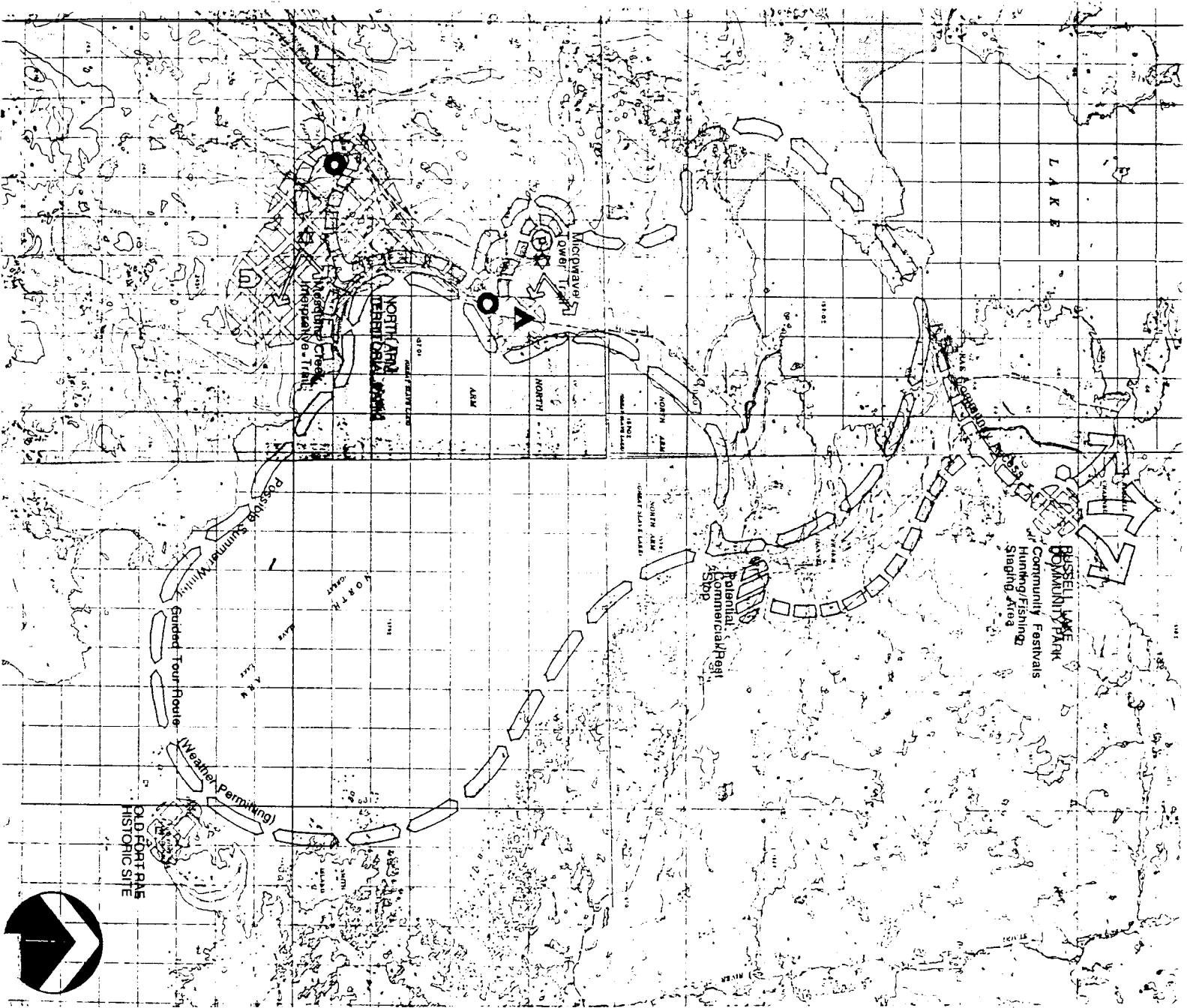
In order to maximize user enjoyment and encourage investment in the area, the concept introduces ideas that hopefully will make the primary park area (ie: North Arm) a destination attraction that will encourage park users to stay in the area for longer periods of time.

The following provides a brief description of the various map sheets and the park features and components incorporated in each. These sheets are located at the end of this section.

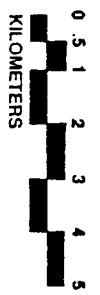
Map 2- Regional Overview:

This map identifies the regional setting of the various potential parks namely: Russell Lake, Old Fort Rae and the North Arm.









In regards to the Old Fort Rae site, it was generally agreed that no park development would occur until archaeological research had taken place to locate and document sacred areas. Once the research was completed, and if community support was obtained, then the site would be established as a Territorial Historic Park. In the



REGIONAL SETTING



LEGEND

-  FUTURE FACILITY DEVELOPMENT
-  DAY USE/PICNIC
-  LOOKOUT C/W BENCHES
-  CAMPING/INTERPRETIVE
-  TRAIL
-  GUIDED TOUR
-  PROPOSED PARK
-  COMMERCIAL

PROJECT: LAKE-EDZO PARK ALTERNATIVE

DRAWING: PARK CONCEPTS & LINKAGE SYSTEM

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM/GNWT.

SCALE: 1:50000

PREPARED BY:



North Consultants Inc.
ALBERTA • CANADA • NEW HAMPSHIRE

interim, the Map identifies the historic importance of the site and the potential to offer, weather permitting, selected guided tours from Frank's Channel either by boat in the summer or snowmobile in the winter.

The Map also identifies the Russell Lake site as a Territorial Community Park which, as the name suggests, is intended primarily to serve the needs of local residents from nearby Fort Rae. However, it will also serve as an **attraction** to encourage tourists to visit Rae.

The final park area on the Map is that of North Arm. At present, the site is a small, day use, boat launch area with a rustic cook shelter and some cement fire pits. The regional overview suggests that the site could be greatly expanded to include a large area to the south around Mosquito Creek and a smaller area to the north. The map also identifies the site as a Territorial Outdoor Recreation Park.

Although the site has tremendous potential for a major park development, preliminary field investigation suggests that the site be expanded in both north and south directions.

Map 3- North Arm Territorial Outdoor Recreation Park

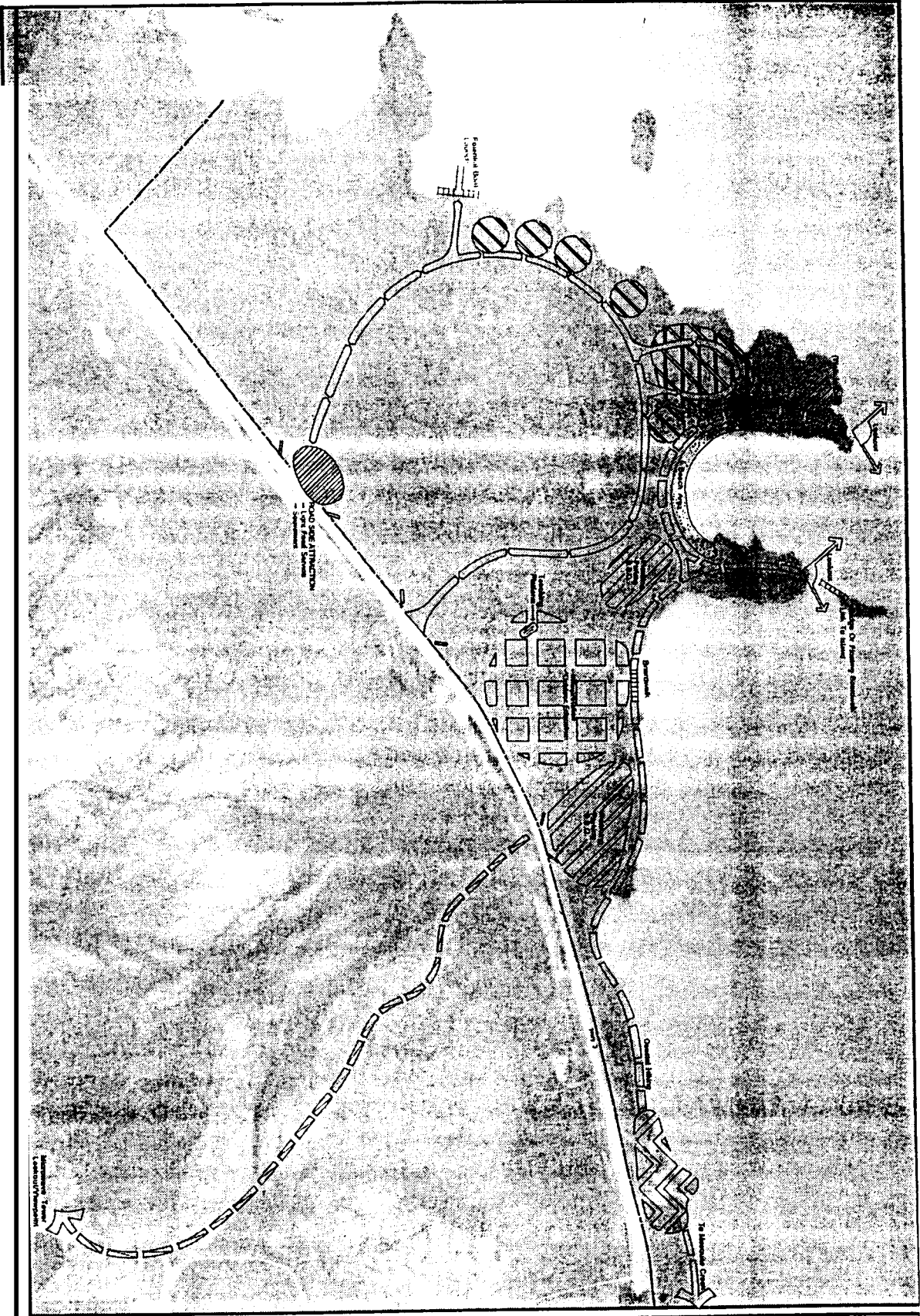
Map 3 provides a more detailed analysis of the various conceptual components of the North Arm Territorial Outdoor Recreation Park.

Option 1.- Development to the North

Initial impressions of the site suggest that although the area is fairly large, it will be easier to develop (and potentially less costly) than the Mosquito Creek area to the west.

Road access into the park will also be more direct at this location than at Mosquito Creek.

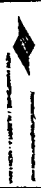
The area is characterized by several distinct landscape patterns which help in delineating potential development of the site.



**NORTH ARM
PARK**











DRAWING
CONCEPT PLAN

PREPARED BY



CLIENT
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNITY

LEGEND

-  BOAT LAUNCH STAGING
-  DAY USE ACTIVITY AREA
-  COASTAL WINDING TRAIL
-  PROPOSED ROAD
-  GROUP CAMPING
-  NATURAL AREA
-  WINDING TRAIL
-  CLIMBING
-  SOURCE
-  PROPOSED BOUNDARY



**RAE-EDZO PARK
ALTERNATIVE**

SCALE 1:2000

Much of the large land area to the north of the present boat launch appears to be low lying, muskeg type terrain, although there does appear to be some higher ground surrounding it. The area also has a large marsh area and several promontories which are ideal for viewing points out over Great Slave Lake. There are also a number of "sheltered" bays having potential for beach use or for separate boat launch facilities.

The Park has three distinct zones: a day use, boat launch area at the present boat launch site; a larger day use picnic/rest stop area adjacent to the proposed nature/interpretive Zone; and an overnight camping area to the north. The overnight camping area would include the potential to develop its own boat launch facilities and, at the very least, a boat launch mooring facility where campers can leave their boats.

The Option 1. concept plan introduces a major loop road for the overnight camping zone following what appears to be the height of land around the low muskeg zone. This main road is approximately 1.6 km in length. Coming off the main road would be an additional 400 meter spur providing access to a proposed Group Camping area.

There are two levels of camping introduced in the Option 1. concept plan:

- Individual camping: coming off the main loop road would be a number of small cluster campsites having direct water access and view;
- Group Camping: an area where community/school groups etc. can come (in numbers of 30-50) and set up camp in a group configuration.

Feature highlights of the park include:

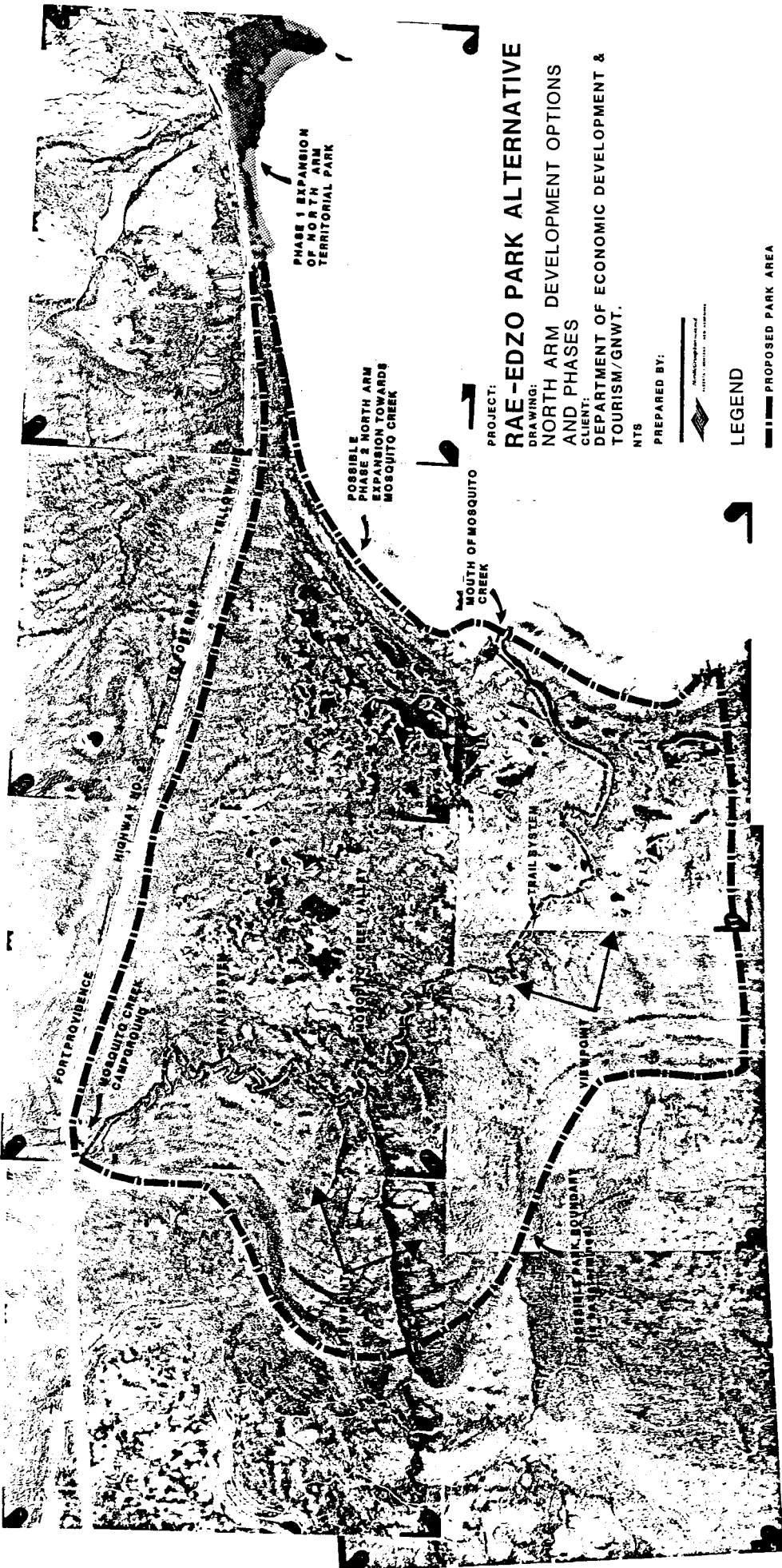
- Coastal Hiking Trail: approximately 2 kilometers of multi-use trail along the shore of Great Slave Lake and connecting the existing boat launch area with the two promontories to the north;
- Mosquito Creek Trail: the coastal hiking trail could continue to the south to include a longer hike to Mosquito Creek;
- Nature Trail: approximately .5 km of specially designed nature trail around the

marsh area for outdoor education/interpretation. Included with the trail would be a proposed boardwalk connecting the present boat launch site with the proposed camping areas;

- Microwave Tower Lookout Trail: approximately 1.5 km of trail would connect the day use/camping areas with the highest point of land in the area providing a magnificent overview of the entire park and Great Slave Lake;
- Beach Area: in the small, sheltered cove to the east of the Group Camping area, the possibility exists to develop a “manmade beach area”;
- Day Use Activity Area: between the camping zone and the day use/interpretative zone is a proposed Activity area. This area is intended to have a cook shelter, picnic facilities and possible outdoor play features such as a playground, horseshoes, etc.
- Park Entrance/Native Cultural: in order to monitor overnight park use and to collect fees, etc., the main park area will require a formal **entrance/gatehouse**. It is suggested that this entrance be expanded in size to include possible staff lodging, camp store and a possible native/cultural attraction for both overnight campers and day use highway travelers wanting to stop and rest, and perhaps enjoy the park setting.
- Day Use Picnic/Rest Stop: a new, larger day use/rest stop area is identified to the north of the present boat launch. It is felt that this area would allow people to come farther off the highway into a more enjoyable setting.
- Existing Boat Launch: the site should be upgraded with improved parking and lake access provided. It can remain as a day use boat launching site.

Option 2.- Development to the South

As a secondary option we have developed a concept plan for park development towards the Mosquito Creek ravine. This area appears to have much better drainage (to be determined during the Master Planning Phase) than is the case with Option 1., however, it does not have the sheltered bays afforded by the north side of the North



PROJECT:
RAE-EDZO PARK ALTERNATIVE

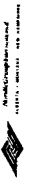
DRAWING:
NORTH ARM DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

AND PHASES

CLIENT:
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM/GNWT.

NTS

PREPARED BY:



LEGEND

— PROPOSED PARK AREA

--- PROPOSED TRAIL SYSTEM

PROJECT:
RAE-EDZO PARK ALTERNATIVE

DRAWING:
REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

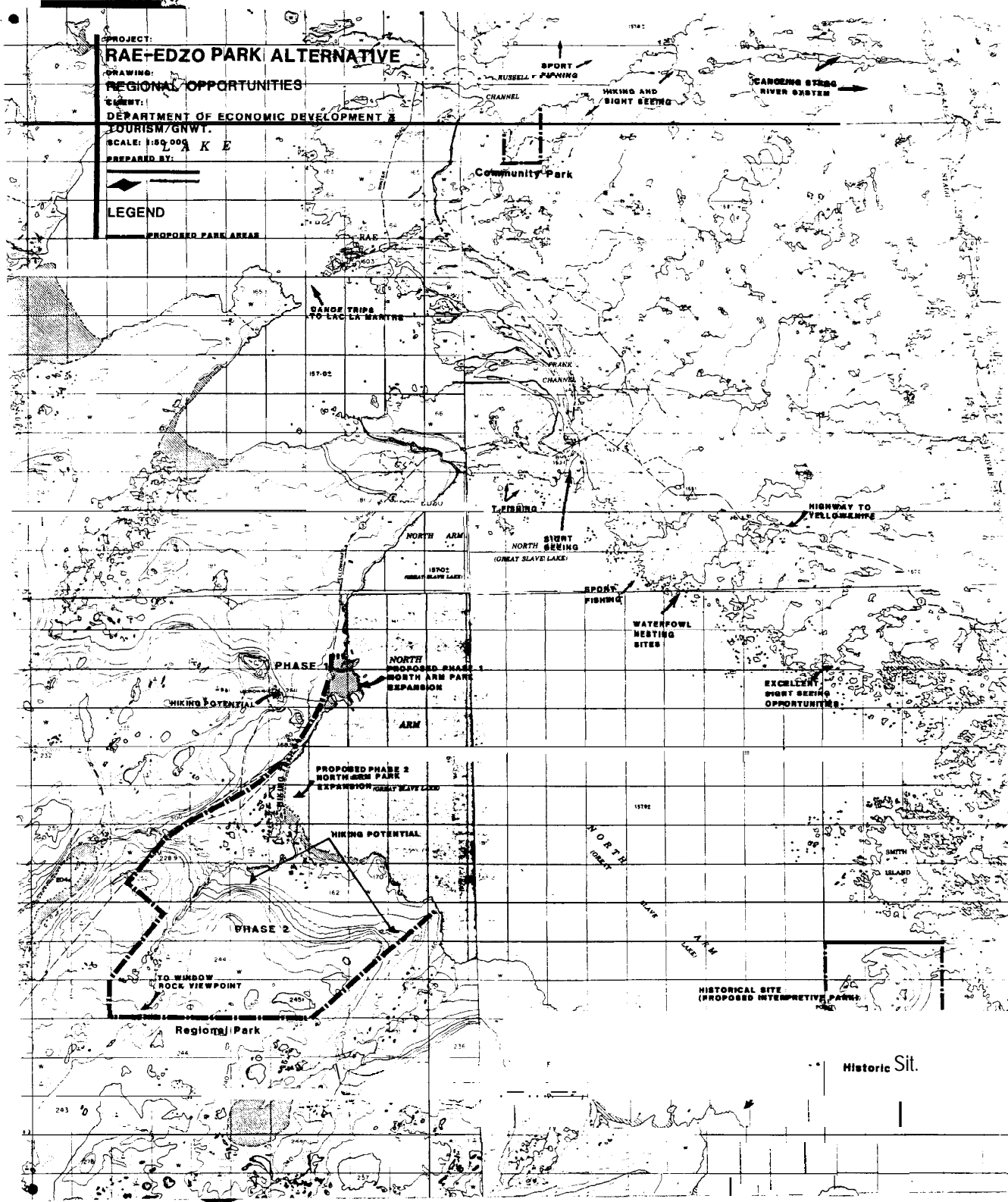
CLIENT:
**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &
TOURISM/GNWT.**

SCALE: 1:50,000

PREPARED BY:

LEGEND

PROPOSED PARK AREA



Arm. In any event, park development towards the Mosquito Creek ravine could include the present North Arm camp ground and extend along the highway across the creek and take in the high ridge overlooking the valley.

The map provided in this section shows the proposed boundaries and concept plan for Option 2.

Map 4- Russell Lake Territorial Community Park:

Map 4 illustrates the conceptual layout for the park and the major components required to enhance park use by community residents.

The primary purpose of the park is to provide a large, group use camping area. In this regard, the concept identifies the development of a large shelter that would serve as a BBQ/dining facility or an activity area for campers in inclement weather.

Overall, facilities would be modest in scale. A short hiking trail would be developed to increase the attractions in the area and to allow for better access to the high bluffs overlooking the lake. In addition, a suitable open space would be cleared for field games/group activities.

A new boat launch facility would need to be upgraded or rebuilt.

A staging area for parking boat trailers, vehicles, etc., as well as winter use for snowmobiles is also proposed.

**RUSSELL LAKE
COMMUNITY**



SCALE 1 1000

DRAWING
CONCEPT PLAN

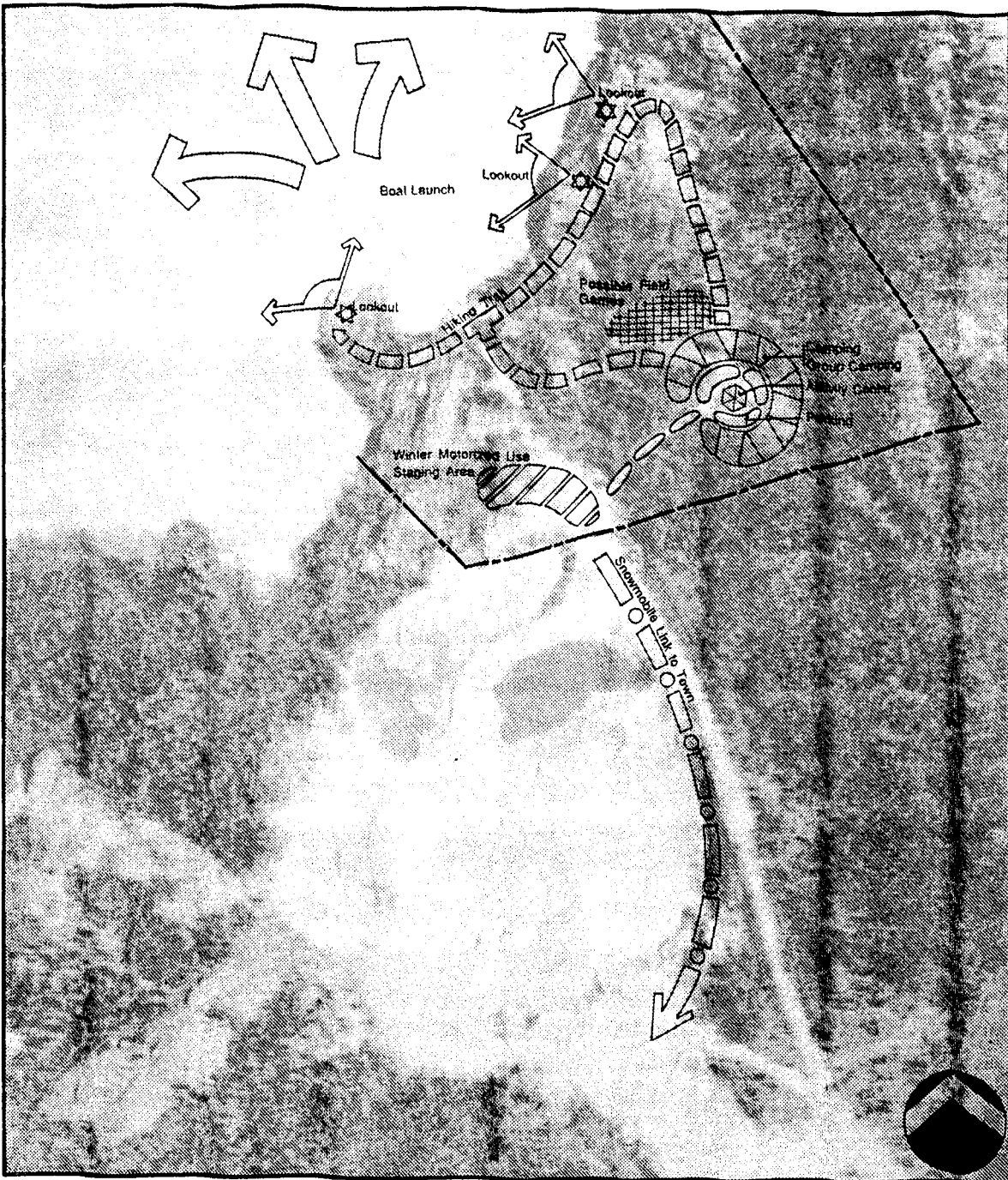
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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM - GNWT

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Boundary



PROJECT:
RAE-EDZO PARK ALTERNATIVE

14.0 Organizational Options for Tourism and Park Development in Rae - Edzo

As noted previously in this report, there were several concerns raised by Fort Rae leaders about the disposition and management of park lands. In particular, members of both municipal councils were concerned about whether their control over adjacent lands would be compromised as a result of further park development in the area. In particular, members of the councils were concerned that the development of parks could mean, in the long term, additional requests for lands outside the proposed park boundaries. In effect, councillors envisaged park development (if not managed in the interests of local people) as representing a possible threat to local lands. Therefore, as a condition of their support for local park development, both councils endorsed the concept of establishing a joint - management structure which would allow for their equal and full participation in the development, operation and management of future parks in the Rae - Edzo area.

It is for this reason that we recommend a Rae - Edzo Tourism and Parks Board be established as a first step in planning for future park development. Fashioned after southern parks boards, a Rae - Edzo Tourism and Parks Board could have a somewhat broader range of responsibilities, taking into account not only park development and management, but general tourism development activities as well. If this were done community priorities and support could be integrated more effectively into for tourism development in the community and surrounding area.

Principles, Goals and Objectives of the Tourism and Parks Board

General goals and objectives for the Tourism and Parks Board should be developed and agreed upon by all interested parties in the tourism development process in the Rae area. In the interim we suggest the following principles and goals could serve as initial targets for the Board.

Development Principles:

As part of the process of ensuring that parks and tourism development occurs within a consistent and logical framework it is useful to establish underlying principles that could guide future developments and activities. Such principles are often necessary for avoiding or resolving potential conflicts and they can serve as a useful starting point for evaluating the relative merits of certain developments over others.

1. **Respect for Traditional Land Use and Access:** Tourism and park development in the Fort Rae area shall respect existing land use, its traditional importance to elders and local residents;
2. **Community Priorities for Tourism and Park Development:** Tourism and park development in the Rae area is desirable, however, such development must be consistent and compatible with community development priorities;
3. **Management and Control:** Maximum community control and participation in the development of parks and local tourism activities must be ensured;
4. **Local Economic Benefits:** Local residents should have first opportunity to capitalize on economic benefits resulting from tourism and park development in the Fort Rae area, including business and employment opportunities;
5. **Education and Preservation of Local Culture:** Where possible tourism and park developments should **strive** to incorporate themes which allow for the preservation of local history and culture and education of local people as well as the traveling public;
6. **Better Integration of Community Development Activities:** Better integration of community tourism development and planning activities at all levels would result in a more effective approach to local tourism development.

Composition of Board Membership: To ensure that all community interests are served, we suggest that at least two members of each municipal council be appointed to the Board, along with two representatives (Regional Tourism Officer and Headquarters) from the **GNWT** Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

In addition, two additional members from the private sector (preferably tourism operators) should be appointed to ensure a private sector perspective is brought to bear on all Board decisions.

Appointments to the Board should be jointly selected and agreed upon by both Band and Hamlet Councils. The term of appointments should be for a period not less than three years and not more than five.

A chairman for the Board could be elected from within the Board membership, however, the chair should be rotated annually.

To provide additional perspective and to ensure local tourism developments tie into broader regional marketing efforts, the Board may want to appoint members from the Northern Frontier Tourism Zone as ex-officio (non-voting) members.

Roles and Responsibilities

As the main purpose of a Tourism and Parks Board is to increase local participation and control over tourism developments in or near the community, the main focus of the Board would be on major tourism policy matters. However, as tourism spokespersons, the Board would also have a major role in lobbying for the improvement and further development of tourism and parks facilities for the benefit of both the local and traveling public.

Specific roles and responsibilities include:

- Identifying and Promoting Tourism and Park Development
- Strengthening Relationships With Major Tourism Stakeholders
- Monitoring Tourism and Park Developments
- Setting Tourism Development priorities for the Community
- Participating in the Management of Park Developments
- Acting as Resource and Advocate For Local Operators
- Providing Input on Tourism Program Development
- Increasing the Profile and Importance of Tourism Locally
- Working With Government Agencies in Advancing Tourism Development
- Acting as an Official Voice for Local Tourism Development

Increasing the Local Benefits From Tourism Activities

Relationship to Existing Agencies

While the Tourism and Parks Board is still a concept at this point we feel it would be premature, without further discussions with the respective councils to suggest a final reporting relationship for the Board. However, for discussion purposes we feel the Board should have a formal relationship to local municipal governments.

Given the joint nature of municipal government in Rae - Edzo we recommend that the Tourism and Parks Board be an independent, but accountable organization. By accountable, we mean the Board would report to both Councils on an annual basis to provide a progress report. Throughout the year we would also expect the Board to meet periodically with each Council to provide interim briefings on specific tourism development activities taking place in the community.

Goals and Objectives

Within the above framework we suggest several goals and objectives that could be adopted by a newly formed Tourism and Park Development Board for the community of Fort Rae. While we are certain there are many other objectives that will be identified by the Board and Municipal Councils, we feel at the very minimum these goals and objectives would be useful in stimulating discussion on the role tourism and parks development can play in creating and enhancing local business opportunities. At the very least, we feel that in achieving these goals, residents and businesses of the Rae - Edzo would be in a better position to benefit from park and related tourism development.

Accordingly, as a starting point we outline ten goals and objectives for the proposed Tourism and Parks Board.

1. **Adopt Community By-Law:** As a first step towards increased community participation and control over park and tourism development in the Rae area, we recommend the Municipal Council develop and adopt a By-Law which would sanction the creation of the Tourism and Parks Board and give credence to its future operation in the community.

To assist in this process, we have developed a draft By-Law for consideration by the Band and Hamlet Councils. The draft By-Law is contained in the appendix.

2. **Develop a Tourism and Parks Policy:** Once the By-Law has been drafted and adopted, a community tourism and parks policy should be drafted so that tourism principles and priorities are applied and developed within a consistent and logical framework (i.e. consistent with GNWT policies and programs).
3. **Enhance and Expand Tourism Facilities:** Once the Board is in place we feel a major effort should be made to identify tourism facilities that need to be developed. These should be identified in the context of park development as parks will likely be the major impetus for tourism visitation in or near the community.
4. **Enhance Tourism Business Opportunities Through Park Development:** Through the creation and expansion of territorial parks we believe several new and exciting business opportunities can be developed in Fort Rae (see section on business opportunities). As a matter of policy the proposed Tourism and Parks Board should take an active role in supporting the business opportunities by acting as a public advocate and voice for local tourism operators.

The Tourism and Parks Board could also work closely with the local Area Economic Development Officer and Regional Tourism Officer to increase the amount of tourism resources for park and tourism development in the community. In particular, the Board could play a significant role in identifying major capital tourism projects and ensure they are incorporated into the GNWT Department of Economic Development and Tourism's Capital Planning Budgetary Process.

5. **Increase Community Awareness of Tourism Benefits:** We suggest the Tourism and Parks Board, through its membership, develop a campaign to increase community awareness of potential tourism benefits. To facilitate the process, the Board may want to consider launching awareness seminars to profile tourism in the community. This could be done by working closely with the local Area Economic Development Officer and GNWT Tourism and Parks personnel

in developing an effective means for educating the public on tourism and park development and what it can mean for the community.

6. **Hospitality Training for Park Attendants and Guides:** To ensure optimal participation of local residents in the tourism and park development process, hospitality training and guide training could be facilitated by the Board and personnel from the GNWT Department of Economic Development and Tourism.
7. **Better Coordination of Tourism Development With Government:** An immediate, but on-going goal of the Board should be to strive to increase coordination of local tourism development with the activities of major stakeholders, such as the GNWT Department of Economic Development and Tourism. Assuming the Board takes an active role in monitoring tourism development generally, it should be in an excellent position to identify on-going priorities, concerns and resource requirements for local tourism and parks. The key, of course, will be communicating these priorities to the appropriate agencies and to effectively lobby for Rae's fair share of funding for local tourism development.
8. **Better Use of Parks as a Vehicle for Local Tourism Development:** If promoted and developed properly, territorial parks could play a significant role in increasing Fort Rae's profile in the tourism marketplace, especially if some unique natural and cultural tourism products were developed as a result of park development. For example, the new North Arm Territorial Park could very well serve as a staging point for Rae - Edzo outfitters offering boat tours of the Great Slave Lake. In this respect, parks could serve an important function by providing a focal point for tourism business development.

The proposed Tourism and Parks Board should therefore play an important role in promoting the use of local parks by working with officials of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. Promotional activities could include in developing attractions and events at the park sites. Ranging from cultural displays, drum dances, disseminating interpretive information on the flora and fauna of the region, and exhibitor on the local history, etc.

9. Improve the Private **Sector's** Role: Another goal of the Tourism and Parks Board could be stimulating increased private sector participation in the tourism sector. This could be accomplished by the Board continually identifying tourism opportunities that arise in the community and making them known to the business community at large.
10. **Joint - Management:** While listed last, this objective should by no means be considered a low priority. Indeed, given GNWT interest in further park development in the Rae area, the Tourism and Parks Board could play a very important role by ensuring that resident interests and concerns are addressed early on in the planning and park development processes. This is particularly important for the second phase (Master Planning) of Rae area park development. This would occur once community approval for park establishment was obtained.

Given the significance of park development in Rae, we recommend the proposed Tourism and Park Board assume a joint-management role with the GNWT during future phases of local park development. This would mean the Board would have an active role and voice in the preparation of parameters for master planning, the selection and management of technical resources and provide overall direction on the master planning process. As well, once the master planning has been completed the Board should continue having a direction role during the construction and operations phases of Rae Edzo area territorial parks.

15.0 Park Capital and O & M Costs and Jobs Created

The estimated capital and O & M costs to establish the three parks and seasonal jobs created are summarized below:

Table 6.0

Summary of Park Capital and O & M Costs

	(\$000) Capital	O & M	Seasonal Jobs
North Arm Park:			
Survey	10		
Master Plan	75		
Road Improvement	50		
Loop Road Development	200		
Trail Development	150		
Interpretive Area	100		
Picnic/Barbecue Area	75		
Camp sites	100		
Beach Area	50		
Lookouts	30		
Microwave Trail	75		
Other	100		
Two Camp Attendants		20	2 Maintenance
Contract		30	2
Total	1,015	50	4
Russell Lake Park			
Camping Sites	40		
Activity Centre	70		
Trails	40		
Field Area	40		
Lookouts	20		
Maintenance Contract		10	1
Total	210	10	1
Total Costs:	1,225	60	

16.0 Community Views

To determine if there was support for the park concept plans, meetings were held with both the Band Council and the Hamlet Council. The results of those meetings are as follows:

Band Council

The draft plans were presented to the Council by the consultants.

The Council agreed that the North Arm site should be developed into a Territorial Outdoor Recreation Park. Option 1. is recommended as a first phase developed towards the north area rather than towards Mosquito Creek.

The Council also agreed with developing Russell Lake into a Territorial Community Park.

The Council indicated that before any decision could be taken on Old Fort Rae research by an archaeological team would be required.

The Council strongly favoured establishing a Rae-Edzo Park Management Board that would oversee development of the parks.

The Council passed a Band Council Resolution (BCR) giving support to proceeding with the next phase of park development. This will require letters of support to be sent by the Band Council to Economic Development and Tourism supporting establishment of a park at the North Arm and Russell Lake. Phase II of area development will require the Band and Economic Development and Tourism to make detailed park plans and discuss future activities in respect to Old Fort Rae and a boat launch at Frank Channel. Phase III will entail soliciting private and public sector interests for the development of a service centre at the junction of Highway #3 and the Rae road. This phase would be dependent on the desire and ability to control other development near Rae or along Highway #3.

Hamlet Council

As with the Band Council, the Hamlet Council supported the concept plans and the overall direction recommended by the consultants.

The Hamlet Council also strongly supported establishing a Rae-Edzo Park Management Board.

A number of Council members also said that developing the parks would encourage growth in tourism and job creation in the area, both of which were required given the very high employment in the community.

The Hamlet Council passed a motion giving support to proceeding with development of a Master Plan.

17.0 Action Plan

To assist major stakeholders in advancing tourism and park development in the Rae area we have developed a brief action plan outlining specific activities over the next several months. For each activity we have suggested an agency which would be responsible, and a timetable for completion.

As a last comment, for any park development process to work for the benefit of all parties - the traveling public and local residents- we feel it is extremely important that all parties work together in a cooperative and effective manner. As well, we feel to achieve this level of cooperation the creation of Tourism and Parks Board would be the most effective organizational option. Thus, we see the proposed Rae - Edzo Tourism and Parks Board being the vehicle and catalyst for responsible and controlled park development in the years to come. It is therefore the cornerstone of the action plan outlined below.

1. Adoption of Parks Planning Study

Description: All major stakeholders should review and discuss the contents of the phase one park planning report and reach consensus on key findings and processes.

Responsibility: GNWT Economic Development and Tourism, Hamlet and Band Council

Timetable: July, 1991

2. Formation of Rae - Edzo Tourism and Parks Board

Description: Because the proposed Tourism and Parks Board would be a cornerstone to ensuring local participation and control of future park development in the Rae area, we feel it would be important for the

respective councils to form the organization as soon as possible.

Responsibility: Band and Hamlet Councils and GNWT Economic Development and Tourism

Timetable: August, 1991

3. Land Transfer Issues

Description: Local Tourism and Parks Board should write ED & T requesting land transfer from Federal Government to the GNWT in order to establish the North Arm Territorial recreation Park and the Russell Lake Territorial Community Park. This would be done immediately to ensure that subsequent master planning can proceed within the next year.

Responsibility: Local Tourism and Parks Board and Municipal Councils.

Timetable: October, 1991

4. Consideration Historical and Archaeological Profile of Old Fort Rae

Description: Rae Tourism and Parks Board writes Northern Heritage requesting that initial archaeological (pre-assessment) work at Old Fort Rae be started with local involvement. This should be done as soon as possible so that Northern Heritage Center staff can include this project in their upcoming summer archaeological program.

Responsibility: Tourism and Parks Board and GNWT Economic Development and Tourism

Timetable: September, 1991

5. Identify Proponents for Park Related Tourism Operators

Description: To ensure that local people have first chance to capitalize on business opportunities arising from territorial park development, an inventory of interested individuals should be put together as soon as possible. The inventory would identify individuals and/or businesses interested in tourism activities, their specific areas of interest, an indication of their capabilities/special skills and equity, if any, they have available for developing a tourism business.

Responsibility: GNWT Area Economic Development Officer in Rae

Timetable: November, 1991

6. Park Development Strategy Session

Description: To ensure that the implementation of the second phase master park plan proceeds with the wishes of all stakeholders in mind, we recommend that a strategy session be held in Fort Rae to scope out roles and responsibilities of all players in the process. Participants should include: members of the proposed Tourism and Parks Board, the local Area Economic Development Officer and representatives from Economic Development and Tourism's Headquarters tourism division.

Responsibility: Department of Economic Development and Tourism

Timetable: October, 1991

Appendix I
Sample By-Law

Sample By-Law

BY LAW NO. _____
OF

A BY-LAW OF _____ TO ESTABLISH A TOURISM AND PARKS BOARD

WHEREAS the Council of Fort Rae, N.W.T. desires to promote,
expand and enhance Tourism Development in Rae - Edzo .

AND WHEREAS the Council considers it expedient to establish such a
Board

NOW THEREFORE, the Council of Fort Rae duly
assembled enacts:

Part I - Definitions

L "Committee" shall mean and include the TOURISM AND PARKS BOARD of —

"**Council**" shall mean the Rae-Edzo Council and Rae-Edzo Hamlet Council of
The Hamlet of Fort Rae, N.W.T. .

"Secretary" shall mean the Secretary of the TOURISM AND PARKS BOARD for

Part II - Appointments/Terms

- II. A Board to be known as the Rae-Edzo
TOURISM AND PARKS BOARD is hereby established
in and for the Hamlet of Rae-Edzo, N.W.T. .
- III. The Board shall consist of not less than 6 and not more than 8 voting members who shall be appointed by resolution of the Council. The said members should be selected from such organizations and businesses as:

Council
Service station operators
Hotel/Motel operators
Restaurant operators
Service clubs
Historical Society
Municipal administration
Local Historians
Department of Economic Development and Tourism

The Northern Frontier Tourism Zone Manager may serve as a non-voting Advisor to the Board along with other local resource people who may be of assistance.

- IV. The Board members appointed shall serve for the following terms:
- a. Members of Council and its Administration shall be appointed annually at an Organizational Meeting of Council.
 - b. All other members shall hold office for 3 years provided that on the first appointment Council shall designate members who shall hold office:
 - i) Until the **first** day of November following the date of appointment
 - ii) Until the **first** day of November of the second year following the date of appointment; and
 - iii) Until the **first** day of November of the third year following the date of appointment respectively so that as nearly as possible 1/3 of such members shall retire each year after the initial two years of operation. The term of any member shall not exceed five consecutive years.
- V. All members shall remain in office until their respective successors are appointed by Council.

- VI. If any member of the Board shall be absent from three consecutive regular meetings, the Council may, upon recommendation of the Board, declare the office of such absent Board member to be vacant.
- VII. The Council may remove any member of the Board for malfeasance in office, or any other good and sufficient cause.

Part III - Proceedings

- VIII. Annually, during the month of November, the Board shall hold a meeting at which time a Chairman shall be selected for the ensuing year.
- IX. Meetings of the Board shall be held on a regular basis at a time to be set by resolution of the Board, at least once every three months, and at such other times as deemed necessary.
- X. A quorum for regular and special meetings of the Board shall be one more than one half of the members, one of whom must be the Chairman.
- XI. Special meetings may be called by the Chairman.
- XII. Meeting procedures shall be conducted in accordance with good meeting practices and disputes resolved in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order, newly revised.
- XIII. Remuneration of the members of the Board may be established by resolution of Council.
- XIV. Neither the Board nor any member thereof, shall have the power to pledge the credit of the municipality in connection with any matters whatsoever, nor shall the said Board, or any member thereof, have any power to authorize any expenditure charged against _____

Part IV - Secretary of the TOURISM AND PARKS BOARD

- XV.** There shall be a Secretary who shall assist the Board.
- XVI. The Secretary shall, upon recommendation from the Municipal Manager, be appointed by resolution of tile Council.
- XVII. The Secretary shall:
 - a. Notify all members and advisors of the Board of the holding of any regular or special meetings.
 - b. Keep proper and accurate minutes of the proceedings of all meetings which shall be retained in the **Municipal** Office.
 - c. Maintain all records and correspondence that are relevant to the Board.
 - d. Carry out such other administrative duties as the Board may require.
- XVIII. The Secretary shall not have voting privileges.

Part V - Duties of the Board

- XIX. The Board shall be responsible for the consideration of Council, a TOURISM ACTION PLAN for Rae-Edzo and for recommending to Council such changes as should from time to time be required.
- XX. Annually, before the 31st day of December, the Board shall submit to the Council a written annual report together with a statement showing in reasonable form and detail, expenditures proposed to be made by the Board during the next year with respect to **all** matters over which the Board has jurisdiction.
- XXI. Within the budget-approved by Council, the Board shall **carryouta** program for the promotion of the goals and objectives of the TOURISM ACTION PLAN.

Part VI - General

XXII. This By-Law shall come into force on the date of the final passing thereof.

READ a first, second and third time and finally passed this

_____ day of _____ A. D., 19 .

Mayor/Reeve

Municipal Administrator

Appendix II
Rae-Edzo Hamlet Motion
&
Rae-Edzo Council Resolution

**Rae-Edzo Hamlet
Minutes - March 6, 1991**

7. Adoption of February 6th, 1991 Minutes

Moved by Councillor Eddie Paul Rabesca, seconded by Councillor Archie Beaulieu, that the minutes of February 6th, 1991 as presented be adopted.

Robert Trudeau & Eric Christensen

Robert Trudeau, on behalf Economic Development and Tourism present further details on two of the Areas chosen for Territorial Parks. the best site for a Territorial Park would be at the north arm between Hwy#3 and the Lake. It is proposed to provide picnic, camp and trailer sites as well as boat launching facilities and a couple of look out areas. This has been presented to the Rae Band Council and they gave their support to go to the next phase of the study.

What we are looking for is support from the Hamlet Council. This park would be managed by a Park Management Board which would consist to local residents plus the Government.

Moved by Councillor Joe Rabesca, seconded by Councillor Joe Mackenzie that Council endorse the concept of the Territorial Park on the North Arm provided that the Hamlet has representation on the Board of Management for the Park.

Carried Unanimously #30-91

Eddie Camille

Eddie Camille appeared before council with a problem he is having with his neighbour. There being a lot of parting at the place and he would like to see the place moved.

The Senior Administrative Officer was asked to investigate the ownership of the lot.

8. Skidder

- a) There has been no response from Municipal and Community Affairs to the Hamlet request for funds for a new Loader to replace the skidder.

**BAND COUNCIL RESOLUTION
RESOLUTION DE CONSEIL DE BANDE**

NOTE: The words "From our Band Funds", "Capital" or "Revenue", which ever is the case, must appear in all resolutions requesting expenditures from Band Funds
 NOTA: Les mots "des fonds de notre bande", "Capital" ou "revenu" selon le cas doivent paraître dans toutes les résolutions portant sur des dépenses à même les fonds des bandes

THE COUNCIL OF THE LE CONSEIL DE LA BANDE INDIENNE DOGRIB RAE BAND	Current Capital Balance <i>Solde de capital</i>	\$ _____
AGENCY DISTRICT NORTH SLAVE LAKE REGION	Committed - <i>Engagé</i>	\$ _____
PROVINCE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES	Current Revenue balance <i>Solde de revenu</i>	\$ _____
PLACE NOM DE L'ENDROIT RAE, N. W. T.	Committed - <i>Engagé</i>	\$ _____
DATE 17th APRIL 91 DAY - JOUR MONTH - MOIS YEAR		

DO HEREBY RESOLVE;
 DÉCIDE, PAR LES PRÉSENTES:

DO HEREBY RESOLVE,

THAT, since a parks study is being conducted by RT & Associates, funded by the Gov't of the Northwest Territories, and,

THAT, the first phase of the study has been presented to Band Council 1 which described the best site for a Territorial Park to be at the North Arm of Great Slave Lake between Highway # 3 and the lake, and,

THAT, the proposed park provide picnic, camp and trailer sites, boat launching facilities, and look out areas, and,

THAT, the park would be managed by a Park Management Board which would consist of local residents and the Gov't of the Northwest Territories, and,

THAT, the Hamlet of Rae-Edzo has given their support for the next phase of the study,

THEREFORE, be it resolved, that the Band Council supports the continuation of a parks study within the identified area.

A quorum for this Bande
 Pour cette bande le quorum est
 consists of
 fixé à **5**
 Council Members
 Membres du Conseil

..... (Councillor - conseiller)	<i>Edmund</i> (Chief - Chef)	<i>Bois</i> (Councillor - conseiller)
..... (Councillor - conseiller)	<i>Moses Khasan</i> (Councillor - conseiller)	<i>Philip Dryneck</i> (Councillor - conseiller)
..... (Councillor - conseiller)	<i>George Wagaller</i> (Councillor - conseiller) (Councillor - conseiller)