FINAL SUBMISSION
ON THE
NORTHEAST B.C.
LAND USE AND OCCUPANCY STUDY

[Volume 2. Part IX (Appendix I)]

PREPARED BY:

UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS
FEBRUARY, 1980
FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Appendix I.

Indian Land Use and Occupancy in the Peace River Country of Northeastern British Columbia

Martin Weinstein

UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS

September, 1979.

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CHAPTER I

Northeastern British Columbia-A Geographic Introduction

Northeastern B.C. is that portion of the province bordered on the north by the Yukon and Northwest Territories, on the east by Alberta, and on the west by the diagonal sweep of the Rocky Mountains. Within the straight lines of the province's political boundaries, it is recognized as a distinct region. It is geographically counterpoised from the major provincial population, economic, and government centers in the Lower Mainland and on southern Vancouver Island; and from this perspective, it is the only part of B.C., which like the rest of Canada, lies behind the great barrier of the Rocky Mountains. Looking at the region from a physical perspective, however, and not from the political and economic one, it doesn't comfortably separate into a distinct region. It only becomes a distinct region after the provincial limits are marked on the map, and, indeed, much of its distinctive character within B.C. comes from its uniqueness in being a land east of the mountains. In terms of land form and forest type, it has more in common with the northern parts of the prairie provinces than it does with British Columbia. Indeed,

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physically and in terms of the region's early history, both Indian and White, there are a lot of insights to be gained by looking at the region from the east rather than the west.

Physically the region is a northern section of the continental Great Plains, extending into the Rocky Mountain Foothills. It's principal rivers, which were the historic fur trade routes, are part of the Mackenzie River drainage system which flows out into the Arctic Ocean. (Fig.1) Nonetheless, politically the Northwest is a region within British Columbia, which is distinguished by its geographic and historic eastern ties.

What has tied the region historically and, in a sense, geographically to British Columbia are two large west-east flowing rivers, the Peace and Liard, which are unique in North America in being the only rivers that literally break through the continental mountain backbone to flow to the east. The Peace River (through the Parsnip to McLeod Lake and then to the Fraser) in particular, was the historic route that tied interior British Columbia economically to eastern Canada and Britian during the fur trade period. Although Fort St. John (or rather Rocky Mountain House) is not the oldest continuously occupied White settlement in B.C.

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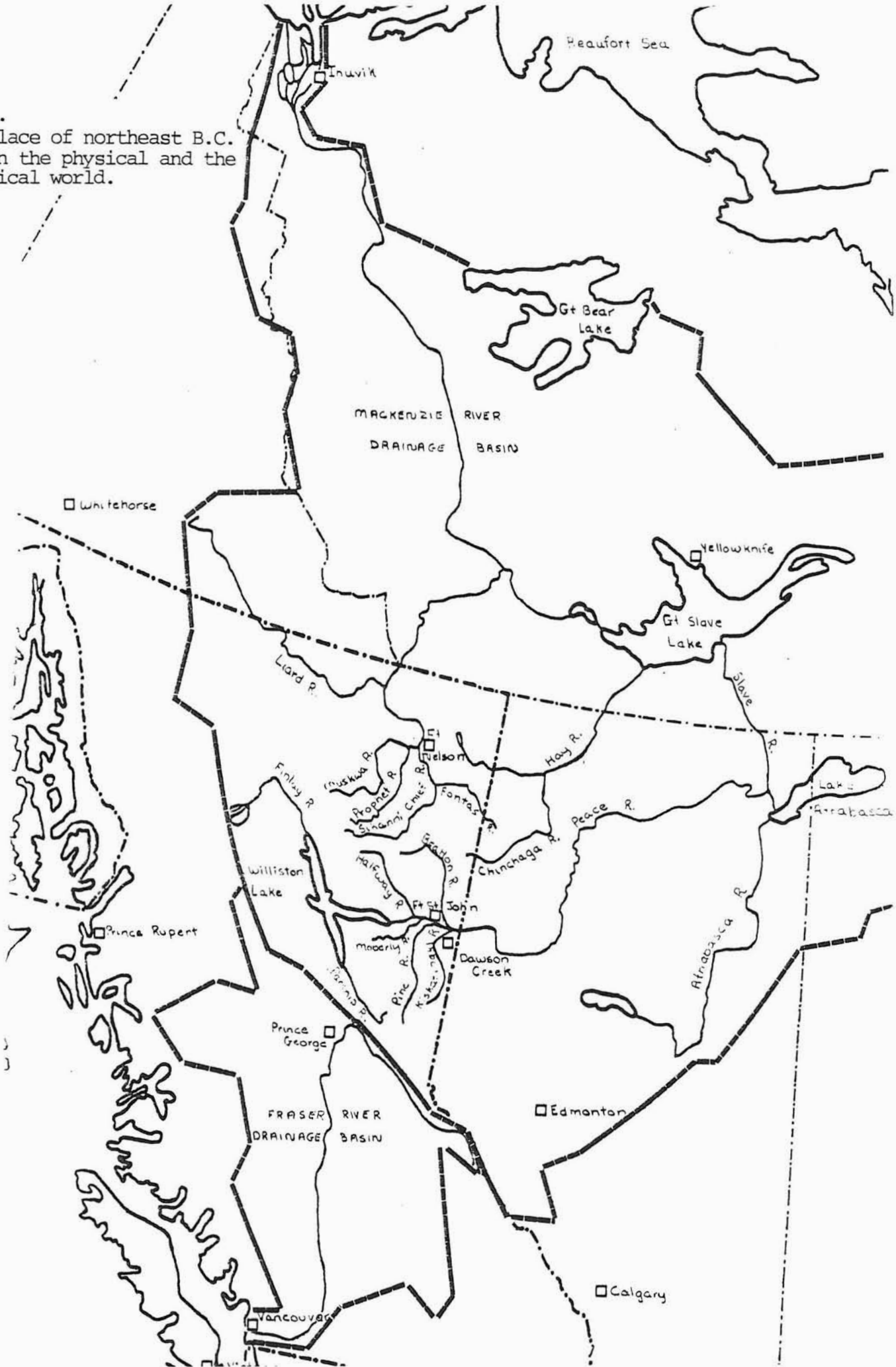

Fig.1.
The place of northeast B.C. within the physical and the political world.

(McLeod Lake is), it was the first White settlement in the province, founded as a North West Company trading post in 1798 (Bowes, 1963).

The Finlay and the Parsnip are the principal tributaries of the Peace in the Rockies. Together they drain much of the northern half of the Rockies in the province. The Liard drains the rest. The Parsnip flows within the Rocky Mountain Trench and the Finlay flows south within the Trench. The two rivers join at Finlay Forks to become the Peace. Actually this should have been written in the past tense, the rivers joined at Finlay to form the Peace. The Forks, a large part of the Finlay and Parsnip Rivers, and the Peace west of the Rocky Mountains are upstream from the W.A.C. Bennett Dam and are now covered by the waters of Williston Reservoir, the province's largest lake. Several smaller rivers flow into the Peace between the Dam and the Alberta Boundary. The Halfway and the Beatton flow in from the north side and the Moberly, the Pine, and the Kiskatinaw from the south. The River then crosses Alberta, becomes the Slave River (after being joined by the Athabaska System) and flows into Great Slave Lake, from which the Mackenzie originates.

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The Laird, on the other hand, originates in the Yukon, dips into northeastern B.C. briefly and then curves north into the Northwest Territories to join the Mackenzie about 200 miles downstream from Great Slave Lake. The Liard drains the northern sector of the northeast through a radiating network of rivers. The north flowing Ft. Nelson River joins the Liard at Nelson Forks. The Fort Nelson, in turn, collects the combined flows of the Muskwa, the Prophet River, the Sikanni Chief, and the Fontas.

We shall be looking at the geography of these rivers and their tributaries in considerable detail here. The reason being that in conversations with northeast Indians about their hunting lands these rivers and creeks are constantly mentioned. Lands are identified in relation to the river system (and to a more variable extent, the road network). To understand the Northeast Bands' land use and occupancy requires some familarity with the rivers and major streams.

One of the startling findings of the land use and occupancy part of the study is the extent to which individual Band's land use adheres to watershed boundaries. In a very abbreviated nutshell: the traditonal hunting lands of the Halfway People lie within the Halfway River watershed; the

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former Fort St. John Band (now the Doig River and Blueberry River Bands) could have more properly been called the Beatton River Bands, with the Blueberry People using the western part of the watershed and the Doig People the eastern part; and the East and West Moberly Lake Bands have traditionally hunted and trapped within the Moberly and Pine River watersheds.

Watershed boundaries are not frequently distinguished on the maps one finds in atlases and they are equally often ignored when the Earth is divided politically. Nonetheless, drainage areas or watersheds are real geographic units that have to do with water, and all that it carries across the land. Watershed patterns greatly influence local ecologies, both human and animal, as we shall see. The reality of watersheds as distinct regions are frequently recognized by traditional indigenous peoples and incorporated into their land use patterns. As an example, it is no accident that the exercise of tracing an international political boundary at the 49th parallel to separate the United States and Canada resulted in some Kootenay Indians living in one country and some in the other (even though they continued to occupy their traditional lands)---the Kootenay River crosses the pencil mark

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into the States and then recrosses back into Canada. This is equally true for the Northeastern British Columbia Bands, some of whose hunting lands are in Alberta, and as well as for some bands in the Northwest Territories and northwestern Alberta who have traplines in northeastern B.C. The land use is not limited by map boundaries, but adheres to the traditional inhabitants' perceptions of boundaries in the real world.

Topographically, the region is bounded by the Rocky Mountains on the west, and includes the Rocky Mountain Foothills, whose summit and ridge elevations range between 6,000 and 7,000 feet. East of the foothills the land is a flat and gently rolling upland with elevations generally between 3,000 and 4,000 feet, consisting of forest carpeted plateaus, plains, prairie, and lowlands. In the far northeast corner lie the flat and very gently rolling Ft.Nelson lowlands with elevations generally less than 2,000 feet. This is an area of poorly organized drainage and extensive muskeg, whose streams meander extensively across the plain to join the larger rivers, the Petitot, the Hay, and the Ft. Nelson. Immediately south of this, in the drainage areas of the Muskwa, Prophet, and Sikanni Chief Rivers, the elevation

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rises and the land is cut by a series of steep escarpments or bluffs. Further south, the elevation decreases again as the land gradually slopes toward the Peace River. To the north of the Peace River in Alberta, immediately to the east of the British Columbia boundary lies a large plateau area, the Clear Hills. Elevations rise from 2,300 feet in the Beatton River area to 3,700 feet at the summit of the Clear Hills.

The Northeast Watersheds-The Halfway System

The Halfway River (so named because it flows into the Peace halfway between the old Fort St. John and Hudson Hope trading posts along the old fur trade route) drains the western slopes of the Rocky Mountain Foothills north of the Peace River. As mentioned above, in talking to the Indian People in the Northeast about their hunting lands and traplines constant reference is made to rivers and streams as waterbodies in their own right and as valleys. For the Halfway Band, it is the smaller tributaries of the Halfway River that are most frequently mentioned: Ground Birch Creek, Kobes Creek, Graham River, Blue Grave Creek, Cameron

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River, Horseshoe Creek, Stoney River (or the Chowade as it appears on maps), and the Cypress River (Fig.2).

All but one of the main tributaries flow out to the mountains along a series of four nearly parallel east-west running valleys, joining the main north-south course of the Halfway on the westside. These are the Graham, the Chowade (Stoney), the Cypress, and the headwaters of the Halfway itself. The Graham, the largest of these rivers, curves up behind the Cypress and the Chowade to drain the western slopes of the Rocky Mountains in combination with the headwaters of the Halfway. The Reserve is located on the eastern shores of the Halfway River south of the Graham. The Cameron River, on the other hand, runs north-south parallel to the course of the Halfway, entering the river from the east downstream from the Reserve. It drains the country between the Halfway River and the height of land of the Beatton River System. The lesser streams, the Ground Birch and Kobes Creeks flow into the Halfway from the west near the Reserve, while Bluegrave and Horseshoe Creeks flow into the Halfway from the west between the Chowade and Graham Rivers.

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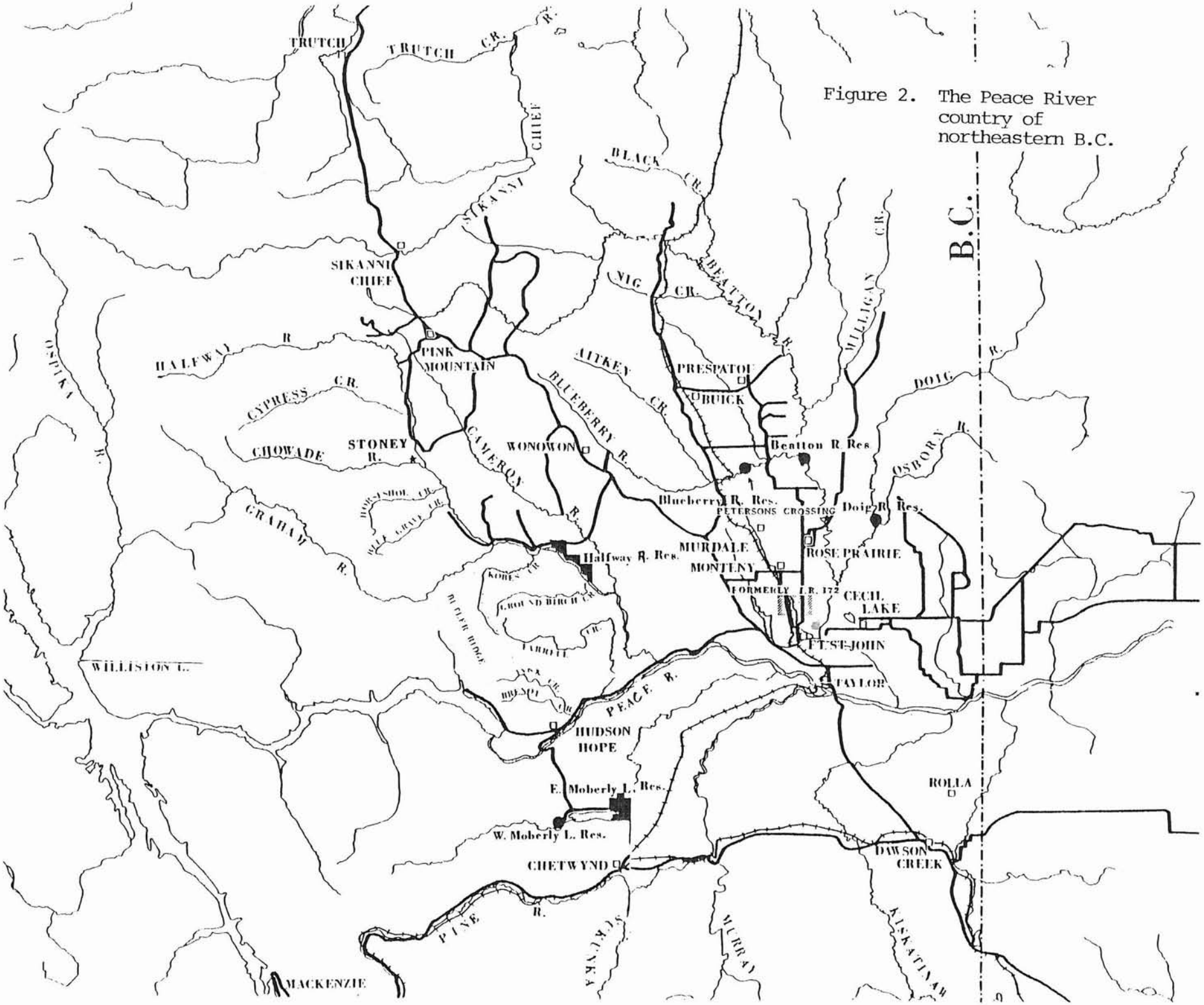

Figure 2. The Peace River country of northeastern B.C.

The Beatton River System

The Beatton River (formerly called the North Pine, but now named after Frank Beatton who was Hudson Bay Post manager at Fort St. John from 1902-1927) originates in the Rocky Mountain Foothills at Pink Mountain, just north of the Halfway River. It flows easterly through the broken hill country extending from the foothills, swings south, collecting flows from its major tributaries the Blueberry and Doig Rivers, and finally empties into the Peace about 30 miles downstream of Fort St. John. All of the river except its headwaters lies to the east of the Alaska Highway. The highway was constructed along the height of land that divides the Halfway and Beatton River watersheds, presumably to avoid having to bridge the profusion of feeder streams that flow into these rivers. The watershed area is framed between the foothills on the west, broken hill country on the north (which becomes defined as a line of east-west oriented hills--the Milligan Hills--near the Alberta boundary) and the slopes of the Clear Hills Plateau in Alberta to the east. Most of the larger river valleys are quite narrow and deeply entrenched. For example, in one place the canyon of the Beatton River is 550 feet deep and only 1800 feet wide (Mathews, 1978).

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The Blueberry Band's traditional hunting lands lie within the western areas of the watershed, and the Doig People traditionally have used the lands to the east. The southern areas of the watershed contain the rich rolling prairie lands, which is the main area of B.C.'s Peace River agricultural country north of the River. The Doig and its tributary the Osborn , and Milligan Creek and its tributaries the Little Beaver Dam and Nancy Creek are the largest feeder streams and rivers on the Doig hunting lands. They flow into the Beatton from the east. They drain the plains, muskeg, and the forested hills which roll down into the Beatton watershed from the Milligan Hills in the north and the Clear Hills in Alberta on the east.

The Blueberry, the Beatton's largest tributary flows in from the west. Aitken, Snyder, Umbach, and Prespatou Creeks all flow into the Blueberry through a series of parallel of north-south running valleys. Nig Creek and Black Creek flow directly into the northern Beatton in the area where the main river course swings from the east to the south. As with the Halfway People, these rivers and streams are the main land features that are mentioned in conversations with Doig and Blueberry People about their land use.

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The Moberly River and Pine River Systems

The Moberly and Pine Rivers drain B.C.'s Rocky Mountain Foothills and upland plateau region south of the Peace River. Both rivers flow into the larger river just south of Fort St. John. The Moberly originates in the Foothills just south of the Williston Reservoir, flows into the west end of Moberly Lake and out the east side. Moberly Lake, which is 9 miles long by about 2 miles at its widest, is one of two large natural lakes in the Peace River area of B.C. The other large lake, Charlie Lake, (8.5 by 1.5 miles), is part of the Beatton River System and is located just north of Fort St. John alongside the Alaska Highway. After emerging from the east end of Moberly Lake the river flows through the rolling plateau area just south of the Peace, nearly paralleling the course of the larger River. Within this country there are a profusion of smaller lakes and marsh lands.

The Pine River and its two main tributaries, the Sukunka and the Murray, drain the foothills further south and flow north through the mixed forest and agricultural lands located to the east of the Moberly watershed.

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CHAPTER II

The Forests Of The Peace

Northeastern B.C. is part of the Canadian boreal forest region. This is the largest forest region in Canada, covering northern Canada south of the tundra in a continuous belt from the shores of Labrador to the northern Rocky Mountains and the Yukon. The dominant trees are white and black spruce, with admixtures of other conifers and hardy broad leafed trees which vary geographically in species composition and relative importance.

In the Northeast the dominant conifer is the white spruce; with black spruce becoming increasingly more abundant on the muskeg and other poorly drained lands; and admixtures of lodgepole pine. The poplars are the dominant broad-leafed tree. Poplars and lodgepole pine are the trees that regenerate first following fires.

Rowe (1972) has broken the Canadian forest regions into generalized 'forest sections.' These sections are areas of distinctive forest and physiography. His descriptions are of interest here in helping to understand the forest distribution in the northeast. Basically the tree species composition is similar from area to area. What changes, however, is

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the relative importance of different species in making up the forests. For example around the Doig Reserve the poplars dominate the forests, whereas in the Rocky Mountain Foothills areas of the Halfway Band's hunting grounds the spruces dominate. The patterns are influenced by the soil and climatic conditions of the Peace and Liard River valleys, the prairie regions to the east, and the mountains on the west. They are further modified by the regrowth patterns of the forests following fires, logging, or land clearing.

In the eastern portion of B.C.'s Peace River valley there is a small 'island' of forest grassland transition, the Aspen Grove Section, in which only poplars are abundant. Prior to the agricultural development there were patches of meadows and prairie lands throughout this area. Extending further up the Peace valley and up the Halfway, Beatton, and Kiskatinaw River valleys and adjoining lands into the hills is another prairie-boreal transition forest, the Mixed Wood Section, in which the conifers start becoming abundant. The characteristic trees of this forest are the poplars, white spruce, and lodgepole pine. Here the spruce dominate in old stands, but the poplars cover the greatest area due to their ability to quickly regenerate after dis-

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turbances, such as fire. As young trees they grow in pure stands, propagating from spreading roots which send up shoots to become trees. However, they are quite intolerant to shade, and in time they are usually replaced by more shade tolerant conifers. B.C.'s Peace River agricultural lands are located within the areas occupied, or rather formerly occupied, by these two forest-grass-land transitional zones.

Extending north, west, and south from the Peace River into the northern hills and Rocky Mountain Foothills are three forest types which Rowe describes as transition zones between the Boreal Forest and the Sub-alpine Forest Regions. In the Lower Foothills Forest Section, which covers much of the Beatton, Halfway, and Moberly River watersheds, the dominant species is the lodgepole pine. The pine, in combination with the poplars, cover areas which have been burnt over, while white spruce and some black spruce dominate in the older stands.

The forests that cover the upper elevations of the Halfway system rivers and the upper drainage areas of the Sikanni Chief, Prophet, and Muskwa Rivers (the Northern Foot-

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hills Section) are dominated by varying proportions of white and black spruce and lodgepole pine, with poplars present only in pockets where growing conditions are more favourable.

The third of the foothills forest sections, the Upper Foothills, covers the upper areas of the watersheds south of the Peace, namely those of the Moberly, Pine, Murray, and Sukunka Rivers. In forest composition it is quite similar to that of the foothills area on the north side of the Peace, described above. Once again the poplars are sparce, and lodgepole pine and white spruce dominate, with admixtures of black spruce.

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CHAPTER III

The Animals Of The Peace

The River country of northeastern B.C., as we have seen in the discussion of local forest types, is a boreal forest transition from the broken forest grasslands of the northern Great Plains and on the west it grades into the alpine tundra areas of the Rocky Mountains. The larger mammals are those typical of the boreal forest, with montane species (such as mountain sheep, mountain goat, and the hoary marmot or whistler) occupying select habitats, and the American Bison in the past being a dominant species in the eastern prairie-forest transition zone. MacKenzie (1963) wrote about vast herds of "elks and buffaloes"[1] in the upper Peace River Valley in 1793, while by 1872 the first railway survey party commented on the old buffalo trails which were still distinct on the grassy slopes opposite the Hudson Bay post at Fort St. John (Horetzky,1963). Charles Horetzky, one of the surveyors, commented, "in a few years more not a buffalo will be left, and their

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[1]The animals refered to by MacKenzie as elk may have been moose. The moose is called elk in Europe. "Moose" is actually an Algonkian word. Because of this double use of the word "elk" there is some confusion in interpreting some of the early explorer's accounts of the animals. (Bansfield, 1974).

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whitened skulls and well marked roads will be sole vestiges of a once numberous and magnificant species." The last buffalo were seen just south of the Peace in 1879 (Williams,1932).

The area is rich in its variety of ungulates. Moose are nearly ubiquitous, except in the most heavily settled areas. Over the last 100 years, moose have gone through a great expansion of their range in B.C. (and elsewhere). Of interest here is the fact that the northeast was probably the main center of moose expansion into the rest of B.C. In 1875, moose in B.C. were limited to the northeast (Peterson, 1955). By 1920, they had expanded their range through northern B.C. as far south as Prince George and Hazelton area (Cowan & Guiguet, 1956). Since then, there have been additional expansions, so that at the present time they are found throughout the province, barring the coastal regions and the islands. Mule deer is the common deer, preferring open coniferous forest and aspen parkland. White tailed deer also occur, but they are not as common and their distribution is more limited than that of the mule deer. According to the Halfway People, white tailed deer have only recently entered their hunting grounds; they were quite surprised when they shot the first one. They have probably entered the region from the east, in response to the habitat changes brought about by forest clearing for

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agricultural land. There are also small and local populations of elk and caribou and, as mentioned above, mountain goat and sheep occur in restricted mountain habitats.

The fur bearing mustelids typical of the boreal forest are also present: marten, ermine, fisher (and the relatively rare least weasel[1]), mink, wolverine, skunk and otter. Other fur bearing carnivores include the timber wolf, coyote, red fox (once abundant and now fairly rare), both black and grizzly bears, and the lynx. There have also been rare records of mountain lions in the Peace watersheds, as mentioned to us by Thomas Hunter of Halfway and cited by Cowan and Guiguet in the biological literature (1965). The fur bearing herbivores of the boreal forest, viz. beaver, muskrat, and red squirrel are abundant.

Other smaller mammals include: the hoary marmot or whistler, present on the alpine meadows and rock slides

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[1]According to Cowan and Guiguet (1965) one of the five records for this species in B.C. came from Clark's Ranch on the Halfway.

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of the Rocky Mountains and the foothills; the porcupine, which is not abundant in the Peace River drainage; and the snowshoe hare, whose numbers vary dramatically within its 8-11 year population cycle.

Several species of game birds are regular residents. These include the Blue Grouse, Spruce Grouse, the Ruffed Grouse, and the Sharp-tailed Grouse (often called the Prairie Chicken). The region is not a major waterfowl area. Small populations of Canada Goose and a number of duck species (Mallard, Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal, American Widgeon, Ring-necked Duck, Canvas Back, Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Barrow's Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Common Merganser, White-winged Scoter, Surf Scoter, and Ruddy Duck according to Godfrey, 1966) breed in the area. Although some of the more northerly breeding populations of geese fly over the area in spring and fall, the main migratory corridors in the general area are further to the east in Northwestern Alberta. Whereas an estimated 26,000 to 75,000 geese fly through northeastern B.C., 300,000 to 500,000 geese and between 226,000 and 750,000 ducks make use of flyways crossing through Northwestern Alberta (Bellrose, 1976).

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Among the species of larger fishes Dolly Varden, lake trout, grayling, lake whitefish, mountain whitefish, pike, burbot, walleye, 2 species of sucker (long-nosed and white), and flat-headed chub occur in both Liard and Peace River drainages. Whereas rainbow trout, large-scale sucker, and squawfish are limited to the Peace drainage area; and inconnu and goldeneye are found only in the Liard system.

What is written above in this section is simply a list of the larger animal species present in the area, which may play a role in the different bands' hunting and trapping economies. A lot more needs to be said about the ecology of these animals and about their population changes and how these interplay with the economies. With the limited time available, however, this is being left to a later date.

Most of the animal species listed above are distributed throughout each of the band's hunting areas. Some of the species which either have restricted habitats or small populations may be present on some band's hunting areas and absent from the rest. We will be discussing this further when we look at each band's land use.

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CHAPTER IV

Food and Furs: The Land Based Economy

Since the advent of the fur trade, the traditional northern Indian economy has been characterized as a quest for furs and food. Because this economy has been largely seen from the trader's perspective, the quest for food doesn't ring as loud in the public imagination as does the fur harvest. However, the provision of meat to feed their families and themselves has been the prime consideration of sub-arctic Indian hunters in their harvesting activities. (In reality the fur traders were equally dependent on the availability of meat. Of interest here is Innes' (1956) view that the importance of the Peace River country to the fur trade was as a meat supply area, rather than because of richness of furs). Although the pre-fur trade hunting economy was modified somewhat to emphasize the harvesting of pelts of fur-bearing mammals, the food needs didn't diminish. The diet was supplemented by trading furs for energy rich and nutritionally low carbo-hydrates, such as flour and sugar, and other items that became staples like tea and baking powder but the prodigious quantities of meat needed to feed people whose basic nutritional needs came

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from a primarily meat diet, still came from the bush. This pattern, somewhat further modified to include a larger variety of store bought food, as well as the basic staples, and occasional purchases of store bought meat still persist in the more traditional Indian communities throughout the boreal forest region; the carbohydrates come from the store and the protein from the bush.

Throughout northern Canada south of the treeline the distribution of animals is remarkably uniform. Most of the animals mentioned in our discussion of the animals of the Peace occur throughout the trans-Canadian Boreal Forest. The major exceptions to this and the animals that make northeastern B.C. an area of greater faunal diversity within this forest are the montane species: goat, sheep, grizzly bear, etc. What varies across the forest is the relative abundance of the different animals. Where some areas have an abundance of fish and migrating waterfowl, other areas might have few of these animals; similarily some areas have an abundance of moose and other areas lie on the fringes of the moose's distribution.

For convenience in our discussions the large variety of animal species that may operate within the traditional subarctic Indian economies can be grouped into a number of general categories. These are the big game animals, small game, fur

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mammals, fish, and migratory waterfowl. The big game animals here include the ungulates and the bears; small game -- hare, porcupine, marmots, and the grouse species; and the waterfowl include ducks, geese, swans, cranes, loons, ect. All of these animals are food providers, although their use may vary culturally through the region. On the other hand, not all of the fur mammals are eaten. Beaver, muskrat, and lynx are eaten by Algonkian and Athabaskan Indians, but the mustelids (fisher, marten, mink, wolverine, etc.) and the canids (foxes, wolves, and coyote) are generally considered edible only under starvation conditions.

Traditional hunting economies in the sub-arctic are based on mixtures of these animal species and species groups. The make up of these mixtures varies geographically. They have also varied historically in particular places with local changes in animal populations and with cultural changes in the economies. The most obvious example of the latter point is the increased emphasis on fur-mammals produced by the involvement with the fur trade. There seem to be a number of factors, some of them ecological and some cultural, involved in determining the local mixture of animal resource species in any given economy. One of these factors is the relative abundance of different animal

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species within a band's hunting area. For example, in areas with lots of small and large lakes, which have an abundance of fish and seasonally migrating waterfowl, these two groups may make up a large portion of the food harvests. Whereas in areas with a few major water bodies, fish and waterfowl may only be occasionally added to the diet for variety or cultural purposes.

Being able to harvest a mixture of animal species is important, not only for the variety in diet it provides, but also for reliability of the economy over time. The boreal forest is an area which is notorious for the major changes in its animal populations' size. The most dramatic example of this is the snowshoe hare cycle. Population densities close to 3,000 hare per square mile have been estimated in northern Alberta when the hare is at a high in its 8-11 year cycle. At the low point in the cycle densities were in the order of 34 per square mile (Winterhalder, 1979). In Fort George, in northern Quebec, when the population is low they are largely ignored. During the low years people make up for the food provided by the hare by increasing their harvests of other types of animals. In Fort George harvests of geese, fish

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and beaver are increased. If people who are dependent on harvests from naturally occuring animal populations do not have access to a variety of resource species, then during times when a major resource species is going through a population decline the bands are economically vulnerable. What stays constant are the band's food needs. Food needs would have to be made up with store purchases. To finance their food people would have to increase their involvement with wage labour, increase their cash trapping , or increase their dependence on welfare. In the northeast, in the past, when the big game populations were low, the people of the foothills -- the Halfway People -- migrated north to known reservoirs of montane animals (goat, sheep, etc.) in the headwaters of the Sikanni Chief River. And it is possible that the Doig People similarly wandered to northwestern Alberta to join the Habay Indians in their migratory waterfowl harvests. We will be looking at this question in more detail when we examine the hunting economies on a band-by-band basis.

As a general rule, when people are dependent on harvested animals and plants for their livelihood they do not go after scarce species. This is not to say that when people are hunting moose and they come across a wandering elk they don't shoot it. This is a general rule and as is the case with rules

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it needs modification. For example, a relatively rare animal, such as an elk, which can provide hundreds of pounds of food would be regarded differently than a snowshoe hare.

The efficiency of harvesting different types of resource species depends on the relative abundance of the animals (among other things). Feit (1973) found that among central Quebec Cree Indians moose hunting was the most efficient hunting 'technique' providing over 100,000 Calories of food per man-day; the return from beaver hunting varied seasonally but ranged between 16,000 and 24,000 Calories per man-day; fishing produced 10,000 Calories per man-day; and small game capture provided 3,000 Calories per man-day. Of course there are problems with predicting the harvest mix of local Indian groups from this kind of efficiency data. There are cultural preferences for particular types of hunting and for different types of meats among different Indian groups; and there are hunts for particular types of animals, which would be regarded as inefficient, to meet the particular cultural need of different groups. This is simply to say that there are many considerations that are involved in a hunting economy. It is not a simple-minded or random hunt; very far from that.

Within any of the local economies, there is a need to pick and choose because the access to animals varies sea-

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sonally due to animal movements; and because the populations of animals change with time both according to the relative predictabilities of the population cycles of such animals as hare and the grouse, and because of unpredictable changes in other animals' populations.

The Northeast

The mixed economy in the northeast is one in which moose is king. As we have seen, moose hunting when the animals are abundant, is a very efficient way of providing food needs. It undoubtedly also fulfills cultural needs, since it is the form of hunting most enjoyed by the northeast Indians. In other areas in the sub-arctic, small game and fish operate as the 'fail-safes' of the hunting economy, providing for food needs when other animal populations are low. Small game, as we have seen, is not a constant because of their intrinsic and periodic population fluctuations. These animals periodically fill this role in the northeast as elsewhere. But the same is not true for fish. Because of the scarcity of larger waterbodies and the absence of anadromous fish runs in the rivers and streams, efficiently harvested and reliable fish populations are limited. It is probable that in the past in the northeast when the moose populations were low, the response was wide wanderings in search of game and a shift to

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areas close to the larger lakes or known for their resident populations of montane animals.

Another consideration in the mixed hunting economy is having an enjoyable variety in your diet. In Euro-American cuisine, there are only a few types of animals eaten, and little more than muscle. Variety is introduced by spices, vegetable mixtures, and a great variation in styles of preparation. With northern Indian cuisine, the preparation is basic (straight roasting, boiling, frying or smoke-drying). The variety comes with the different types of animals themselves and the animal parts that are eaten.

Moose is not the only animal which when abundant provides the greatest food return for the time required to hunt, but is also the preferred food of the Beaver and Cree Indians of the Peace River country. In our conversations, people repeatedly mentioned that if they went without moose for any period of time, they would be 'hungry' even if they had ample store meats or hare or beaver. In one instance, there was a discussion about a cow from the Doig Band's herd that had been accidentally killed. When asked if it was eaten, the response was "Well you know, we don't really like beef." The impression gotten was that other animals are a change of pace in the diet, but moose was the preferred staple.

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The importance of moose to the northeast Indians is not surprising, considering the long-term historical distribution in the northeast and adjacent Alberta. Alexander MacKenzie and others in commenting about the country during their explorations in the late 1700's and early 1800's, noted the abundance of large ungulates. And, as we have seen, moose are believed by some biologists to have spread into the rest of British Columbia from the northeast in the late 19th. and early 20th. centuries. This suggests a long-term historical involvement of the people of the northeast with large ungulates in their hunting economy. This remains true even if we consider that the Beaver Indians were pushed out of their former hunting grounds in Northern Alberta by the westward movements of Crees during the expansion of the fur trade, for this too was an area of moose and bison.

The hunting economies of the Beaver and Cree Bands of the northeast are quite similar. The small differences will be dealt with when we discuss land use and occupancy on a band by band basis. Table I shows the relative importance of the major resource species and species groups through the year. Moose, as mentioned above, are the staple and are hunted throughout the year, although the preference is generally for fat animals and attention to bulls falls off when they are strongly flavoured during their rutting period and through the winter

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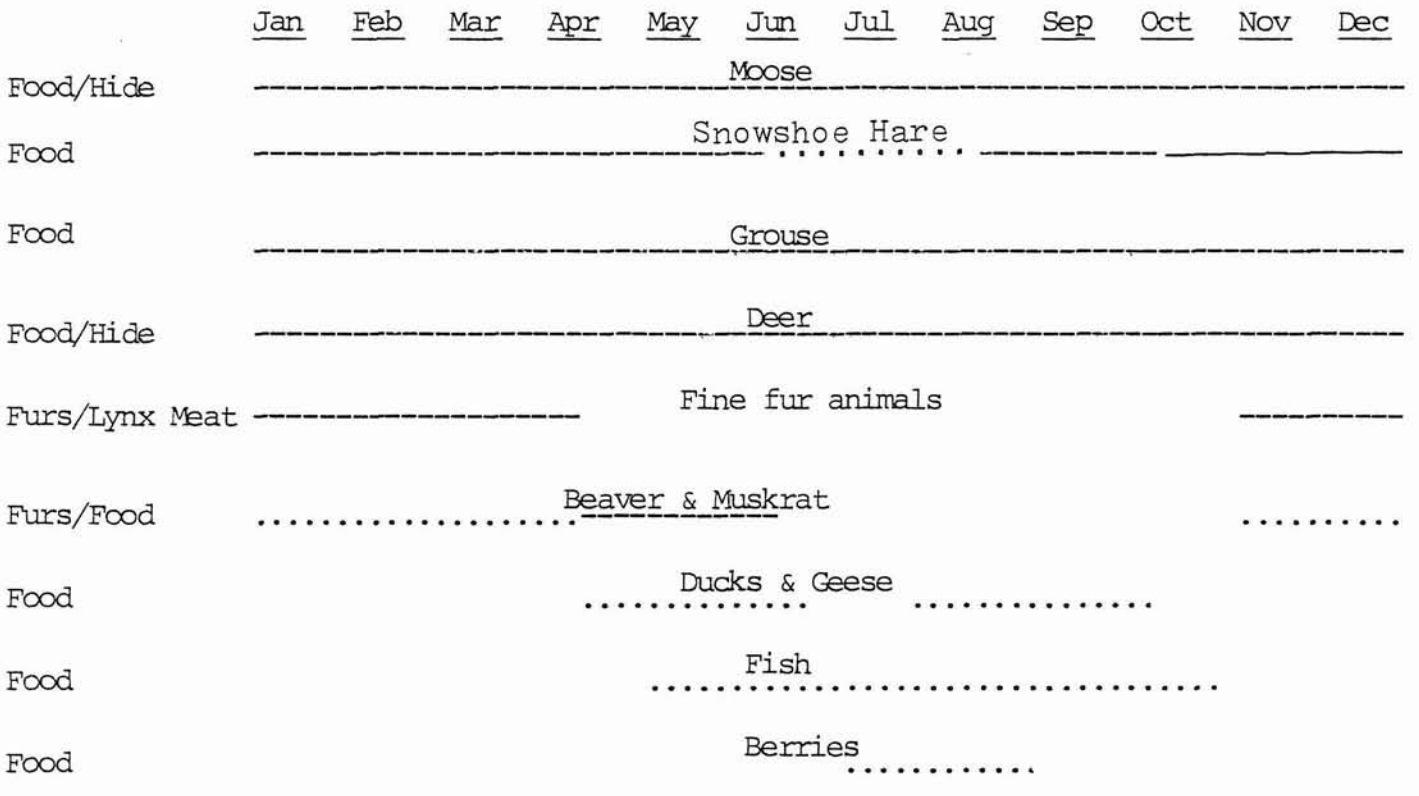
T A B L E 1

The Annual Harvest Cycle In The Northeast



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when they are lean. This doesn't mean that they aren't shot at these times. However, taste and desires for a particular type of meat play the same role among hunters, who are so familiar with the country and the habits of their animals that they can be specific in their hunting activities, as they do with a city dweller's choices when he goes to the supermarket. It seems a valid generalization that among northern hunting peoples, fat is an important and positive part of taste and resulting harvest decisions (Jochim, 1976).

All of the moose is eaten, except for the brains, lungs, and gall bladder. The brain is used for tanning the hide. The ears, nose and tongue are eaten and the long bones are boiled or roasted and then split for the marrow. The meat is frequently smoke-dried to make 'dry-meat', a traditional storage form of moose meat, which is eaten with lard or bacon grease. The hide is cured to a soft, supple consistency, with a velvety surface. Hides are then made into mocassins and other types of clothing for personal use or for sale as handicraft. In some cases, the worked hide is sold, bringing about $100 - 200 for a good quality hide.

Deer, too, are hunted throughout the year. The use of this animal's parts is similar to moose, but may not be as rigorous. For example, among the Blueberry Cree, the ears are not eaten.

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Snowshoe hare (locally called rabbit) and the grouse (locally called chicken) are harvested throughout the year when abundant. The importance of both of these animals to the food economy is quite variable from year to year. Some of the grouse (ruffed grouse and sharp-tailed grouse) go through a population cycle similar to the hare's. On an annual basis, adult hare are more abundant in late fall and early winter, after a summer's reproduction and good feeding conditions, and before the cummulative toll of mortality by predators through the winter months. Because of this and the ease of hunting them at this time of year, the fall and early winter are particularly important times for harvesting hare. They are shot and snared at this time. In the fall, before the snow falls, the rabbit stand out against the leaf-bare willow bush background, because of their coats are part way through the change from summer brown to winter white. After the first snow fall, snaring is facilitated by being able to read the fresh rabbit trails, and because the snow is still light for effortless walking.

The northeast is a relatively light snow cover area, compared to other parts of the sub-arctic. Two factors are at work here. First, the region is just east of the Rocky Mountains and lies somewhat within a mountain rain shadow. And second, warming chinooks periodically sweep through, melting

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and consolidating the snow cover. From records in the Fort St. John Hudson Bay Post Journals, it seems that 1.5 to 2.0 feet of snow is a critical depth. Two feet is a snow depth mentioned in the Journals as critical to ranging horses. At depths greater than this, they have difficulty pawing through to the grass under the snow. This can also be taken as an indicator of human travel problems. In the northeast, snowshoes are not often used because of the light snow cover. At snow depths over 1.5 feet, walking without snowshoes becomes very tiring. From the Journals and from local comments, it seems that although winters with snow depths in excess of 2 feet occur, they are unusual.

The light snow cover may go part way toward explaining the seasonal timing of the beaver harvest. The fur season officially opens in November. While some beaver are trapped and snared under the light ice cover of early winter, the main hunting period is in the spring just after the ice cover on the streams and beaver ponds breaks up and the beaver start swimming around. At this time, they are easily shot, and are sometimes trapped as well. This is equally true for muskrat. The traditional spring beaver hunt is as much a celebration as a hunt. People often spoke of this time with great enthusiasm. From Hugh Brody's personal comments, it seems to be a time for going out on the hunting grounds and

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and seeing the changes that the year and the winter, in particular, have brought to the land, the forests, and the animals. In mid-winter, when ice cover is heaviest (probably in the order of 4 feet), little if any beaver trapping goes on. In some of the other areas of the sub-arctic, this is the most important time of year for beaver. A number of things may contribute to the difference in the timing of the harvests, one of which may be the light snow cover in the northeast. Snow acts as an insulating cover on ice. With the relatively thin snow cover here, the ice that has to be chopped through in mid-winter to set snares for beaver, may be thicker here than in other areas. The abundance of moose in the northeast may also be a contributing factor. Because of the thickness of ice that has to be cut through to set snares and traps and to block off all the other exit holes, mid-winter beaver trapping is quite strenuous work. In some other areas, where the emphasis is on mid-winter beaver trapping, moose aren't as abundant as in northeastern B.C. Rather, beaver is an extremely important food resource at this time of year. In addition, in the northeast, with its relatively light snow cover, moose continue to roam through the winter. They are more easily encountered and tracked by hunters than they are in areas with deeper snow where movements are more limited and moose are restricted to 'yards' on occasion. The heavy ice cover and

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the availability of large and efficiently harvestable moose population during the winter may have made the spring the traditonal time for beaver harvesting in the northeast.

The other fur-bearers, which are the mainstay of mid-winter trapping include lynx, marten, fisher, wolverine, mink, ermine, the red squirrel. As mentioned earlier, only lynx is generally eaten. All of these animals roam about during the winter. Coyote and wolf are also shot or trapped at this time. The red fox is presently scarce, although they were once more common. Otter is also not abundant.The lynx goes through a population cycle similar to the hare, it's principal prey.

Among the animals that play occasional roles in the hunting economy, bears are now killed more often for their skins than for meat. Grease may be made from the bears in the fall. Attitudes towards bears varies. Grizzly are sometimes shot, but among some of the bands, they are feared and the attitude is "if we leave them alone, they will leave us alone." Black bear was a regular part of the economy at one time. Although some people still eat them, others are concerned about the safety of their meat because of the possibility of the bears having eaten poisoned bait, and others are concerned about their growing reputation as man-eaters.

Porcupine are eaten, but are so scarce that one of the younger hunters from Blueberry, who talked about them

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with relish, had only eaten it once. Porcupine have a low reproductive rate and are easily hunted. It is possible that the population was severely reduced during a starvation or starvation periods in the past when game was scarce and that their populations haven't recovered yet. On the other hand, Alex Chipesia of Prophet River says they died off since the Alaska Highway was built. Hoary mormot, or whistler, is taken in the summer by bands hunting in the Rocky Mountain Foothills, and is consumed with considerable relish for its fat. Ground hogs, on the other hand, may or may not be eaten. At Doig, some people talked about avoiding ground hogs because they burrow near grave sites.

This is not an area of abundant ducks and geese. Hunting efforts for these animals varies from band to band and seems to vary from person to person as well. When hunted, they are shot during their spring and fall migrations or clubbed on the streams when they are flightless during the summer moult. Waterfowl hunting is incidental to the spring beaver hunt; they are shot on open creeks or ponds. Eggs, especially those of the Mallard, are occassionaly collected.

Fishing too is variable from band to band. However, fish do not presently make up a substantial part of the economy anywhere in the northeast. Fishing was probably more important in the past. Each of the Bands has run into problems with their fishing. These have ranged from the loss of Klua Lakes,

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a traditional fishing location and campsite for the Prophet River People, to a white commercial fishery, to conflict with sports boaters in Moberly Lake. Other pressures include competition from sports fishermen, residential and agricultural developments on traditional fishing sites, and degredation of fish habitats by agricultural developments, road building, etc.

In terms of the fishing technology, trouts are caught on hooks. Suckers are herded into gunny sacks when they are spawning in the shallows in the spring. In the past, people built weirs of willow branches, laid parallel to the direction of water flow into which the suckers swam and became entrapped. Suckers and pike found in the shallows are sometimes snared. In the past, nets were used in Klua Lakes, Moberly Lake, and perhaps on other lakes.

Although there are small groups of elk and caribou in the area, they are largely ignored. At present, hunting of mountain goats and mountain sheep is limited to guiding activities. Some people may bring back a sheep or goat carcass when they return from guiding.

Finally, berries are the main plant food gathered and are collected from mid-July to September. A variety of berries occur in the area, including saskatoons, huckleberries, blueberries, raspberries, gooseberries, crowberries, and cranberries.

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A hunting economy that depends on the larger ungulates is lovely when it works. When moose and other ungulates are scarce, however, if there is no reliable alternative, people go hungry. In an economy with this type of mix of resource species, people were not strangers to periodic hunger and occassional starvation. Riddington (1968) quotes Jack Aku at Doig about two of the band's hunting groups at the turn of the century: "They were always starving." Moose are huge animals and when encountered and shot, they provide nearly 500 pounds of food per kill. However, they aren't as abundant as rabbits, grouse, or fish. The difficulties of economies relying on big game is their hit and miss nature. If you get a moose, you're okay; if you miss, you've only got so many days to get one until you're too weakened by hunger to effectively hunt.

This is where the resource mix comes in. In times of scarcity, rabbit, fish, grouse, etc. keep you going. Rabbits, as we have seen, are in a sense, unreliable because of their periodic cycle. If moose are low at a time when the hare cycle is also low, unless there is another staple available, periodic hunger and starvation, at the least, are to be expected. In many areas in the boreal forest, the other staples are fish and beaver: fish because they can be caught with little effort by untended hooks and nets; and beaver because at certain times of year, they are a realiable catch that provides

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a relatively large amount of food per kill. In the northeast campsites near good and reliable fishing areas that will provide catches day after day are scarce. In the past, beaver here may have operated as an emergency species. However, the tradition of mid-winter beaver trapping appears weak. (My present understanding of the reasons for this are purely speculative--ranging from the social values placed on mobile big game hunts to the probable low levels of beaver populations in the area during the late 1800's and early 1900's).

In any event, it is likely that there are social/psychological consequences of reliance on ungulates and small game. One of these is ingenuity, when other sources of supply are available. When the fur traders first appeared, they were seen as a possible resource. Indeed when MacKenzie first appeared, his usefulness was tested by people insisting on being ferried in his canoes across the Peace River to the south shore. At different times, the Fort St. John HBC Journals are repleat with mentions of people coming to the post when their camps were hungry (or starving as the Journal puts it). I haven't traced these periods in terms of the hare cycle, but I suspect that the cycle was at a low during these times. Following this line of reasoning, it is probable that the major disruptive social events in the histories of the northeast communities came at times when the periodic hare cycle was

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down; when people had the least resilence because of their hunger.

One of the things in the northeast that has personally startled me, is people's directness in their requests after they know you. I'm much more familiar with the indirectness of the eastern Cree, in which there are many excapes from direct confrontation. Directness is extremely effective in dealing with a resource such as a HBC factor during a time of need. (I'm not arguing cause and effect here, but simply stating a probable case). However, learning to deal with white institutions undoubtedly came out of a long-term relationship between the hunters and the fur traders.

In the next sections, as we discuss each band's land use and hunting economy in more detail, we will continue to examine those general features of the northeast hunting economies needed to understand band land use.

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CHAPTER V

The Blueberry River Band: Land Use and Occupancy

The Doig and Blueberry People have traditonally hunted and trapped the lands drained by the Beatton River, with the Blueberry People using the lands to the west of the river and the Doig using the lands to the east. Both bands were administratively joined as the Fort St. John Band until 1977. As a part of the Treaty 8 settlement, a reserve of 18,168 acreas, located 6 miles north of the present Fort St. John town site, was allotted to the Fort St. John Band in 1916 (Table 2). This reserve was sold to the Veterans Administration in 1949 for apportionment to returning World War II veterans. In partial exchange for the original reserve, three smaller reserves were allotted to the Band in 1959. One of these, the present day Blueberry Reserve, stradles the Blueberry River along 8 miles of its meandering course, about 34 miles to the north and west of Fort St. John.

There are two roads you can take to get ot the reserve. Your initial impression of where the reserve is situated depends on which of these roads you travel. By situated, what is meant here is ecologically situated, i.e., the nature

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T A B L E 2

Northeast B.C. Indian Reserves.
(Based on "Notes on the present state of understanding and research on Treaty 8," U.B.C.I.C. except as noted.)

Bands Pre 1970's	Present Bands	Population 1978[6]	Reserves	Date of Survey[3]	Date Allotted	Acreage
Saulteau	Saulteau	186	E.Moberly Lake No.169	1914	1918	4490 acres
Hudson's Hope	W.Moberly Lake	62	W.Moberly Lake No.168	1914	1916	5025 acres
	Halfway River	136	Halfway River No.169	1914	1925	9890 acres
Fort St. John			[1]Fort St.John No.172	1911[4]	1916	18168 acres
	Blueberry River	115	Blueberry River No.205	1947	1950	2838 acres[5]
	Doig River	114	Doig River No.206	1946	1950	2473 acres[5]
			[2]Beatton River No.204	1946	1950	883 acres[5]
Fort Nelson	Fort Nelson		Fontas No.1	1962	1966	25 acres[5]
		281	Ft. Nelson No.2	1960/1964	1966	23,444 acres[5]
			Kahntah No.3	1962	1966	26 acres[5]
			Snake River No.5	1962	1966	28 acres[5]
	Prophet River	112	Prophet River No.4	1962	1966	924 acres[5]

[1]Sold in 1949.

[2]Jointly held by Blueberry and Doig Bands.

[3]Perrot's "Black Book Reserve Register (DIA)"

[4]Department of the Interior Survey Map.

[5]Schooner, Dinah. 1978. Index, Indian Reserves, U.B.C.I.C.

[6]DIA 1978 Band Lists.

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of the habitats on the lands near the reserve. For, in terms of a hunting economy, what is important is the potential mixture and productivity of harvestable animal species which the lands around the reserve can support. And this depends on the types of habitat present.

It needs to be emphasized here that bands for whom hunting is an important part of their economic mixture cannot simply be restricted to reserve lands. The registered traplines and other traditional hunting lands provide the real resource base for the hunting economy, not the limited reserve areas. The limited size of the reserves were originally based on the assumption that the bands' economic base would 'progress' by changing from a hunting to an agricultural economy. Hunting and trapping economies are based on the natural productivity of the land, which in the boreal forest requires a large land base to be viable. Although particular types of habitat may be encouraged by various Native ecological management techniques, such as the selective use of fire to encourage early forest successional stages, the types of animals and plants important to the economy are those which occur naturally on the hunting ground. An agricultural economy, on the other hand, is based on increasing the efficiency of production of a limited range of introduced and/or genetically manipulated

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animals and plant stocks. The efficiency and intensity of this means of production requires major human involvement and the input of large amounts of energy to initially change naturally occurring habitats (through forest clearing) and then to maintain the new habitats (through annual planting, harvesting, fertilization, and through the use of various means to eliminate or discourage competing animals and plants). This all sounds very abstract until you realize that one of the animal competitors of the agricultural economy are the hunters and trappers who depend on a totally different type of habitat for their economic production.

To return to the initial impression of where the Blueberry Reserve is situated: the initial impression of the reserve from each of these two routes is startingly different. The differences are quite instructive in understanding the ecological or habitat location of the reserve, and as well some of the band's difficulties in maintaining a hunting and trapping way of life. On the one hand you can drive north-west from Fort St.John along the Alaska Highway, following the western height of land of the Beatton River watershed through densely forested land, passing a scatter of homesteads and roadside gas stations, which progressively thin out. Turning east onto the dirt road at Mile 73, you continue through mixed bush and forest, crossing the tracks of B.C. Railway

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several times, passing small forest roads that lead to drill rigs and work camps and producing wells, and crossing and recrossing an underground gas pipeline and seismic cut lines. As you get closer to the small settlement of Buick Creek, a scatter of cleared farmland appears among the trees, and gets progressively denser. Turning to the east at Buick Creek, you follow a network of dirt farm roads through established farmlands and newly cleared fields to the Reserve.

For the other route, you drive directly north of Fort St. John, following a maze of interconnecting farm roads through the heart of B.C.'s northern Peace agricultural lands (including the Old Fort St. John Indian Reserve). Most of the low rolling hills have been cleared, although there is a scatter of mixed poplar and spruce woodlots here and there. As you go north, the density of the woodlots between mixtures of established and recently cleared fields with their windrows of bulldozed trees waiting burning, increases.

Following the Alaska Highway route, Blueberry is 53 miles from Fort St. John, across the farmland it is only 38 miles. Travelling along the former route, the reserve appears to be within a pocket of agricultural land surrounded by boreal poplar/spruce forest. Following the latter, the reserve appears to be within the Peace River prairie lands.

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We will return to the importance of the location of the reserve later, when we discuss the Band's land use.

Most of the reserve is rolling uplands, still largely forested with a few cleared fields, with steep hill sides sloping to the deeply trenched river bed. The village is located on a level area formed by a bend in the river. There are twelve houses, most of which were built in the early 1960's, a teacherage which currently houses several band families, a combination band hall/school/laundry, a medical clinic, and a workshop storage shed. The houses, each of which is occupied by several families, are quite basic. They are all heated by wood. Most (or possibly all) of the houses have a running water system, but the water supply is, at best, unpredictable. It contains high concentrations of iron and people often complain of oily residues. Last summer, there were periods when the flow was a trickle or didn't flow at all. The Department of Indian Affairs did considerable repairs to the water system last fall (1978), but the pipes froze nonetheless during the winter and people returned to the old standby, melted snow. Some (or possibly all) of the houses use outhouses. All of the houses have electricity. Furniture in most of the houses is a bare minimum, quite similar to what Brody described for Halfway: a

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homemade couch, and a cot in the living room (which also double as beds), a kitchen table and chairs, and beds or mattresses in the bedroom, perhaps some hunting or trapping gear piled in the corner. The impression you get in some of the houses is of a large and crowded hunting camp.

There is a radio-telephone in the medical clinic. However, most of the communications here, as for the other Fort St. John areas bands, is through the message service of the local radio station. Buick Creek, 10 miles away (or more realistically--a twenty miles round trip) houses the local post office and the nearest grocery. The local school,which goes up to grade 7 is also located at Buick. The kids are bussed from the reserve. The closest liquor outlet and the hospital are in Fort St. John (a 76 mile round trip).

The Blueberry People

Culturally, Blueberry is a mixed Beaver and Cree Band. Of the 115 people listed on the 1978 band list, approximately 50% are Cree and 50% are Beaver. Figure 3 presents an age and sex break-down of the band according to the 1978 band list.

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Blueberry River Band

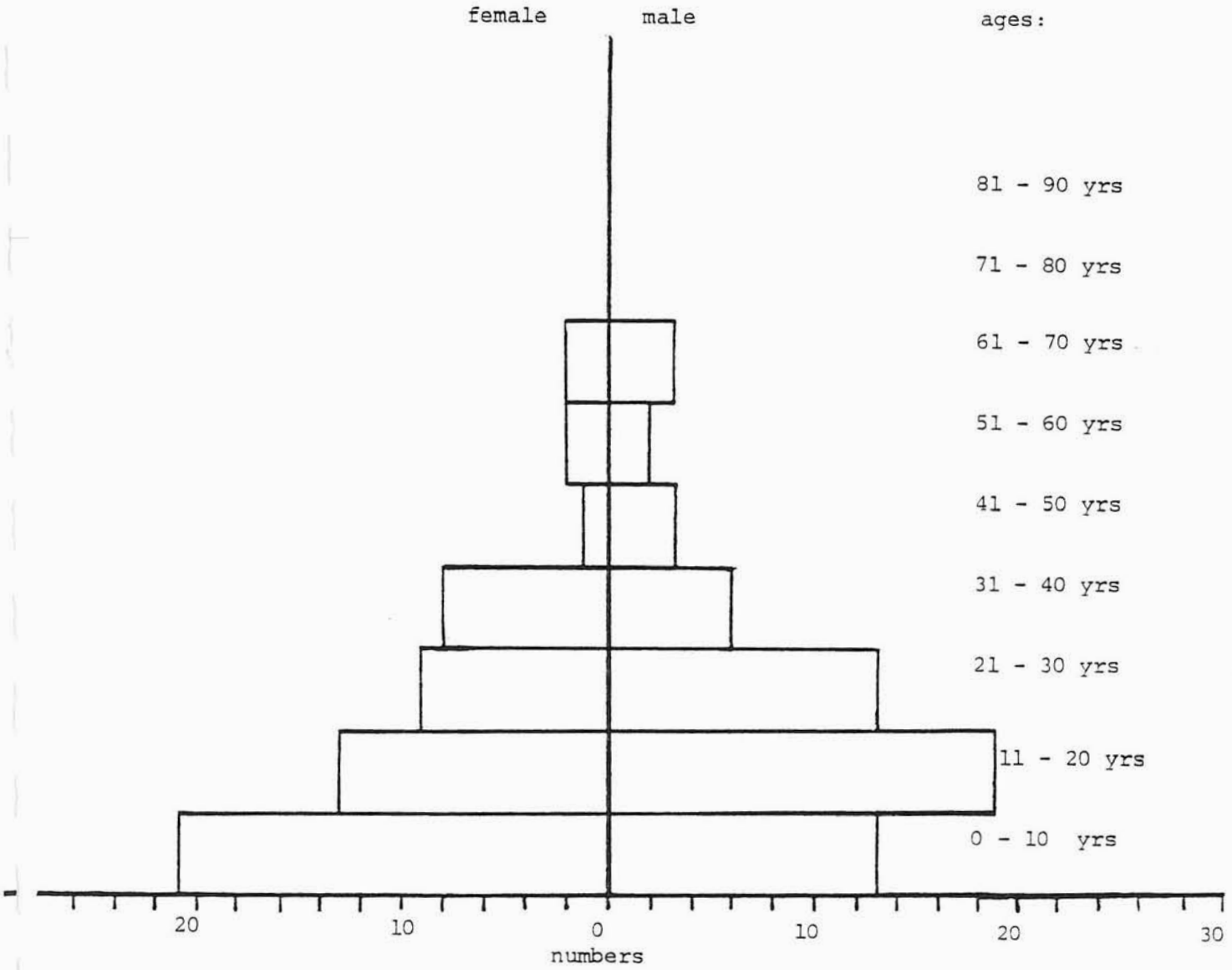

Fig. 3 Blueberry Band population pyramid, according to the 1978 DIA Band list.

The present day Blueberry Beaver are the descendents of three closely related hunting groups which often camped together at the turn of the century. These groups were headed by Big Charlie Lake, The Wolf, and Maadiyane (Riddington, 1968). According to John Yahae (Big Charlie's grandson) Maadiyane's and Attachie's groups were the ones most closely involved with Big Charlie's hunting group.[1] Attachie, whose people linked the Beatton River bands and the Halfway groups, headed as independent family group that hunted and trapped the lands between the Halfway River and Charlie Lake, in the Cache Creek area (Riddington, 1968). From John Yahae's comments, this latter often joined up and hunted with the Blueberry Beavers. The present day Yahaes are descendents of Big Charlie, and the Davis' and Wolfs' are descendents of the Wolf. There are many marital cross-connections between the two families. After Big Charlie's death about 1918 (Riddington, 1968) his son, Charlie Yahae (who died several years ago) was a focal personality for the band, as well as the last recognized Beaver prophet.

The Blueberry Crees, the Apsassins, are the descendents of Joseph Apsassin. According to the historical

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[1]As Maadiyane isn't mentioned in the Fort St. John Hudson Bay Journals of the time, whereas Attachie, Big Charlie, and The Wolf are frequently mentioned, it is possible that Maadiyane and The Wolf are one and the same.

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legends, the Peace River got its name because it marked the boundary between the Cree and Beaver Indians (and possibly marked the site of the actual agreement) after decades of conflict which arose from the Crees westward expansion. The Cree and the Assiniboine in their eastern forest homes, encountered the fur traders in the late 1600's, and rapidly emerged as middlemen in the trade of furs and the tools of metal technology; trading kettles, iron knives and axes, and at times rifles in exchange for furs in advance of the fur traders. The Crees pushed the Beavers from the northern prairies to their present areas of occupancy in northern Alberta and northeastern B.C. between the Peace River, the Fort Nelson, and the Rocky Mountains. The Beavers, in turn, pushed the Sikanni from the Rocky Mountain Foothills into the Mountains themselves.

The large Apsassin family, which represents about 50% of the Blueberry Band, are an exception to the Peace being the boundary between the Athabaskan and Algonkin cultural groups. The patriarch of the clan, Joseph Apsassin, is believed to have arrived in Fort St. John in 1898 (Loggie,1956). He was born in Grouard on Lesser Slave Lake in northern Alberta, probably around 1878. His entire family died when he was a boy during an epidemic which killed some 80 people at the

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Lesser Slave Lake settlement. He did odd jobs around Grouard to earn his keep and eventually worked as a horse-back packer and dog-team driver for the Hudson Bay Company, which brought him to Fort St. John.

The Blueberry Crees are related to the Wolf-Davis clan through the marriage of Joseph Apsassin to The Wolf's sister. They are also tied through later marriage to the Halfway Beaver, the Doig Beaver, and the Moberly Lake Cree (Riddington, 1968).

The Basic Annual Round

To place the following discussions of land use within their proper context, we need now to discuss the basic round of seasonal movements of the northeast bands prior to their moving into permanent housing on the reserves. This discussion is based on descriptions by Alex Chipesia of the Prophet River Band's rounds during the 1940's and 50's (and possibly the '60's), and deals with some of the details of his band's land use. The general pattern, however, was followed by all of the northeast bands, and is the basis for understanding their land use and occupancy.

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During the fall, people hunted moose to put up a stock of dry-meat for the winter. At the summering areas near Prophet River, the band split up into several smaller hunting groups. Each group travelled by horse to their fall hunting camps. The main areas were around the Minniker River, near Trutch, and on the Prophet River. Following the hunt, the groups returned to the main campsite near the present Prophet River Reserve. At one time, this main campsite was probably on the Klua Lakes, which is known for its whitefish populations. (On some of the older Federal Government maps, an 'Indian Village' is marked on the north shore of one of the Lakes. However, in recent years, there seems to have been a family conflict over fishing in the Lakes). The women remained at the campsite, while the men travelled to the Sikanni Chief Hudson Bay Post, on the Sikanni Chief River southeast of the present reserve, to get winter trapping supplies. Some of the men took the horses at this point and travelled along the old Fort Nelson-Fort St.John Trail to Montney where the horses were boarded for the winter with farmers (at $10/head). The men walked back with their pack dogs. The 200 mile one-way distance took about 10 days. They made the same time with dogs as they did with horses.

After returning from the trading post, the families dispersed to their traplines and were later joined by the men

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returning from the Fort St. John area. Through the winter, there was a round of hunting and trapping on the traplines after they were registered, or prior to that time, on the family hunting grounds or elsewhere if game and fur-mammals were scarce. From the Fort St. John Hudson Bay Journals, it appears in the early decades of the century people whose hunting grounds were relatively close to the post, would come into the Trading Post for mid-Winter festivities around New Years. The hunting and trapping period continued after New Years, until just before the melt, when the furs were traded. At the same time, in the case of the Prophet River People, some of the men walked the trail down to Fort St.John to pick up the horses.

They then rejoined their hunting groups for the spring beaver hunt. According to the Fort St. John HBC Journal for 19 March 1923: "The Indians are all going off to hunt Beaver and will not be in before the 20th of May. The Hills getting green." During the spring beaver hunt, fires were selectively set to manage preferred habitats on the hunting grounds. These fires encouraged new plant growth for grazing ungulates, cleared deadfalls from paths and trails, and provided pasturage for horses. In Alex Chipesia's words:

> "The Indians looked after the country. Whatever bad country was burnt. Wherever there was windfalls and no big timber was burnt so new growth

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could come and game return. Now with the forestry, can't do nothing. Before that, when we hunted beaver (in the spring) where bad places, would see smoke (from the fires Indians set).

Every spring beaver hunt, where bad places, set match. Just where thick stuff, not timber, put match; so grow new stuff; so moose can go back. If you do that now, you know who will be there.

Where Whites presently live on the Minnaker, we burnt every year for horse pasture. Now who lives there? Whites."

(In this last comment, Alex was referring to three parcels of land along the Prophet River south of the reserve. In 1963 Whites settled there after presumably recognizing the potential of the land from the Indian practice of selective burning to encourage pasturage for their horses. At that time, there were three Indian cabins there which were burnt by the settlers, according to Alex).

Following the spring hunt, the smaller hunting groups rejoined on the reserves, which were regarded at this time as summering places. During the summer, people periodically travelled to their summer hunting camps. Although each of the band's seasonal rounds varied somewhat from this general description, it is the general pattern.

At present, the Blueberry Band has 5 traplines registered to band families. These are the Yahae trapline, and

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and those of the Apsassins', the Wolfs', the Cheekyass', and the Appaws'. These traplines cover much of the northern and western drainage areas of the Beatton River watershed. The northern edge of B.C.'s Peace River agricultural lands extend into the more southern of these traplines. The trapline areas cover most of the areas indicated by Blueberry Band members, in the Land Use and Occupancy Survey, as lands they have used for hunting during their lifetimes (Fig.4) That is they represent a large part of the lands, that the band considers are their hunting grounds.

From our interviews, the old HBC records for Fort St. John and an interview conducted with Joseph Apsassin in 1956, we are able to piece together a picture, albeit sketchy, of the band's land use prior to the trapline registration period, i.e., prior to 1926. What follows is by no means complete and must be recognized as the minimum case for people who were widely ranging for their food needs, especially during those periods when game was scarce.

According to John Yahae, Big Charlie Lake's band had a main camp at Charlie Lake, and other camps at the junction of the Blueberry River and Aitken Creek and at the headwaters region of the Blueberry River. In the fall, they would follow the old trail from Charlie Lake to the junction of the two streams, and hunt moose, in the hills near the headwaters of

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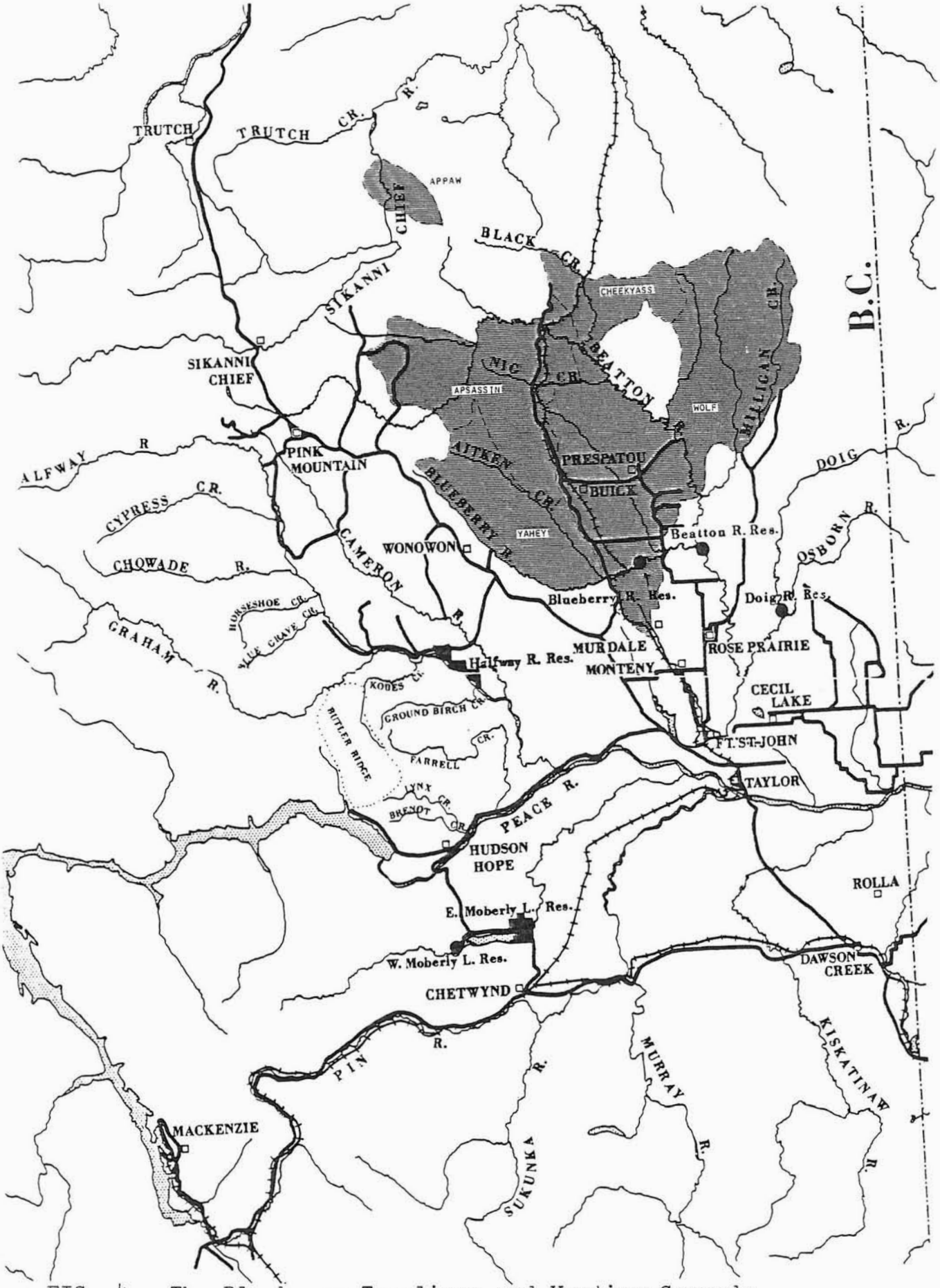

FIG. 4. The Blueberry Traplines and Hunting Grounds. This is a preliminary figure. Although the text refers to the Blueberry hunting grounds, this figure only shows the traplines. The hunting ground area will

the Blueberry, around Mile 118 on the present day Alaska Highway. There, they would make dry-meat and prepare moose and bear grease until the weather turned cold. They would try to cache about 5 moose for their winter supply. At times, Maadiyane, Big Charlie's, and Attachie's groups would combine for the fall hunt. And at other times, the three of them hunted moose for the Hudson's Bay. After the hunt, they would return to the main camp with their pack horses. They would then disperse for the winter's trapping, with Big Charlie's group returning to the headwaters of the Blueberry by dog teams.

At different times, Attachie and Big Charlie acted as independent traders for the Hudson Bay, trading furs at Prophet River and at Moberly Lake.

At the same time, during the early years of the 20th Century, Jǫseph Apsassin was hunting and trapping between the Kiskatinaw River, along the country near the Peace, as far east as the Montagnuse River in Alberta, about 40 miles from the boundary (Loggie, 1956). At times he was also hunting and trapping up the South Pine River (HBC Journals). After marrying The Wolf's sister, he probably joined up with that hunting group.

The information we have about the land use of The Wolf's band is much sketchier. According to the Journals, he

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hunted around Charlie Lake (and judging from the location of the family's trapline, probably on the lands north and east of the lake). At times they also hunted and trapped on the Clearwater River just across the boundary in Alberta, and at other times in the Clear Hills of Alberta.

Big Charlie Lake and his wife died in December of 1918 (according to the HBC Journals) during an influenza epidemic that killed an unknown number of Indians in the area. From the HBC records, we know that it was in excess of 11 people. There were an undetermined number of others. In the HBC Journal for Jan. 23, 1919: "...the Deaf Boy and 3 others arrived from the North and report the death of Adisles and Matchakie and all the women in camp" and on March 17,1919: "...12 starving Indians arrived from beyond Charlie Lake they are all women & children or widows & orphans who will be fed at the expense of the Government." This later entry possibly indicates the destruction of a band, whose men died during the epidemic. It is possible that this group's hunting grounds were north of the Beatton, in the Sikanni Chief country where there are presently no Indian traplines.

This epidemic followed another even more tragic one in 1910. In November and December of that year, a measles epidemic killed 60 of the estimated 180 Indians in the Fort

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St. John and Moberly Lake areas, one in every three. This was preceded by a dramatic increase through 1909 and early winter 1910 in the HBC Journal mentions of periodic starvation in the Indian Camps. (There were two references to starvation in the camps in winter 1902, 1 in winter 1904, 1 in late winter 1906, 1 in spring and 1 in early winter 1908, and 7 through the year in 1909 and 3 in the winter months--Jan, Feb---of 1910).

This was reported by the novelist Hulbert Footner, travelling through the Peace River country in 1911 (Footner, 1963), with unintentional irony:

> "He was warm in his praise to their good qualities, their scrupulous honesty in trade, their skill in the hunt, but he confessed with a shake of the head that physically they were sadly degenerate. Their isolation as a tribe has probably forced them into too close inter-marriage. Such is now their lack of stamina that the mildest disease ranges among them like a pestilence. During the winter of 1910 they were attacked by the measles, and of a hundred and eighty members of the tribe, sixty died. Mr.Beat on, who fed, and and doctored and cheered them as best he could, said that their demoralization was pitiful. They simply laid down and died."

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It is quite possible, however, that the Fort St.John area and the Moberly Lake Indians were severely weakened by the previous year's starvation, and consequently even more susceptible to an epidemic of this European disease, that swept through the Indian bands of the prairies and elsewhere, as well as the northeast. And in turn it is quite possible that the lack of game was a product of increased hunting pressure produced by the influx of settlers and other Whites into the country at this time.

The Registered Trapline Period

The system of exclusive use registered traplines presently in effect across Canada originated in British Columbia. The system was proposed in 1925 and registration began in 1926. It was originally designed as a fur-animal managment system, whereby trappers would in effect become fur farmers. Part of the philosophy behind they system was that by locking trappers into a limited area where they had guaranteed exclusive use, they would be encouraged to maintain reproductive populations of fur-animals within their trapline and only crop the surplus.

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In the post-War period, immediately prior to the registration, there was a great demand for furs, and pelt prices were extremely high. From 1923 to 1926, trappers in B.C. were averaging $16-20 per pelt for beaver, $7-9 per pelt for mink, $18-21 for lynx, $16-20 for marten, and $50-71 for fisher (B.C. Government Statistics). Relative to the cost of living and the earnings of rural labourers during the mid-20's, the potential earnings of a trapper were extremely high. This produced a large influx of highly mobile white trappers across northern Canada. This intrusion greatly increased the pressure on the fur-mammal and game populations that were the basis for the native economies. There were justifiable fears that animals as ubiqutous as the beaver would go the way of the buffalo.

In northeastern B.C. trapping was a means through which the homesteaders and itinerant prospectors could earn cash during the winter months to finance their primary activities during the summer. Prior to World War I there had been a large influx of settlers into the Peace River country, but due to a provincial economic depression in 1913, plans for a railroad and other developments were abandoned. Many of the male settlers enlisted in the army and departed permanently. Following the War, in 1919, there was a fresh influx

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of settlers. Again because of transportation problems, many settlers left the area. Then in 1926 a Peace River farmer won the prize for best wheat and oats at the Chicago International Agricultural Show. And by 1928 there was a third and more permanent influx of white homesteaders into the Region (Bowes, 1963).

Although some of the writings on the B.C. registered trapline system claim that the anticipated disputes between White trappers and Indians were largely avoided (Eklund,1946), this was certainly not the case in northeastern and northwestern B.C., as we have seen in an earlier section, (Brody, Chapter 6). This was a period of entense conflict between band members and White trappers and provincial officials.

Even before this, there had been jurisdictional disputes among the officials over the meaning of Treaty 8 hunting and trapping rights. Local Indian agents tended to be supportive of a wide interpretation of these rights and higher levels within the Department sided with the provincial Game Department in favouring more restrictive interpretations.

During the spring of 1924, Joseph Apsassin was convicted "for killing five moose, same being in excess of requirements for himself and family"[1]. What emerges from the Police report was a serious conflict between the local Indian Agent, Laird, and the Provincial Police, who were responsible

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for enforcing provincial fish and game regulations at that time. Laird was supportive of a broad interpretation of Treaty rights. According to the Fort St. John police Constable Barber, "advising the Indians they were at liberty to hunt and trap wherever and whenever they liked and that B.C. Game Wardens and Police had no right to interfere..."[2] Liard in fact gave Constable Barber "a great calling down before the Indians on Treaty day July 23rd 1924." [3] And in turn the Constable "gave Mr. Laird to understand, that I would prosecute an Indian everytime an occassion warranted."[4] The response of higher levels of the Department to complaints about Laird's interpretation of Treaty hunting and trapping rights were less supportive. W.E. Ditchburn, Indian Commissioner for B.C., wrote to the Superintendent of B.C. Provincial Police that:

> "The paragraph on page 10 (of the Treaty) with reference to hunting and trapping by the Indians is quite clear and provides that such hunting and trapping in the surrendered area is 'subject to such regulations as may from time to time be made by the Government of the Country' (in this case the Province of British Columbia)... With regard to Indians hunting and trapping within the confines of the Reserves, it is quite a different matter altogether.'[5]

However, he goes on to say that Mr.Laird is under the jurisdiction of Indian Commissioner Graham, at Regina, and it would

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be against 'Department etiquette' for him to be further involved in this conflict.

Joseph Apsassin also lodged a complaint that his dogs were killed in the winter of 1925, by the poisoned bait used by a White trapper who was trapping on his 'line'. According to Constable Barber:

> "There is a bitter controversy all through this district between the Indian and White trapper, the Indians claiming the Whiteman is encroaching too much on their hunting grounds...."[6]

At the time of the moose incident, Joseph Apsassin had been hunting 25 miles from the Reserve, and trapping 100 miles from the Reserve, outside of the Peace River Block altogether.[2] The actual areas are not clear. The trapping area referred to could be in Alberta, more likely, since it was within the jurisdiction of the B.C. Police, in the northern areas of the Beatton River watershed.

The actual conflicts over Trapline Registration began in 1926. There seems to have been an initial agreement to recognize Indian rights and then a breakdown in the enforcement of the agreement. Provincial Game Inspector Thurber met with Indians at Hudson Hope (presumably Halfway and Moberly Lake People), who were quite conscious of the problems, in the summer of 1926.

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"The Indians ask-

> (1) No more White trappers to be allotted traplines in the district, (i.e., the whole northeast) and that if any of the present traplines become vacant, they should revert to the Indians;
>
> (2) That the Indians will respect and keep off Whitemen's traplines, and that they should be allowed to trap all the country south of Parallel 58 that is not covered by Whitemen's traplines.
>
> I propose to recommend at Victoria that any settlers going into this district be warned that outside of their own homestead, they cannot be expected to be granted traplines except north of Parallel 58. This will ensure no further crowding of Indians in your district."[8]

However, this was not to be. Trapline registration proceeded. On 10 July, 1927 the Constable at Hudson Hope wrote to the Police N.C. O. at Pouce Coupe:

> "I took the matter up with Mr.Laird and he stated that he would have nothing to do with it. That as far as he was concerned, the Indians could run wild, as long as they did not interfere with the traplines already being run by White trappers. That if any trapline were given up, they were to revert to the Indians. Mr.Laird claimed that such

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> was the agreement entered into with Major Thurber last summer.
> On the other hand, Sgt. Van Dyk instructed me to insist that the Indians register their lines the same as the White trappers.
> There is some truth in what Mr.Laird says to the effect that the Indians could not stay on any given lines, as they have to change camps and territory in order to kill the necessary meat for their families...."[9]

The conflict over trapline registration continued through the late 20's and early 30's as the Indians were increasingly pinched between the registered White lines. The picture you get from the Trapline Registration Correspondence is one of conflict between the northeast Indians trying to maintain the land use strategies necessary to continue their economy, and the needs and interests of White trappers and officials. Although the trapline registration was a fur management program, it became an attempt to limit Indian hunting land use, as well, to the bounds of the traplines, as was pointed out by Brody. It was also seen as a means to provide for the needs of the emerging White economy, as we can see in a report written by T. Van Dyk N.C.O. i/c Game, Provincial Police in Prince Rupert:

> "The majority of the trappers operating in the north are prospectors, who depend of the fur

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> catch to carry on their propecting in the summer months. Any regulations tending to curtail their trapping, would also curtail, if not stop, their prospecting operation, which would not be advisable."[10]

The conflict finally came to a head between 1933 and 1934. Prior to this time, even when Indians tried to protect their trapping rights, confusion over just what Registered Traplines were continued to put the squeeze on them:

> "A number of Indians hold registered traplines...."[11]

> "All of these Indians are of a very ignorant type and have not the slightest idea, what it is to register a trapline: they have no knowledge of maps and are satisfied as long as they have visted the office; that is no doubt why the traplines of any Indian are just little scratches on the map."[12]

> "In the Fort St. John district, the Whitemen hold big areas for traplines and between these Indians are registered."[13]

After 7 years of conflict, the Department of Indian Affairs was still listening to the bands' complaints. These are

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excerpts from the reports on meetings held in 1933:

> "At a meeting with the band (the Fort St. John Band) they laid the complaint about their trapping lines. That all their old hunting grounds were taken up by Whitemen."[14]

and

> "...the Indians at Moberly Lake, Halfway Reserve, and Fort St.John complained that they were unable to make a living off the hunting grounds that had been allotted to them, and this will be borne out by anyone familiar with conditons in the Peace River Block."[15]

The department finally decided that it was necessary to purchase back White traplines that covered the traditional hunting grounds of the area's bands.

According to the provincial Fish and Wildlife Trapline Registration Cards, the dates of first registration for the five Blueberry traplines was 1935 for the Apsassin Line, 1937 for the Yahae line and the Wolf line, 1938 for the Cheekyass line and 1949 for the Appaw line. These records show that the Cheekyass and the Wolf line were formerly held by White trappers. According to the Apsassins, their line was also formerly held by a White trapper and they purchased it themselves.

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As already pointed out by Brody, the family traplines are the key to the present day hunting and trapping economy in the northeast. There is considerable confusion over rights on the trapline. The areas are looked on as hunting grounds granted in exchange for signing Treaty 8. In the words of John Yahae, during one of our interviews:

> "Long time ago, not supposed to come to Blueberry, White people and half-breed guys. That's what they say that. Boss, you know, Chief, Maadiyane say that too. Indian Agent, you know, my Dad told me, tall guy he said that. Just like a treaty, Treaty Traplines. Give him treaty. Maadiyane they want to give treaty. Big Boss he say that I give you that trapline, that's two rivers (between Blueberry River and Aitken Creek, i.e. the present Yahae trapline). Nobody come around here. Just the treaty Indians. Now right here, oh gee, just cut a highway, you see. Big farming in here, fence around. Just like no more old pack trail (because of the fencing)."

The Alaska Highway to the Present

The fear of a Japanese invasion of Alaska during World War II led to the nearly instantaneous construction of

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a 1,442 mile road linking Dawson Creek with Fairbanks, Alaska in 1942. The initial road was pushed through virgin "wilderness" by the U.S. Army Engineers in an intense 8 month construction period. The road was up-graded by private contractors during 1943, and finally turned over to the Canadians after the war.

Prior to the construction of the Highway, travel north of Fort St. John was along the old Fort St. John-Nelson Trail. I can't fix the date of first usage of the trail as a White travel and commerce route, but Joseph Apsassin was acting as a guide along the route in the summer of 1922, which must have been at the earliest stages of its use (Fort St. John HBC Journals). This was a summer pack horse or winter sledge trail. The route was considerably to the east of the present highway for most of its length and crossed through several of the Blueberry traplines.

For many of the White fur-trappers heading north to Fort Nelson and beyond in the 1920's, it ended at the Sikanni Chief River. At the junction of Conroy Creek and the Sikanni Chief, there was an encampment of fur traders, a saw-mill, and a boat construction site. Boats were built here to take the trappers and traders onto Fort Nelson after the spring break-up (Patterson, 1963). The place, called Hold-up, was also an independent trader's post, which was the first 'bush' trading post used by the Blueberry People.

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The construction of the Alaska Highway marked an end for the period when trapping was the key link in the area's economy. For the Blueberry People, it meant the closure of the HBC trading post at Nig Creek, on the upper Beatton River. According to Theresa Cheekyass, the post was established in 1913 and closed around 1943, after the Highway was constructed. The post was an important trading location for the Blueberry People during this period, as it was situated in the middle of their trapping area.

During this time the Cheekyass' were hunting and trapping in the winter on their trapline around Black Creek, a tributary of the Beatton to the north of the larger River. There were several major campsites or cabins on their trapline, one at the junction of Black Creek and the Beatton, and one at the headwaters of Black Creek. (This latter area is outside of the family trapline area as it appears on the official Fish and Wildlife trapline maps). The Apsassins had several main campsites on their trapline. And Charlie Yahae's group's main camp was at the junction of the Blueberry and Aitken Creek, near the present Blueberry Bridge on the Mile 73 road.

> "After they finished the road (the Mile 73 road to Nig Creek, which is a secondary road off the Alaska Highway) the trucks used to come to Nig Creek to bring groceries, everything that they needed."
>
> Edward Apsassin (translated from Cree).

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"The most important things they used to buy was flour, tea, sugar, but they used to buy a lot of that to get by for the winter."

Nora Apsassin (translated from Cree)

"They used to make a lot of dry-meat, and everything they could get (by hunting) to get them going for the winter."

Theresa Cheekyass (translated from Cree)

Fur prices dropped drastically during the post-war years. The average price for beaver in B.C. dropped from a high of $52/pelt in 1945-46 to $17 in 1948-49, similarly lynx went from around $40-50 in the early '40's to $11 in 1948-49 and $3.23/pelt in 1953-54 (B.C. Fur Statistics). The actual prices paid to northeast Indians probably dropped even lower. Hunting was variable, there were times when the moose and deer population was low and during those times people would be hungry.

"There used to be hardly any moose or deer, or even fur in some winters disappeared. Now and then, there would be fur."

Edward Apsassin (translated from Cree)

"In those days people were poor, you know. They used to go hunting. As long as there was hunting, they never went hungry. As long as there was

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> moose around. People used to make their own grease out of goose. Anything they could get a hold of, they would store it for the winter. Since the Whiteman came, everything went down. Everything they could think of they said.
> ...There used to be big dances at Moberly River. The old people, they're dead now, they used to have big dances down there. At one time they danced so much, they danced in a circle, that there was a great big ring around that they dug up. ... There used to be Halfway People for that, they call it get-together dance...They called them dance sites and they mentioned they used to have big dances at Montney."
>
> Theresa Cheekyass (translated from Cree)

The annual rounds took people from their traplines in the winter to the old reserve in Montney in the summer. The Montney Reserve was sold in 1949 to the Veterans Administration, for sub-division as homesteads to returning World War II veterans. From the comments of Alex and Mrs.Cheekyass and Edward Apsassin, it is clear that the Montney Reserve was used as an important summering place and as a meeting place in the year's round of hunting and trapping activities.

> "After winter trapping was over, they used to move back to the Montney Reserve every summer.

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> They used to live there every summer, and in the winter they moved back to Nig Creek or wherever they were trapping."
>
> Edward Apsassin (translated from Cree)

The sale of the Reserve led to considerable disruption within the hunting groups at Blueberry, and probably Doig as well.

> "After they sold the place, everybody moved all over the place, around here (Blueberry River, where Charlie Yahae had a cabin), Nig Creek and wherever they had their trapline, that's where they moved. People moved all over the place...there were no roads, but there were trails all over the place, so they couldn't have no wagons and such things... They had a lot of horses and that's how they travelled, by pack horse. There was a trail up to Montney right up to here, Blueberry, and through Squaw Creek to Buck Creek and from there to where the traplines were. That's where they moved all over."
>
> Edward Apsassin (translated from Cree)

The sale took place without consultation with many of the people:

> "The Indian People didn't even know anything about selling the place then. This old Indian Agent Galabois was the one

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> that was trying really hard to sell the Reserve...All of a sudden, they were told not to move back to Montney. Mrs.Cheekyass said they didn't even include the young people to see, like herself or Alex. They didn't even know what was going on. They were told they had sold the place."
>
> Theresa Cheekyass (translated from Cree)

Following the sale of the 18,168 acre reserve, 3 smaller reserve areas totalling 6,194 acres were purchased by Indian Affairs from the British Columbia government. The new reserves were surveyed in 1946 and 1947 and allotted in 1950 (Table 2).

As part of the Land Use and Occupancy Survey, we asked people to indicate where they were born and where they were raised. From the answers of the men born in the 1950's, we can piece together a picture of where the various Blueberry families lived during this period in the 1950's. Some of the Apsassins moved to Peterson's Crossing in the early 1950's, a traditional camping site and small village site of the Doig Band, which is still occupied by some of this band's families. Peterson's is located on the Beatton River, near where the road from Rose Prairie to the Doig Reserve crosses the River. These families moved to the Blueberry Reserve in the late 1950's. The younger Wolfs, Davis', and Yahaes, on the other

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hand indicated that they were raised on Blueberry. Charlie Yahae, who was an important spiritual leader and a focal personality for the band, had a cabin on a hill overlooking the present village site. Several other families built cabins scattered through the present reserve area, probably because of the proximity of the Yahae cabin.

The first 4 DIA houses were constructed in 1961 in the river bend that marks the present village site. The considerations that went into the choice of this site were probably the proximity of already existing cabins and the flat land in the bend, which was available for a 'consolidated' village which could be economically 'serviced'. However, the concentrated sub urban style village plan, with band families living in houses quite close to each other, contrasts to the preferred arrangment that resulted when people constructed their own cabins, both here and at the original village site of the Halfway Band, at Stoney. In both cases, people built their own cabins some distance from each other. Several members of different bands have discussed their housing aspirations with us during the study. The feeling was that a variety of the bands' social problems are due to the dense sub urban-style village pattern. Their aspirations include having new houses on a more scattered basis, providing some privacy; and some people have mentioned that these requests have been made to DIA.

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BLUEBERRY: The Contemporary Scene

During our Land Use and Occupancy discussions, John Yahae suggested Harry Chipesia as a good person to talk to about land and hunting and trapping. Harry Chipesia frequently hunts and traps with the Yahae group. Some of the following comments, which resulted from the discussion, are specific to the Yahae trapline, but can be taken as indicators of conditions common to other band traplines.

Moose continue to be the staple in the Blueberry hunting economy; supplemented by hare, grouse, beaver, deer, and a variety of other animals. The terrain on the Blueberry traplines consists of rolling uplands, with pronounced hilly regions in the northern areas of the Beatton River watershed. Within the traplines seasonal moose migrations are basically localized terrain shifts, rather than the type of migration you expect from animals like caribou. Seasonally, the moose shift between valley bottoms in early winter, the side hills in late winter, and higher ground on the hills in the summer. Mating takes place in early September, after which the cows stay in thick bush. The bulls are solitary during the winter, but during December the young bulls stay with the cows.

The methods used for hunting moose require great familiarity with the land and the habits of the moose. Harry Chipesia doesn't call moose, rather he looks, reads the signs,

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and watches the direction the wind is blowing very closely.

> "I don't call (moose) around here. I just go hunting. (A lot) depends on how much wind is blowing...I just look, you know, I just look in the bush, where he's going to be. I just think about where he's going to be. Sometimes I don't even see tracks. He's just there, sleeping or standing against a tree... I know the places, which areas the moose are going to be. And I got to go there."
>
> Harry Chipesia

In recent years, because of the proliferation of roads, pipeline clearings, and seismic lines, and the increased reliance on vehicles for hunting,there have been some shifts in hunting methods. At certain seasons some of the people travel the Beatton River Road north of Buick Creek, watching the cleared lanes for moose, and then continue their stalking on foot. At the same time people, during the summer months spend periods of two weeks to a month at a time in bush moose camps, generally located near a vehicle access road.

As might be expected, there is considerable concern over the moose population.

> "Even (where) I've been guiding in the mountains. I've seen from the last 5-6 years, we're getting less moose now, even

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> in the mountains. Before when I'd go and look around the valleys, look with binoculars, and see about 100 moose, 150 in a day. Now I bet I never see more than 20 in a day. This is in the Sikanni."
>
> Harry Chipesia

Deer, on the other hand, are increasing since a very hard winter 5 or 6 years ago, when there was a high mortality of the younger deer because of the snow depth. They simply starved and froze to death. There are few other ungulates on the band's traplines. There are no habitats suitable for sheep and goat, and there are only a few caribou in the northern Beatton River area. About 100 years ago there were elk on the band's traplines, but there are none at the present time.

Snowshoe hare (rabbits) are periodically plentiful. There are places within a mile or two of the reserve, among other areas, which are good for rabbits. "We've been hunting here all our lives and know the good places." (H.C.). There was an abundance of hare during the winter of '78-79, but about 2-3 years ago there were hardly any. Harry suggested that they may periodically over-eat their food supply. Four or five years ago, the tops of the small willows were all chewed up.

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> "...hardly any food, I guess. You can see where they are, just cut off the tops (of the bushes). (At that time) up the road, along the Beatton River Road, you could see dead rabbits run over. Sometimes 3 or 4. All along."
>
> Harry Chipesia

When rabbits are ubundant, people eat rabbits, but not as constant fare. After 2 or 3 meals, people generally get tired of the lean meat and go back to the staple, moose. People repeatedly told us that they don't tire of moose.

Among the other small game animals, grouse can be found anywhere when they are abundant. Porcupine disappeared locally about 25 years ago, but within the last 10 years they are slowly coming back. Small kills of ducks and geese are made in the spring, summer, and fall on the rivers, streams, and ponds near the reserve or hunting camps.

The trapping period starts in November. Beaver are snared in early winter when the ice is still thin, and hunted in the spring on the creeks draining into the Blueberry River and on the River itself. During the last year, because of a population high in the lynx cycle and the historically high prices being paid for lynx pelts, many people concentrated on lynx for their winter trapping.

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On the Yahae trapline (and probably elsewhere -- but here we need CIRG's information), much of the big timber in the Blueberry and Aitken Creek valleys has been logged off. Only small patches of mature spruce ramains. This has led to a major reduction in the populations of fur-bearing mammals that require climax forest conditons for their habitat, such as marten and squirrel. Formerly there were good areas for lynx, squirrel, marten, fisher, wolverine, etc. Now they are nowhere abundant. In the past, good money could be made from efficiently harveting squirrels, with upwards of 50/day snared. Since the logging, during the last 4-5 years, it isn't possible to trap as efficiently as before. There is an ambivalance in this, since it is recognized that logging the climax forest creates habitiat for moose. Nonetheless, this is an economy that depends on a mix of fur-bearers and game animals for its operation. And it is the diversity of habitats that this variety depends on that being reduced.

> "Easy to make money with squirrel. Fellow make a meeting about the pipleine, (said) they scare moose, everything. He never mention about the timber, you know. Lots of squirrel, you know, lots of money. You can't miss, set it right the snare. Fellow knows how."
>
> Harry Chipesia

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The Competiton over Habitats and the Use of Vehicles

Since the Blueberry People have settled into permanent housing on the reserve, there have been major changes in the habitats around them. There have been major increases in cleared agricultural lands around the reserve and, as mentioned above, important areas of climax forest on the traplines have been logged off (See CIRG's maps). As a consequence of the increase in farmlands, some of the old horse trail systems have been fenced off. These trails are either not accessible for use or people feel uncomfortable about using them. At the same time, the increase in farming, oil and gas exploration, and logging activities have produced a vast network of roads throughout the bush. In addition, there has been a major increase in fast moving traffic on the local farm roads. Surprisingly, some of the distances become significantly longer using the roads. For example, the Blueberry Bridge crossing where Charlie Yahae had his cabin is only about 6 miles from the present village site by horse trail, whereas along the road it is 16 miles. This is equally true of many of the other traditional hunting camps. They are relatively close to the reserve by horse trail, but by road the distances are significant.

While the habitat changes are looked on as undesirable, the roads are seen as an asset. Since the permanent housing

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was constructed patterns of hunting and trapping have become more sedentary. Instead of seasonal shifts between camps, the reserve functions as a large base camp out of which people travel for varying periods of time for their hunting and trapping.

Other than the band's problems with oil and gas developments near the reserve, (especially their real fears of hydrogen sulphide poisoning from regular emissions and leaks of the gas collection station located on the hill above the Reserve) and their concern over the social and environmental impacts of the large pipelines, there is no sense of major conflict over oil and gas exploration and development on their traplines. The feeling is that petroleum exploration enhances hunting by providing access roads for the band's hunters. It is also felt that disturbances are minimal, that moose are not affected or disturbed by drill rigs or road noises.

> "(Before 1950 there were few farmers.) Just few around here. Now you got no place to hunt pretty soon, you know. It's going to be hard for hunting, you know, and trapping. There's Mile 18 and straight across, plus Aitken Creek. We hunted up there. That's a good place all along. There are roads there too, you know, oil company roads. All

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along there. That's good hunting place. That's where we hunt there in summer. We have a camp in there on Aitken Creek. Camp here close to the road, on the east side. Lots of moose there. Lots of road there. Make new road every summer, them oil company. Make good road.
(The moose) they don't scare. You know they make road with a cat. How much they make noise. Moose is there. Staying around the bush. Even rig, you know. Not even a mile. All summer about 3 bulls were living there and the rig right there. One day I went hunting, I killed one (of them). He never go away."

Harry Chipesia

On the other hand, there is a clear sense of conflict with farming and the logging industry, in that they change the support potential of the land for the different resource species. And this is the core of the ecological or economic conflict. In both of these cases, the change is in the direction of early forest successional stages. (Although in the case of farming the natural flora are replaced with domestic species, and the naturally occurring animal species discouraged). Logging of 'climax' or mature forests destroys habitat for squirrel, marten, wolverine,

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and fisher, but it creates productive moose country. The real problem here is the reduction of diversity. It is true that logging in areas not subject to heavy erosion is not destructive to the growth potential of the land, but it does reduce the habitat diversity. To animal harvesters who hunt and trap in limited and fixed areas this can result in the removal of whole habitat types and their dependent animal populations from their area of utilization.

In the past, horses and dogs were the means of travel, but in recent years the use of cars and trucks have become more prevalent. Among the 3 bands in the Fort St.John area, the Blueberry People are distinctive in the extent of their change-over to vehicles. While the Doig People, and to a lesser extent, the Halfway People make use of the road networks for access to their hunting and trapping areas, the horse is still important, and at any one time there may be one or two operational vehicles on these reserves.

About 1½ years ago, the Blueberry Band owned some 50 horses; last winter they were down to about 20. A number of factors have led to the change over, including: various social pressures on the continued use of traditional trails

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that now cross farmlands adjacent to the reserve;[1] the discomfort and dangers of riding horses or driving wagons down roads travelled by fast moving logging trucks, drill rig vehicles, B.C. Rail vehicles, as well as local traffic; and finally the convenience of having your own vehicle. There is a real sense of loss that has accompanied the change-over from horse, and wagon and team.

There are a number of economic and social consequences of the change. First, it requires a change in hunting technique. Without horses, hunters are more limited in the distance they can travel into the bush and pack out the approximately 500 pounds of food gotten from a moose kill. And second, and perhaps more significant, there are the increased cash needs and social costs of the change over. At Blueberry, older cars are generally purchased for a few hundred dollars and are constantly being repaired on the reserve or junked. There are over 50 junked vehicles scattered

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1. It's only fair to mention here that when the more recent local farmers called on M.P. Frank Oberle about 3 years ago to discuss their side of the problem, he was extremely supportive of Indian rights. He explained to the farmers that they were newcomers and that Indians had guaranteed and long established usage rights to hunt and trap. According to Gerald Yahae this seemed to help, and the conflicts were reduced. Nonetheless, there has been a gradual replacement of horses by vehicles. It is also important to understand that the conflict was with new neighbors. With the long-established homestead families, the Indian perspective is of a mutual respect relation, that has come from long-term social and economic relations.

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throughout the reserve. The cash is not only needed for the purchase of vehicles, oil and gas, and parts for repair, but also to pay insurance and registration fees, and to pay fines. A significant portion of the earnings of fur sold during the 1978-79 trapping season went to various vehicle related costs. For example, in early March after the annual vehicle registration and insurance period terminated, there were a flurry of arrests of Blueberry Band members for driving uninsured and unregistered vehicles into Fort St. John. There have also been a number of arrests for drunken driving. The consequences of this has been an increased need for cash incomes to pay the fines, etc. Lack of money to pay the fines results in a jail sentence, with the offender shipped out to Prince George to serve the sentence.

What is remarkable in all of this has been the persistence or the Blueberry People in continuing their hunting and trapping. Or, alternatively, perhaps, it is not so remarkable, since that is what people do in a hunting economy. That is what life is about. Even if a person is not hunting he is thinking about hunting, the land, and the animals. Here I am not being a romantic; this is what we have seen today and what people have told us. Although the Northeast Indians have been in contact with Europeans since the 18th. Century, until the 20th. Century the economic reasons that Whites have been living and travelling in the area have had

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to do with the Indian People and their economy. It is only in the last few decades that what may be major and final disruptive changes have occurred, namely habitat change, settlement, and competition for game with a very large population of outsiders, on traditional hunting lands.

That Blueberry is still a hunting and trapping community is clearly shown on the land use and occupancy maps, which stand by themselves in documenting the community's land use. Although the individual maps from which the maps in this report were compiled cover an entire life time, the maps of the younger people are remarkably similar to those of the older people. This is true both in terms of the lands use and the types of animals harvested. This latter point verified by our economic survey of hunting, trapping, and cash earnings over the past year (See Brody's report). People do occassional wage hour labour, (and from the old HBC Journals this has been going on quite awhile), but they continue to be hunters and trappers, and perhaps equally important, they consider themselves hunters and trappers.

Still, changes are taking place and there are many real pressures on the Band and its economic base. John Yahae, who is 57 years old and is the son of Charlie Yahae and the grandson of Big Charlie Lake, is recognized as a powerful singer and orator in the Beaver language throughout the area. He is not as comfortable with English, but some of his comments

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about his relation to the land and the Indian's changing relation to the White community are nonetheless extremely powerful.

> "That's all we using, deer and moose and bear and beaver....See (if) we sold him that one (my trapline), I can't do nothing. What I'm gonna eat? See White people got a big farm, lots of pigs and lots of cattle. He's not short of meat. I got nothing, I'm a poor man. I got no money in a bank. See, we gotta hunt something. Gotta hunt something on my trapline. Maybe I shoot chicken, maybe I hunt rabbits, maybe shoot beaver, shoot moose, shoot deer, bear. See that's how we keep to eat meat. Just like I raised them. Just like my farm right here. You guys take this one, White people, what I going to do then?
> We raise lots of kids. We've got to still use the traplines, two rivers that one (the Yahae trapline, between the Blueberry and Aitken Creek) That was my Dad's, used to be. He helped White people, that two rivers. Just like I raising White people. A long time a go, Indians had lots of horses, White people they got nothing. Just a woman. Make some kids. A dollar a day, he's got to work for a dollar a day. Treaty Indian at that time, he could shoot moose any time, but he got moose right here. But the farmers right here, White people, he got no meat. Give him some meat, erverything--moose grease even--he give it free, don't charge nothing. Sometimes that woman

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(s)he like him. Just like the Indians raising White people, making life.

Oh, a long time ago pretty hard. Nothing, no White people. Now just full right here. Lots of cars. Nobody poor White people. He's got cars, he s got a truck. Everything he got. Just one farmer and Jees, he got lots. He got how much money in the bank. If he want a drink, he got a beer parlour, he got a liquor store in Fort St. John. If he want a drink, maybe Friday, maybe Saturday, just go ride a car. Maybe one-half hour he's in town, buy whiskey, and drive home. Maybe his wife wants a drink, he can give his wife. No more poor White people, he's got lots of money. He's got a big truck. Can load up with lots of (fire) wood, long ways. Nothing troubles (him).

John Charlie Lake (Yahae)

Chapter V - Footnotes

1. Report of Constable Barber, Fort St. John Detachment, B.C. Provincial Police, 12 Sept., 1925.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Letter of Indian Commissioner W.E. Ditchburn to J.H. Mullin, Superintendent of B.C. Police. 6 Oct., 1925.
6. Barber. Op.cit.
7. Report of Constable Barber, Fort St. John Detachment, B.C. Provincial Police, 11 Nov., 1925.
8. Letter of M. Thurber, Chief Game Inspector B.C. to M. Laird, Indian Agent, Grouard, Alberta. 9 June, 1926.
9. Letter of A.T. Batchelor, Constable i/c Hudson's Hope, B.C. Police Detachment to N.C.O. i/c Pouce Coupe, B.C. 10 July, 1927.
10. Report of T. Van Dyk, N.C.O. i/c Game, B.C. Provincial Police, "D" Division, Prince Rupert. 15 Feb., 1928.
11. Report of Game Warden G.M. Kerkhoff, Fort St. John. 6 Nov., 1933.
12. Report to Game Warden G.M. Kerkhoff, Fort St. John. 17 Dec., 1933.
13. Report of Game Warden G.M. Kerkhoff, Fort St. John. 6 Nov., 1933.
14. Report of M. Christianson, Inspector of Indian Agencies, Alberta, 24 July, 1933.
15. Letter of M. Christianson to the Secretary, Department of Indian Affairs, Ottawa. 18 Sept., 1933.

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CHAPTER VI

The Halfway River Band

Introductory Orientation

The lands within the Halfway watershed and the headwater region of the Sikanni Chief, to the north, are the traditional hunting areas of the Halfway Band. The band was administratively part of the Hudson's Hope Band until 1975, when that band was split into the present Halfway and West Moberly Lake Bands. Interestingly, separate reserves for each of these bands were surveyed as early as 1914. The Halfway Reserve was allotted in 1925, and the West Moberly Reserve in 1916 (Table 2). Until the Hudson Bay Post at Hudson's Hope was closed, this was the primary trading location for both bands, as well as some of the East Moberly families.

The Halfway Reserve, which consists of 9890 acres, is located on the east shore of the lower Halfway River, on the edge of the Rocky Mountain Fotthills. Where the Blueberry and Doig Peoples are hunters of the lowland forests, the Halfway People are hunters of the foothill and mountain forests. Although the reserve was allotted as early as 1925, it wasn't occupied until 1961. The first permanent housing was constructed on the Reserve in 1961. Prior to 1961 the focus of the band's residence was at Stoney, on the Stoney (or as it appears on the maps, the Chowade) River. This site was initially a tipi site

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and later a village of scattered log cabins. It was occupied periodically throughout the year as the band pursued the assembly-dispersal residency pattern of their annual round of movements, similar to that already described in more detail for the Prophet River People. Briefly, Stoney was occupied by the various Halfway hunting-groups during the ice-free months. The groups dispersed from Stoney to their winter trapping grounds. The Hunter family, on whose trapline Stoney is located, probably continued to use their cabin as a main base during the winter season as well. Stoney remains the spiritual homeland for the Band. The site is located about 40 miles from the Reserve, and as we shall see the move profoundly affected the Band's hunting economy.

Coincident with the move from Stoney a ranch was begun on the Reserve. Indeed, the move is seen by the Band as an attempt by the Department of Indian Affairs to change their economic base from trapping to cattle ranching. The Reserve is located within an area of good pasture land, whereas Stoney isn't. According to DIA the Halfway Ranch is the most economically successful Indian cattle ranch in the area.

The Reserve lies within the Halfway valley, on the edge of spectacular Rocky Mountain Foothill country to the east. Where the lands around Blueberry are densely occupied mixed crop farmland, the cleared valley bottom areas near

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Halfway are occupied by isolated ranching homesteads. The village is located about 22 miles from the Alaska Highway. The Mile 95 road off the highway which leads to the reserve is heavily used by logging trucks, gravel trucks (removing gravel from nearby pits for upgrading the Alaska Highway), oil and gas company vehicles, local traffic, and sports hunters in the fall. A portion of this road goes through the Reserve.

The reserve houses are more scattered than at Doig or Blueberry. There are 17 houses on the Reserve; they are quite basic shelters, heated by wood and without electricity or running water. The other structures on the Reserve include a school, a band hall/church, as well as a number of sheds, corrals, and other structures associated with the ranching operation. The nearest store, post office, and beer outlet is 28 miles away at the small Alaska Highway community of Wonowon. (Once again the real distance here is the round-trip, 56 miles). The closest hospital and other public facilities are in Fort St.John, 70 miles by road. Interest-ingly here too the distance frequently become longer by road. Where in the past the Hudson's Hope trading post was a 55 mile trip by horse, it is now 106 miles by road, and the Moberly Lake communities are even further removed. There are

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very few vehicles on the Reserve (1 or 2) and as a consequence, most of the travel to Wonowon or to Fort St.John is by the irregularities of hitch-hiking, both in summer and in winter.

Culturally the band is entirely Beaver. The present Band are the descendents of the hunting groups of the children of two half-brothers, Hatayakle and Maketsueson, the prophet, who were leaders probably prior to the turn of the century; and the children of Old Thomas Hunter (Riddington, 1968). The Hunters originally hunted on the Ospika River, on the western slopes of the Rockies, and come into the Halfway country in 1912. All three groups are interlinked through subsequent marriages. The band is most closely related to Prophet River, Blueberry, and West Moberly families. The 1978 DIA band list shows 136 band members. Figure 5 shows the band's age distribution.

The Band presently has seven registered family traplines; the Metecheah's, the Hunter's, Moses Wokeley's, the Field's, Charlie Butler's, Peter Butler's, and the Jackson's (Figure 6). These traplines are not all adjoining and do not form a solid block, as do the Blueberry and Doig traplines. They cover three regions, with lines registered to White trappers located in between. The Metecheah and Hunter

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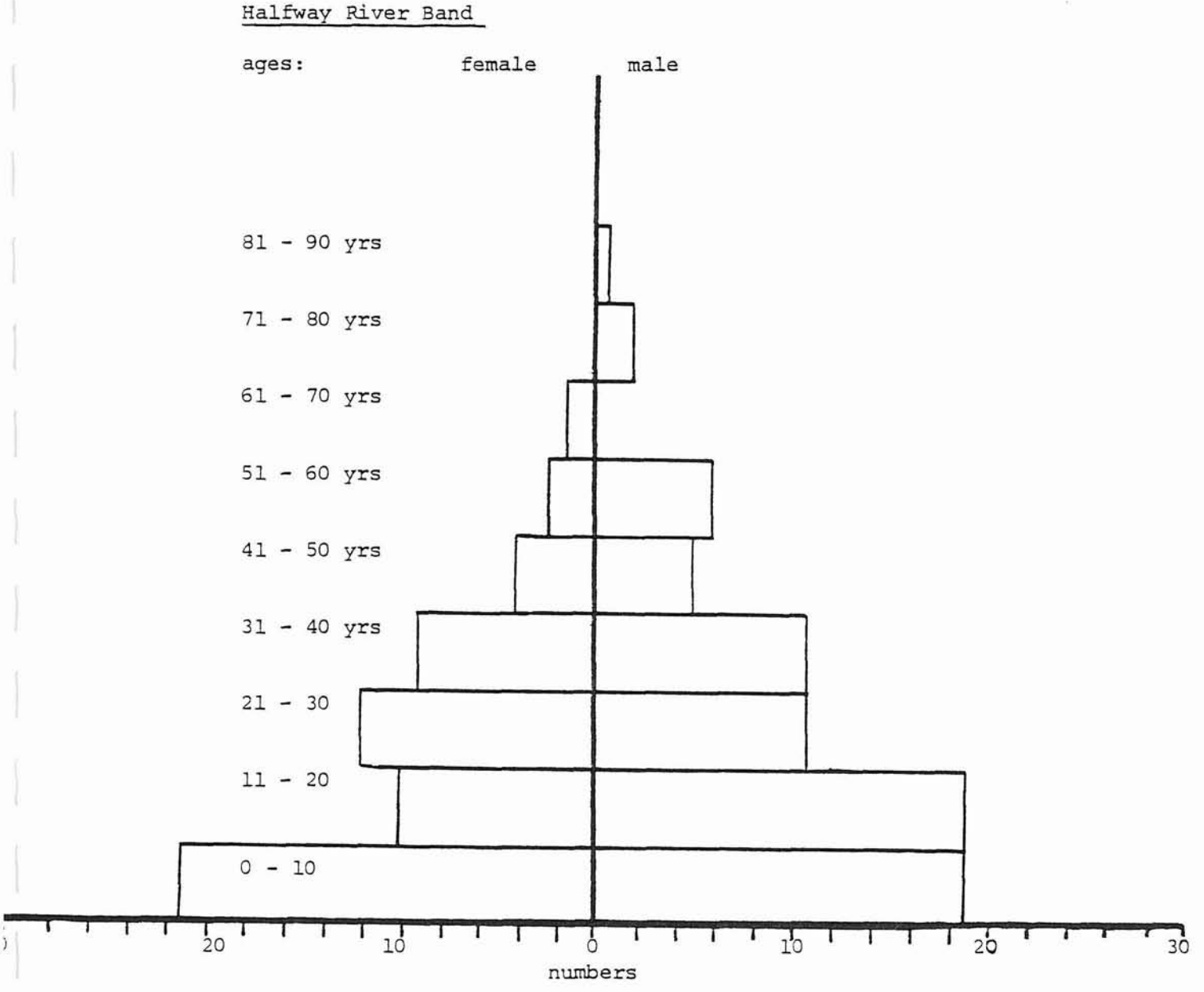

Fig.5 Halfway Band population pyramid, according to the 1978 DIA Band list.

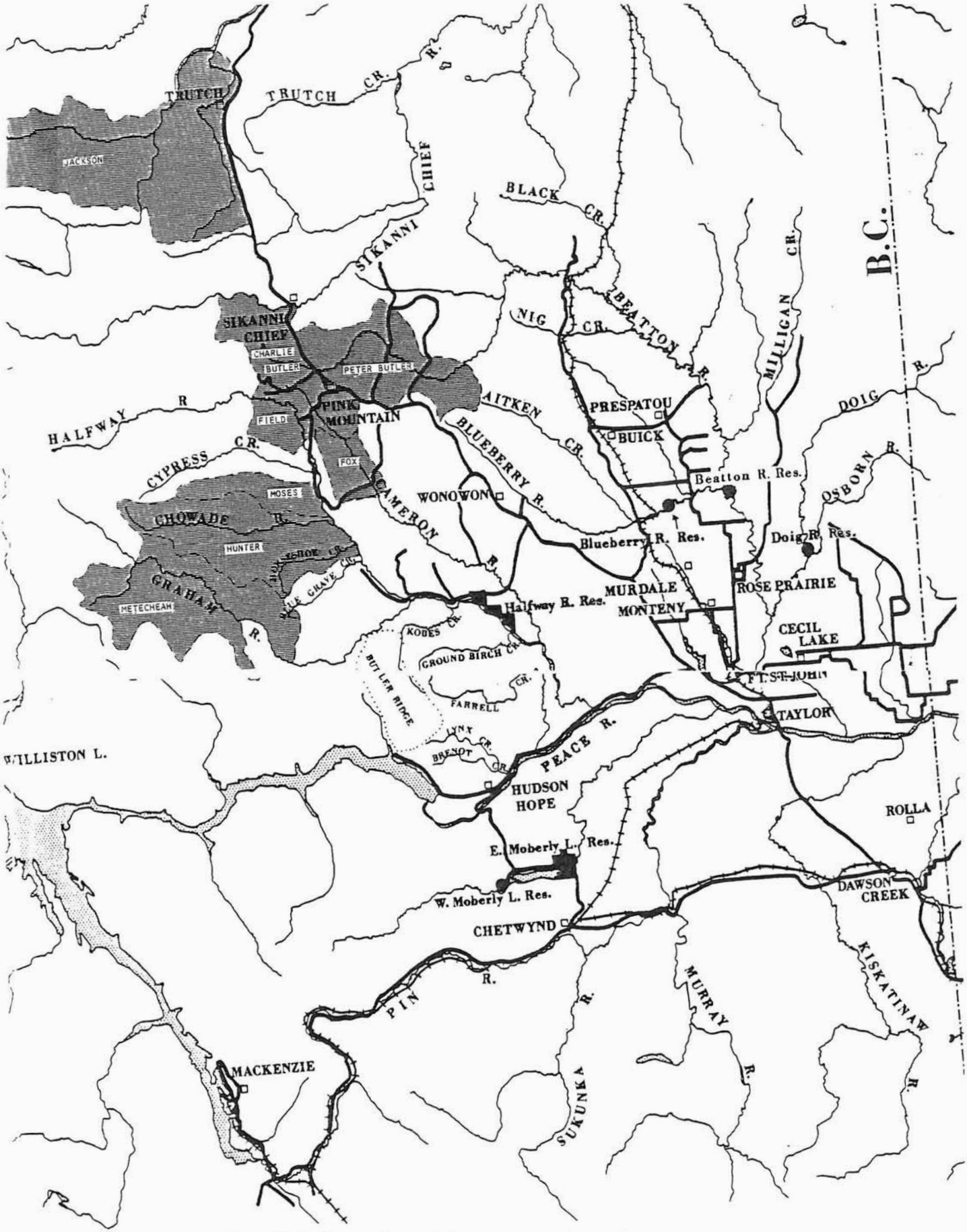

FIG. 6. The Halfway Traplines and Hunting Grounds. This is a preliminary figure. Although the text refers to the Halfway hunting grounds, this figure only shows the traplines. The hunting ground area will be added after the information is compiled from the map biographies.

lines cover part of the middle Halfway watershed, including part of the Graham and all of the Stoney (Chowade). The lines of the Field, Fox, and Butler families cover the upper drainage areas of the Cameron River, the Beatton River, and part of the Sikanni Chief. Billy Jackson's trapline lies substantially further north, north in fact of the Sikanni Chief, and cover the Minniker River and the headwaters of the Prophet River. The Reserve lies outside of the Band's trapline areas. The people have to travel a minimum of 25 miles just to get to the edge of their nearest trapline. (Once again this means a 50 mile round-trip). On the other hand, Stoney was in the heart of the southern group of traplines. This, as we shall see, has had important consequences for the Band in their maintenance of a trapping and hunting economy.

Halfway From a Distance

The view that we get of the Halfway People from the comments of White fur traders' and travellers' journals is more sketchy than for the Beatton River People, but some of the insights gained about the early conflicts from the Indian

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side are quite valuable. In particular, there are a number of early mentions that show the Halfway People were quite conscious about what the intrusions of the Klondikers, adventurers, and the later settlers meant to their way of life.

According to Henry Moberly, an independent fur-trader and prospector, in 1865 there were about 23 families of Sikanni (which can be read as Beaver here) whose hunting areas extended from the Peace River as far as the Liard, "in and among the foothills" (Moberly, 1963). At this time, the Indian economics were hunting and trapping, and , for some, occassional wage labour as hunters, Interestingly, the pattern of occassional wage labour which is common to the bands throughout the area started at an early date, and persisted along side the hunting economy. In the late 1800's, and probably earlier, the HBC at Hudson's Hope (and elsewhere) were employing Indian hunters to supply the post with meat. In 1879, the HBC here employed 2 families to hunt moose and bear (Gordon, 1963). The harvests were not insubstantial; according to the Fort St. John HBC Journals, at one time in mid-winter 1867, there were 21 moose cached within 20 miles of the fort. People were given $10 worth of ammunition twice a year, a monthly allowance of tea, sugar, and tobacco, and were paid for each moose according to size.

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Most of the activities of White traders and travellers seem limited to the major river valleys prior to 1890. With the advent of the Klondike gold rush, however, there was a sudden incursion of Whites through the area, trying different routes through the mountains on their way to expected riches. Stories of hardship, starvation, and death among the propective miners scattered over the Peace, Liard, and MacKenzie Rivers led to the Canadian Government's decision to send an RCMP team to blaze an overland trail from Fort St.John to Fort Graham in 1897. This trail led the original RCMP group and a later force of 32 trail builders in 1905 through the Halfway country. The original report of Inspector Moodie was that a route up the Halfway and across the Rockies was not only feasible as a trail for the Klondikers, but was also a possible railway route and a way to "open the riches of the country."

Inspector Moodie's report was responsible for the Government effort to include northeastern B.C. within Treaty 8. He felt that competition for game with the newly arrived Whites would put severe stress on the northeastern Indians and warned that:

> "...unless some assistance is given by the Indian Department, they are likely to take

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> what they consider a just revenge on the Whitemen who have come, contrary to their wishes, and scattered themselves over their country. When told that if they started fighting as they threatened, it could only end in their extermination, the reply was 'We may as well die by the Whitemen's bullets as of starvation.' "
>
> (Moodie, 1963)

Indeed in 1898 or 1899, there was an incident in which after a group of Klondikers ardeously pushed their wagons and carts up the 600 feet high slopes of the Peace River to Fort St. John, a group of Indians pushed 75 wagons back down the steep hill and destroyed them (Maurice, 1963). There is some controversy about who the Indians were, whether they were local Beavers or Prophet River People. This may have been the incident reported in the Ottawa Citizen for 30 June, 1898 as:

> "In June 1898, 500 Indians of the Fort St. John area responded to this threat (of the Klondikers) by blocking the route of the police and the miners and demanding a treaty, stating that some of their horses had been shot and that the influx of so many men into their country would drive away the fur-bearing animals."
>
> (reported in Daniels, 1976)

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The order of the Governor-in-Council (27 June 1898) which was furnished to the Treaty Commissioners includes "...a report was received some time ago from the Commissioner of the Northwest Mounted Police, as to the advisability of steps being taken for the making of a Treaty with the Indians occupying the proposed line of route from Edmonton to Pelly River...that the Beaver Indians of the Peace and Nelson Rivers as well as Sicannies and Nihanies, were inclined to be troublesome."

Various recorded incidents indicate that the conflicts were by no means limited to competition for the resources which were the basis for the Indian economy in the northeast, namely game, and moose in particular. There were also incidents of theft of Indian horses and destruction of Indian traps and snares set along various trails. In one such incident, prospectors were travelling the Halfway trail to Ft. Graham. Close to the fort they travelled an Indian hunting trail which had a number of bear snares set along it. The lead pack horse ran into a snare/dead-fall set and nearly broke its neck. After the horse ran into a second snare, the prospectors walked ahead and cut five more snares. The Indians soon discovered the destruction of their snares and followed the pack trail to Ft.Graham, where, according to the author, they were quickly placated by pleas of ignorance and promises of tea, tobacco, and new snares (Haworth, 1963).

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The Halfway People undoubtedly suffered from the tragic effects of the 1910 and 1918 epidemics, as did the other northeast bands. In the Fort St. John HBC Journals for 27 December, 1910, there is a mention of 11 deaths among people trading into Hudson's Hope. (To further evaluate the effects of the epidemics, requires access to the HBC Hudson's Hope Journals, if they exist).

One information vignette from the narrative of the first big-game expedition into the region clearly shows the Halfway People's sense of their proprietory right to the animal populations on their hunting lands. In the summer of 1912, after following the then abandoned RCMP trail for part of its distance, the expeditcn collected specimens of mountain sheep and caribou in the headwaters region of the Graham and Halfway Rivers. On their return to the Peace,they came across a band of Halfway People who, according to Vreeland, the expedition leader, had just returned from hunting on the " Nelson River" (probably the headwaters of the Sikanni Chief or the Prophet Rivers). The band had just cut a new trail from the headwaters of "Stone Creek," as the Indians called it in their own language (i.e. The Chowade) across the 4,800 foot pass into the headwaters of the Graham. This was where they encountered the expedition. The band's reaction to the intruders

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is quite revealing. "They frowned unpleasantly at the sight of our sheep and caribou, which they said were their sheep and caribou." (Vreeland, 1963).

Trapline Registration

The general history of the trapline registration period included under the discussion of the Blueberry Band's Land Use and Occupancy, provides a general picture of the type of difficulties encountered by all of the area's bands. In the Trapline Registration Correspondence, there is in addition, scattered information about the land use of specific hunting groups during this period.

As was mentioned, during the earlier round of discussions about Trapline Registration, Mr. M. Thurber, Chief Game Inspector for B.C., met with a group of Indians at Hudson's Hope in 1926. From the correspondence, it appears that there were people from the Hudson's Hope and Moberly Lake Bands. He was sufficiently impressed at the meeting to endorse the Band's requests (see p.67), which, had they been followed, would have avoided the difficulties and ensuing loss of trapping areas during this period. From his letter, it seems that the actual plan for the traplines was not clear at this point; it wasn't clear if a registered trapline was to be just that, i.e., a line, or rather a trapping area. As we have seen, this confusion was carried over to the Indian registration and led to considerable hardship even when Indians did register. Thurber recognized from the Hudson's Hope discussions that White and Indian trapping patterns and needs were quite different.

> "I propose that wherever possible the Indians shall register a trapline but I realize that the Hudson's Hope and

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> Moberly Lake Bands hunt more or less in families, and that possibly an area is more suitable to their requirements than a trapline. Their movements are governed more by 'jabone' and their food supply than those of the Whiteman. I think therefore, that this district will have to be worked on a combination of traplines for the Whiteman and traplines and trapping areas for the Indians."[1]

As we have seen, this was not the procedure followed. In fact, it is more likely that it worked the other way around, with the Indians registering lines in between larger White trapping areas, and only obtaining their larger trapping areas in the 1930's and '40's. The correspondence shows that there were three Halfway 'traplines' as of 1933 (Johnnie Cryingman, Thomas Hunter, and Lilly and Band).[2] From the material available, it isn't clear how large these areas were. It may be that they were similar to the small areas registered to the Fort St. John Band, or they might have been as large as the present lines.

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1. Letter to H. Laird, Indian Agent, Grouard, Alberta from M. Thurber, Chief Game Inspector for B.C., 9 June 1926.
2. Report on Trapline Registration in the Peace River District, concerning Indians of the Moberly Lake, Halfway River, and Fort St. John Reservations. T. Van Dyk, Inspector i/c 'D' Division Game, Prince George, B.C.

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Nonetheless, there were disruptions and difficulties for the Halfway People, just as there were for the Fort St. John People. This can be seen from the comments of the local Game Warden in 1933 about Halfway hunting groups:

> "During the winter of 1913, Lilly was trapping along the Sikanni Chief River, he moved to the Halfway River last winter, where he was brought in for interfering with Robert White's line. This fall he was reported to be at the Halfway again, but when a patrol was made to that area, he had moved away."[3]

and "Dan Butler is registered on the headwaters of Nick Creek (probably Nig Creek); he has a band of young Indians with him and they will trap wherever they find an opening."[3]

and "Atla and Dick trapped the winter of 1931 along Bulldog Creek, a tributary of Cypress Creek,; they did not trap there last winter and this season are reported to be with Dan Butler."[3]

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3. Report on the conditions of the traplines in regard to Indians. From Game Warden G.M. Kerkhoff, Fort St. John to Inspector Van Dyk, Prince George, B.C.

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From these comments, we get a feeling, not only of the specific areas trapped by some of the Halfway hunting groups at this time, but also of the general flexibility of hunting-trapping areas and hunting group composition that were the basic patterns of the Indian economy. And we get an idea of the fundamental conflict between a fixed registered trapline system and the more flexible land use system required for the northeast Indians to pursue their big-game economy.

By 1935, Halfway traplines were registered to Ackla, Dan Butler, Thomas Hunter, Antoine Hunter, Lilly, and Moses.[4] The trapline registration cards available to us show that the present Moses trapline was registered by 1935, the Hunter and Fox lines by 1937, the Metecheah and Jackson lines by 1943, the Field line by 1951, and Peter and Charlie Butler's lines by 1963. It isn't clear from these records if these were in fact the dates of first registration of the lines, or if registration of some of these lines were earlier. At least one of the lines, the Metecheah, was purchased from a White trapper. In addition from discussions with Hugh Brody, it appears that two lines were lost or sold to White trappers, one in the 1930's or '40's. These are the lines (one on Cypress Creek and the

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4. Letter to G.M. Kerkhoff, Fort St. John Game Warden to Dr. H.A.W. Brown, Indian Agent, Fort St. John, 6 March 1935.

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other on the middle Cameron River) that presently separate the two southern Halfway trapline blocks. They are currently registered to Eileen Simpson and Patrick Brady, local ranchers. In addition, the Ackla trapline, covering the headwaters region of the Halfway and Graham Rivers, was sold because the family considered it was too distant to use.

Halfway -- from the inside

Thomas Hunter and his family came to the Halfway country in 1912 from the Ospika River, just west of the Halfway watershed. Thomas' comments about the movements and hunting patterns of his family and the other Halfway hunting groups have provided a good picture of the band's seasonal rounds and their land use since 1912. What became apparent in these discussions was two events that led to significant disruptions and dislocations in land use: the trapline registration and the move from Stoney to the Reserve. Nonetheless, the Halfway People have a strong sense of continuity in their land occupancy. In discussing the trapline registration, I asked which areas were hunted before the registration. I was adamantly told "The same thing, up the Halfway to the headwaters." This is not to say that there haven't been important losses of the

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Band's hunting grounds. Rather it is a statement of continuity and a sense of the band's view of their claims to land areas, even though they haven't hunted in these areas in recent years because of travel distances from the Reserve and conflicts over these areas with different user groups. One example of this latter point is the Graham and Halfway headwaters region, which was lost to sports hunting outfitters sometime in the 1950's. Prior to this the area was an important summer hunting area. Since the allocation of the region to sports hunting outfitters, the People have stayed out because of various kinds of pressure. (It wasn't clear from our discussions if these were simply pressures exerted by the outfitters or if they were 'warned-off' by the Game Wardens as well). Although these descriptions rely heavily on Thomas' comments, many other band members, Billy Fox in particular, contributed to the discussions.

The Hunters moved to the Halfway after the death of Thomas' mother in 1911. Before that they had hunted up the Ospika and the Finlay Rivers to Fort Graham. Game had been scarce on the Ospika and the hunting group went through periods of starvation. At the time of the move, the Halfway People were hunting throughout the Halfway watershed, and at times on the headwaters of the Sikanni Chief. According to

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Thomas, "At that time it was all Indian country." In 1912, game was also very scarce in the Halfway country. In the summer the band travelled to the headwaters region of the Sikanni Chief, where there were known populations of mountain goat, mountain sheep and caribou, and a number of relatively large mountain lakes. From Thomas' comments, it appears that this was a regular pattern for the halfway People at times of scarcity of their main food species, i.e. the more distant populations of mountain ungulates and the fish in the mountain lakes would act as fall-back reservoirs at times when game was scarce on their closer hunting areas. This probably explains the band's shocked reaction to the discovery of the big-game expedition (also in 1912) on their hunting grounds. The expedition was in fact returning with animals from the band's emergency store at a time when other game was scarce and the band had been going through times of starvation.

Although the Sikanni Chief area was used irregularly as needed, the regular hunting rounds took people to the headwaters region of the Graham, Halfway, and Chowade Rivers. In July and August, the hunting groups would travel to these headwater regions to hunt moose, and whistler, and fish at

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Robb Lake, at the head of the Halfway. In these moves the people were partly following the seasonal movements of moose, as they moved into their higher summer pasturage. Thomas hinted at a possible relation between Europeans leaving the country to fight in World War I and the return of animals such as caribou. He also feels partly responsible for the return of caribou, through his own management.

> "When I came here (1912) there were no caribou. One old man told me there had been lots of caribou in this country at one time. About 1913, I used to trap all over. At that time, I see caribou track; two caribou there. I tell all the boys don't shoot them. Pretty soon, 2-3 years, I got some few caribou. Now today, I don't know how many caribou there."

Following the summer hunt, they would return to their main base with supplies of dry-meat. And in October, some of the people would travel down to Hudson's Hope along the pack trail down the Halfway and across Butler Ridge to get their supplies of tea, flour, etc. The one-way trip taking 3-4 days.

There was a HBC trading post at Hudson's Hope, a Revillon Freres Trading Company Post, and one other. The first two were 'out-posts' of the main trading posts at Fort St.John.

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In 1906, and presumably for some time before and after this date, these posts were only occupied when the Hudson's Hope and Moberly Lake People were in the vicinity, during the late fall and winter months (Robertson, 1963).

After getting their winter trapping supplies, the people would return to their main base for dispersion to the winter trapping areas. Prior to being based at Stoney, the Hunters had built 'cabins' at Ronny Anderson's (probably the Anderson Ranch, just north of the junction of the Cypress and the Halfway), but they mostly lived in and travelled with teepees. The 'cabins' referred to by Thomas could be winter teepees, made of split logs set vertically and chinked with moss. Prior to the trapline registration, Thomas' group trapped on Cypress Creek and probably used the teepee and cabin site at the Anderson's as their main base.

It is important to note that here, as was the case in Blueberry, people had a generally good relationship with the early settlers whose remote homesteads were on the Indian hunting grounds. In some cases, the histories of these early settler families and their economies were closely tied to those of the Indians. Brady, another early settler who later married a woman from Blueberry (according to Brody) operated as a fur trader and opened a small store at the mouth of

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Cypress Creek in 1914 or thereabout. Thomas remembers him as 'a good man.' Brady would travel down to Hudson's Hope with a string of 30 pack horses to pick up supplies for his store. Brady's nearby store was one of the reasons that Stoney became a focus for the band's residence-travel rounds.

After Brady's store closed, Teddy Green, an Englishman, had a series of three stores in the area. The first was on the Halfway, near the confluence of the Chowade; the second was at the mouth of the Stoney; and the third was at the Federal Ranch, on the lower Graham River. Brady continued as a local fur buyer, trapper, and rancher after his store closed.

Hudson's Hope also continued to be an important location in the band's seasonal rounds, even with the small stores nearby. It served as a summer meeting place for Halfway and East and West Moberly Lake families. Pow-wows were held in many places, but in particular at Hudson's Hope during Treaty time in the summer. It also was a re-supply depot for the local traders, and continued to provide occassional employment for the Halfway Indians. Thomas worked on an occassional basis for the Bay over a 40 year period.

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When the Hunters were based at Stoney, they trapped primarily along the Chowade, Moose Creek, (a tributary of the Stoney on the south side), Horseshoe Creek and Blue Grave Creek (until the Blue Grave was allotted to White trappers). They would follow a circuit up the Chowade to Moose Creek and then over to the Horseshoe or the Blue Grave to the Halfway River; and from there back to Stoney. After the traplines started to be registered, Thomas applied for and got the Chowade River, Horseshoe Creek and the Blue Grave. At a later date (possibly only 8 or 9 years ago), there was a dispute over the Blue Grave, and that section is now part of the line of a White trapper. The band seems to have lost or sold the Cypress Creek trapping area to Brady in the 1930's. Prior to the loss of this trapping area, the Hunter group would travel up Coal Creek, a tributary flowing into the Chowade from the north, across to the Cypress and back to Stoney. In mid-winter, at Christmas time, there frequently was another visit to Hudson's Hope.

The winter trapping period was followed by the spring beaver hunt and a trip to Hudson's Hope to sell furs. During those times in the summer when people were camped near Hudson's Hope, the streams draining nearby Butler

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Ridge were important moose hunting area; in particular the valleys of the Ground Birch, Kobes, Lynx, and Farrell Creeks.

During our discussions, we attempted to mark the band's trail system and travel routes on maps. The insights gained from this exercise are quite important. Although Thomas roughly marked in trails from the Ospika to the Halfway; to the Sikanni Chief; along the Halfway, the Graham, the Chowade, Moose Creek, Blue Grave Creek, and several trails to the Peace, the idea of trying to put on paper a life-time's travel and extensive land use was mind boggling. His comment was: "So many trails! There are trails all over the place!"

As mentioned earlier, the move from Stoney to the Reserve took place in 1961. Until the move, the band followed the seasonal rhythm of dispersal and aggregation described above. The move is looked on with mixed feelings. The superior ranching lands on the Reserve are acknowledged, but many of the social problems experienced by people in recent years are blamed on the move. There is a real sense of loss, although many of the younger people who were raised on the Reserve would be reluctant to move back, as was brought out during our discussions.

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I think that it's fair to say that at Halfway in recent years, the hunting and trapping economy has become mainly a hunting economy. Trapping continues, but is not as serious an activity as in the past. Since the move, trapping has become physically difficult. The Reserve is surrounded by White traplines and the distances to the community traplines require extended trips. For this reason, it is not possible to make an adjustment to one day or several day trapping trips. This pattern of short-term trapping trips onto nearby trapping lands has enabled many of the more traditional northern Indian bands to maintain a trapping economy after taking up a more sedentary residence pattern on Reserves. What this means can be seen on the community's trapping map (Map). In the more recent years, people have trapped in two areas: on the now distant band traplines and on the very limited Reserve area. It goes without saying that a community trapping economy cannot be run on a 10,000 acre area.

The Reserve is also distant from the mountain hunting and fishing locations that were part of the summer harvest round. At Stoney, moose, caribou, whistler, and fish were part of the seasonal fare. In July and August, people used to hunt caribou up the Graham at Horn Creek and

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at the headwaters of the Halfway and fish in Robb Lake.But this hasn't been done since 1960. Fishing around the Reserve is also difficult due to low populations, but in the mountain rivers and lakes, there are large fish populations. To get to the headwaters region from the Reserve by horseback is a very long trip. Although the areas are also quite a distance from Stoney, the trip was feasible.

The Halfway Hunting Economy and Land Use

In spite of the difficulties experienced by people due to the move from Stoney, the Halfway Band probably has the most vigorous hunting economy in the area. The bush-food harvests are dominated by moose, as it undoubtedly was in the past, and supplemented by small game, deer, bear,beaver, and admixtures of waterfowl, fish, and a variety of other animals. In a sense what has been reduced by the move is the diversity of the animal species contributing to the economy. I qualified this statment because while such animals as whistler, fish, and perhaps caribou still make inputs to the economy, their importance has been significantly

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reduced. The reason that the band has been able to maintain its hunting is the 'local' abundance of moose. Food needs previously supplied by a variety of moose populations and by the mountain animals have been made up by increased local harvests. And that undoubtedly means an increased dependence on moose. At the same time, it is important to realize that the change to a more sedentary residency pattern has resulted in a more intensive dependence on moose habitats within several day's travel radius of the Reserve. This makes the economy relatively fragile when considering the agricultural developments and sports hunters competition on these lands.

During our interviews, we briefly discussed local moose ecology. The discussions that follow about moose and other resource animal species are based on these conversations. It is the people's intimate knowledge of moose behaviour and seasonal movements that are the basis for an efficient hunting economy. There are no definite seasonal migrations, rather the moose change habitat seasonally. They move around quite a bit in winter, but not as much in summer. In winter they stay in the river valleys, close to areas of willow. During mild winters, they stay at higher elevations, but in severe winters, they generally come down into the lowlands around the lower Halfway and

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the Reserve, sometimes crossing the River. In March they start moving back up the mountains. As the leaves appear they progressively follow the green growth up the mountain slopes. The leaves don't appear on the higher slopes until May or June. In the fall, they move down from the summer pasture as soon as the deep snow starts to set on the slopes and upper river valleys.

In the summer months, bulls and cows don't generally stay together. They usually occupy different feeding grounds until the rutting season in the fall, when they gradually move to the same areas. There are no specific rutting or mating grounds; mating can take place anywhere. In spring and summer, the bulls are the first to move up the slopes, with the cows following as the calves get older. When calving starts, the cows stay close to the rivers, so that they can escape wolves by moving into the water. They usually don't calve far from water, although at times they do calve on higher grounds.

From the discussions, it appears that the Butler Ridge moose population has become increasingly important to the Halfway People. This area was used in the past as a moose hunting area when people were camped near Hudson's Hope. The moose stay on the ridge slopes or in the river

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valleys draining the ridge year round. These valleys include Kobes, Ground Birch, Farrell, and Lynx Creeks. These areas are close to the Reserve. Because of their accessibility, they are of key importance to the current Halfway hunting economy. In the winter, the moose move down the Ground Birch. If the winter is mild, they remain in the upper valleys. With the increase in farming and ranching activities in the valleys, however, the feeling is that the moose are becoming scared and not coming down in their former numbers.

For the actual hunting of moose in summer, although the Chowade and the Cypress are reputed to be the best places, the higher grounds of the streams draining Butler Ridge are among the most intensively used areas now because of their accessibility from the Reserve. Similarily, in winter, the Ground Birch valley is an important hunting area. The use of these areas require crossing the Halfway, which is difficult at high water times. (Billy Fox suggested that the band would like to have a boat-cable ferry to cross the river at these times. While horses can swim the river, people have difficulty). On the Reserve side of the river there are too many nearby ranches for comfortable moose hunting.

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The Cameron River valley is also extensively hunted from the Reserve. It is reputedly a good place for moose, bear, and other game, and is the best place for deer. There are two species of deer on the Halfway hunting grounds, mule and white-tailed. The habitat of both species are similar. They generally stay in the timber in winter or on the side hills and disperse in summer to places where there is good feed. The mule deer are the more abundant of the two. There was a catastrophic winter about 5-6 years ago for the mule deer. Due to a severe winter with deep snow conditions, the populations suffered a high mortality. Many deer died and their caracasses littered the hills. According to the Halfway People, they started coming back in numbers during the spring of 1978. The white-tail deer are recent arrivals, only expanding into the country 5-6 years ago. Thomas said that he had never seen them before; Billy Fox shot one and didn't know what it was. Their numbers are on the increase, but they are still relatively few.

The Cameron is equally a good place for bears. Black bear den on the dry hills where there is no spring water. They can be hunted in the dens, but that is rare since it is a matter of luck in finding the dens. The summer, after the Saskatoon berries ripen on the side hills, is a good time to hunt the bears as they feed on the berries. Along the Cameron

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and in areas across from the Reserve, there are patches of Saskatoons. There is considerable concern over the safety of eating bear meat. Bears were regularly eaten until the advent of predator control poisoning programs, both by the government and local ranchers. The poison program is also looked on with apprehension in terms of its effects on trapping, since the carnivores which are the mainstay of trapping (Marten, lynx, etc.) will also take the poisoned bait.

Grizzly bears were hunted higher in the mountains. They move up the mountains to den in the winter, but come down the river valleys in spring and spend part of the summer in the low country where they can find berries.

Whistlers (hoary marmot) live on the skree slopes and meadows of the higher mountains. They are hunted with considerable enthusiasm for their meat and fat. Grizzlies often stay in the mountains in summer to hunt whistler. Whistlers are abundant on the headwaters of the Graham, Cypress and Halfway. Because of the move from Stoney they don't figure as regularly in the summer hunting round as they did in the past.

The same is true of the other montane species, mountain goat, mountain sheep, and caribou. Sheep stay in alpine pastures throughout the year. Although most animals

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come off the mountains in the winter because of the snow depth, the sheep remain in areas where the constantly blowing winds blow off the snow cover. There are sheep populations at the head of the Chowade, Cypress, and Graham Rivers. There are also populations of goat in the headwaters region. The caribou stay up in the mountains like the sheep. Tracks are occassionally seen up the Chowade. When the band lived at Stoney, there were more caribou than at present. The recent reduction of the population is blamed on hunting pressure from the outfitters.

There are no elk around the Reserve, but tracks have been seen up the Chowade. The feeling is that the elk are dispersing from the Sikanni Chief, Prophet River, and Tschode areas where the populations are increasing.

As elsewhere in the area, spring is the most important time of year for beaver. There is some snaring when the ice is still thin, but most of the beaver come from the spring hunt -- which combines moose hunting, waterfowl harvests, and muskrat and fine-fur trapping as well. The 'good' places mentioned were around Horseshoe and Blue Grave Creeks. Muskrat are shot or trapped in the spring on the Horseshoe, Blue Grave, and the Chowade. Mid-winter trapping is usually for the carnivorous mustelids (marten, mink, etc.), squirrel,

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and lynx. Foxes are rare, their place probably taken by coyote. There are also few otter, but they seem to be increasing in number.

Among the small game animals, rabbits are abundant cyclically and are snared and shot in willow and low jack pine thickets. Near the Reserve, good areas include the gravel bars and the local goose and duck ponds. Porcupine are not abundant; the odd catch is a memorable occassion. There are four species of grouse in the hunting areas: spruce grouse, blue grouse, ruffed grouse, and an occassional sharp-tailed grouse. The latter two species are known for their cyclic abundance. The blue grouse is a mountain species with a highland-lowland migration pattern. They come down to Stoney in numbers in early spring.

In the past, during summer hunting trips a lot of fishing would go on at Robb Lake, Chinaman Lake, Emerslund Lake, and in the streams and rivers. The fish can be seen in the clear rivers and could be caught efficiently with a baited line. This is not feasible in muddy rivers like the Halfway and the Blue Grave. As a consequence since the move, fish have not played as important role in the diet.

From this discussion, it can be seen that reliance on moose in recent years (i.e. since the move) has increased.

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The Halfway People are quite concerned about the status of the moose populations. Based on population estimates derived from reading moose tracks on their hunting grounds they feel that the populations are presently low. There is a sense of frustration over the numbers of sports hunters flocking into the Halfway each fall. They experience the evidence of gross wastage of moose kills, with only the more choice parts packed out of the bush by the sports hunters. They also see seismic work crews with moose carcasses in their camps and rifles in their travel vehicles. Besides the sense of competition for moose, they also feel a real loss in the management of animal populations on their hunting lands. From the B.C. Fish and Wildlife statistics, it is clear that the Halfway country is an important sports moose hunting area. There is an influx of hundreds of moose hunters into the area during the fall, 72.0 % of them in 1977 coming from outside of the Peace River country (Map). The new road and seismic cut network makes a large part of the hunting area accessible with 4-wheel drive vehicles.

> "We can't go any place in hunting season. You just move in the bush and they fire at you. Too many people start moving in over here, from Vancouver, all over the country. They say lots of moose over here. That's why we want to stop that, you know.

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> Around Mile 143, Horseshoe Creek and around here (Mile 95), we want to stop those guys. It's pretty hard to go hunting around hunting season. Too many trucks, we've just got to stay here. Even right across the river on the seismic lines, they drive the Bombadiers and get moose in there in hunting season. Any place in the bush you move and they shoot you."
>
> Billy Fox

There are also conflicts at Halfway with the more recent resident ranchers.

> "Farmers move onto a registered trapline and build their house and say 'You can't hunt or trap here!' They've got nothing to do with a registered trapline. They say you can't hunt or trap on the rivers, that belongs to them too. Game Department said that 75 feet on the river, the farmers don't have anything to do with. They put fences across and don't want us to get beaver on their land. On my Dad's trapline, there won't be places to hunt beaver pretty soon."
>
> Jasper Wokeley

The other recongized major problem is the distance of the Reserve from the Band's trapping territories.

> "Last winter we trapped quite a few otter around the Reserve, but we can only trap

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> on the Reserve. The area on the other side of the River and around the Reserve are part of a Whiteman's trapline.Across the River is Ardill's trapline. Our traping areas are quite a way from the Reserve! To go to Stoney you have to go to Pink Mountain (turn off on the Alaska Highway) and drive in. They're going to log up the Chowade and if they put in a road we could go up to Stoney directly."
>
> Billy Fox

This is the irony, a road up the Halfway to Stoney would also make it more accessible for the sports hunters. The logging would have the same kinds of impacts on squirrels and marten as occurred on the Blueberry streams.

What the Band wants is clear. A hunting territory for their exclusive use. This was voiced a number of times during our discussions. The purchase of more productive traplines close to the Reserve would also be of value.

> "We'd like a hunting territory of our own to avoid these types of problems:Cypress, up the Halfway, the Chowade and the Graham. Only for our hunting."
>
> Billy Fox

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CHAPTER VII

Doig River Band

In the last chapters we discussed the Blueberry and Halfway Bands' land use and occupancy. In these chapters we also discussed the more recent history of these bands. This was intended to provide a frame work for understanding the history of the northeast bands in general during this century, since the general patterns hold true for all the Fort St.John area bands. Some differences do exist between the harvest patterns of the bands whose traditional hunting areas cover the lowland forests and those who hunt in the foothills. The Halfway and Moberly Lake Peoples are hunters of the foothills; while the Doig and Blueberry People are hunters of the lowland forests of the Beatton watershed. In the sections on the historical land use of the Blueberry People we were also discussing the general patterns that were equally a part of the hunting, movements, and annual rounds of the Doig People. The same is true of the discussion of the Halfway Band's land use: the particulars are unique to that band, but the general pattern was also followed by the Moberly Lake Peoples.

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Because of our time constraints, we will not be gleaning the historical records for what they have to say about Doig land use and seasonal movements. These documents (HBC journals, travellers' accounts, trapline registration correspondence, etc.), however, contain a wealth of information about the Doig People. This is not particularly surprising, since the old Fort St.John trading post was established to trade with nearby Indians. From these records, it appears that the Doig hunting groups formerly included the lands immediately northeast of Fort St.John within their hunting area. They were, however, pushed progessively north to their current hunting areas and traplines on the northern edge of agricultural development by the influx of White settlers who homesteaded the agricultural lands north of Fort St. John. This is not to say that they didn't use the lands they currently hunt on in the past, rather it speaks to the loss of former hunting and trapping areas. In our conversation during the mapping program, we actually asked people where they had hunted and trapped prior to moving to the Reserve. The answer we got was a clear and surprised (at having the question asked at all) "The same place."

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Introductory Orientation

The Doig People have traditonally hunted the lands to the east of the Beatton River, north into the Milligan Hills and east to the Clear Hills of Alberta. This is a country of low rolling hills, with bogs and muskeg at the northern extreme, rising into the hills in the north and the Clear Hills Plateau on the east.

The band is culturally Beaver, and has 114 members according to the 1978 DIA band list. Figure 7 presents a breakdown of the 1978 band list by age and sex. The band was administratively part of the Fort St. John Band until 1977, when it was split into the present Doig and Blueberry Bands. The Doig People shared the Fort St. John Indian Reserve with the Blueberry Band until it was sold. Both bands presently share the 883 acre Beatton River Reserve, although it is used primarily by the Doig People as a hunting area and as a pasture for their cattle.

The band's houses presently occupy two locations: the 2473 acre Doig River Reserve, which stradles the Doig and Osborn Rivers at their confluence; and Peterson Crossing, a small parcel of crown land leased to the band. Peterson's is located adjacent to the Beatton River Bridge crossing on the

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Doig River Band

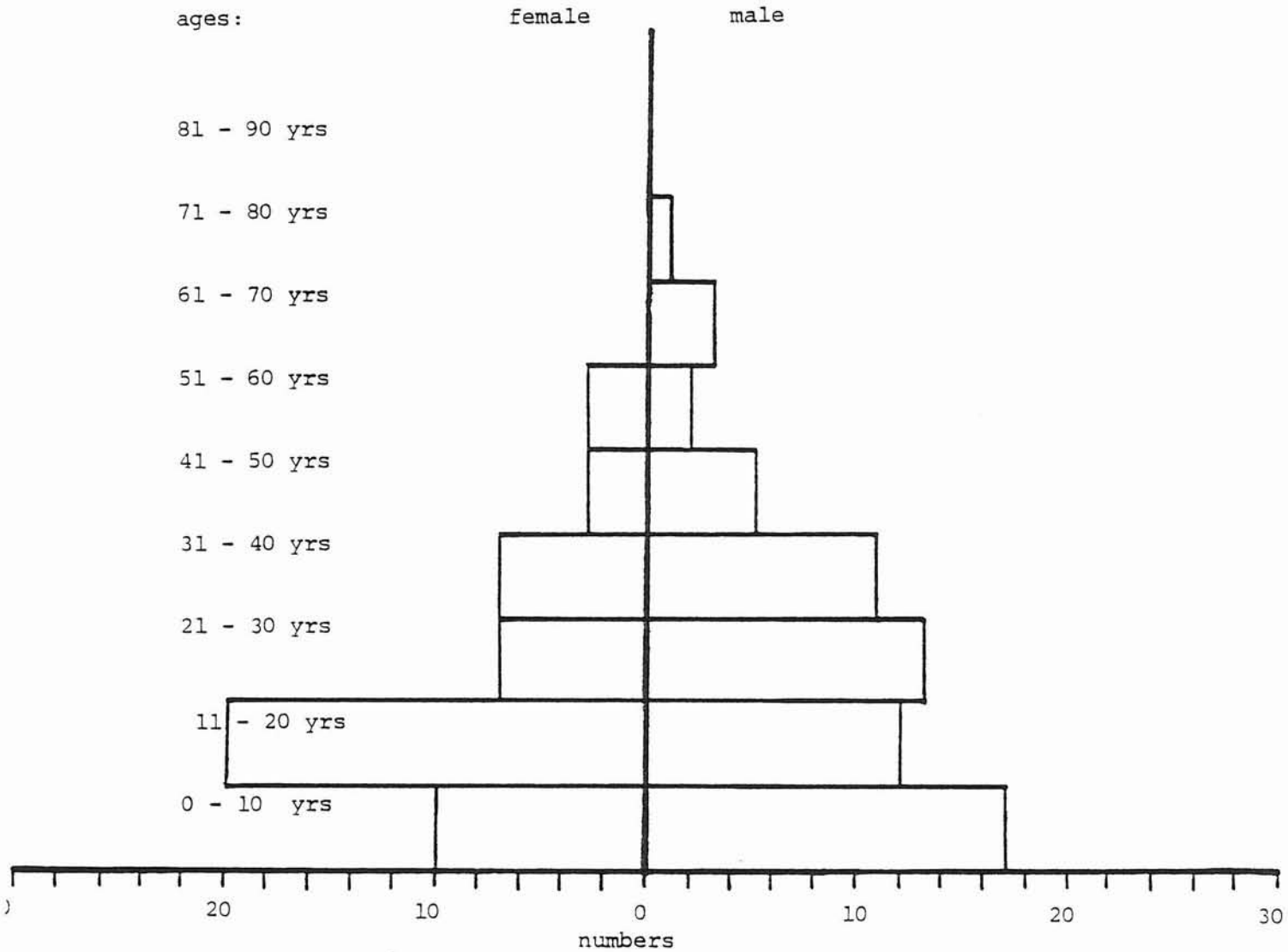

Fig. 7 Doig Band population pyramid, according to the 1978 DIA Band list.

Milligan Creek road, about 10 miles from the Reserve (Fig.8). Both the Reserve and Peterson Crossing lie on the northern fringes of the Peace River agricultural lands. Although they are surrounded by farms and ranches, which produces problems similar to the Blueberry Band's, much of the undeveloped lands close to the Doig communities are areas of poor drainage. As a result, agricultural development pressure is not as severe as for Blueberry. People still have to travel considerable distances for hunting and trapping, but there are relatively large areas of bush closer to the reserve which remain important harvest areas. Nonetheless, the people feel the threat of increased expansion of agricultural lands on their way of life very strongly, as was repeatedly brought out during our interviews.

The construction of permanent low-cost DIA housing at Doig began in the early 1960's. There are presently about 13 houses on the Reserve. There is a row of about 8 houses, spaced 15 to 20 feet apart, and several other more scattered groups of houses. The physical structure of the community is deceptive. On driving into the reserve what strikes you is a tight row of closely spaced buildings parallel to the road. The real activity center, however, is located behind the houses. Here there are moose-meat drying

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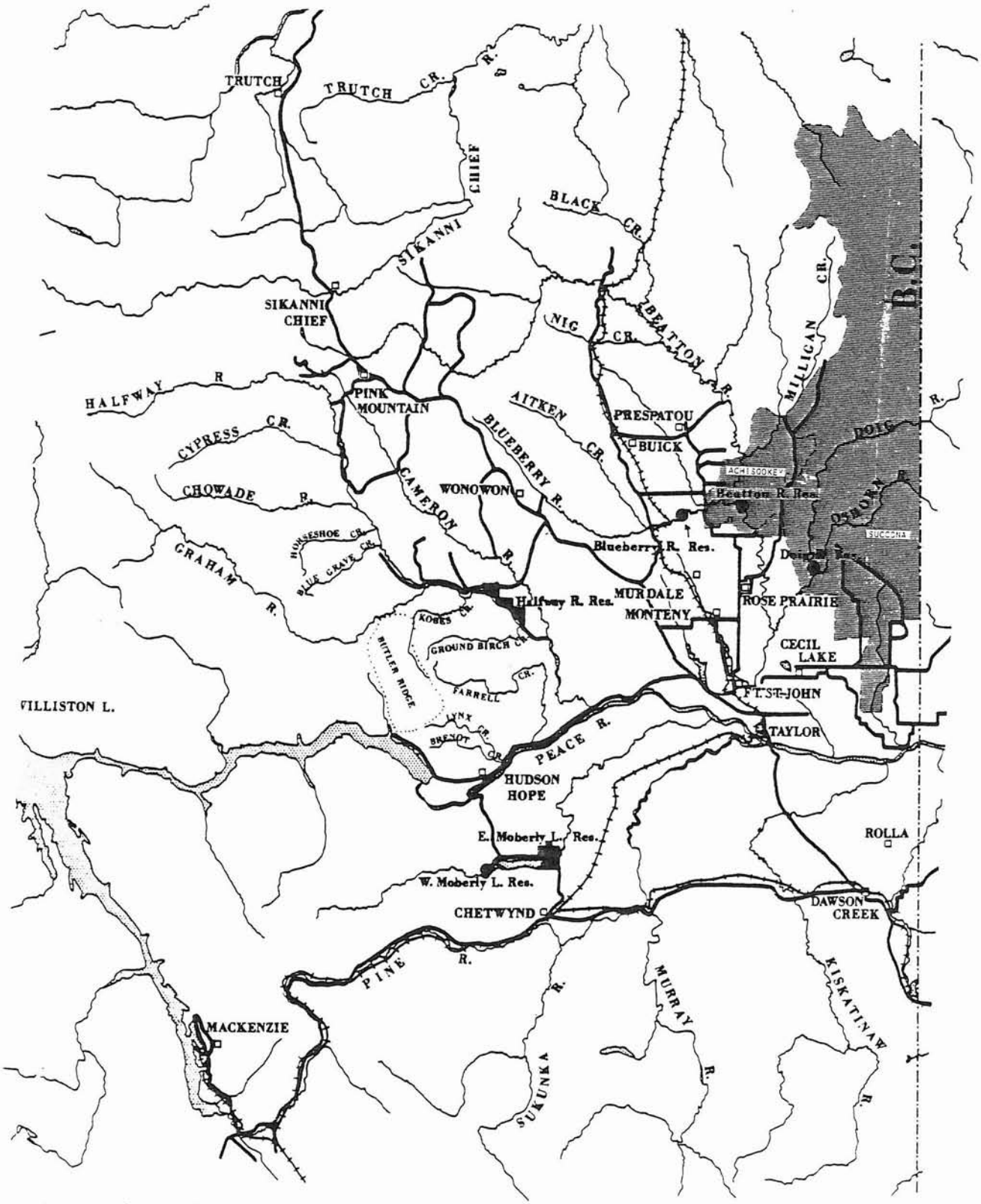

FIG. 8. The Doig Traplines and Hunting Grounds. This is a preliminary figure. Although the text refers to the Doig hunting grounds, this figure only shows the traplines. The hunting grounds will be added after the information is compiled from the map biographies.

racks, moose hide stretchers, a few scattered buildings, wood piles, saw horses, old wagons, many of the accoutrements of a hunting life style. A large log cabin was built this fall in a beautiful poplar grove above the Doig River, several miles to the north of the main village site, by a number of older men. It was occupied through the winter. One of the band families and a number of other people occupy the former teacherage. Other buildings include a laundry, a log church building, an old school building, and a number of barns and sheds which are part of the band's ranching operation. Most or all of the houses have running water and electricity.

The comments about the 'material poverty' of the Blueberry and Halfway households apply equally to Doig. Although Doig is distinctive among the area band's in having some television sets. At any one time there are several vehicles on the reserve.

The nearest store is in Montney, about 25 miles away by road (again, in reality that means a 50 mile round-trip). Up to several years ago there was a closer store at Rose Prairie. The distance to the store and the lack of vehicles is considered a hardship for the older people. The children are bussed to school in Rose Prairie. An interesting feature of the school is a written Beaver language program

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for the students. One of the band members and a local missionary, who developed the written language, teach the course. Several of the older children attend the high school in Fort St. John. The Doig Band is unique among the Fort St. John area bands in this. For these students school attendance requires a long day. They leave by bus at 7:00 A.M. and get back to the Reserve at 5:30 P.M., and then there is homework. The local hospital and the closest liquor store are in Fort St. John, about 37 miles from the Reserve.

The band operates a cattle ranch, which presently has 80-90 cattle. There are also about 100 horses on the Reserve. There were more cattle in the recent past, but they were sold, because of limited field areas to grow sufficient grain and hay to feed the cattle through the winter until fresh spring growth appears. The work of operating the ranch and the resulting employment is shared among the band members. The band is presently interested in purchasing the adjacent Foothills Ranch, in excess of 11,000 acres, which has been offered to them for $800,000.00.

About five of the band families live at Peterson Crossing. Most of the houses are simple frame log cabins, which were built by the Peterson people. The cabins have no services, no electricity or running water.

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The Old Fort St. John Reserve at Montney

Following the sale of the Fort St. John Reserve, many of the Doig families and some of the Blueberry families built cabins at Peterson's and the community became the summer residence focus for these families during the 1950's. From the information which is available to us, it isn't clear what the status of Peterson's was before the sale of the Reserve. It may have initailly been a cabin site of Oker, a recognized Prophet of one of the Doig hunting groups.

It is also not entirely clear what the status of the Fort St. John Reserve was for the band, since we didn't have a chance to conduct formal 'cultural' mapping interviews at Doig. The inforamtion we do have is indirect, having come out of our discussions at Blueberry. Judging from the comments made during these interviews, the Montney Reserve served the same function, as a summer meeting and camping place, for both bands. It was undoubtedly occupied off and on during the warm months as the bands dispersed to their summer moose hunting camps and returned. On a drive through the farmlands that presently covers the old reserve with some people from Blueberry, the camping areas of the Doig groups and those of the Blueberry groups were pointed out. The two areas were several miles apart, separated by a low hill. People used to regularly ride on horseback

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between the camps for visits. The present Doig Reserve had been used as a summer hunting camp for making dry-meat for winter use.

Hunting, Trapping, and the Seasonal Rounds

The band's traditional hunting lands include areas in B.C. and in Alberta (Fig.8). The seasonal rounds prior to the 1960's (which marked a change in the travel-residency pattern, following the construction of permanent housing on the reserve)and into the 1970's included the winter dispersal of hunting groups to their trapping areas on the Doig and Osborn Rivers, Milligan Creek, and Big Arrow Creek (and probably other areas: to the north of Milligan Hills, on the headwaters of the Chinchaga River, and the Clear River and its tributaries in Alberta). Following the winter trapping and spring beaver hunt, various hunting groups would rejoin for summer camping, meetings, and moose hunting. The people who live at Peterson's have been more involved with the western section of the band's traditional hunting areas, around Milligan Creek north to the Milligan Hills, while the families who live on the Reserve have traditionally hunted along the Doig and Osborn into the Clear Hills of Alberta. The area of summer meeting probably shifted

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from the Fort St. John Hudson Bay post, to the Montney Reserve and then to Peterson's. During the summer hunting period people would travel to the northern and eastern hills following the moose as they moved up the higher elevations on the Clear Hills and on the Milligan Hills. Travel was initially by horse and later by horse and wagon.

Some of the people also undertook more extensive travels following the spring beaver hunt. They would travel along a well-established trail between the old Fort St. John Reserve and Habay, Alberta, on the Hay River near the North West Territories, Alberta boundary. Some of the Doig people spent up to 2 years with the Habay people. Family ties still link the two bands, although the circuit was last made in 1945.

The moose travel back into the hills in the summer. In the case of the local Doig populations, the moose travel north to the Milligan Hills and east to the Clear Hills in Alberta. Some of the bulls may stay around in the more southerly areas close to the Reserve and provide more accessible summer hunting, but the bulk of the population moves north and east. These summer movements require people to move out of the reserve into the country to the north or the east at this time of the year to do serious hunting. On the other hand, the opposite type of movements in winter bring the moose

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down into the lowlands and river valleys close to the reserve in winter, and make the Reserve well placed for winter moose hunting.

The Doig people have one of the strongest hunting and trapping economies in the area. One of the things that struck the non-local people working on the study was the number of times the village seemed deserted during our visits because people were off hunting. The use of horse and wagon to travel to their summer hunting camps only stopped between 1973 and 1976. People still spend extensive periods at their summer moose camps, but the more distant travel to Alberta has recently stopped. In Alberta people would hunt moose for a large part of the summer and make dry-meat for winter use. It is considered a superior area for moose at this time of year. However, travel to Alberta as part of the seasonal rounds stopped 5 years ago. There seems to be two main reasons for this. Involvement with cattle ranching started 5 to 7 years ago; if people travelled to Alberta there would be no one to look after the cattle. The other reason is the band's recent increased involvement with education. The school vacation in summer doesn't leave enough time to make the round-trip. The kids leave school early in June for hunting (probably to join the beaver hunt), but the early return to school in September

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interfers with the former hunting cycle. However, while the use of wagon has gone, people still make extensive use of horses for their hunting and travel to their hunting camps.

The band has 2 registered traplines (Fig.8), the very large Succona line, which is used by nearly all band members, and the Achisookey line. They were both areas originally registered to White trappers. These lines were first registered to band hunting groups in 1935. Extraordinary as it may seem, for a period during the 1920's and 1930's the band had virtually no 'legitimate' trapping areas. They probably had very limited registered 'lines', but the large areas that they had formerly trapped were registered to White trappers. Nonetheless, they seem to have continued to occupy the area.

> "In October 1932, Victor Kostick applied for registration of a trapline along Osborn Creek and when he went out there to trap, he found that a large band of Indians under Chief Sakona were trapping all over that area. To compensate Kostick, the Milligan Creek area was registered in his name as the country was open for registration. Kostick went out to his new line this fall and found Indians all over the area. They had been trapping there all their lives and were not going to vacate. As the line is

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> registered in Kostick's name, he is entitled to it, but to enforce the law, it would mean bringing in all these Indians and their bands."[1]

The huge area covered by the Succona line, which extends into the farm-lands, of the Peace and then north of the Milligan Hills into the Kahntah River watershed, was consolidated from 5 traplines formerly held by White trappers, purchased for the Band by the Department of Indian Affairs. This is the current band trapline on which most of the trapping is done.

The other line, the Achisookey line, is being held as part of an estate. The Band has been trying to have it reallocated for general band use, but the matter has been sitting with DIA and Fish and Wildlife for several years now. A number of people have also suggested that the section of the large Wolf trapline east of the Beatton River may have originally been purchased by DIA for Doig families. The Wolf trapline is currently registered to the Blueberry Wolfs' (Fig.4). From our study records it isn't clear if the Blueberry Wolfs' and Davis' consider this area part of their trapline.

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1. Report. G.M. Kerkhoff, Game Warden, B.C. Game Department, Fort St. John Detachment, 6 November 1933.

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As a result of our work we feel that there is still a lot of confusion about trapline boundaries. The Succona line is a case in point; a number of people that we spoke to didn't realize that the official maps show it extending north of the Milligan Hills. One of the services we can supply to the communities is providing them with copies of Fish and Wildlife maps of the band traplines, which are part of the study's data.

Many of the Doig trappers use the creek beds for their trapping routes. An interesting strategy was described by Jack Askoty of Peterson's. According to Jack, the creek beds are the most productive areas for trapping the carnivorous fur bearers, which are the mainstays of mid-winter trapping in the northeast. The predatory species (marten, fisher, lynx, wolverine, coyote, mink, etc.) follow the frozen creek beds in winter. He goes back to the same areas year after year. If these animals are removed, the following year there is usually a replacement of the harvested predators by new animals. This pattern of non-rotational sustained yield will work for the more territorial predators.

Beaver hunting, on the other hand, is done on a rotational basis:

> "The last spring we've been trapping (beaver) through here. Every 2 or 3

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> years we get to down here. And we keep changing places, other places. Last spring we didn't hardly trap any (beaver) through here. We let the beavers come back up the lake..."
>
> Jack Askoty

The Doig and Peterson People, judging from their enthusiastic discussions, are among the areas most serious spring beaver hunters. Many of the people walk the streams and rivers near the Reserve on a daily basis, hunting beaver in the spring. The actual hunting isn't limited to the men, the women are just as enthusiastic beaver hunters. They walk up the river from the Reserve after the ice goes, and then back again. Again because of the ice thickness not much snaring for beaver goes on in winter.

> "In the spring time, ladies hunt and trap beaver. Set snares on the Doig River."
>
> Mary Dominic

The women and the children (when they have no school) set and tend rabbit snares.

There are differences in the trapping travel patterns between people who live at Peterson Crossing and those who live at Doig. About 2-3 years ago, a new road was con-

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structed, for the resource industries (logging and oil and gas), which crosses the Beatton River at Peterson Crossing. This road provides access into the gas and oil fields between the Doig and the Little Beaver Dam Creek, and into the Fontas logging area north of Milligan Hills. The road cuts right through the Peterson's cabins and splits Jack Askoty's cabin from his father's. In effect, it puts Peterson Crossing on a main road, with inherent advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantages include having fast moving traffic cutting through the village site. The road, however, does provide access to the Milligan Creek area. The Peterson people can easily obtain rides by hitch-hiking to their trapping areas by simply walking out of their doors. This enables them to tend their traps on a more regular basis than the Doig people. Doig is about 7 miles off the Milligan Road, on a spur road which has little traffic which makes the hitch-hiking travel strategy for trapping rather difficult.

The nearby oil deposits have posed some problems for the trapping of the aquatic fur mammal species at Doig. The gas wells are tied into a pipeline but some of the oil wells aren't. Oil produced at the isolated wells is collected by truck. Some of the Peterson's People mentioned

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oil spills by the collecting trucks and their concern that declines in the local fish populations were caused by oil pollution. Oil soaked beaver and oil slicks on the rivers were also mentioned by some of the people at Doig. Oil spills, in fact may be a periodic feature on the Doig traplines.

On a visit to Peterson Crossing in Fall 1978, I was informed about a break in an oil pipeline crossing the Little Beaver Dam and people's concern about the impact of the oil on beaver.

> "All through this creek (Little Beaver Dam) and this Nancy Creek, on every little creek that's going in there is just full of beavers...there is a big oil spillage down there. But I don't know how much damage it has already done. I am going to be walking around through there checking it out."
>
> Jack Askoty

Other concerns include the increase of cleared areas of agricultural land pushing good moose hunting areas further north. There are also the same types of conflict with local farmers over trapping that were previously discussed for the Halfway and Blueberry Bands.

> "We used to go hunting near our place (Peterson Crossing) but now because of

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> agricultural development we have to go hunting about 30 to 40 miles from our home."
>
> Albert Askoty

There is also concern over changes in animal behaviour with the encroachment of development and increases in sports hunting. The noise scares the moose and they have moved further north, even though that area has a larger wolf population. Animal behaviour is not as predictable after they have come into contact with road traffic or, in some cases, been wounded by sports hunters. Many of the people at Peterson Crossing commented that they were especially concerned about a number of reports that moose and grizzly were becoming more aggressive and charging people in the bush.

Interestingly, according to recent B.C. Fish and Wildlife statistics, the area north of Doig hasn't yet become an important moose sports hunting area. The relatively few sports hunters who have reported moose kills in this area in 1976 and 1977 have been largely Peace River area residents (Map

I cannot think of any way that would be better to conclude the discussion of Doig land use than the direct and terse comment of one of the Band members:

> "The land is important; there is nothing else that can be said any simplier than that or more important."
>
> Mackenzie Ben

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CHAPTER VIII

The East Moberly Lake Band

Introductory Orientation

The Moberly Lake People have traditionally hunted and trapped the lands south of the Peace River, east of the Rocky Mountains. The western sections of this area include the Rokcy Mountain Foothills, while to the east the lands grade into the rolling hills of the South Peace Prairie Lands. These are the lands that lie within the Pine and Moberly River watersheds. The south most section includes the drainage areas of the Sukunka and Murray Rivers, which are major tributaries of the Pine. Before the large-scale agricultural development of the Dawson Creek, Pouce Coupe, and Rolla prairies, some of the band families hunted the lands drained by the Kiskatinaw River and into Alberta as well.

Culturally the East Moberly Lake or Saulteau Band is Cree. The origins of the band are enshrouded in the mists of history. Some Cree and Saulteau (which is a branch of the Cree) Indians originally came into the northeast in the early 1800's with the westward expansion of the fur trade. Among some of the band families (the Courtoreilles and the Desjarlais in particular) there is a strong tradition of an exodus from the prairies in the late 1800's, following the Riel Rebellion. Some of the legends claim that several of the families were involved in the Frog Lake Massacre, and wandered west in fear of reprisals from the RCMP and the Canadian Government. The families stayed for several years

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in Moose Jaw, Calgary, Edson, and Jasper, and finally split into two groups. According to the legends, one of these groups settled near Moberly Lake. It is highly likely that a number of movements into the area during the 1800's produced the present band. One of the families, the Napoleans, originally hunted the Kiskatinaw River into Kelly Lake and Grande Prairie, Alberta and were living in South Peace area prior to the settlement of the Saulteau families, according to both bands traditions and the Fort St. John HBC journals. The Napoleans are tied through marriage to Hudson Hope and Doig Beaver families.

There are 186 band members listed on the 1978 DIA band list. Figure 9 presents a break-down of this band list by age and sex. The reserve consists of 4490 acres, located on the eastern shores of Moberly Lake. It was first surveyed in 1914 and allotted to the Band in 1918 (Table 2).

The band houses are scattered throughout the Reserve area. Some of them are located on or near the shore of the lake, and the rest are distributed throughout the cleared areas and wood lots. The first construction of permanent housing on the reserve took place in the early 1960's here, just as it did for the other area bands. Reserve housing is more similar to local White residences than to the basic dwellings of the other bands. Most (or possibly all) of the

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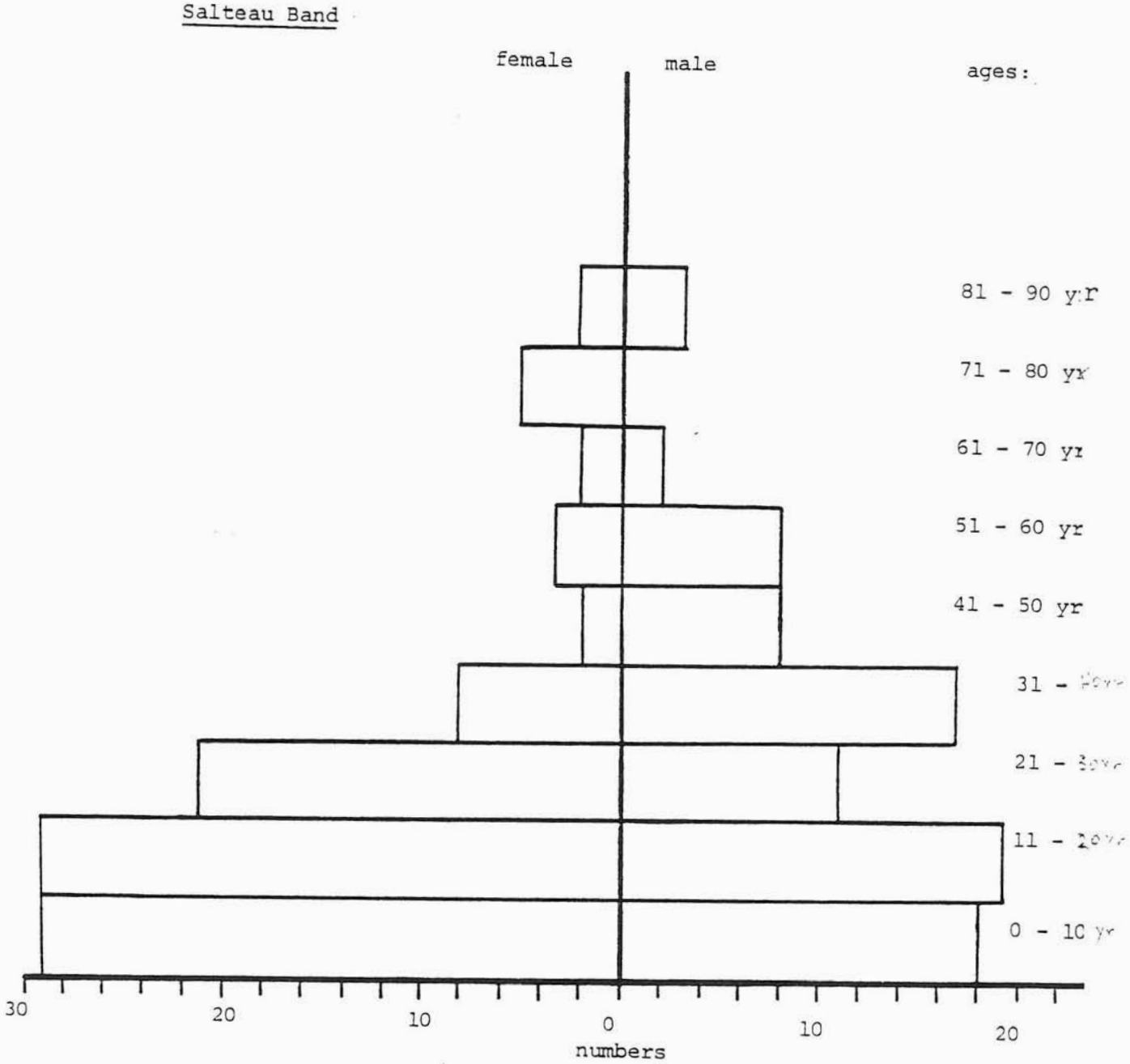

Fig. 9 Salteau Band population pyramid, according to the 1978 DIA Band list.

houses have electricity; some have running water; and several houses have telephones. Community communication is more of a problem here than on the other reserves because of the nature of the village structure. People need access to vehicles or horse to visit. Some people have complained about the breakdown of social visiting and the infrequency of band-wide festivities. In fact many of the social patterns are more similar to those of local White families than to those of the more traditional bands in the area.

Chetwyn, which is the local service, shopping, and employment center, is only 10 miles away. A local store and post office is located within a mile or so of the reserve. The paved road connecting Chetwyn and Hudson Hope (Highway 29) crosses through the reserve.

Although the reserve is presently on one of the northeast's main travel routes, it is instructive to realize how recently this connection was made. As we have seen, the Alaska Highway linking Dawson Creek and Fort St. John to the continental road system through Alberta was constructed in 1942-43. The road linking the northeast to the rest of B.C., however, wasn't built until nearly 10 years later. The John Hart Highway linking Dawson Creek with Prince George was only completed in 1952. At this time Chetwyn was a small settlement called Little Prairie, and the route from Little Prairie to the reserve was a single lane, dry-weather road. Trails and wagon tracks linked the reserve with Hudson Hope to the north. During the construction of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam in the mid-1960's the present bridge crossing the Peace near Hudson Hope was constructed and the present highway connecting Hudson Hope and Chetwyn was constructed through the reserve. The road was originally a tote road for the dam construction. The reserve and adjacent lands became linked into the transcontinental travel routes as a consequence of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam construction.

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Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing Land Use

As late as the end of the 1950's the Moberly People were still riding their horses down to the Peace along traditional trails and swimming their horses across the River when travelling to Hudson Hope. Similarly summer horse and wagon trips to Fort St. John, which were part of the seasonal hunting and trapping round, were made up until 1962. The round trip took 2 months, with people hunting as they travelled between camps. The circuit was abandoned with the advent of increased developments along the travel route and the construction of the highways. The construction of permanent housing on the reserve, which also took place at this time, probably also contributed to the abandonment of the summer travel circuit.

Once again moose are the mainstay of the hunting economy. Deer, which have recently been declining in numbers, are also an important food resource species, as are the game animals and beaver. Lynx and muskrat are also eaten, but the other fur mammals are not. Bears have a special place, but are not generally eaten today. In the past they were an important source of grease. Whistler and the mountain ungulates were also an important part of the economy in the past. Whistler are still considered a delicacy, but there has been a decline in mountain goat and caribou populations with increased development in the mountain areas and increased hunting pressure from sports hunters. The range of mountain ungulates are outside of the reduced hunting areas used by band members today. Porcupine were once moderately common, but are quite scarce today.

The band is distinctive in the area in their fishing. Moberly Lake has populations of whitefish, pike, lake trout, greyling, ling cod, and suckers. There has been a net fishery on the lake for whitefish, pike, and trout, with hundreds

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caught in the past. The net fishery came under considerable pressure from Fish and Wildlife officials about 15 years ago. There was a conflict over the declining fish numbers in the lake. Fish and Wildlife blamed the net fishery for the decline and the Moberly Lake Indians blamed the heavy use of motor boats. There is still an irregular net fishery on the lake, but the people claim that the hazards of motor boats cutting the net headlines cause serious problems and make the continuation of the net fishery unattractive. There has also been a net fishery on the Cameron Lakes and line fishing on the smaller streams and rivers.

Ducks and geese are hunted on the smaller lakes and ponds during migration in fall and spring. Interest in the waterfowl hunt, however, varies between families.

The traditional seasonal rounds were similar to those of the other foothills bands. During our interviews, Fred Courtoreille described the seasonal circuit of his family hunting group around 1917. During the winter they travelled to the headwaters of the Sukunka River. There were four families in the group and they built flat-roofed log cabins, covered with moss and earth and floored with spruce boughs. The families hunted moose, caribou, and deer and fished and trapped in the Burnt River Canyon area (a tributary of the Sukunka) through the winter. In mid-April, they travelled to Chetwyn, which was called Bob's Prairie at that time, where there was an independent trader's store. After camping there for 5-10 days, they moved to Jackfish Lake (just east of Moberly Lake) for the spring beaver and muskrat hunt. They travelled and camped around Moberly Lake for the summer. Some of the band families travelled to Hudson Hope, which was a meeting place with the Halfway People. It seems that for some of the families, Hudson Hope was not an important focus place at this

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time. Fred Courtoreille, for example, didn't travel to Hudson Hope until 1924, when he was 15.

During the fall moose hunt, the band hunting groups would travel up the Moberly River to the headwaters to make a winter stock of dry-meat. At times they would join up with the West Moberly Lake People in the fall hunt. Following this hunt, the groups would disperse to their winter trapping grounds. Some of the families would winter on the Sukunka, while other families would travel to the Pine, Murray, or lower Moberly Rivers.

Trapline Registration and Traplines

Prior to the trapline registration period the Gauthiers hunted and trapped the headwaters of the Sukunka River, Moose Creek, and Gwillim Lake. The area is presently outside of the family's trapline.

> "I don't know how my Grandfather never registered (this area). There must have been somebody else got one jump ahead of him. But that's where he'd been trapping all the time."

At present, 7 trapline areas are registered to band families (Fig.10). These are Fred Napolean's, the Gauthier's, James and Joseph Desjarlais', Phillip Davis', Tom Napoleans's, Madeline Davis', and Louis and Marvin Desjarlais' traplines. The areas of these traplines are considerably smaller than those of the other area bands'. In fact, they are closer in size to White trapper's lines. This suggests fierce competition at the time that the lines were first registered. Since the band's traditional lands are the most southerly in the region, areas of the East Moberly trapping and hunting lands

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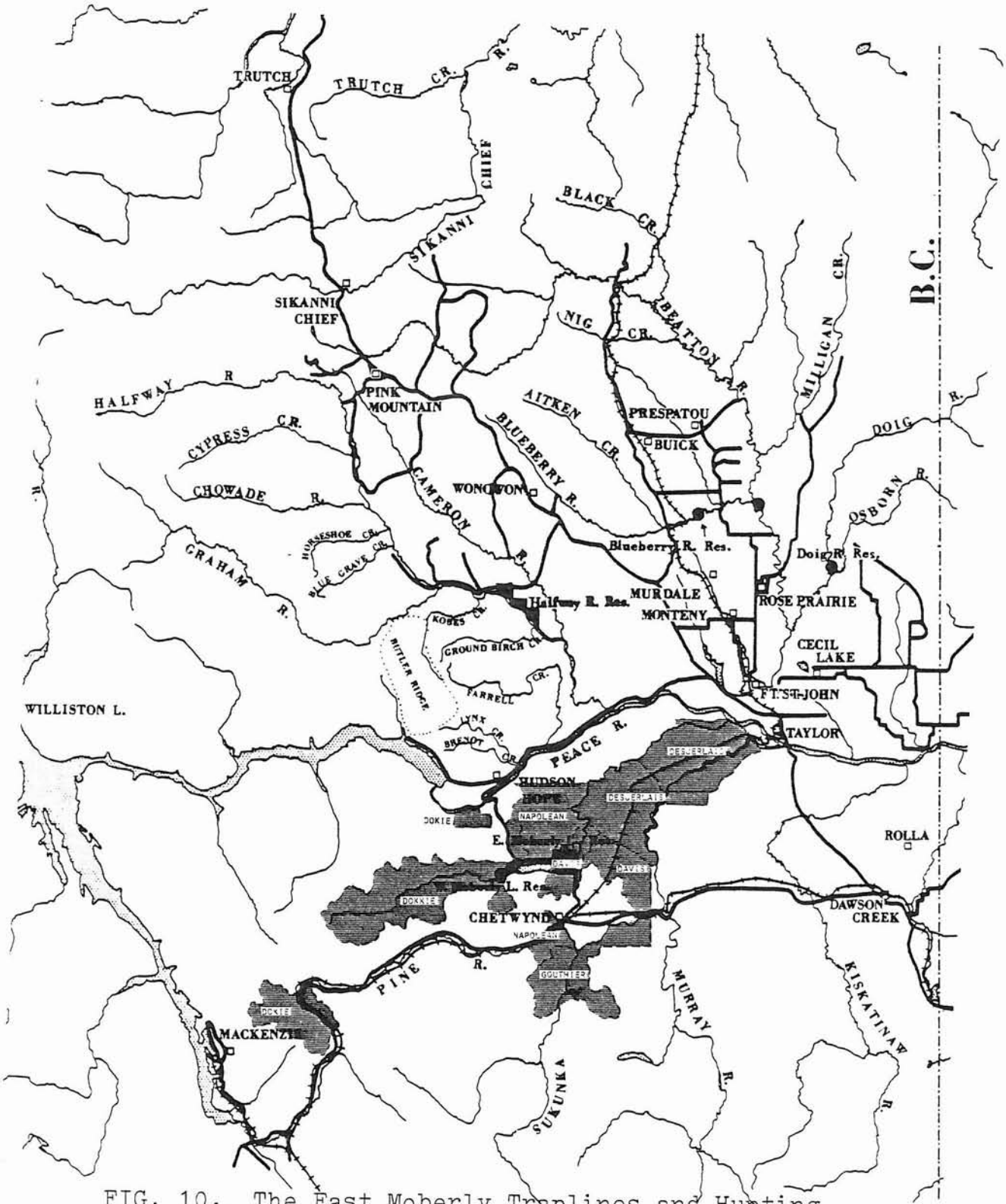

FIG. 10. The East Moberly Traplines and Hunting Grounds. (The 3 Dokie Traplines, which belong to the West Moberly Band are also shown in the figure.) This is a preliminary figure. Although the text refers to the East Moberly hunting grounds, this figure only shows the traplines. The hunting ground area will be added after the information is compiled from the map biographies.

have been subject to considerable development and settlement pressures.

According to the Registration Correspondence, in 1933 the only trapline registered to a Moberly Lake Indian was Chief Dokkie's (of the West-end Band). In 1935, traplines were registered to Dokkie, Desjarlais, and Theophile Garbitt. According to the Trapline Registration Cards, the present East Moberly Traplines were registered between 1938 and 1959 (Table 3).

TABLE 3.
First Dates of Registration of Current East Moberly Traplines, according to Fish and Wildlife Trapline Registration Cards.

Fred Napolean	1938
Alexis Gauthier	1938
James Desjarlais, Joseph Desjarlais, James Monias, Harvey Kyah	1943
Phillip Davis and Sons	1943
Tom Napolean, Frank Napolean Felix Napolean, William Napolean	1943
Madeline Davis	1959
Louis Desjarlais, Marvin Desjarlais	(Card missing in our files)

From the records available to us, it isn't certain if the families who only obtained traplines in the 1940's and 50's had recognized trapping areas before that date.

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The two Napolean traplines were originally registered to White trappers, as was Louis and Marvin Desjarlais'. Louis Desjarlais purchased his trapline for $400 cash and worked an indefinite amount of time for the original registrees because no definite price was set for the transfer.

Although the line is currently trapped by Marvin Desjarlais, it is considered relatively unproductive because of the extent of oil and gas development, ranching, and logging on it. The same seems to be true for many of the traplines. In recent years, Fred Courtoreille sold his trapline to a White trapper. This line was also originally purchased from a White trapper (in 1936). The line covered part of the areas between the Napolean and Desjarlais traplines, and the Peace River on the north. It was sold partly because Fred was too old to continue trapping and his sons were not interested in continuing as serious trappers; and partly because the family no longer considered it a productive line because of developments.

Some of the East Moberly trappers, the Gauthiers in particular, are considered to be among the most efficient trappers in the region by Fish and Wildlife officials. John Gauthier's trapping requires a concentrated effort. He generally goes out by himself or with a helper. They work hard and concentrate on particular species, handling a large volume of furs. He traps his land hard for a number of years and then lets it lie fallow to let the animal populations recover. He feels that with current fur prices, a highly motivated and efficient trapper can make $10,000 in 2 months. However, in recent years, the Gauthier trapline has experienced a decline in the populations of its fur mammals, which he too blames on the extent of development in the area.

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Band members have experienced two kinds of conflicts and pressures on their traplines, direct removal of lands and conflicts with new property owners. With the increased settlement in the area, especially following the construction of the John Hart Highway, areas of the relatively small East Moberly band's traplines have been covered by farms and ranches. Other areas on the lines have been logged, or have oil and gas wells, seismic cuts and road networks scattered throughout.

There has also been direct pressures from the settlers. In a number of cases, homesteaders moving onto their new land in the 1950's and 1960's, bulldozed or burnt trapping cabins, and barred access along traditional trails and wagon roads.

> "When I was 10 years old, I went with my Dad and Uncle Eddy to trap on the family line on the Sukunka. My Grandfather, Alexi Gauthier, had a cabin on the Pine River and I went to stay with them over the winter. They used to live there. '58 snd '59, my Dad hired a White guy to be taken out there for trapping. We'd hardly moved any stuff into the cabin when a White guy came over and said he'd just bought the land. My Dad didn't say anything but he was pretty mad. We moved down the River and lived in tents. The White guy burnt the cabin a few days after. It was -20°. That's where my Grandparents lived as trappers in winter and spring."
>
> Jim Gauthier

These conflicts are not simply historical. The band continues to have some very active trappers who continue to feel the pinch of development.

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"The farmers can only own land within 20 feet of running water. You are supposed to be able to trap on running water on farm land. Some farmers we know for quite a while and they don't bother us. They have even helped us. Local farmers don't generally bother us. There is still a lot of game and the farmers who know us don't bother us, but newer people who don't know us block roads and try to keep us out."

Oliver Gauthier

And

"(I) found 3 beaver last year and 1 last spring, just shot for fun and left. Also workers at the local sawmill were trapping on our line. I found 4 traps on our trapline in the last 2 years. As soon as you turn your head, there is someone behind you."

Oliver Gauthier

In recent years, the trapline boundaries have been reconstructed by Fish and Wildlife Officers to 'rationalize' the way the traplines are defined. From the Fish and Wildlife point of view, the losses and gains balance out. From the band members' view, however, the reconstruction of the traplines was done without consultation and a number of important areas were lost from the taplines.

"They've cut off areas from our traplines, according to new maps. The lines used to cover large areas, but now there are farms. They've cut off part of our trapline and told us later. The east boundary area has gone to Bernie Smith (a White trapper). We used to drive to the Murray (River) and then go down with boat, shooting beaver, but now we can't (because the River section is no longer part of the trapline.)"

Oliver Gauthier

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Partly because of these pressures, trapping as an important part of the economy, has significantly declined for many families. Many of the younger people no longer consider themselves trappers, although they will shoot fur-mammals as they come across them during the trapping season while they are hunting other animals. The spring beaver and muskrat hunt also continues to be important for many people, but on more of a short-term day trip basis.

Hunting and Fishing

There has been a considerable erosion of hunting land usage since 1960. The extent of this can be seen from the hunting land use occupancy maps (see also Fig.10). The present core hunting areas are centered around Moberly Lake and the adjacent lands, especially the lands to the north of the lake. The Pine and Moberly River and Boucher Lakes area are presently considered to be the band's hunting grounds. The band still maintains a vigorous hunting economy, as was borne out by our questionaire results (See Brody's Report). However, there are real concerns about the future. Band members recognize the extent of sports hunting on their lands; and they also recognize that oil and gas exploration roads and seismic-cut lines provide access routes for sports hunters.

> "Not too long ago families would go out hunting with wagons along the Pine River, Boucher Lake for 1 week to 10 days; to make dry-meat and store it for the winter; also for berries. Now there are hunters in 4-wheel drive all over the place, and people are afraid to go out for fear of getting shot. Now the game is down, roads are being built, sesmic lines, etc. and you can go anywhere in a 4 x 4...Hunters from Vancouver travel all

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this land in their 4 x 4's coming from Vancouver and all over.

The moose are getting killed off around the lake. Now you don't see too many good moose. Five to ten years ago, you could go out for 2-3 hours and get a good moose and be back. Now you have to drive 100 miles; it's the same if you go out on horse or on foot.

Up to five to ten years ago, people used to hunt quite a bit more than they do now, all over the place. Now there isn't as much hunting and trapping. There's a lot of farmers moving in and a lot of doubt (about the future). There's a lot of poachers trapping on other people's lines. When people don't use their traplines other people without traplines move in and poach."

Jim Gauthier

The same kinds of pressures also are true for fishing. Carbon Creek, which flows into the Peace west of Moberly Lake, is currently considered one of the best areas for line fishing for trout.

"They're building a road in there now and pretty soon it will be all fished out. Sukunka valley, many years ago, you could go fishing any place and catch 10 trout. Now you're lucky if you catch 4 ounces of fish. As soon as the road was built there they disappeared. Sports hunters and fishermen come from all over the place."

Oliver Gauthier

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