

# Community Excellence Award

## **Background**

The District of Taylor is submitting the Peace Island Expansion project for an award under the Leadership and Innovation Category of the Community Excellence Awards in the small municipality category.

## **Project Description**

The parameters of the project are described in the attached Softwood Industry Community Economic Adjustment Initiative (SICEAI) application. While recognizing that the project itself may not be extra-ordinary, the application for the award is being submitted for the leadership displayed in bringing a number of diverse groups together to develop a facility that was needed to serve the region. The constructed facility provides much needed access to the Peace River and promotes regional tourism due to the close proximity to the Alaska Highway.

## **Criteria for Excellence**

### Ecological

Through this park expansion +/- 400 acres of land will be protected from development and this will be protected from development and this will minimize the potential for pollution to occur.

In addition, an integral part of the development is habitat enhancement and the fostering of controlled wildlife/human interaction to educate and promote environmental stewardship. Through the creation of a replica Rocky Mountain Ranger Fort, it will also help individuals in the region to connect with an almost forgotten past. A past that co-existed with nature to a far greater extent than today's society.

### Social

The Peace Island Park expansion required the leadership of a dedicated Council to see the project through to completion. The project evolved through the positive interaction and coordination of a multitude of 'players,' including but not limited to:

B.C. Hydro  
Peace River Water Use Management Planning Team  
Federal Government (through the SICEAI)  
Peace Country River Rats  
B.C. Parks Department  
Peace River Regional District  
The Residents of Taylor  
The Taylor Municipal Council  
The Private tourism sector

It involved submission to BC Hydro for the use of the land, followed by a public process (led by BC Hydro) to determine the highest and best use of the property. Once the land was secured, discussions were then held between BC Parks, the Peace Country River Rats and Taylor to close

a dangerous (as it entered fast water) boat launch at South Taylor landing. This fact was recognized by BC Parks, who paid \$10,000 for the concrete pads to develop a new boat launch in the calmer waters of the expansion area as well donating a washroom and bear proof garbage containers.

The River Rats then (with a design paid for by the District of Taylor) involved the business community who donated the labour, material and equipment to construct/install the boat launch, and parking area – at an estimated value of \$60,000.00.

Recognizing the impact of the two hydro dams on the Peace River, causing a lack of access caused by fluctuating river level due to their operation, the District carried it forward as an issue into the Water use planning exercise mandated by the province. This resulted in a recommendation to fund the boat launch and dock to a maximum of \$200,000 plus \$25,000 annually for maintenance. While not having approval of the Water Comptroller, BC Hydro donated \$100,000 seed money ahead of plan approval as a result of negotiations with the District.

All of these sources of funding and ‘in kind’ volunteer labour were then used as the third party private funds necessary to actually qualify for the SICEAI grant. Those involved with the SICEAI process recognize the benefit of the program on one hand, but the difficulty in administration on the other hand. Therefore, it is no small feat for a community of our size to successfully complete a quality development.

### **Conclusion**

It is our belief that the Peace Island Park Expansion project exemplifies leadership in the bringing together of a multitude of players to successful complete (and fund) a facility that is an asset to the region.

*just for info*

# Peace Island Park

**District of Taylor  
EXPANSION  
PROPOSAL**

# 1 PEACE ISLAND PARK EXPANSION

Submitted by: District of Taylor

January 28, 2003

Reference File No.: 345-457112-014

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## 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The District of Taylor lost one of its largest employers when Canadian Forest Products Ltd. ceased operations in Taylor. This closure will have a dramatic financial impact on the District and requires immediate action to stimulate other economic opportunities.

Taylor is located in the valley overlooking one of British Columbia's most scenic heritage rivers, the Peace. This is also the point where the world famous Alaska Highway intersects the Peace River, creating spectacular tourism opportunities. More than a half million visitors annually pass through the region via the Alaska Highway, with nearly 75% of them preferring to stay in campgrounds and RV parks.

The District owns and operates a small recreation site on the south side of the Peace River, with direct access off the Alaska Highway. The untapped potential of the site is tremendous and with funding under the Softwood Industry Community Economic Adjustment Initiative, the District of Taylor proposes to turn this site into a prime tourism destination. The District is seeking to diversify its industrial based economy through the phased expansion of the Peace Island Park and provide employment to offset the impact of the mill closure.

The first phase of the project will be to augment the existing campsites by installing serviced lots capable of accommodating the modern Alaska Highway RV traveler. The project will comprise of development of: 60 serviced RV sites, central sani-dump, washrooms and outhouses, 40 additional rustic campground sites, signage and an adventure playground. This phase is expected to cost a total of \$378,400, of which this proposal requests 50% or \$189,200 from the SICEAI fund. Subject to approval and weather constraints, this work will be completed by March 31, 2004.

The second phase of the project will elevate Peace Island Park to a destination stop for travelers. This phase will include construction of: a replica fort of the Rocky Mountain Rangers, trails to accommodate a range of activities in all seasons, boat launch and dock. Phase 2 is expected to cost a total of \$483,700, of which the proposal requests 44.4% or \$193,700 from the SICEAI fund. Subject to program extension, funding approvals and weather constraints, this work will be completed by October 31, 2004.

Increased tourism visits associated with the project could generate additional \$455,000 in tourism spending locally and create seven new tourism jobs.

The proposal is supported in principal by studies that point to the need for increased infrastructure and activities for the long-haul travelers. It has broad community, business and regional support and can serve to offset the devastating impacts the Canfor mill closure will have on this community.

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## 4 PROPONENT INFORMATION

The District of Taylor (the District), a municipality incorporated in 1958, is the proponent of the Peace Island Park Expansion project (the project). The municipality encompasses 16.6 square kilometres on the north bank of the Peace River. Taylor is intersected by the world famous Alaska Highway which is the main corridor between Alaska and the lower 48 states.

Taylor is home to approximately 1,200 residents and the District is guided by an elected council of five members consisting of Mayor and four Councilors.

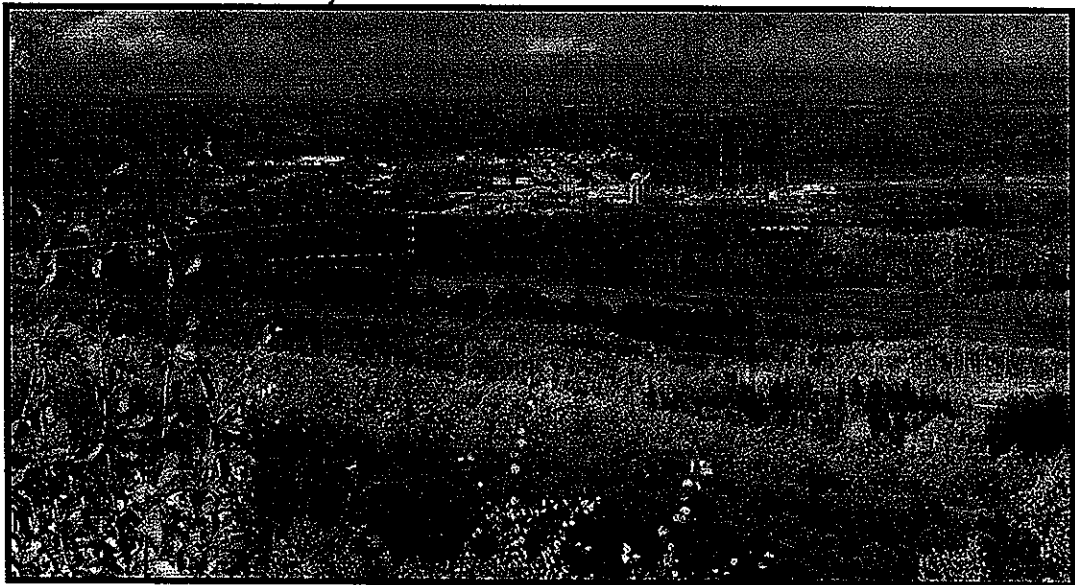
Fredrick Jarvis	Mayor
Brad Filmer	Councilor
Robert Fraser	Councilor
Joan Lewis	Councilor
Helen Gaulin	Councilor

The District employs 19 full time employees with three key staff involved with the development of this project.

Terry Johnston	District Administrator
Natalie Poole-Moffatt	Community Services Director
Gordon Davis	Public Works Superintendent

Council and staff in the District are experienced in Tourism operations through management of District owned facilities such as the 18 hole golf course, and through hosting international events like the World's Invitational Gold Panning Championships.

Photo 1 – District of Taylor



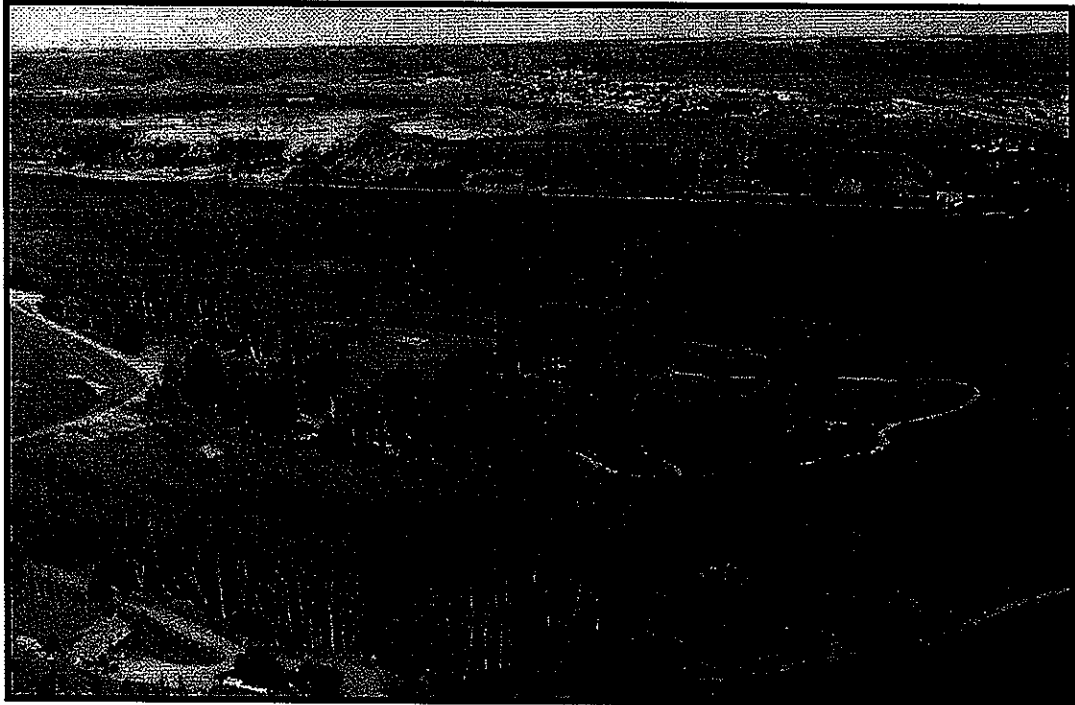
## 5 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The District owns property south of the Peace River and west of the Alaska Highway known as *Peace Island Park*. The District has recently entered into a long-term, renewable lease for additional BC Hydro lands comprising of approximately 160 hectares adjacent to the existing park.

Located just above the confluence of the Peace and Pine rivers, this site offers the best road access to one of British Columbia's most breathtaking rivers. Designated as a B.C. Heritage river, the Peace has a rich history and a promising future. Early explorers like Alexander Mackenzie, Simon Fraser and John Finley were amongst the first to discover the opportunities that the mighty river provided between 1793 and 1805. For the next hundred years, the Peace provided passage for the lucrative fur trade and outposts were established by the North West and later Hudson's Bay Companies.

Photo 2 – Peace Island Park



Settlement began in the early 1900's but it was the fateful events of December 7, 1941 that forever changed the region when the United States entered the Second World War after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Between March and September 1942 the Canadian and United States armies pushed



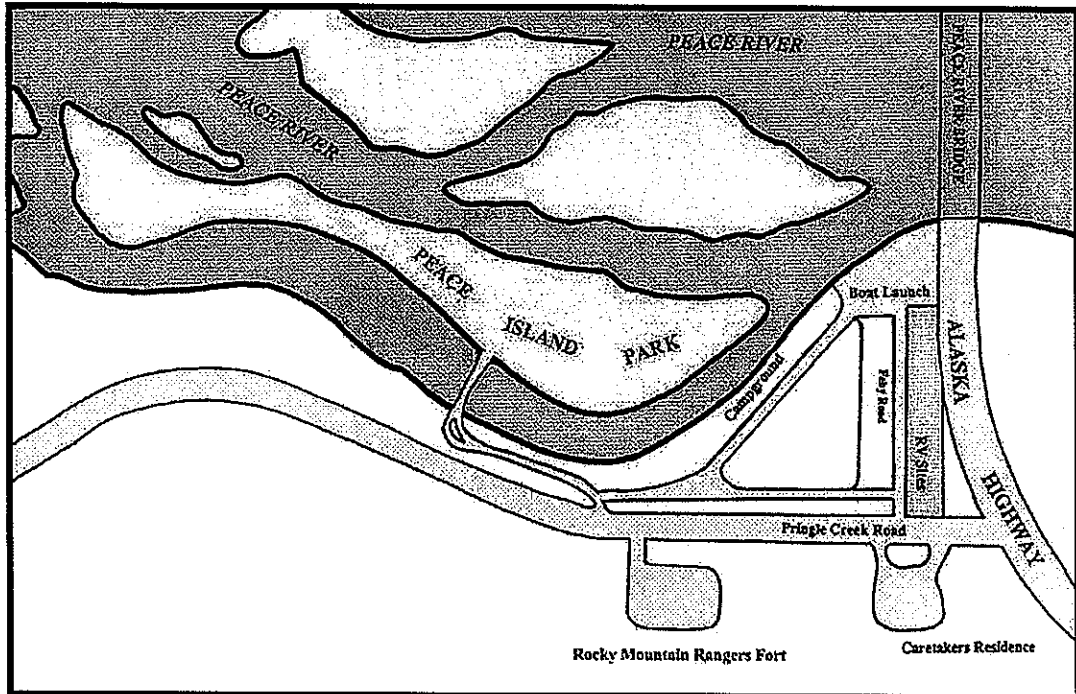
through 1500 miles of muskeg, mountains and mosquito's, to meet at Contact Creek, just south of the BC/Yukon border.

From the humble beginnings of a military supply line, the Alaska Highway has grown to be the "must do" trip for many in the lower 48 States. No longer a winding, steep, narrow ribbon of dangerous curves and hills, the Alaska Highway's many miles of sealed and paved highway ushers the most luxurious of RV's to enjoy the many tourism opportunities along the way. The goal of this project is to capitalize its prime location where the historic river and world renowned highway intersect.

## 5.2 PROJECT SCOPE

The District owns and operates Peace Island Park. The scope of this proposal is to develop the underutilized recreation site into a significant tourism destination along the Alaska Highway. This will be accomplished by developing necessary infrastructure to attract visitors to the area, which will in turn increase volume for existing business and open doors to new business start-up in the region.

MAP 1 - OVERVIEW



### 5.3 RELEVANT STUDIES

This project conforms or is within the parameters of recognized tourism development opportunities within the region. The expansion is supported by both a preliminary study done by the Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourist Association and Tourism BC and by the in-depth review of the South Peace Region through the Dawson Creek Tourism Opportunity Strategy (TOS)<sup>1</sup>.

The TOS Activity Description and Analysis assesses products /activities through a resource and market analysis for each to determine "high opportunity" areas. The comprehensive review was undertaken to assist potential proponents to develop projects like this that would increase the tourism opportunities in the region. Select findings relevant to this project are noted below.

#### 5.3.1 DAWSON CREEK FOREST DISTRICT TOS

The Dawson Creek Forest District TOS was developed through a Local Advisory Group with representatives from the tourism industry, local government, community groups and provincial government agencies.

- "the major strengths of the study area are its diverse natural attributes, a full range of experiences from the scenic alpine to prairie lands, abundant wildlife ... Opportunities for tourism development in the study area are good. ... river/lake, trail products and winter products all have potential to expand." (p.2).
- "The Peace and east Pine Rivers dominate the recreation opportunities in this District. Suitable for a host of water activities, the rivers likewise have a rich natural history and heritage values." (p.3)
- the main challenges to tourism and economic development will continue to be a lack of infrastructure, services and access to financing, both for communities and for businesses." (p.2).
- "Communities must play a more prominent role by furnishing infrastructure and support services that underpin the industry and the employment and regional income benefits it can bring to local residents." (p.17)

This study consistently ranks the project site as a "high opportunity area". Additionally, a tourism research study clearly details that almost 75% of the 690,000<sup>2</sup> visitors that travel through our region destined for Alaska and the Yukon each year prefer to stay in campgrounds<sup>3</sup>. While annual statistics will vary, the Alaska Highway is predicted to sustain high volumes of RV traffic for the foreseeable future.

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<sup>1</sup> Lions Gate Consulting Inc. (2001) – Dawson Creek Forest District Tourism Opportunity Study

<sup>2</sup> Lions Gate Consulting Inc. (2001) – Dawson Creek Forest District Tourism Opportunity Study

<sup>3</sup> Tourism BC (January 2004 – Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Visitors Research Project

## 5.4 CURRENT STATUS

The District currently owns and operates Peace Island Park. Existing park amenities include: 26 un-serviced campsites, open field (multi-purpose area), small children's playground, horseshoe pits and a short nature trail.

The park is open annually from the long weekend in May to the third week in September. One person is contracted for maintenance of the park and some limited programming is in place. Existing park usage consists of long haul visitors as well as regional and local users. Due to the ample space, tranquil setting and proximity to services, the park is currently a favorite venue for weekend family reunions. The park is also used to support regional events such as baseball and horseshoe tournaments, car racing, and annually attracts an international audience to the World Championship Gold Panning Competition.

Photo 3 - World Championship Gold Panning



Revenues from this park have been steadily increasing, but the potential for further revenue growth is limited due the number of camping sites and lack of services:

Table 1 - Existing Park Revenues

	2000	2001	2002	2003
Revenue	18,455	20,588	24,721	33,860 <sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Estimate - final 2003 Revenue is not yet available

Potential of the park is demonstrated in our 2003 estimate which indicates that due to a number of factors, it is anticipated that our site revenue will be greater than 100% occupancy rate:

$$(26 \text{ sites}) \times (126 \text{ night season}) = 3,276 \text{ rentals @ } \$10.00/\text{night} = \$32,760$$

This was possible by utilizing an open field for overflow parking during peak periods. The occupancy rate of greater than 100% for the 2003 calendar year dramatically illustrates the potential growth that could be accommodated within the proposed park expansion. A conservative estimate of usage, combined with the BC Hydro contribution generates sufficient revenue to ensure the operation will be self sufficient.

Table 2 – Projected Park Revenue by Source

Source	\$	Description
Existing Park Revenue	33,860	Per 2003 estimate
New RV Sites (60)	94,500	60 x \$15/night x 50% occupancy/210 day season
New Camp Sites (40)	10,500	40 x \$5/night x 25% occupancy/210 day season
BC Hydro	20,000	Contribution Agreement
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>158,860</b>	

Photo 4 – Junior Explorer at the World Championship Gold Panning Event



## 5.5 DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The District proposes a joint development with the Government of Canada through the SICEAI program that involves a multitude of users. As such, the public relations benefit to the District and the Government of Canada cannot be overstated. The basic concept for the park expansion is defined in the following sections. In keeping with the constraints of the SICEAI program and timeframes, the project is presented in two phases.

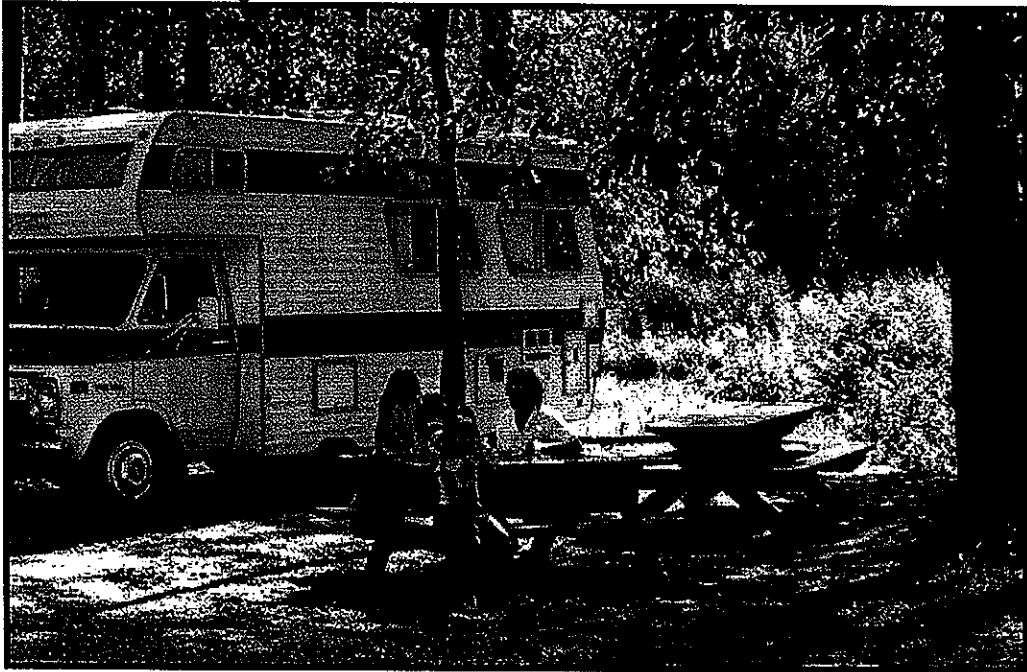
### 5.5.1 PHASE 1- INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Phase 1 of the proposed park expansion involves the development of the infrastructure necessary to maximize the tourism potential of the South Taylor lands. Each aspect of the infrastructure, the rationale for it and the anticipated costs are detailed.

#### Serviced RV Sites

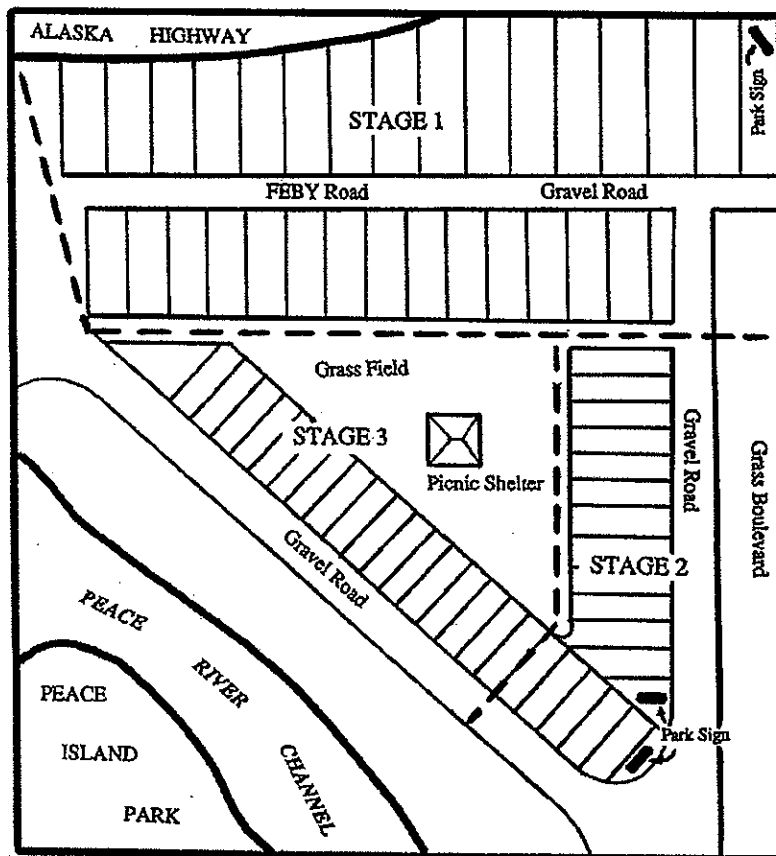
There is a shortage of serviced RV sites within the vicinity of the Peace River. This prevents many of the visitors traveling the Alaska Highway from enjoying the Peace River and its many tourism opportunities. Our review of existing usage found that while the park was full during much of the peak period, the majority of users are staying in tents or with smaller RV's such as trucks with campers. By comparison, attractive sites for the long-haul visitor must accommodate the big motorhomes and 5<sup>th</sup> wheel travel trailers favored by the modern Alaska Highway vacationer.

Photo 5 – Existing Un-Serviced Site



To accommodate this important market niche, a portion of the BC Hydro lands east of the existing caretaker's residence would be designated for serviced RV site development. Development will occur around a triangle road network in three stages. Common to all sites will be a crushed gravel base, electrical service, picnic table, barbecue stand and fire pit. In addition, a centralized sani-dump would be installed.

MAP 2 – Serviced RV Site Development – Stage 1 - 3

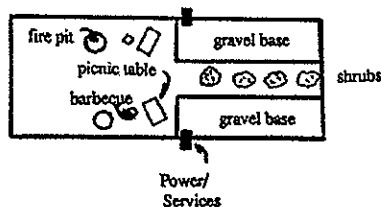


Stage 1 will consist of site development on both sides of the road servicing the former Feby subdivision which was fully serviced with hydro.

Sixty recreational vehicle sites could be constructed by utilizing existing hydro services. This will require minimal new electrical infrastructure. Work will consist largely of installing underground electrical conduit.

TYPICAL RV SITE

Not to Scale

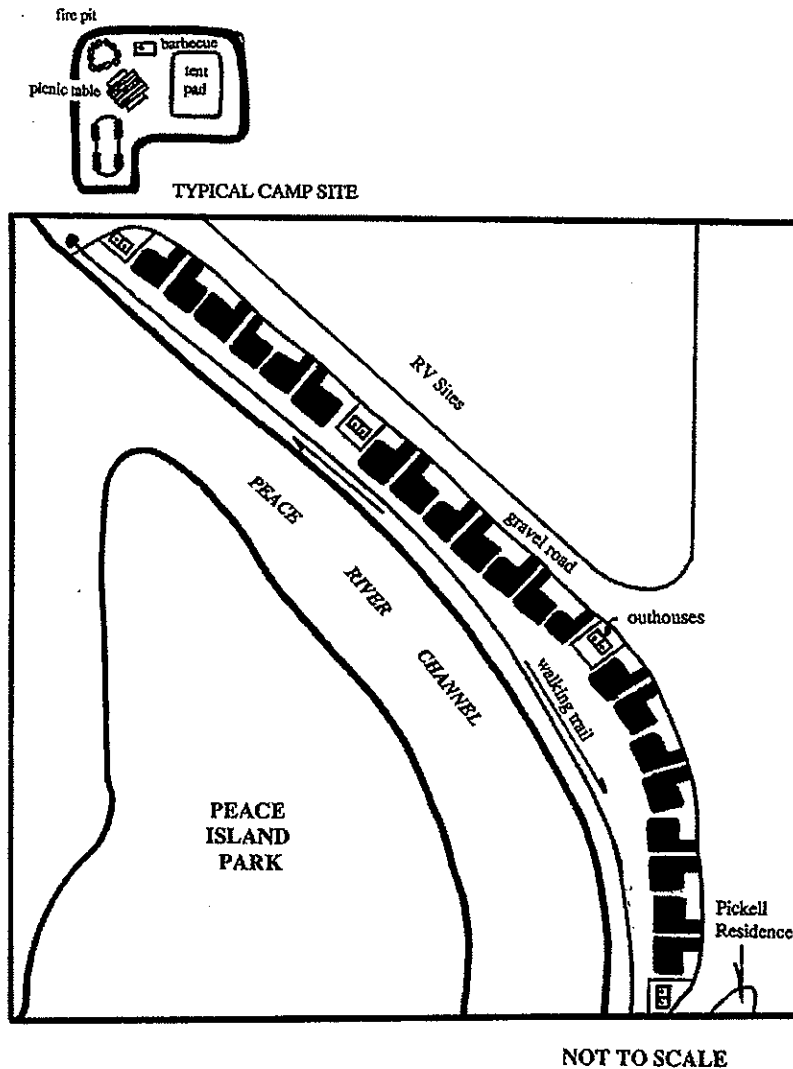


The areas designated stage 2 and 3 are available for future park expansion. Until then, the area will remain in a natural state to minimize maintenance.

Campground Development

An expansion of the park allows for the construction of additional campsites. The development of this area would result in an alternative option to camping on the developed island.

MAP 3 – Additional Un-Serviced Campsite Development



It is anticipated that approximately forty sites could be roughed out along the canal.

Development of these sites would require site clearing, preparation and the installation of fire pits, barbecues and picnic tables. It is envisioned that the sites will be "nature" sites requiring minimal upkeep.

However, the development of these 40 sites

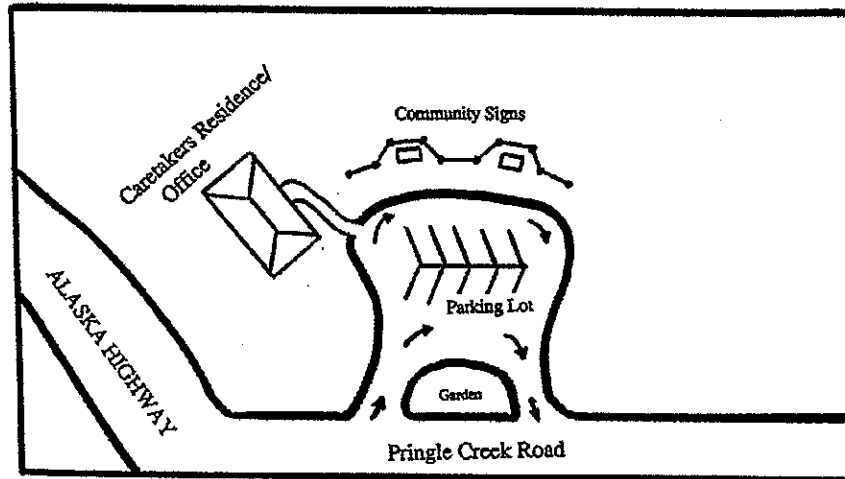
will necessitate the installation of an additional 4 outhouses (to be evenly spaced throughout the sites).

As development occurs, it would also be beneficial to have a centralized playground/picnic area.

### Signage

Appropriate signage, given the reliance on the 'rubber bound' tourist, is essential. It is the backbone of a marketing campaign that would be directed to respond to surveys that indicate visitors have a very high degree of flexibility (in excess of 75%) with respect to activities<sup>5</sup>. In other words, they are open to the opportunity that our site as the dominant recreational feature in the region provides, but they have to be drawn in.

Map 4 – Proposed Signage



Not To Scale

The preliminary results of the Tourism B.C. Northern Rockies – Alaska Highway Visitor Research Project contains numerous unsolicited comments that demonstrate just how important signage is. Just a few comments are:

- "More signage to mark the pullouts, where they are, how far away..."
- "Rest areas/Campgrounds need signs to indicate if a 35ft RV towing a vehicle can maneuver into it"
- "Attraction signs could be improved..."
- "Writing on signs too small and colors are a problem..."

As such, an integral component of our project will be to provide signage, both within the park and to direct visitors to regional attractions. Such signage and would highlight the efforts of the Government of Canada and the District of Taylor in developing the site as a destination stop. It is anticipated that it will also feature points of interest within the Peace Region, including Fort St. John, Taylor and Hudson's Hope to promote the circle tour suggested by the TOS report.

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<sup>5</sup> Tourism BC (January 2004 – Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Visitors Research Project



### Adventure Playground

In excess of 100,000 Alaska Highway travelers are families<sup>6</sup>. The TOS documented "the trend toward more family participation in freshwater fishing could have benefits locally, especially along the Alaska Highway rubber trade. In keeping with the comprehensive intent of the park development, the District plans to install an adventure playground North of the German House (and the entrance loop). This playground is estimated at \$80,000 based on equipment catalogues. The playground will appeal to traveling families, will also encourage regional and local visitors to the area, creating positive economic spin-offs for local businesses.

### 5.5.2 PHASE 2- DESTINATION AREA/TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Phase 2 involves the development of an extensive trail system for hikers, trail rides, etc. in the summer and snowmobile, cross country skiers, etc. in the winter. Inclusive of this development is bird viewing hides, bird habitat enhancement and interpretative signage. Completion of a boat launch and dock will be a highlight on the Peace River itself. To supplement these natural attractions, the District proposes the development of a model Rocky Mountain Fort and grounds as a historical display.

Our proposed facility would build on the fact that the Peace River from Hudson's Hope to Taylor is deemed to be a *HIGH OPPORTUNITY* area for the use of motorized craft in. Our site is also at the confluence of the Pine River which also has *HIGH* suitability for tourism potential due to scenic sloping canyons with viewing opportunities.<sup>7</sup>

While the TOS study concluded that the opportunities for motor boating are modest, this is primarily due to the lack of key attractants such as large natural lakes. It is specifically noted that jet boating on the Peace River could be developed through the targeted deployment of marinas/launches and related services. Our proposal specifically speaks to this opportunity!

### Boat launch/dock

Access to the Peace River is seen as a major tourist attraction. "The Peace and east Pine Rivers dominate the recreation opportunities in this District. Suitable for a host of water activities the rivers likewise have a rich natural history and heritage values. Almost one third of the residents and non-resident tourists (or 231,330 people annually) are seeking an outdoor adventure of the type that this site provides."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Lions Gate Consulting Inc. (2001) – Dawson Creek Forest District Tourism Opportunity Study

<sup>7</sup> Lions Gate Consulting Inc. (2001) – Dawson Creek Forest District Tourism Opportunity Study

<sup>8</sup> Lions Gate Consulting Inc. (2001) – Dawson Creek Forest District Tourism Opportunity Study

As previously noted, the trend toward more family participation in freshwater would be key in the use of the combination boat launch and fishing dock.

A review of the existing launch facilities at Peace Landing indicated that are less than satisfactory due to the presence of a swift current. The facility has now been decommissioned by the Parks Branch. As such, we have worked with the Peace Country River Rats Boating and other interested parties to construct a double ramp boat launch at the end of Feby Road in anticipation of project approval.

This area is protected by Peace Island and there is a natural back eddy. The main cost associated with this development would be the clearing and development of a large gravel parking area.

We are also particularly excited about the possibility of the existing river piles being utilized to develop a dock, subject to an engineering review. If feasible, it would provide an opportunity for river boats to tie up and to be used as a fishing "wharf". This would offer supplementary tourism opportunities that other camping and RV sites in the region do not offer. It is an important component in developing new tourism opportunities.

This concept was unanimously supported through the Peace River Water Use Planning process. As such, a recommendation for its construction has gone forward and funding is anticipated to be forthcoming – as per appendix 3. Through this process, B.C. Hydro will become a quasi-partner to our development plans.

It provides an opportunity that is supported by a wide range of stakeholders, from the provincial parks branch, to all local governments and a significant number of private sector individuals and businesses. Attached as supporting documentation are 12 letters to non-resident businesses that have made donations (totaling over \$5,000) to start the development rolling! These donations have been incorporated into the financial plan.

### **Rocky Mountain Fort**

The TOS identified that one of the weaknesses in the region was a lack of road side attractions. This study concludes that "the key to unlocking the potential of this market is to develop four key dimensions, including staging areas, attractions, services and tour corridors. Because the primary mode of transportation is RV's and cars, the key to getting travelers to explore more corridors is to link together staging areas, services and attractions into themed units."<sup>9</sup> as our proposal does! With this feature, it brings together

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<sup>9</sup> Lions Gate Consulting Inc. (2001) – Dawson Creek Forest District Tourism Opportunity Study

exploration (river access), nature (wildlife) and history (the Rocky Mountain Fort).

Based on information gleaned from historical records (and with the assistance of Urban Systems Ltd.), we propose to develop a detailed reproduction of the original Fort for the Rocky Mountain Rangers. The District plans to build a historically accurate reproduction of this camp. It will be the main focus for promoting the 'Stay Another Day' concept with tourists on the Alaska highway.

This is strongly supported by the region. There is high potential for a circle tour in the Peace region. Tourists have identified a high degree of flexibility associated with travel on the Alaska Highway (B.C. Tourism). The Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, Hudson Hope, Taylor circle tour provides excellent road infrastructure, unique scenic opportunities and excellent wildlife viewing.

#### Trail Development

Trail development is an essential part of any proposal. It is clear that non-resident tourists come to the region for the natural experience. The TOS concluded that they are more likely to participate in outdoor activities than B.C. residents and their participation rate is the highest of all travel regions of the province.

The Product Analysis Summary details the need for single /multi-day trails of both a linear and circular nature. In the summer the primary use of the trails would seem to be hiking and riding, while in the winter it would seem to be Nordic skiing and snowmobiling. As per our proposal, scenic viewing (the river) and nature observation are critical to the success of a trail development. (TOS p.36)

After a comprehensive analysis of the market case, the TOS<sup>10</sup> concluded that:

- Trail riding and packing has some good potential in the region (p.61)
- Hiking has good potential in the region as among non-resident visitors to Northeast B.C. hiking/backpacking is one of the most important outdoor activities (p.62)
- The potential for snowmobiling is growing extremely fast, perhaps more so than any other outdoor activity- with most visiting snowmobilers coming from Alberta. Our proposal addresses the single greatest critical need to meet this market- trail infrastructure (p.68)

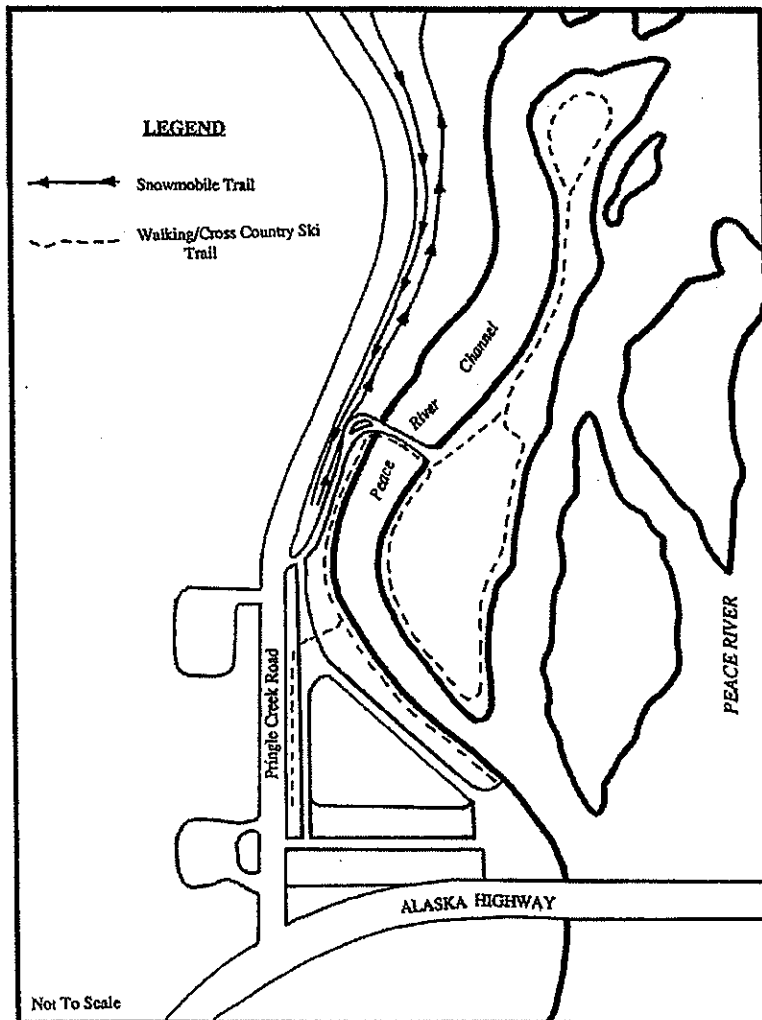
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<sup>10</sup> Lions Gate Consulting Inc. (2001) – Dawson Creek Forest District Tourism Opportunity Study

- The Peace River with its history, landscape and wildlife earn it a HIGH suitability for nature observation. Wildlife such as moos, whitetail and mule deer are common, and the river is a major flyway for many species including swans and eagles (p.83)

Based on these findings, the final component of the park proposal would be the development of a multi-use trail system. A rough layout has been detailed to take advantage of the natural attributes of the area. All the trails would have to be appropriately marked. For example, while cross-country skiing or walking may be compatible with horseback riding, it is not necessarily compatible with snowmobiling or quad use.

MAP 5 – Proposed Trails



Trails will be designed in such a manner as to incorporate viewing blinds, habitat protection and enhancement.

Through such actions, we anticipate providing for a truly natural experience that will appeal to the Alaska bound tourist.

## 6 WORK PLAN

The components of our work plan are simplistic in nature, yet must be scheduled in such a manner as to address the complexities of the regulatory regime in which we operate. Rather than note specific dates, the time period for completion is noted. This has been done due to the uncertainty associated with the project approval date. Subject to approval and weather constraints, Phase 1 work will be completed by March 31, 2004. Subject to program extension, funding approvals and weather constraints, Phase 2 work will be completed by October 31, 2004.

Work can generally be categorized as professional services, district services and contracted services.

### 6.1.1 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The District will engage the services of Urban Systems Ltd. to develop a comprehensive site plan which will include; RV site design, Hydro installation plan, Signage design, Sani-dump design/layout, Rocky Mountain Fort design, Trails design and Wildlife Blind/Habitat Enhancement plans.

### 6.1.2 DISTRICT SERVICES

The District is committed to development of Peace Island Park in a cost efficient and expedient manner. To that end, we have determined that the District can provide many of the project components with existing personnel and equipment, preventing us from having to compete and pay a premium for equipment that may otherwise be contracted by the busy regional oil and gas industry.

The District will utilize existing staff and temporary hires to manage the project, operate equipment, assemble components, install signage and provide general labour required to support this project. Additionally the district will utilize its own vehicles, equipment, hand tools and other resources to conduct the site preparation and construction components. District costs will be documented and recorded as "in-kind" contributions to this project based on accepted government rates.

### 6.1.3 CONTRACTED SERVICES

The District will contract specialized services like Hydro installation to qualified local contractors. Due to the specialized nature of services in Phase 2, most of those components will be delivered by contractors.

Detailed project components, persons responsible and completion deadlines are included on the Gantt chart in section 7.

## 7 Schedule

Activity	Responsible Party	Start Date	End Date	Duration (Days)	Notes
PHASE 1					
Comprehensive Site Design	Urban Systems	2/26/2004	3/31/2004	34d	
RV Site Design		2/26/2004	3/23/2004	24d	
Hydro Installation		2/26/2004	2/27/2004	1d	
Signage Design		2/27/2004	3/11/2004	14d	
Self Drip Design/Layout		2/27/2004	3/11/2004	14d	
Rocky Mountain Fort Design		2/27/2004	3/25/2004	28d	
Trail Design		2/27/2004	3/11/2004	14d	
Wildlife Band 7 Habitat Encouragement		2/27/2004	3/11/2004	14d	
Planning and Site Preparation		2/26/2004	3/31/2004	34d	
Order/Procure Components	District	2/26/2004	2/26/2004	1d	
Transfer Hydro Installation	District	2/26/2004	2/27/2004	1d	
Install/Compare 60 RV Sites	District	2/23/2004	3/21/2004	28d	
Install Hydro	Contractor	3/1/2004	3/28/2004	28d	
Site Construction		3/16/2004	3/25/2004	10d	
Install RV Site Components	District	3/16/2004	3/25/2004	10d	
Install Signage	District	3/16/2004	3/25/2004	10d	
Install Self-Drip (closed)	District	3/16/2004	3/25/2004	10d	
Complete and Develop System		2/26/2004	3/31/2004	34d	
Agriculture Land Reserve Approval	Urban Systems	2/26/2004	3/19/2004	23d	
Clearing/Site Development		3/19/2004	3/29/2004	9d	
PHASE 2					
Approvals		4/16/2004	10/15/2004	137d	
Water Use Plan Approval	BC Bylaw	4/16/2004	7/9/2004	85d	
Construction		6/14/2004	10/15/2004	94d	
Trails/Habitat Build's	District	5/14/2004	10/15/2004	196d	
Block Barrier	Contractor	7/12/2004	7/30/2004	18d	
Construct & Install Dock	Contractor	8/22/2004	9/19/2004	28d	
Rocky Mountain Fort	Contractor	8/18/2004	10/15/2004	45d	

## 8 FINANCIAL PLAN

The project funding from the SICEAI is being requested in the form of a non-repayable grant. Taylor is being hard hit by the plant closure and loss of 91 jobs. The District is looking to the SICEAI program for the expressed purpose of mitigating the impact of the assessment based loss associated with the Canfor closure. This closure and the loss of a substantial portion of our assessment base will have a long term impact on the ability of the District to raise the funds necessary to complete such capital works.

The cost estimates for Phase 1 and 2 have been developed in conjunction with our consultant, and are believed to be an accurate reflection of the cost factor components of the project:

TABLE 3 – FINANCIAL PLAN

Project Components	Cost Estimate	Total
<b>PHASE 1</b>		
Serviced RV Site Development (Stage 1)	145,000	
Install Sani-dump	15,000	
Washroom / Outhouse Development	32,000	
Campground Development	22,000	
Adventure Playground	80,000	
Signage	50,000	
Contingency and Engineering	34,400	
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>378,400</b>
<b>PHASE 2</b>		
Trail Development		
Cross Country Ski, Snowshoe, Horse Riding trails	23,000	
Quad, Snowmobile trails	23,000	
Walking trail	6,000	
Brushfire Control Equipment	10,000	
Bird viewing hides	4,200	
Bird Habitat Enhancement	17,000	
Interpretative Signage	27,000	
Boat Launch Phase 2 / Access Road Upgrade	109,000	
Construct & Install Dock	96,300	
Historical Display (Rocky Mountain Fort & Grounds)	133,000	
Contingency & Engineering	35,200	
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>483,700</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$862,100</b>

**Project Funding Breakdown**

Project funding of the project is somewhat unique in that it brings together independent bodies as funding sources with the overall SICEAI grant request being approximately 44% of the total budget.

**TABLE 4 – FUNDING BY SOURCE**

Funding Source	Amount	Percentage
<b>PHASE 1</b>		
District Funding (Cash)	34,750	9.2 %
In Kind (District)	149,200	39.4 %
Private Donations	5,250	1.4 %
SICEAI Grant Request	189,200	50.0%
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$ 378,400</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>PHASE 2</b>		
BC Hydro Funding	290,000	60.0%
SICEAI Grant Request	193,700	40.0%
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$ 483,700</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>TOTAL PROJECT FUNDING</b>		
District (Cash)	34,750	4.0%
In Kind (District)	149,200	17.3%
Private Donations	5,250	.6%
BC Hydro	290,000	33.6%
SICEAI Grant	382,900	44.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 862,100</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**TABLE 5 – CASH FLOW ESTIMATE**

Cash Flow Estimate	Amount	Amount	Total
<b>PHASE 1</b>			
Cost	189,200	189,200	\$378,400
Budget Percentage	50%	50%	100%
2003/04	Q4 - Feb	Q4 - Mar	
<b>PHASE 2</b>			
Cost	241,850	241,850	\$483,700
Budget Percentage	50%	50%	100%
2003/04	Q1 - May	Q2 - Aug	



## 9 LEGAL AND REGULATORY

The regulatory body controlling these lands is the Peace River Regional District. The lands are appropriately zoned for public and recreational use. Approval of our development plans was given prior to entering into the long term lease with B.C. Hydro. A significant portion of the land is also within the Agricultural Land Reserve. However, the area designated for the highest degree of development (RV Site, Adventure Playground, boat launch dock) consists of subdivided lots under 2 acres in size and thus not subject to the regulation of the Commission.

Commission approval will be required for the non-intrusive development of trails and nature campgrounds. The Regional District has indicated that they will support the application for recreational use. Discussions with the Northern Panel of the Commission have indicated that, since our plans will be non-intrusive and protect the agricultural integrity of the lands, approval would be forth coming. This is supported by the development of a Growth Strategy Plan which incorporates the development of these lands which has been forwarded to the Commission.

## 10 COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Widespread community support for our development plans is evident. Attached in the appendices are numerous letters of support which indicate that our vision for the lands is shared by others. Evidence of the anticipated regional impact of the development can clearly be seen in the support given by surrounding communities that would normally be in a competition position for development purposes.

That support is further augmented by support letters from other RV facilities in Taylor and in the region. Three regional RV parks have provided letters of support for this initiative along with the Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association. These group recognize that bringing more visitors, and promoting longer stays in the region, will have wide ranging benefits for all tourism operators. The letters are provided in supplemental Appendix ii.

BC Hydro conducted a region wide public input process prior to disposing of the land to the District. As a result of this process, it was deemed that the District's plans constituted the highest and best use for the lands. Submissions of support from numerous residents of our community were made throughout this lengthy public input process.

## 11 BENEFITS

### 11.1 GENERAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Tourism is one of the potential growth sectors of the local economic for the District of Taylor and the surrounding area. In 2001, over 10 percent of the labour force in Taylor was associated with the tourism related service sector. Locally this represents direct employment of 70 jobs, mostly within the accommodation and food services, arts and entertainment and food and beverage sectors.<sup>11</sup>

While a portion of the tourism labour force would be supported by out of town industrial workers and local residents a significant contribution is made each year by the fraction of the 695,000 tourism visitors that travel in the Northeast region each year and pass through Taylor.<sup>12</sup> The vast majority of these tourism visitors are from outside the region with US, Overseas and non-BC Canadian travelers making up 43 percent of total travelers to the area, a further 30 percent come from southern BC, Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland, while the remaining 27 percent are visitors from Northern BC.<sup>13</sup>

A sizeable number of these travelers are on long vacations headed to destinations outside the region, with Alaska and the Yukon being the most popular final destinations. US travelers are typically on trips with durations of greater than 65 days, while overseas travelers plan to be on their current holiday for over 77 days. Canadian travelers are on vacations that average almost a month. Most of these travelers state they have the flexibility in their schedule to spend extra time in a community like Taylor, as well, 66 percent of these travelers are staying in campgrounds and RV parks as they travel through the region.<sup>14</sup>

Taylor recognizes the potential of these travelers and the contribution that they make to their local economy already. Based on the average daily expenditure of \$150 a day per traveling party and municipal Peace Island Park site rentals of 3,276 site days (100 percent accommodation capacity) in 2003, the total local tourism expenditures could be as much as \$490,000. Therefore, the expansion of the Peace Island Park which would increase the local overnight stays to approximately 6,300 traveling parties, could represent upwards of \$945,000 of associated tourism spending locally, an increase of \$455,000 over current levels. Collectively, this level of new

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<sup>11</sup> Statistics Canada 2001 Census.

<sup>12</sup> Tourism British Columbia (1998), *The Report on Visitor to Northern British Columbia Tourism Region: Northeast*.

<sup>13</sup> Tourism British Columbia (1998), *The Report on Visitor to Northern British Columbia Tourism Region: Northeast*.

<sup>14</sup> Tourism British Columbia (January 2004), *Northern Rockies - Alaska Highway Visitors Research Project*.

spending in the community could create upwards of seven new person-years of tourism employment in Taylor each tourism season. This would be in addition to the start-up construction employment that would also be created.

## 11.2 SPECIFIC ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO AREA BUSINESS

### 11.2.1 LOCAL CONSTRUCTION BENEFIT

The actual project spending will generate approximately \$400,000 in wage income for the local construction sector. This will directly create approximately 9 person years of construction employment.

### 11.2.2 TOURISM SERVICE SECTOR BENEFITS

There are several businesses in the Taylor area that benefit from each additional tourist that stops and makes purchases at their business throughout the year. Specifically, if the Peace Island Park expansion is completed as planned several businesses would benefit including:

*Redwood Esso* – is a gas station and convenience store in Taylor. This business already benefits from the traffic at Peace Island Park and the doubling of the number of overnight visitors to the site could result in increased work for existing part-time staff and the hiring of a new part-time employee.

*Mile 36 Café* – is a local café that caters primarily to local workforce. Currently the business sees a small number of tourists each year. However, if more visitors were to spend a greater amount of time in Taylor it is likely they would visit the Mile 36 Café, and assist with increasing the hours worked by the company's employees.

*North Taylor Inn Restaurant* – is busy local restaurant that benefits from tourism traffic. The doubling of visitors staying at the Peace Island Park could result in the hiring of upwards of two new part-time employees to assist during peak demand periods.

*Artistic Endeavors* – this local art business currently generates a significant amount of its sales to tourists through product placed at the visitor information centre and the local museum. Additional visitors in town will result in increase sales for this business.

### 11.3 TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS

#### 11.3.1 GOLF

The Lone Wolf Golf Course currently sees a small number of tourists at their golf course each year. However, with the Peace Island expansion and the creation of more family oriented activities in the District, people traveling with families will be more inclined to stop. It is envisioned that this would greatly enhance golf course usage by tourists.

#### 11.3.2 RIVERBOAT TOURS

Riverboating is a significant economic activity in the area with an estimated 3,000 boats accessing the local stretch of the Peace River annually. The development of the boat launch could lead to the future development of guided river boating tours similar to the product that has developed in the Chetwynd area.

### 11.4 CONCLUSIONS

The proposed park plan as detailed will provide a multi-faceted facility that will benefit the entire Peace Region. The District of Taylor must diversify the local economy but can not make all of the necessary capital expenditures alone. As such, we will be looking specifically to the SICEAI program to provide necessary funding. If approval in principle is given, the District will make every effort to reduce expenditures by the use of volunteer labour from user groups.

- i) The involvement of The Government of Canada can be broadly advertised on all park facilities. Given the heritage status of the river, and the fact that the site could easily be one of the highest profile developments on the provincial highway network, the public relations component to your involvement could be immense.
- ii) The annual maintenance concerns would be addressed by Taylor. This responsibility will remain with the park. One must recognize that over time, the ongoing financial responsibility being accepted by Taylor would far exceed any capital component costs.

## 12 RISKS

There are a number of issues that the District has addressed.

First and foremost, a significant amount of the lands are in a floodplain. All permanent structures would be located in areas above the floodplain. The only impact during a flood event would be that there is a potential for them to be isolated (i.e. lose road access), but this would occur in the off season.

However, the floods (if experienced) would be atypical to other areas in the province. They would occur in the winter as a result of water backing up on an ice jam. As such, the flooding is generally non-erosive. If it occurs, the resulting task for the District would be clean-up from siltation. Previous experience has demonstrated that this would be minimal, as winter flows of the Peace River contain nominal sediment loads.

As an indication of potential risk to the District, flooding has occurred only twice in the area over the past 20 years. Flooding is anticipated to be nominal due to flow agreements between B.C. Hydro and the province of Alberta. Another indication of risk (or lack thereof) is the fact that B.C. Hydro is prepared to invest in the development of a boat launch and dock in the first area that would experience flooding. The Public Health Officer has also indicated minimal risk, in that permits for outhouses have already been received in preparation for project approval. A permit has also been received from the Ministry of Environment for the construction of the boat launch.

Any financial risks outside the grant process have been assumed by the District as a result of the anticipated benefits to our community and the region. This was recognized at our regular council meeting of August 19, 2003, where by resolution of Council it was affirmed that the District will meet its funding commitment through a combination of in-kind work (site development, preparation, and infrastructure installation), district funding and funding that is to be provided by B.C. Hydro.

## 13 SIGNATURE

Submitted on behalf of the District of Taylor: \_\_\_\_\_

Terry Johnston  
*Administrator*

## 14 APPENDIXES