

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
7<sup>TH</sup> COUNCIL, 49<sup>TH</sup> SESSION  
RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL  
NO. 3-49



Not for release before  
tabling during the  
49th Session of Council

COUNCIL OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
CANADA

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL 3-49

PROPOSAL FOR ESTABLISHING  
A  
PARKS SYSTEM  
IN THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

DISPOSITION

Tabled	To Committee	Accepted as Read	Accepted as Amended	Deferred (to Session)	Rejected	Noted not Considered

## BACKGROUND

The Council of the Northwest Territories at its 48th Session, adopted a motion requesting a Recommendation to Council regarding the establishment of Territorial Parks in the Northwest Territories for the 49th Session of the Territorial Council. The motion also asked for draft enabling legislation to be prepared for the consideration of Council at the same session.

In 1968 responsibility for campgrounds and picnic areas, developed by the Mackenzie Forest Service, was transferred to the Government of the Northwest Territories. The Territorial administration has added to and upgraded these facilities to the extent that, at present, there are nine designated campgrounds, ten picnic areas and two points of interest.

It is evident the recreational requirements of visitors and residents are not being met within the present program. The public tourist facilities program does not provide for withdrawal of particularly scenic areas for the long-term benefit of the public. Many types of legitimate outdoor recreational activities cannot be fostered or accommodated within the present program.

Increasing development of non-recreational resources, with a consequent effect upon the recreational resources, requires the implementation of a program to identify and reserve, where appropriate, those areas where recreational resources are significant.

## PROPOSAL

It is proposed to establish a system of Territorial Parks that will be user oriented, encompassing natural and scenic landscapes and developed to maximize public benefit and enjoyment of Territorial residents. Economic benefits may be expected to accrue directly to residents, to communities, and to the overall economy of the Northwest Territories. The growth of tourism is accelerating and parks are known to have attractive values for tourism. Additionally, there could be significant social benefits in that a system of Territorial Parks could make the Northwest Territories a

more desirable place in which to live by offering opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Concurrent with the establishment of parks would be the development of the tourism plant to serve visitors within parks and within communities in the vicinity of parks. In the more remote parts of the Northwest Territories the establishment of Territorial Parks and the associated demand for visitor services would give rise to opportunities for indigenous people to become involved with outfitting and concession type services for visitors.

The rights and privileges of the indigenous peoples to practice their traditional activities of hunting, fishing and trapping would not be alienated within Territorial Park boundaries. Sport hunting within Territorial Park boundaries is not to be tolerated, but sport fishing should be encouraged within resource limitation. For safety reasons, the use of firearms should not be permissible in or near campgrounds, picnic areas or other heavily used areas during periods of recreational use.

The development potential of renewable and non-renewable resources will be assessed prior to the selection of an area for inclusion in the Territorial Parks System. Great care will be taken in the selection of park areas in an effort to not include any areas likely to be favourable for non-renewable resource exploitation. Where development of renewable resources is of economic significance and conflict of use may possibly occur, the park would be zoned to permit renewable resource development, incorporating accepted resource management practices, and be subject to legislation regulating resource use.

Research into the natural phenomena found in parks is desirable for a better understanding of the natural conditions, which may result in better management of the park. It is not desirable, however, to allow establishment of permanent research facilities within parks, nor to permit research which interferes with visitor use or may be damaging to the ecology of the park.

Areas of land considered suitable for inclusion in the Territorial Park System will be transferred to the Territorial Government as provided by the Territorial Lands Act.

Public hearings will be held prior to an area being designated as a Territorial Park. In the case of campgrounds and picnic areas consultations will be held with the community or communities directly involved, Government agencies and other parties who may have a direct interest in the selected areas.

Responsibility for the administration of Territorial Parks will be vested in the Department of Industry and Development. As is the case with the present public tourist facilities program, the Chief of Tourism will be responsible for program operation and management.

Development of recreation areas and parks should continue at a pace sufficient to meet the ever-increasing demand for outdoor recreation areas. Financial responsibility for the development and operation of Territorial Parks should be a charge on public funds. An exception should be Community Parks, where the community may enter into an agreement to operate the park and receive any revenues.

Considerable economic benefits may be expected to be generated through development by the private sector, improved employment opportunities and increased travel stimulated by park development. These revenues may well exceed all capital expenditures at a future date.

#### Criteria for Territorial Parks

Criteria for Territorial Parks will, to a certain degree, vary in accordance with the classification of a potential park area, and the statement of purpose for that specific park. (Reference Appendix "A" for Classifications)

The following criteria are considered common to all areas to be selected for inclusion in the Territorial Parks System.

Areas selected for inclusion in the Territorial Parks System should be unencumbered Crown Lands.

The area should contain territorial, regional or locally significant landscapes with unique, scenic, natural or scientific values.

The area should have recreational potential and be suitable for the development of accommodation and related visitor services, either within the boundaries of the park or as a peripheral development on the land access routes.

The area should have reasonable access in relation to the potential demand for recreation areas by population centres.

Potential park lands should be reasonably free of resource "exploitation-recreation" conflicts and parks should be selected, within reason, to avoid conflicts of interest with resource development.

Areas of national significance should not be selected for inclusion in the Territorial Park System, but should be recommended for inclusion in the National Park System.

The area must be of sufficient value to warrant the expenditure of public funds for development in accordance with the purpose of the Park.

#### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended to the Council of the Northwest Territories that:

1. A Territorial Parks System be established and developed in the Northwest Territories and that the following principles form a part of the Park policy:
  - (a) Territorial Parks to be developed for the economic and social benefit of Northwest Territories residents and visitors to the Territories.
  - (b) Employment of Northern residents and development of tourism related businesses to be fostered.
  - (c) The traditional rights and privileges of the indigenous people to hunt, trap and fish in the Northwest Territories will be honoured within the boundaries of Territorial Parks.
  - (d) There is to be no exploration for or extraction of non-renewable resources within Territorial Parks. Land use and surface disposition within Territorial Parks will be regulated by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

- (e) Commercial development of renewable resources will be permitted subject to legislation regulating resource use by zoning of parks to eliminate possible resource use conflicts.
  - (f) Scientific research will be encouraged subject to minor limitations to ensure such research is not detrimental to the use and purpose of the park, but no permanent research stations shall be permitted.
  - (g) Natural history interpretation and education is to be an integral part of the Territorial Park development program.
  - (h) Public hearings on park proposal and prior consultation to be provided for in Territorial Park legislation.
  - (i) Development and operation of Territorial Parks will be an expenditure against public funds.
  - (j) The use of Territorial Parks to be at no direct cost to the public except for the use of accommodation or other services provided through the expenditure of public funds; and fees for business licences or other licences required by Federal or Territorial legislation.
  - (k) Territorial Parks should not contain large tracts of land but rather be relatively small, containing areas that are of interest and usable to the general public.
2. An Ordinance respecting Parks in the Northwest Territories be prepared for the January 1974 Session of the Council of the Northwest Territories.

## APPENDIX "A"

Territorial Parks will be divided into four classifications, reflecting the purpose and use planned for a specific area, encompassing the primary recreational activity and the significance of the physical landscape.

### Natural Environment Recreation Park

This type of park is an area of land suited to the more passive types of outdoor recreation activities, established in areas where there has been little or no prior disturbance of the land surface. The purpose of the Natural Environment Recreation Park is to protect the recreational resource and preserve the particular landscape.

Parks in this category will be carefully chosen to eliminate possible conflicts with other resource uses. Public recreational use of the park is to be encouraged, but only minimum facilities such as docking facilities for boats or float-equipped aircraft and designated tent camping areas would be provided. The park would be subject to zoning, permitting resource development and defining areas of development. No permanent dwellings or business establishments are to be permitted within the park boundaries. Peripheral development at the main point of land or water access routes would provide a development area for business opportunities generated by the park's existence.

Highways or secondary roads could be developed to provide access to the park. However, construction of interior roads is to be discouraged, while development of hiking trails, waterways for canoeing and boating and rustic tent camping areas are desirable.

### Specialized Outdoor Recreation Park

This class of park is an area of land especially suitable for the more active types of recreational pursuits. Special attributes may be present, such as exceptional fishing, natural history values, boating and water skiing potentials which would be amendable to development.

These parks would be relatively accessible to population centres. Public access may involve road construction or provision of mooring and docking facilities for boats or float-equipped aircraft. These factors would weight heavily in the selection of this type of park.



Development of commercial accommodation and visitor services are to be encouraged within the park boundaries. Where visitor service facilities in the form of permanent structures on park lands are necessary, provision will be made for land leases and park use permits.

Some of the concessions permitted in this type of park would include guiding, food services, transportation and craft shops. Every effort would be made to stimulate and encourage the involvement of the indigenous peoples in operating concessions and other services as would benefit the park visitor.

Development of interior roads, paths, trails will be necessary to allow visitors access to park features. Road construction and visitor services would be located in accordance with a specific zoning plan to enhance the natural setting and reduce impairment to a minimum in keeping with the purpose of the park.

For purposes of example, an area encompassing Alexandra Falls, Louise Falls and Escarpment Creek, or an especially scenic area along the proposed Mackenzie Highway to Inuvik could be developed as a Recreation Park. None of the areas developed under the public tourist facilities program qualify for inclusion in this category.

#### Highway and Wayside Parks

This classification will include road and riverside campgrounds, picnic areas, boat launch areas and viewpoints. They offer convenient stopping places for the traveller and enhance the travel experience. Generally, these parks will be located at particularly scenic spots along the highway or waterway systems.

There are fourteen public tourist facilities which fall into this classification. These include Lady Evelyn Falls, Louise Falls, Prelude Lake, Reid Lake and picnic areas situated along the existing highway system.

Alternate resource uses of these parks such as logging or mining would not be consistent with the purpose of the park and would interfere with its intended use. The small size of this type of park and its general roadside location will preclude resource use conflicts. Where resource use appears to be more beneficial to the economy of the Northwest Territories, the facilities at a Wayside Park would be removed and the designation as a park revoked by the Commissioner in Council.

Concessions of the type described under Recreation Parks would be allowed to operate on the periphery of these parks subject to any existing area development regulations and where they would result in a more enjoyable visit to the park.

### Community Parks

Community Parks are similar in nature and purpose to Highway and Wayside Parks, except they are developed for the economic and social benefit of a specific community. Campgrounds have been developed in or immediately adjacent to five communities within this classification. Community oriented day use areas, such as the one under development at the Meliadine River near Rankin Inlet and the proposed development at Frobisher Bay also fit into this classification.

These parks would be developed to a semi-serviced state, in consultation with the community, by the Territorial Government. Initially the park will be maintained and operated by the Territorial administration. However, the community may enter into an agreement with the Territorial Government to operate and maintain these parks retaining the revenues derived from the operations. Development of the park to a fully serviced stage, water, electricity, laundry and showers, would be carried out by the community.

Uses other than camping, picnicking and associated recreational activities would not be desirable in a Community Park and therefore they would not be permitted. Concession services would in most cases not be necessary because of the proximity of the community, but concessions may be permitted. For instance, the concessional operation of a transportation service between Rankin Inlet and the proposed day-use area at Meliadine Lake, and a boat rental service at the site could be foreseen.

Territorial Parks would, generally speaking, be afforded the degree of protection as follows:

- (a) Primarily for outdoor recreation, lands reserved from sale, some resource exploitation allowed.
- (b) Set aside for multiple resource use, with recreation as a co-ordinate land use. Lands reserved from sale.