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An Outline  
for a  
Traditional Skills Camp  
Proposed by the  
Fort Resolution Settlement Council  
  
Prepared by Mike Mercredi  
  
August 1988

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FOREWARD



The basic traditional skills are usually perceived as hunting, trapping and fishing. Each of these, however, have specific related skills quite different from the others. The real common thread of hunting, trapping and fishing is living almost independently off the land.

Therefore the goal of the Traditional Skills Camp is not as it may seem, to train trappers, hunters and fishermen; but to develop and reinforce the traits and characteristics of our parents, grandparents and forefathers. The traits of determination, perserverance, independence and interdependence are only a few necessary to survive and live comfortably on the land.

Our forefather habitually practised the skills of forethought and planning; setting objectives and measuring how they made out. Problem solving and decision making, for them was a normal, natural and daily occurrence. Team work went unsaid, because it happened naturally between paddlers in a canoe, a trapper and his dogs and in a family unit.

These things are being said here because it seems that we are continually being told that we have to learn how to make decisions, how to plan and set goals and objectives, how to cooperate, how to conduct ourselves properly. We are told that we must learn the 'life skills'. Maybe we do not really have to learn the life skills but remember and strengthen our life skills.

That is the intent of the Traditional Skills Camp..."to remember and reinforce the skills and traits we have inherited from our ancestors". And to use these skills and traits in today's society.

Mike Mercredi

## The Traditional Skills Camp

### 1.0 Preamble

- 1.1 In the pre-European times a native community was an extremely self-sufficient unit. The immediate forests and surroundings regions provided the people with all of the necessities of life. The collecting and sharing of these resources was almost a spiritual way of life. This sharing or 'equal economy' created an almost pure socialistic society, where everyone benefited or suffered alike.
- 1.2 Fundamental to this self-sufficient society, was the self-sufficient individual who could in fact become just about totally independent. The striving for independence, however, was tempered by an innate desire to help others by sharing and thereby contributing to the whole society. Of course, the individual also received.
- 1.3 The independent, self-sufficient individual who willingly gave to others and who received from the same society, was part of an interdependent collection of independent people.
- 1.4 Perhaps, we should accept that we grow from dependence as an infant to independence as a young adult to a state of interdependence as a mature being. This interdependent state may be where we recognize that as an individual we cannot do all and that we are dependent on the strengths of other individuals.
- 1.5 The mature person looks forward to even sharing his independence provided he can share his dependence.
- 1.6 Many of our younger people have not learned the necessary traditional skills to be self-sufficient and independent in their outdoor environment. As well, many of them do not have the skills to take on the available job opportunities.
- 1.7 These job opportunities are already scarce and as the labour force grows these jobs become even more scarce. Without the traditional skills as a basis for independence and without specific job skills the result is more dependence on government assistance. And it seems, to the welfare recipient, that escape from this dependence is hopeless.

## 2.0 Traditional Skills as a Foundation

- 2.1 The Elders and Leaders of Fort Resolution believe that now we must develop a method to teach traditional skills. Those skills that are associated with a comfortable survival in the wilderness; hunting and fishing for food, and trapping.
- 2.2 The Elders believe that by learning these skills, the younger people will once again appreciate their natural surroundings; to understand and be proud of the achievements of their parents and grandparents.
- 2.3 The Elders also believe that pride in the ancestry will be the foundation of their personal pride and high self esteem. With this foundation younger people will have the confidence in their basic skills of independence and thereby be able to meet and handle the obstacles in their path. Their confidence will give them the courage to believe they have the right and ability to improve their life regardless at what level they may be at and to act on this courage.

## 3.0 The Goal Statement

- 3.1 The goal of the traditional skills training camp is to re-inforce the concept of self-sufficiency and independence so that each person will willingly contribute to a state of interdependency of their community.
- 3.2 The fundamental intent of the training will be to develop the mental discipline of each person to persevere and complete a task once started.
- 3.3 The philosophy, skills, techniques and the military influence in the training will be designed and used to develop and re-inforce in every participant the following traits and qualities:

- determination
- perserverance
- self esteem
- self confidence
- assertiveness
- independence
- interdependence
- team work
- reliability

- co-operativeness
- loyalty
- leadership

#### 4.0 The Traditional Skills Camp/Project D.A.R.E.

4.1 The Traditional Skills Camp will be modeled after Project D.A.R.E. in Ontario. D.A.R.E. (Development through Adventure, Responsibility and Education) began in 1971 as a specialized training school facility. D.A.R.E.'s programs are conducted in a wilderness setting. The participants are presented with challenges and experiences designed to develop personal and community values.

4.2 These challenges and experiences at D.A.R.E. in many ways resemble situations that occur in a community. The participants are placed in this intensive situation and are responsible for their own actions as well as those of each other.

4.3 The staff members work with the participants and promote their growth through their roles as models, facilitators and educators.

4.4 Without the many distractions that might otherwise occur, the outdoor setting acts as a catalyst for growth and change. A wilderness program produces inherent anxiety, new situations which often reduce the time to identify and solve hidden problems.

4.5 By exposing participants to a new environment such as D.A.R.E.'s wilderness setting, they do not have the normal defences developed in their usual surroundings. They must learn to co-operate, to develop strengths and skills that they may not have realized possible.

#### 5.0 A Military Influence

5.1 The Traditional Skills Camp will cultivate discipline, dedication and loyalty, combined with a high degree of achievement. The camp will incorporate a military-like influence to develop these traits and qualities. This military influence will be reflected in having participants assume leadership roles and by exercising a degree of authority over others. They will be given the chance to direct others, make decisions and solve problems.

5.2 Their decision making and problem solving will, of course, be preceded by the guidance and sound judgement of the instructor. It will also be the beginning of supervisory roles and management of people and resources. A valuable skill for the future.

5.3 Certainly, as leaders are being developed so will followers develop as capable, willing and discretionary supporters. They will be able to recognize an appropriate and justified order and accept authority with loyalty.

## 6.0 The Training Philosophy

6.1 Training will be challenging and adventurous. The basic philosophy of the challenges and adventure is that success is always preceded by a certain degree of risk. And that perceived success is directly proportional to the degree of perceived risk. The greater the risk the greater the success.

6.2 All risk will be mitigated by the instructor's observations. If in the judgement of the instructor, the risk or stress level could become more than the candidate could endure the exercise or task will be aborted.

6.3 The degree of risk must challenge the participant and not the training.

## 7.0 Mental and Physical Discipline

7.1 The casual observer will see the activities of the camp as being almost entirely physical. Life in the wild is physical. The discipline, however, to persevere, to keep trying, to be observant, to know that your survival depends on what you do and how well you do it, requires a mental ability that is not readily learned in a passive setting.

7.2 A simple activity like splitting and hauling wood means that you can be warm and comfortable and be able to cook something to eat. The activity, however, becomes a little more difficult when it is raining, the wood is wet and everything you have can be carried in your packsack. It is now more obvious that mental discipline is a skill to be learned and developed.

## 8.0 The Training

- 8.1 Training at the camp will be in two phases, Basic Survival Skills and Traditional Skills. A third phase, an on the land experience, will be optional. This third phase will depend on getting a family willing to take someone with them on a hunting or trapping trip.
- 8.2 Each of the first two phases of training will end with an exercise that is challenging enough to convince the participant that certain skills have been mastered.
- 8.3 The exercise at the end of phase one, 'Basic Survival' will be a solo adventure that will re-inforce the idea of self-sufficiency and independence.
- 8.4 The exercise at the end of phase two, 'Traditional Skills' will be in pairs or fours. This exercise will extend the idea of individual self-sufficiency to the greater effectiveness of group self-sufficiency.
- 8.5 This group self-sufficiency will begin the concept of interdependence as an extension of independence.

## 9.0 Basic Survival Training

9.1 Objective: The aim of this six weeks of training will be to learn the skills of survival with standard equipment and by improvising and using the natural material available.

9.2 This training will cover the following:

- shelters
  - tents, lean-tos, 'hootchies'
- fires for cooking, baking, warmth, signals
- camp cooking
  - with utensils and pots, etc
  - without equipment by improvising
- planning meals for more than one day
- preparing pack sacks
- map reading
  - compass bearings
  - natural bearings
  - bracketing



9.3 Test Exercise: At the end of this training, candidates will select a destination and complete a one day march, over night improvise camp and return.

#### 10.0 Traditional Skills Training

10.1 Those candidates that were successful in completing the eight weeks of basic training, and the over night exercise, will be allowed to take part in the next phase of advanced training.

10.2 Objective: The aim of this training will be to introduce the candidates to the skills of trapping, hunting and fishing. The duration of this training will be approximately ten weeks or longer, depending on the progress of the candidates.

10.3 The subjects of training will necessarily depend on the season. The following list of subjects will be covered:

- behavior of animals of the season
  - tracks, calls, methods of hunting and trapping
- prepare and repair of seasonal equipment
- care and handling of dogs in summer or winter
- fishing with nets, traps, snares, spears, hooks
- skinning and preparing furs
- canoeing, boating and water safety practices

#### 11.0 Sample of Day's Activity

0630	Wake up and wash
0700-0730	Role Call and run
0730-0800	Shower, make beds and get ready for breakfast
0800-0900	Breakfast
0900-1200	Work Detail <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Raking, painting, repairs, haul and split wood, shovel snow, pick up garbage, etc</li></ul>
1200-1300	Lunch
1300-1630	Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In classroom or outside, depending on weather</li></ul>
1630-1830	Evening chore and supper detail
1730-1830	Supper
1830-1930	Free Time
1930-2000	Next day's activity and duty meeting

2000-2130 Free Time  
2100-2130 Lunch  
2230 Lights Out

12.0 Clothing and Equipment

12.1 All clothing and equipment issued to participants will be controlled by an individual issue card for each person. The items will be listed and signed for individually. At an established date or before leaving the camp all the items issued to the individual will be returned or accounted for. A recovery process will be initiated for any damaged or lost equipment. All equipment will be clearly marked as property of the camp.

12.2 Upon arrival at the camp the participants will be issued the following clothing and bedding:

3 blankets	2 sets of denims
2 sheets	1 set of mess tins, cutlery
1 pillow	1 sewing kit
1 pillow case	1 pair rubber boots
2 pair coveralls	

12.3 The participants will bring in addition to what they will wear, toilet and shaving gear, at least four pairs of socks and underwear.

12.4 The camp will provide cold weather gear, rain gear and camping gear as needed.

13.0 A Feasibility Study

13.1 This preliminary paper was designed to describe a camp concept. Understandably, a feasibility study will have to be carried out. The study should closely examine the concepts presented in this paper.

13.2 The study should also examine other factors such as camp administration, equipment and inventory control, camp safety and fire prevention, medical aid for injury and sickness as well as an evacuation system.

13.3 The study must also look at a means of getting qualified instructors and look forward to a method of training future instructors.

13.4 The study will also identify potential sources of funds and a way to

Nuni(ye) Development Corporation  
Terms of Reference for a Feasibility Study  
on a Traditional Skills Camp

Preamble

The Board of Directors of the Corporation and the Elders of Ft Resolution have directed that research must begin to establish and operate a Traditional Skills Training Program and Camp.

Direction was given that the program and camp must be designed to meet the needs of the youth of the NWT.

The complete program will involve three phases. Phase 1 will be on basic survival skills in the woods. Phase 2 will be on the traditional skills of hunting, fishing and trapping. The third Phase will be an "on the land" experience, hunting or trapping with a Native family.

Preliminary work has been done and an outline of a Traditional Skills Camp has been developed. The study is expected to research and follow the basic concepts presented in this paper.

The Study will research, but not be limited to, the following elements:

1. Camp Development

-location

terrain

transportation link

wildlife

rivers/lakes

-facilities, construction and costs.

-equipment and supplies

procurement and inventory control.

2. Camp Administration and Management

-selection criteria of candidates

-medical and health

-ordering and purchasing food and supplies

-cooking and camp maintenance

-management and staff

3. Program Development

-training curriculum

-training syllabus and schedule

-training supplies

-Cultural education

-instructors and instructor development

-student and instructor certification

4. Camp Program Budget

-forecast of expenditures

-sources of funds

5. Viability and Revenue Generating

-tourist lodge

-conference centre

-learning centre

-marketing strategy

The Purpose of the study will be to clearly identify the hurdles to vault and positions to take by the Corporation that will lead to a successful and long lasting venture. It is also important to remember that along with providing a valuable learning experience for the Youth of Northwest Territories, the camp must take the

necessary steps to reach a certain degree of viability. Therefore it will be necessary to examine the tourism spin-off activities as well.

The Expected Results will be a development plan to be used to secure the funds needed. An operating plan and strategy to achieve a degree of viability. The total report will serve as a foundation to achieve the goal of the Traditional Skills Camp.

The Recommendations will include, whenever possible, a second or third alternative. Furthermore the advantages and disadvantages will be clearly shown for each recommendation.

## Lutra Associates Ltd.

Project Management - Research

September 13, 1988.

Mr. Mike Mercredi,  
Economic Development Facilitator,  
Nuni(ye) Development Corp.,  
FORT RESOLUTION,  
N.W.T.  
XOE OMO

Dear Mike:

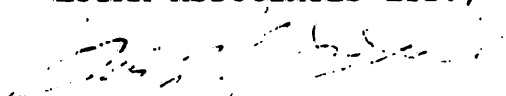
Thank you for inviting Lutra to prepare a proposal to undertake a feasibility study for the development of a traditional skills camp. This is an interesting concept and certainly one worthy of investigation.

As I'm sure you are aware, a feasibility study terms of reference for the traditional camp was prepared a few years ago. I believe that funding support for the venture was not forthcoming and therefore the study was shelved. We are fearful that the same might occur again and are therefore reluctant to put substantial effort on such short notice, into the preparation of a proposal.

It would appear that the funding environment has not changed since the last call for proposals. That is, this type of venture does not appear to be within the current policies of the G.N.W.T. and the devolution of mental health, alcohol and drug and, health responsibilities from the Federal Government to the Gov't of the N.W.T. certainly closes the door to Federal funding. As you suggest, examining tourism use and revenue generating potential may hold promise for the operation. However, multi-use, land-based facilities have not met with a great deal of success in past years as targeting at distinctly different user groups causes conflict and a host of operational problems.

It would seem that a feasibility study of this proposed operation might be premature. What I would suggest is that the Development Corp. take the idea and sell it to such groups as the Dene Cultural Institute, the Dept. of Social Services and the Dept. of Education. A commitment of support would ensure that a feasibility study would at least have a chance of being implemented.

Sincerely,  
LUTRA ASSOCIATES LTD.,

  
Lois M. Little.  
Principal Partner.

October 17th, 1988



HLA  
CONSULTANTS

Mr. Mike Mercredi  
Nuni (Ye) Development Corporation  
General Delivery  
Fort Resolution, N.W.T.  
XOE OMO

Dear Mr. Mercredi:

In response to your request, we are pleased to present the following as our proposal to conduct a feasibility study on a Traditional Skills Camp. The methodology is presented on a sequential task basis.

**Task 1: Client Meeting and Project Initiation**

At the outset of the project we will meet with the client group to review the methodology, time schedule, budget, and all aspects of the project. The contract terms can also be finalized. At this time, preliminary location-related discussions and work will take place. We will consult with relevant individuals who might be involved in numerous aspects of the camp operation. While in Yellowknife, we will also consult with relevant government and other organization representatives.

**Task 2: Data Collection**

The Traditional Skills Camp, being an innovative concept, will require ground-breaking work in market research. We will contact many sources of information to determine interest, constraints, opinions and possible directions. These will include:

- . The Fort Resolution Settlement Council (elders and leaders);
- . Federal government: Indian and Northern Affairs; Employment and Immigration; and Regional Industrial Expansion;
- . Territorial Government: Education; Economic Development & Tourism; Renewable Resources;
- . Other organizations; Dene nation, youth organizations, Travel Industry Association (TIANWT);
- . Provincial representatives; government, native and adventure related organizations and tourism industry representatives;
- . Operations with adventure and outdoor education programming; and
- . Tour operators and wholesalers specialising in adventure markets.

**Task 3: Comparative Analysis**

We will make contact with other related operations which incorporate some of the elements of the proposed Traditional Skills Camp. These may include: Project DARE, Ont.; Outward Bound Schools; Camp Apa Cheesta, Alta.; Strathcona Park Lodge and Outdoor Education Centre, B.C.; Sub-Arctic Wilderness Adventures Ltd., N.W.T.; Banff Alpine Guides, Alta.; Canadian School of Mountaineering, Alta.; The Lac Des Arcs Climbing School, Alta.

The information of interest will be related to markets, locations, seasonality, staff, facilities, funding, pricing, costs, funding and marketing. As part of this analysis, we will personally visit selected locations to obtain more detailed facility and financial information. Strathcona Park Lodge and Outdoor Education Centre will be important, as it is world renowned, and has programs which range from Easy through to Strenuous. Not only has the centre educational packages for youth groups during the school year, but has a variety of specialized outdoor interests. These include: Nature Awareness and Survival Training, Pioneer Living Skills, Backcountry First Aid, Leadership, Adventure Camps, and International Outdoor challenge. We will also be making personal contact with Alberta adventure-oriented schools, including Camp Apa Cheesta, where small groups live in authentic Indian tipis and learn traditional skills by doing them.

#### Task 4: Market Analysis

It will be necessary to examine other recreational and tourism markets, as well as educational and traditional skills markets. The facility will likely be based on a varied total package of programs and facilities. We believe that this multi-activity option package will be very important, especially at first, for attracting the variety and number of visitors to make the project viable. We will undertake a comprehensive study of the various, preferably overlapping, market segments for adventure products.

As well as the interviews and contacts in previous tasks, we will obtain information from Package and Speciality Tour operations, for example: Canadian Wilderness Adventures, Sask.; Sportsmen's Adventures Inc., Sask; Northern Saskatchewan Outfitters' Association; Northern Horizons Outdoor Enterprises, Ont.; Temagami Wilderness Adventures, Ont.; and Canadian Wilderness Trips, Ont.

There are numerous market segments for traditional skills, outdoors, adventure, and recreational activities. Target markets for the operation will be determined, and might include: native groups (eg., for band retreats); youth groups; international youth groups; regional/territorial residents; leaders of organizations; tourists; outdoors enthusiasts, small meeting or conference groups; package tour clients, etc.

#### Task 5: Programming and Concept Development

From the preceding tasks, market trends and target market information will provide directions for proportionate emphasis to place on various programs, eg., water or land-based; wilderness living skills, first aid, and behaviour, nature awareness and survival training, adventure activities, survival psychology, or other traditional outdoor skills.

These programs will be determined based on: current/potential demand; market segments; multi-season attractiveness; available local resources and skills; economic return; special requirements; and location. It is possible that for market viability, the initial operation may require a



fishing or nature-oriented lodge, with a gradual increase in traditional skills programming. This will be determined.

Programming information will be used to determine physical facility requirements such as size, special needs, equipment, etc.

#### Task 6: Economic Analysis

The costs for development of the project will be determined, in order of magnitude terms, for: Capital costs - construction, transportation, materials, equipment, special features, inventory and supplies. Whether an existing facility is modified or extended, or a new one is built, we will have an architect determine facility costs, together with bubble diagrams; operation and maintenance costs - staffing (management, instruction and service staff), repairs, utilities, marketing, etc. Pricing guidelines will be developed, based on program costs and comparative/competitive information. This will be used to develop a forecast of revenues, and may vary by program component. Other sources of revenues, eg., a retail outlet, rentals, etc., will also be considered.

The costs and revenue projections will be used to develop a pro forma for the operation. This will be presented as an overview of the project's economic viability (profitability) in the market place over a period of time. In addition, sources of funds, or other types of assistance will also be examined.

Prior to final report preparation we will submit our findings and meet with the steering committee to discuss these, as well as alternatives and recommendations.

#### Task 7: Report Preparation

The final product will include a development plan suitable for presenting a financial or other institution for funding. This will include:

- . An operational plan which will have administrative requirements, staffing and management components.
- . A marketing plan which will include such components as advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, public relations, and direct selling to the industry.
- . Other components will include; target markets; programming recommendations; facility requirements; and projected costs and revenues.

The final document will give a clear indication of the steps necessary to make the project feasible, and will be concise and action-oriented.

If your needs become more specific, and if it is required, we can provide you with a more detailed proposal with our firm brochures and resumes.

Budget

Per diems are an average of \$450 for professional staff. We can, of course, modify the budget according to your needs and final methodology.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Cost</u>
1. Initiation, client meeting, interviews, data collection	19	\$ 8,550
2. Comparative analysis, market analysis	17	7,650
3. Programs, concept development, architectural costing	10	4,500
4. Financial analysis, capital, O & M, revenues, pro forma, client meeting, draft findings	14	6,300
5. Final Product: development, operational and marketing plan	12	<u>5,400</u>
		\$32,400

Disbursements

Travel: - airfare Fort Resolution (4 at \$700)	\$2,800	
- airfare Campbell River (1 at \$600)	600	
- car rental Campbell River (1 at \$40)	40	
- 800 kms. Banff at \$.25/km.	200	
Subsistence: 20 at \$100/day	2,000	
Long Distance Telephone	500	
Report Production	<u>500</u>	
		<u>6,640</u>
		<u>\$39,040</u>

TOTAL STUDY COSTS \$39,040

Experience

HLA Consultants is experienced in many types of feasibility studies and business development plans. In addition, we are very familiar with tourism markets and planning, and in particular, with adventure products. We also have considerable work experience in the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

Relevant projects include:

- Market and Feasibility Study, Hotel Complex; Fort McPherson;
- Alberta-Yellowhead West Regional Tourism Strategy. This included numerous adventure product components;

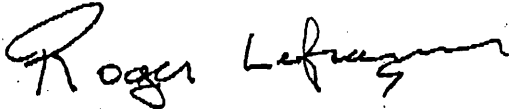
HLA

- Yukon Tourism Resort: attractions/accommodation resort;
- Indian Cultural Centre Development Plan: Little Salmon Carmacks Band, Yukon;
- Wild Rose Ranch: market assessment for a guest ranch in the Rocky Mountain foothills;
- Market and Feasibility Study for a Lodge Operation on the Arctic Tundra: Lynx Tundra Lodge;
- Destination Yukon: Tourism Development Project;
- Tourism Alternatives for Grande Cache: an alpine wilderness area in Alberta; and,
- Saskatchewan Cypress Hills Tourism: major tourism plan.

If you have any questions or concerns please to not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

HLA CONSULTANTS



Roger Lefrancois,  
Principal



Northwest  
Territories Fort Smith Region  
SOCIAL SERVICES

19 August, 1988

Mike Mercredi  
Nuni(ye)  
Development Corporation  
General Delivery  
Fort Resolution, N.W.T.  
XOE OMO

Dear Mr. Mercredi:

In reading over your Outline for a Survival and Traditional Skills Camp, the suggestion that a feasibility study is needed becomes apparent. I have attached a letter of support for such that you may use when approaching funding sources.

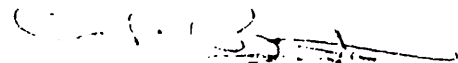
If I may be allowed to offer a couple of brief (as they are not well thought out) suggestions:

- 1) Adults: the tourism market in the south may be interested in a northern traditional (cultural) experience in the form of short one to two week programs that go beyond the present fishing camp approach. This may capture the family or couple oriented market that is generally lost in traditional fish camps, which I suggest is becoming increasingly competitive.
- 2) Conferences: I like the idea; you may want to investigate the operation at Prelude Lake (outside Yellowknife) as an example. A conference centre would also add revenue and exposure to your other programs.
- 3) Certification: those youth that complete the program phases should receive some form of recognition. One idea would be to contact the Tourism Guide Training Program to see if your program could be affiliated with theirs, thereby increasing employment opportunities for your graduates.

.../2

(2)

These suggestions are only ideas to mull over. If I can be of further help please feel free to contact me. Good luck.



Colin Bonnycastle,  
Specialist/Comm. Corr.

Attachment

cc. Area Supervisor  
Hay River, N.W.T.



Northwest  
Territories Fort Smith Region  
SOCIAL SERVICES

19 August, 1988

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

**Outline for Survival and Traditional Skills Camp**

In reading the above outline proposed by the Fort Resolution Settlement Council dated August 1988, I was very intrigued by its progressive nature. Its philosophical focus on the concept of interdependence fosters what seems to be a timely and needed approach to working with northern youth. The paper's suggestion that further study, in the form of a feasibility study, shows maturity on the part of the Council. It is extremely important that Outward Bound model programs can ensure that high safety standards and economic viability can be obtained before such ventures are allowed to operate.

I therefore support the outline in principle and see the necessity of the Council to solicit funding sources so that a quality feasibility study can be completed.

Colin Bonnycastle,  
Specialist/Comm. Corr.