

Department of
Indian Affairs and
Northern Development



c.c. The Deputy Minister

Ministère des
Affaires indiennes et
du Nord canadien

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MR. J.-B. BERGEVIN
ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER
(INDIAN-ESKIMO AFFAIRS)

Ottawa 4, November 23, 1970.

our file / notre dossier A. 8: N.D.
your file / votre dossier CENTRAL SERVICES REGISTRY

DEC 14 1970
318-10
FILE No.
CORR. No.
REFER. TO

REQUEST FOR LAND IN WOOD BUFFALO NATIONAL PARK
BY FORT CHIPEWYAN BAND OF INDIANS

-- Attached are copies of material prepared by officers of the National and Historic Parks Branch on the question of boundary changes to Wood Buffalo National Park and the provision of land for Indian Reserves.

It is clear that, if satisfactory arrangements can be made with the Province of Alberta respecting the Indian lands, the three areas requested by the Fort Chipewyan Cree Band at a meeting with the Regional Director, Western Region, of the National and Historic Parks Branch on October 16, 1969 could be made available to them. The areas concerned are shown on Map No. 3 of the attached report. These lands approximate in area what is understood to be the Fort Chipewyan Cree Band's entitlement to Reserve lands under Treaties 8 and 11.

I note that in 1969 the Indian-Eskimo Economic Development Branch had serious reservations about the suitability of the areas proposed for Reserve lands. Are you now satisfied that the three areas would be a satisfactory solution to the Band's land entitlement?

A preliminary evaluation of the gypsum deposits at Peace Point carried out by the then Resources Division in 1964 indicates that there is little chance that the deposits could be economically exploited in the foreseeable future. Other points about these lands have been noted on page 2 of the National Parks' paper.

Despite the National Parks' misgivings about bringing the hunting and trapping rights question into these negotiations, the possibility of increasing substantially the size of areas 2 and 3 in exchange for the surrender of hunting and trapping rights in Wood Buffalo National Park held by members of the Fort Chipewyan Cree Band does exist. Again, concurrence by the Province would be required.*

*I personally think this issue should not be raised: I would assume you would NOT wish to create a precedent for the N.W.T. by offering more land than the Treaty calls for.

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It is probable that the Fort Chipewyan band is not aware that if a suitable exchange of lands can be effected with the Province, a considerable area west of Peace Point would be deleted from the Park. The possibility exists that they may wish to reconsider the location of the three areas they have chosen in the light of this information.*

The Regional Director of the National and Historic Parks Branch has not had any direct consultations with the Band since October of 1969 and it would seem desirable for your Group to carry out any negotiations with them, with National Parks officials present in the capacity of observers. We are prepared to press the Province strongly on the land exchange question once we have determined what provisions should be made to protect the interests of the Indians involved.

J. H. GORDON

J.H. Gordon,
Senior Assistant Deputy Minister
(Conservation).

LEARMONTH/wc

Encls.

*This is a possibility only. The boundaries of the park may be modified at some future date. The issue is so complex however that I do not see it as an early prospect. We do have a confidential study of lands to the East of the Park boundary of high potential for park purposes which might feature in any exchange or rationalization worked out. The consequences for the Indians cannot be clearly foreseen. They should however know that the possibility exists of boundary changes.

Department of
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Northern Development



Ministère des
Affaires indiennes et
du Nord canadien

MR. T. B. BERGWIN
ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER
(INDIAN-ESKIMO AFFAIRS)

Ottawa 4, November 23, 1970. X

our file/notre dossier

your file/votre dossier

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