

## FORT CHIPWEYAN CREE BAND'S REQUEST FOR RESERVE LANDS

The Fort Chipewyan Cree Band is entitled to some 89,000 acres of Reserve Land under Treaties 8 and 11. It is the responsibility of the Province of Alberta to provide the land.

Periodically, since at least 1963, the Band has requested that a Reserve for them be established at Peace Point in Wood Buffalo National Park. In 1965, they requested 50,000 acres at Peace Point and several smaller Reserves elsewhere for fishing purposes.

In 1968, the Band identified the Peace Point location and three other areas in the Park as being of interest to them for Reserves. The four areas are shown on Map No. 2 and total some 200,000 acres.

At a meeting between members of the Fort Chipewyan Band and the Regional Director of the National and Historic Parks Branch on October 16, 1969, the Chief and the Band Council indicated sites in three of the four areas identified in 1968 as the areas they were now interested in.

These areas,

- Area 1 - 43,600 acres at Peace Point
- 2 - 26,200 acres near Embarras Portage; and
- 3 - 19,300 acres at Ag Lake between the Revillon  
Coupé and Quatre Fourches channel

approximate the Band's entitlement to Reserve Lands. The areas concerned are shown on Map No. 3.

It should be noted that in 1969 the Indian-Eskimo Economic Development Branch had serious reservations about the suitability of the areas proposed. They recommended that a "comprehensive socio-economic study be carried out of the region and that this study, and the alternatives if offers, be made known to the Cree Band so that their decision may be an informed one".

A number of points should be noted about this proposal:

1. If the Peace Point location (Area 1) were established as an Indian Reserve without turning over the land west of it to the Province, we would have an isolated enclave in the Park; a very undesirable situation.
2. In reviewing the Alberta proposal for road connections to Fort Chipewyan and Fort Smith, this Department favoured the more easterly route that followed the Athabasca River (Route A on Map No. 4). This would have the road running through any Indian Reserve in Area 2.
3. We have recently reached agreement with Swanson's Lumber Company Ltd. to grant them timber cutting rights to an area which includes Area 2, in exchange for their rights in the Peace Delta Block of the Park. Since cutting of the timber would provide both revenue from timber dues and employment opportunities to the Band this may not be objectionable.
4. If it is desired to grant more than the 89,000 acre entitlement, Areas 2 and 3 could be enlarged. It would, indeed, be logical to grant the entire "Island" on which Area 3 is located as shown on Map No. 2, rather than the smaller reserve shown on Map No. 3.
5. Any transfer would involve turning the land over to the Province for conveyance by them to the Indian Band.
6. Any deletion of lands from Wood Buffalo National Park would require an amendment to the National Parks Act.
7. The situation on all three areas is complicated by the existence of hunting and trapping rights held by Metis and other non-Indians. Compensation for these rights would probably have to be provided.
8. The provision of lands from the Park for Indian Reserves could present an opportunity to negotiate for the withdrawal of hunting and trapping rights in the remainder of the Park. However, such rights are also held by many individuals, Indians and non-Indians, who are not members of the Fort Chipewyan Cree Band. If a reasonably speedy settlement of the treaty land entitlement is desired, the hunting and trapping question should not be made a part of these negotiations.

- 3 -

Recommendation

If the Indian-Eskimo Economic Development Branch is satisfied that the granting of these lands is a reasonable solution to the Chipewyan Cree Band's Reserve land problem, it is recommended that we press the Province for an early settlement of this matter.

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*Agreed*

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