

ALGONQUINS OF BARRIERE LAKE
MAN-MADE IMPACTS ON THE COMMUNITY
AND FISH & WILDLIFE, 1870-1979.

Draft For discussion purposes only.

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Introduction.

This paper has been prepared for the Trilateral Secretariat to provide some historical perspective as efforts are made to finalize the IRMP and develop possible approaches to the reconciliation of resource and land use within the territory. It was felt that a review of the different impacts which have influenced the fortunes of the Barriere Lake people and fish & wildlife within the Trilateral Territory would be helpful to the parties as they proceed. The report that follows attempts to provide historical context by reviewing selected documents which relate to these issues.

Methodology.

The main source of data for this exercise has been the document database maintained by the Algonquin Nation Secretariat. This database contains transcripts and summaries of archival documents, as well as published materials, relating to the Algonquin Nation generally, and Barriere Lake specifically. This database contains over 10,000 records drawn from original sources which include the Oblate records, Hudsons Bay Company archives, National Archives of Canada and the Archives National de Quebec. Searches were conducted using various combinations of keywords and dates to capture relevant data, which were then reviewed and incorporated into the draft.

We were also able to reference two unpublished manuscripts previously prepared for the Algonquins of Barriere Lake: *Algonquins of Barriere Lake - Historical Report*, prepared by Leigh Ogston in November, 1987, and *Summary of Quebec Orders-in-Council (1928-1980)*, prepared by Stu Herbert, September 16, 1988.

There are, however, a number of significant gaps which should be mentioned at the outset. First, the records of the provincial Fish & Wildlife department were largely destroyed by fire in the late 1970's in Quebec City, meaning that we do not have access to the vast majority of provincial government records for the period from the late 19th century through to the 1960's (except what may have survived in federal records, or published sources).

Second, we have not yet had the opportunity to do a systematic collection and review of provincial legislation, Orders-in-Council, and regulations relating to fish & wildlife, parks, sports clubs and ZECs. Some of these materials have been collected and transcribed in connection with the land claims program, and Stu Herbert's report is useful for the period following 1928, but we have only been able to review Herbert's summary report, and have not reviewed the Orders-in-Council themselves.

Third, we have not reviewed oral history collected from Barriere Lake members to glean information regarding impacts. Fourth, there are still some items from Indian Affairs records at both the National Archives of Canada and at INAC HQ which remain to be collected and/or integrated into the document database. Some of these relate to both Barriere Lake and the game preserve.

Fifth, our information starts to get sketchier as we move away from the 1950's up to the 1970's. We have almost no data covering the period 1970-2003. And finally, we have not carried out any new primary research for this project; instead, we have made use of what we already had in hand.

However, even taking these limitations into account, readers should be able to come away with a clear idea of the main events of the period under study, as well as the key themes and issues which emerge. If, upon review, there are additional areas identified which require further research and analysis, or gaps which need to be filled, these can be addressed in a subsequent phase.

Preliminary Conclusions.

A number of preliminary conclusions can be drawn from the results of this review. These can be summarized as follows:

- C Impacts on the community of Barriere Lake have been severe & sustained over a long period of time, and largely negative. Historically, external impacts on fish and wildlife populations have also been severe, sustained, and largely negative, although there have been peaks and valleys in efforts to protect and sustain these populations over the years.

- C Overall, the Provincial government's approach to both the allocation of resources, and the management of those resources, has not adequately considered or accommodated Algonquin needs, interests, practises, or prior use. As a general rule, priority and benefit has been given to non-resident interests, whether they be timber companies, hydro, tourists, or sports hunters. Also as a general rule, the Algonquins have received little or no benefit, and in fact have suffered hardship and loss as a result.

- C There is a long history of involvement by the federal government to intervene with the provincial government on behalf of the Algonquins of the area generally, and the Barriere Lake people specifically. This began at least as early as the 1870s's with the provision of relief and occasional health care. It continued in the early 20th century with efforts to seek amendments to prejudicial elements of the provincial fish & game laws, and obtain reserve lands. These efforts continued in the 1940's and 1950's with the federal government taking over active management of the Grand Lac beaver preserve and paying for it's operation, as well as signing an agreement with Quebec in 1941 regarding the Mont Laurier highway Fishing reserve. In this respect, the federal government's participation in the original Trilateral Agreement is not something new, but rather a continuation of a long-standing pattern of commitment and acknowledgement of

responsibility.

- C Despite years of sustained negative impacts, Algonquin use of fish and wildlife resources within their traditional territory has persisted. Perhaps even more important, Algonquin management techniques have continued to be applied wherever and whenever circumstances have permitted.

Readers are invited to provide their comments, observations, corrections, etc., and it is hoped that they will find this report useful in coming to a better understanding of these issues and their application to the tasks at hand.

Algonquin Tenure - Allocation of Resources & Regulation.

In 1760, the trader Alexander Henry explained what he knew of the Algonquin system of land tenure as it then existed (at least with respect to the southern Algonquins who spent portions of their summers at the Oka mission):

I learned that the Algonquins, of the lake Des Deux Montagnes [...] claim all the lands on the Outouais, as far as Lake Nipissing; and that these lands are subdivided, between their several families, upon whom they have devolved by inheritance. I was also informed that, they are exceedingly strict, as to the rights of property, in this regard, accounting an invasion of them as an offence, sufficiently great to warrant the death of the invader.

From this, it can be seen that when Europeans came into Algonquin territory, and began allocating lands & resources and regulating use of those lands & resources, they were not entering a vacuum; not only indigenous interests, but also indigenous resource management and allocation systems were in place on the ground.

As early as 1862, the Algonquins of the Lake of Two Mountains were complaining about encroachment by lumbermen and settlers on their hunting grounds, and contrasting their approach to conservation with the methods employed by whites. Their petition read, in part:

The Indian, whose Hunting Ground is secured to him according to ancient usages amongst his own people under the regulation of his chief, pays every attention to the increase of (particularly the Muskrat and the Beaver) which are purely local, whilst the white Trappers invariably exterminate them.

At the same time, they said, provincial legislation did not take their needs or practises into account, and unjustly imposed close seasons and heavy fines, “no matter what our necessities may be”.

What was clear was that the provincial government was not taking Algonquin needs and interests into

account when it was allocating lands and resources to other users. Neither did provincial efforts to regulate wildlife harvesting consider or accommodate Algonquin needs and practises. This dual conflict would become an enduring theme over the next century and a half.

Logging, Dams, Petitions for Reserve & Relief, 1870's.

The first major industry to compete with the fur trade in Barriere Lake territory was lumbering. By the 1870's, much of the traditional territory of the Algonquins of Barriere Lake was already leased out to timber companies. The loss of habitat, combined with the influx of shantymen who also hunted and trapped, began to put pressure on the resource base.

At this point it would be useful to give an indication of the contribution which timber from the Ottawa Valley has made to the provincial treasury over the years. Quebec's first statistical handbook, published in 1913, split the province into fourteen regions for the purposes of managing the timber harvest. Two of those regions were the "Upper Ottawa" and the "Lower Ottawa". Between 1870 and 1913, the Upper Ottawa generated \$16,762,745.00 in provincial government revenues - 48.5% of the total. In the same period timber harvesting on the Lower Ottawa contributed \$3,624,026.00 to provincial coffers - 10.5% of the total.

Together, then, these two regions generated 59% of Quebec's revenues from timber for the period 1870-1913.

Records from the 1871 census, which were taken by the Reverend Joseph Poitras, include 22 families (86 individuals) described as *Kakebongang* (Cabonga or Barriere) Indians. That same year, a lumber firm built two dams in the vicinity of Cabonga:

In 1871 the old lumber firm of Barnett and Bennett of Quebec erected at the outlet of Kakabonga Lake a timber dam for the purpose of storing water for log driving. This dam raised the water some four feet flooding out lakes draining into Kakabonga. It was found that this dam raised the water to a height sufficient to back the Kakabonga Lake water over into the Ottawa River drainage at a point near the Hudson Bay Company post. This made necessary the construction of another dam at this point on the low height of land dividing the Gens de Terre drainage and the Ottawa.

By July, 1876, Chief Michel Zages of the Bouryare (Barriere) Indians was requesting reserve land, farming implements, supplies and material relief for ninety-nine individuals of his Band.

The reasons for Chief Zages' petition were made clear in subsequent petitions which were sent on behalf of all of the Indians of the Grand Lac vicinity, as well as the adjacent localities of Kippewa and Temagami, in the summer and fall of 1871. As Commissioner Donald Smith of the HBCo explained to The Honourable D. Mills, Minister of the Interior,

There is I think no doubt that their hunting grounds have been encroached on for the purposes of lumbering at least to an equal extent as those Indians in the Lake Superior District and elsewhere who have been receiving the bounty of the Government for many years back while the present applicants have I understand received but very little of any assistance.

Another letter sent to Smith by Chief Francois Pappatie of the “Grand Lac Indians” in January 1877 provided more detail:

We could all support ourselves health permitting if our Hunting Grounds were left to ourselves but they are not left to us. people come up pretending to work at timber but they do not work at timber alone they Hunt on our ground Kill the animals and sometimes take only the skins and leave the flesh to rot in the woods. as there appears to be no remedy for this we think we should get assistance to live otherwise if our Hunting will be ruined.

As a result of these petitions, in the spring of 1877 application was made to the Governor in Council for relief to be drawn from the Indians of Quebec fund, to be distributed to the sick, aged, infirm and/or widows at Kippewa (16), Barriere (15), and Grand Lac (32). However, although this signalled the beginnings of government relief (which, in itself was sporadic and never entirely sufficient), it did not translate into positive action to prevent or mitigate the causes which led to the scarcity of game. Encroachments were to continue and accelerate in ensuing years.

The Department of Indian Affairs’ Annual reports for 1875 and 1878 indicated that Indian poverty across northern Quebec was growing as a result of the scarcity of game, and the introduction of provincial regulations prohibiting spear-fishing. As a result, additional appropriations were required to cover increasing relief costs.

Wildlife in Decline, Relief Costs Rise, 1880-1893.

The fur bearing population continued to decline throughout the 1880's. Agent Charles Logue of Maniwaki, in referring to the *Tete de Boule* Indians who lived towards Barriere, reported in 1883, “I have explained to them that the rapid decrease of the fur-bearing animals will compel them at no distant period to adopt some other means of obtaining a livelihood”. However, most of them continued their pursuits.

Adverse impacts from logging were exacerbated by waves of epidemics which took their toll as well: smallpox, diphtheria, measles, whooping cough and influenza in the 1880's alone. Throughout the 1880's and 1890's, the Algonquins at Barriere and Grand Lac received relief to supplement the hunt, paid from the federal funds and delivered by the local HBCo.

By the time Henry O’Sullivan came up to the Grand Lac and Cabonga area to survey at the beginning of the 1890's, the area was already dotted with trails, shanties, farms, dams and depots associated with

the timber trade.

Portions of a Quebec Lands and Forests Report covering the early 1890's describe a period of rapid change. Although some types of game and fish were said to still be plentiful in the region, there was also evidence of their impending decline as a result of over hunting and a breakdown in the consensus over management of those resources.

Of the large game caribou is the most plentiful: in fact around Kakebonga, etc. seems to be their feeding ground in this part of the country.

Deer and moose are also to be found, but the moose is being rapidly destroyed by the Indians who hunt them the whole year round. [...] Grouse, partridge; ducks; ptarmigan. The fur-bearing animals are chiefly the bear, fox, otter, marten, mink, hare, wolverine, lynx and the beaver, though the last, most interesting and valuable of our fur-bearing animals, will soon be exterminated unless some effective law is passed to save the species from extinction. Of fish, maskinonge, pike, large grey trout, dore, can be taken in any quantity: also splendid white fish in the fall with nets.

The comment about moose being “destroyed by the Indians” is contradicted by much of the other historical evidence which we have seen - most observers reported that over-hunting by whites was the reason for the decline in wildlife populations. But the point remains that without agreed upon rules, competition for the resource was threatening to eliminate it.

Over the course of the following decades, the government of Quebec responded by introducing a number of measures intended to restrict and regulate access, and also to provide for some form of enforcement. Unfortunately, their efforts were ham-fisted and often managed only to harm Indian interests, while not resolving the root causes of wildlife decline.

Close Season on Beaver and Fish & Game Acts, 1893-1905.

The 1894 Fish & Game Act set closed seasons for big game, fur bearers and fowl; prohibitions on the use of snares and traps to catch big game; and prohibitions on the use of poison. Limits were placed on the number of big game which could be harvested in a season: 2 moose, 2 caribou, and 3 deer (although for \$5 a permit could be obtained from the Commissioner of Crown Lands to take an additional five caribou and five deer). The Act was intended to apply equally to Indians and Whites, although Indians who successfully demonstrated their poverty could apply to the Commissioner of Crown Lands for a permit to take more than the limit of big game without having to pay the \$5.00 fee.

The Act also outlined the powers of game-keepers to search and seize, as well as procedures for prosecution and tariffs for fines (ranging from \$2 up to \$50, or up to three months in jail in lieu of payment). The Commissioner of Crown Lands was empowered to appoint a Superintendent

responsible for implementing the Act, and to appoint game-keepers. In addition, Crown Land and Timber Agents and wood-rangers were also authorized to enforce the Act. The Commissioner of Crown Lands was also empowered to establish closed seasons for periods of up to five years.

Another important element of the 1894 Act was with respect to the privatization of the allocation and management of fish & game, by providing for the establishment of Fish & Game Clubs who would obtain exclusive rights to areas of land and water, and in return, assist the government in implementation of the regulations. Members of such clubs could obtain licences at a 50% discount.

The following year, the Act was amended and more restrictions were added: taking big game in deer or moose yards was now prohibited, as was the practise of hunting big game by “crusting”. Permits had to be purchased for all harvesting (although upon application, the Commissioner could waive the fees). Now, settlers as well as Indians were allowed to exceed the limits for big game without payment of a fee, so long as they could establish that such was required for their families’ subsistence. The revised Act also enabled the Governor in Council to establish exclusive hunting territories up to 400 square miles in size (so long as the lands in question were “remote from settlements”, not fit for cultivation and not subdivided). The Commissioner of Crown lands was empowered to lease these territories out, either by public auction or private arrangement, for not less than \$1.00 per square mile, for periods of up to ten years.

Perhaps most important of all from the Algonquin perspective, the revised act closed the beaver season for the next five years (ie., until 1900).

The implications of these changes, and in particular the close season on beaver, were not lost on the HBCo. Commissioner Chipman wrote to Indian Affairs in June of 1896, alerting the Department to these developments, and asking for it’s views on the close season, and also on “how far the provisions of the Act can be enforced”.

In July, Indian Affairs wrote to EE Tache, Assistant Commissioner of Crown Lands for Quebec, to seek clarification on the application of the close season for beaver: “The Indians of the Province of Quebec who depend on the chase for support derive their livelihood mainly from the trapping of beaver, and if they be prohibited from taking beaver until 1900 great destitution will be entailed.” After repeated letters of reminder, Tache finally replied in early December, to confirm that the province was intent on enforcing the closed season until November 1900. But he did indicate that “A special permit may however be granted to any Indian whose poverty would be well established and who would require hunting the beaver as a means of subsistence for himself and his family”.

It was not until late December that the HBCo and Indian Agents were informed of this by the Department, and requested to provide lists of Indians who were eligible for the exemption. The HBCo responded by casting doubts on the ability to enforce the provincial law, since, “As you are aware, the

Indian regards his right to hunt as one which cannot be taken from him, and he will therefore, with Permit or no, take beaver if he considers it at all necessary". It was also observed that it would be difficult if not impossible to identify specific cases of need, since all of the Indians who depended on the hunt were in need.

Above all, however, the Company was concerned about whether the law would allow Indians to trade the pelts of beavers they had caught; if they were prevented from selling on the open market, "the skins will either be wasted or sold to unscrupulous traders at low prices, and the Indians will not have the means of purchasing many other important necessities". Indian Affairs duly sought an answer from Quebec on this last point, but when one was finally received, it represented a step backwards: the province had decided that no permits to take beaver would be issued to Indians for the current season after all, and that, consequently, traffic in their skins would remain illegal as well.

Quebec's position became the subject of debate in the House of Commons during Question Period with specific reference to the Algonquins of the Upper Ottawa, at which time the government admitted that "these Indians are likely to suffer destitution" as a result of the Quebec game laws, and reported that despite its interventions, the province had remained adamant. Regardless, the government did not propose to take any "special measures" for the relief of the Algonquins; instead it would draw from the ordinary appropriations for relief of Indians in Quebec.

The issue then became the subject of a report to the Governor in Council, which acknowledged that the Indians of the Upper Ottawa, including the area inhabited by the Algonquins of Barriere Lake, "depend upon the flesh of the beaver as an article of food, and upon the skins to trade in exchange for clothing, ammunition and other necessaries of life". It further cast doubt on Quebec's approach to management of the issue, acknowledging that threats to the resource did not come from the Indians, but from non-Indian interlopers:

[...] experience has shown that little if any diminution of beaver has occurred in districts where Indians alone are to be found, and that the real cause of the destruction, where such has occurred, has been indiscriminate trapping and hunting by others than Indians.

This report was adopted, and a record of the decision was sent to the Lieutenant Governor of Quebec, with a request that the "Indians should be exempt from the provisions of the laws in order that their means of livelihood may not be removed". Quebec sent a curt letter of reply to say that it had no intention of relaxing the laws or exempting Indians from their operation.

A report on the exploration of the Upper Ottawa filed with the Quebec Commissioner of Crown Lands in 1896 portrayed a fish and game free-for-all, with moose meat being sold openly on the Upper Ottawa "just like beef", and reports of many animals being killed for sport and then left to rot. There did not appear to be much respect for the provincial hunting laws, either:

Through the region in which I have recently travelled, an astonishing indifference exists as regards the game and fishery laws passed by the Province. No one troubles himself about them and all evade them as they please, whatever may be his administrative or social rank.

Game and fish are so near, the hunter camps pay such good prices for them and the Government is far away.

The author of the report, who was clearly a sports hunter influenced by European practise, recommended the introduction of severe restrictions, and the establishment of hunting preserves - not for the Algonquins, but for rich clientele, to facilitate the "lordly sport" of hunting big game with hounds and horses. Fortunately, this recommendation was not implemented.

The Department of Indian Affairs' annual report for 1897 tried to put a brave face on the situation, but could not avoid admitting that the close season had caused hardship:

[...] although the hunting Indians of the province of Quebec have felt the consequences of the restriction placed by the provincial Government for some years upon the killing of beaver, no doubt it will eventually turn out to their own advantage, and the department has given assistance in cases where the prohibitory laws have had the effect of rendering such really necessary.

It is evident, however, that game is steadily decreasing and bands which have in the past depended largely upon hunting and trapping are beginning to recognize the fact that they must turn to something less precarious for their support.

At this point, the federal government seemed unwilling or unable to take proactive efforts to protect Indian interests *vis a vis* wildlife; instead, it appeared to accept and rationalize the province's position. The following letter, sent to an Indian at Becancourt in the fall of 1898 after he had complained of his trapping grounds being taken over by whites, is typical of the position stated by the Department during this time with respect to Quebec:

[...] the Department has no power to interfere as the licensing of hunters and making of regulations for the preservation of game are under the control of the Provincial authorities.

In any case, the Department is not aware that there was ever by Treaty or otherwise by any agreement made to reserve any of the public domain as hunting grounds for the Indians, although the same rights to hunt as the rest of the community might enjoy were secured to them.

In practise, however, as we shall see, Quebec gave Indians far less consideration than that which was enjoyed by whites.

At the turn of the 20th century, Quebec continued to extend the close season on beaver: first to 1902,

and then to 1905

Relief, Sickness, Reserve Petitions, 1905-1927.

In 1905, a visiting physician gave a bleak report on conditions at Barriere and Grand Lac: “As for the condition of the Indians, it is getting worse all the time”. A Departmental census for the year 1913 records the population of the Barriere Lake Band as including 128 individuals. They continued to suffer from poverty, as well as the devastating impact of the Spanish influenza epidemic of 1917-18. In 1917, medical and relief assistance to the “Barriere Lake and Grand Lac Bands” amounted to over \$1,200.00. The following year, the same Bands received over \$720.00 for medical, relief, and “burial expenses”, and in 1920, almost \$1,900.00.

Things got progressively worse in the first two decades of the 20th century. The close season on beaver kept being extended, and by 1914, the Great War had begun, fur prices had fallen, and Indians across northern Quebec (and northern Canada) were in dire straits. In September, Indian Affairs appealed to the government of Quebec, advising them of the situation and asking if the provincial game laws could be amended so “as to give the Indian a better opportunity of supporting himself and family during the present winter”. Departmental records do not indicate if Quebec obliged, but based on subsequent events, it seems unlikely. By 1916, the HBCo was in court challenging the province’s game laws, after provincial wardens charged an HBCo employee with possession of beaver skins.

In 1919, Indian Affairs petitioned Quebec for a reserve at Barriere Lake, describing the Band’s situation as “very urgent”. In separate correspondence dated 1920, the HBCo stated that, “Their idea in asking for a reserve is to keep away the white men from their very home”. The issue of a reserve at Barriere Lake (as well as Lac Simon and Wolf Lake) was raised again by Departmental officials in January 1921, and connected directly to the scarcity of wildlife:

I understand that the Indians are alive to the fact that to obtain their livelihood by hunting is becoming more and more precarious. Their desire to have lands set apart for them which they may call their own, on which to erect houses and have small clearings appears to be very reasonable [...]

A formal request for reserve lands was made in August 1921. However, the provincial government was reluctant to set aside reserves generally, and, in particular, it was not prepared to disturb timber licences which already covered most of the region and had been awarded with no consideration of their impacts on the settlement or harvesting patterns of the Algonquins.

Although it appeared an easy thing for the government of Quebec to alienate lands for timber, tourism, mining or colonization, it was apparently next to impossible to set aside lands for the Algonquins of Barriere Lake. Between 1921 and 1960, despite repeated requests from the federal government for reserve lands for the community, the province of Quebec consistently refused to do so. Although the

excuses changed through time, the bottom line remained the same: other users had priority, and Indians were a federal responsibility. In fact, of all the provinces, Quebec has the worst record in setting aside reserve lands to meet First Nation needs.

At this time we also begin to see more frequent complaints about encroachments by non-Indians and over hunting, and ambivalence from federal authorities. A case in point from 1919 relates to a member of the Maniwaki Band who was in the habit of hunting and trapping around Baskatong. In forwarding his complaint, the local Indian Agent, ES Gauthier, reported that “up to a few years ago each Indian family adopted a certain part of the upper country as their own hunting ground”, but he added that of late, “Indians and White people hunts to the best advantage”, implying a breakdown of age-old systems of tenure and conservation. He closed by saying, “I do not know that the Indians have any more claim than any one else on the land belonging to the Provincial government, for the purpose of trapping, except on their Reserves”.

In reply, Gauthier was instructed to tell the Indian that there was nothing that the federal government could do.

In 1921 the Quebec game laws were amended again. Big game limits were set at 1 moose and 2 deer or caribou per season. As before, the Minister could grant special permits to exceed these limits, and Indians and settlers, and could also waive the \$5 fee for them.

As conditions continued to deteriorate, steps were taken to pressure the provincial government into action. These efforts appear to have been largely led by the Oblates and the HBCo, with Indian Affairs getting involved after the fact. In July of 1927, a large delegation of Indians arrived in Quebec City along with their Oblate missionaries and HBCo officials. Rev. Gounard and a group Indians met with Premier Taschereau and JE Perrault, Minister of Colonization, Mines & Fisheries. The encounter was described in the *Quebec Chronicle Telegraph*:

[...] Of late they have been worried by the hunters from the south taking away their rights. [...] where the Indians live, there is an unwritten law by which every Indian family is entitled to a certain amount of land on which to hunt. Hunting is their principal source of sustenance and by the unwritten law, each family has a strip of land on which to hunt [...] until the present, there has been no trouble.

Now the trouble is that white men, hunting merely for sport, are going into these lands and shooting animals without mercy. Not only does this deprive the Indians of their rights and of a good deal of income, but the white hunters, the Indians told Premier Taschereau, seem to think that every animal they see can be shot, with the result that the Indians think the thing must end. It appears that there is already a shortage of male beavers but the white hunters are killing off the few left and this might mean that the animal will become extinct.

The proposal put forward by the deputation this morning, and Father Gounard also spoke for

the Indians in the Grand Lac Victoria, was that legislation be enabled whereby the Indian hunting grounds would be protected from the white man. They do not want a reserve but merely the land made exclusive to the Indians.

Perrault's comments to the media:

This is a very serious matter. [...] These Indians have lived peacefully for generations and it appears that they have some ground for complaining. [...] **What will happen, I cannot say. [...] This is evidently a new phase which was never expected and I suppose something will have to be done to relieve the situation.**

The HBCo were also there, but lobbying more discreetly. By September, the press was reporting that the provincial government was intending to proceed with legislation to address the issue:

As stated by Hon. Mr. Perreault, special legislation will be necessary and it will be the first time for many years that an Indian bill has been brought before the Quebec Legislature. It is the desire of the Government to acquiesce with the desire of the Indians as much as possible, as their hunting is an important item in the revenue of the Province and it is also desirous to give justice to the native race which for so long has led a peaceful and industrious existence in the Province.

Although Canada was not involved in this event, it was also working to address these issues across Canada, since what was happening in Quebec was, to varying degrees, also happening in other parts of the country. The issue predominates Indian Affairs annual reports throughout the 1920's. In the winter of 1928, the federal government sponsored a federal-provincial conference on fish and wildlife where the concept of Indian-only hunting reserves was raised and discussed. At that conference, the parties adopted a resolution endorsing the concept which concluded: "Therefore be it resolved that this conference approves a policy of setting aside, as far as practicable, in unsettled regions, certain suitable and reasonable areas whereon Indians only may be allowed to trap". It was reported that Quebec's Superintendent of Game & Fish and Deputy Minister of Colonization, Mines and Fisheries were present and supportive of the principle.

Grand Lac Victoria & Abitibi Beaver Preserves, 1928.

In the end, the government of Quebec chose to act by way of Order-in-Council when it established two game preserves in the spring of 1928: Abitibi (4,000 square miles) and Grand Lac Victoria (6,300 miles). The Grand Lac Beaver Preserve included within its boundaries portions of the traditional territories of the Algonquins of Wolf Lake and Long Point (on the west), but it centred on the traditional territories of Grand Lac Victoria, Lac Simon and Barriere Lake. (See Map #1)

The rationale for their creation was that "for some years past the white trappers have entered into

hunting grounds heretofore occupied exclusively by the Indians”, and that “such invasion into those distant places has been the cause of certain difficulties among the Indians and the other trappers of different nationalities”. The O-in-C restricted access to the resource by non-Algonquins by prescribing that “Indians only may hunt fur-bearing animals”. It did not mention fishing. Licences to trap inside these preserves would be provided to the Indians for free, and they would be required to report their harvest levels annually.

But although the preserve had been created on paper, the province took no substantive steps to actually make it a reality in practical terms (in fact, Quebec did not even advise Indian Affairs directly of the creation of the beaver preserves until April of 1929).

Observers on the ground noted that the situation was continuing to deteriorate. Rev. Blanchin wrote to Indian Affairs in the late summer of 1928, reporting that game was “very scarce”, and he recommended that two game wardens be appointed to prevent poaching. Dr. JJ Wall, returning from treating an outbreak of smallpox in the area in the fall of 1928, reported that although they were grateful that the province had taken steps to establish the Grand Lac game preserve, “The Indians of all these Bands complained bitterly of the inroads of the white trappers.” He went on to contrast the methods employed by the Algonquins with those used by whites, and the resultant breakdown in age-old conservation practices:

The white trappers are very unscrupulous in obtaining fur, with no sense of conservation of animal life, and will clean a beaver colony in their greed. The Indians are commencing to do the same thing, as they are aware that if they do not, the first white man will. If this situation is not promptly remedied there will be a great dearth of game in a few years. The province will lose revenue and in a short time many of the hunting Indians who are now self-supporting will be destitute. I cannot urge too strongly that the Department take action with the provincial authorities to prohibit this ruthless slaughter. [...] The provincial authorities should not allow a national asset to be wiped out by white trappers. An Indian will hunt until he considers he has sufficient to meet his debts and a few little luxuries over and above. Once this is assured, his natural abhorrence for physical exertion will assert itself and he takes little additional effort to enrich himself with unnecessary wealth.

The following spring Rev. Blanchin again wrote to the Department, reporting that the provincial government had still taken no steps to enforce the boundaries of the game preserve, and further, that the Algonquin’s winter hunt was very poor due to the impact of white poachers on their lands. The correspondence suggests that Quebec expected Canada and the Oblates to be the ones to implement the terms of the Order in Council (ie., enforcement, distribution of licences to the Indians, and collection of harvesting data). It had other more pressing plans for the area.

Cabonga Reservoir, 1928-1930.

The creation of the Grand Lac Beaver Preserve was not the only development within the Barriere Lake territory during this period. In 1928-29, the Gatineau Power Company (a subsidiary of the International Paper Company) constructed dams to establish the Cabonga reservoir, which took up an area of about 100 square miles, drained an area of 1,050 square miles, and had a holding capacity of 43 billion cubic feet. This was done by way of an agreement with the Quebec Streams Commission. The construction work, and the subsequent flooding, required that a large part of the existing community settlement at Barriere Lake had to be relocated, and two cemeteries were damaged. The federal government allowed the company to pay some compensation to the members whose dwellings were affected, but no steps were taken to quantify or compensate for the damage to habitat and livelihoods that resulting from the filling and operation of the Cabonga reservoir. In all, 23 families lost their cabins or cleared areas. The project itself cost \$600,000 to complete. The Algonquins of Barriere Lake received \$495.00 in compensation.

In 1928-29 the same company also constructed dams to create the Baskatong reservoir, further south, with a capacity of 95 billion cubic feet. Both of these reservoirs were initially built to provide power to CIP's Gatineau mill, and for export to Ontario.

(Non) Enforcement on the Grand Lac Beaver Preserve.

In the spring of 1929, Quebec declared another close season for beaver, in the area south of the CNR line, to be in effect until December 1932.

In it's annual report for 1929, Indian Affairs highlighted the grave circumstances of Aboriginal peoples throughout the northern portions of the provinces, cited the creation of the Beaver Preserves in Quebec, and called for the establishment of similar Indian-only game preserves in other provinces. The same report also acknowledged the contrast between Aboriginal management of the resource and non-Aboriginal use:

By immemorial usage the Indians are conservationists of the game and fish, and may be expected to continue so, if protected; on the other hand, if whites are allowed to deplete the fish and game on Indian hunting grounds, the Indians themselves will naturally take all they can, while they can, and there is grave danger that such a situation may bring about intensive competition between whites and Indians, ending in the virtual extermination of valuable species. Indian families, in most cases, are permanent residents, and their hunting grounds are recognized among themselves, and handed down from one generation to another, whereas white trappers are frequently of the itinerant class, whose practice is to trap out an area and then move elsewhere.

The matter of enforcement continued to be a live issue. In the summer of 1931, officials reported that although the Abitibi and Grand Lac beaver preserves had been created three years earlier by the province, "No steps have however been taken to date, to protect the rights of these Indians, and

consequently the areas in question are being over-run by white trappers in much the same manner as hither-to-fore". In light of the province's apparent unwillingness to implement the Order-in-Council, it was recommended that the federal government initiate action to demarcate the boundaries of the preserves and to ensure that some form of enforcement be used, preferably a combination of RCMP from Amos and local Indian guardians.

The Department forwarded these proposals to Quebec (including posters showing the boundaries and warning re: trespass) and the province indicated its agreement. (See Map #2 and poster)

By 1932, Indian Affairs had hired two part-time guardians, with theoretical backup from the RCMP in Amos, but the RCMP were too busy to come down unless events required it, and the two guardians found their work difficult because there were so many points of entry into the game preserve (Timiskaming, Dumoine, Maniwaki, Rouyn, and the CNR line). The federal government took responsibility for covering the costs of these measures.

But conditions did not improve, and in fact, new encroachments were to occur. By 1936, the province had begun construction of the Mont Laurier - Senneterre Highway, which cut north-south almost through the centre of the beaver preserve. It was not only intended to be a transport corridor, but also to be a gateway to facilitate recreational use of the area. In the spring of 1936, the Quebec government wrote to Indian Affairs advising of this development and suggesting that patrols may need to be carried out throughout the year (instead of only during the fall and winter) to account for the extra activity that was expected (Quebec indicated that about 400 workmen would be on site for the duration of the project). The part time guardians and occasional patrols by the RCMP were evaluated and regarded as ineffectual to prevent poachers: the guardians were not paid enough to make it worth their while, and it was too costly for the RCMP to do anything more than token patrols.

A 1937 report from the RCMP at Amos stated that prospectors and sports hunters were killing large numbers of moose in the both the Grand Lac and Abitibi Beaver Preserves, in some cases only taking a hind quarter to eat, and leaving the rest to rot. The Algonquins were complaining about another 5 year close season on beaver which had been imposed by the province. The RCMP also reported that wildlife populations were down considerably, and tied the lack of game directly to Indian poverty and poor health:

The plight of the Indian in North Western Quebec will soon be if it is not already sad one. It will also be noted that every month an Hospital account form goes direct to the Department and the past Summer rather large accounts have been paid for Hospitalization the in several cases denote conditions brought about by lack of necessities and living under unsanitary conditions which may be traced in several cases to poverty. [...]

It is felt that a time has come for a serious study of the situation by the local, Provincial and Federal authorities insofar as the granting of fitting privileges for due and fitting means of

existence for the Indian. It is within an Indian's personal right to demand [reasonable] means of existence and the duty of Provincial and Federal Government to subsidize to this request insomuch as it is possible.

The same report recommended amendments to the Quebec game laws which would prohibit the hunting of big game in Northwestern Quebec by non-Indians.

Federal statistics bear out the RCMP's observations: in 1937-38, Indian Affairs spent over \$10,000 on medical care for the "Barriere District" (which included the Barriere and Grand Lac Bands, and other more northerly ones), as well as over \$21,000 for relief and clothing, and \$365.75 for burials.

Relief and Dependency: Comparisons with Quebec.

In subsequent years, Indian Affairs annual reports only provide aggregate numbers for provincial-level expenditures on relief, but these show that dislocation, and the attendant relief costs, were unusually high in Quebec, even taking into consideration the effects of the Great Depression.

In 1937/38, relief costs for Quebec Indians totalled \$209,168.45. Although the amount diminished somewhat in 1938/39 (to \$206,092.56), it remained the highest of any province, including Ontario, which had twice the native population of Quebec (but where relief costs amounted to only \$143,539.93). In contrast, expenditures on fur conservation for Quebec in this year (which included costs related to the Grand Lac Beaver Preserve) amounted to only \$2,048.00 - less than 1% of the amount spent on relief.

For the year 1939/40, relief expenses in Quebec were again on the increase: \$216,956.06, compared to Ontario which had actually decreased to \$141,693.65.

In 1940/41 relief costs were down to \$200,636.46 in Quebec, but it remained the highest of all the provinces. In 1941/42, the costs were reduced again in Quebec, to \$124,353.38 for an official Indian population of 14,578, but it still received more relief than any other province (\$8.53 per capita). The next highest was Ontario: \$95,375.48 for a population of 30,145 Indians (\$3.16 per capita).

In 1942/43, were down again to \$115,902.58, but were still the highest, with Ontario next at \$88,070.08.

Judging from relief payments, it appears that Quebec Indians bore a disproportionate level of hardship, not only during the Depression, but also well into the 1940's.

Mont Laurier-Senneterre Highway.

An excerpt from a report filed by Departmental Inspector Jude Thibault in the fall of 1938 regarding

Barriere Lake and Grand Lac Victoria indicated that conditions were not improving. This was at least partly due to the construction of the Mont Laurier - Senneterre highway:

Hunting is getting worse and as far as I could see, the following appears to be some of the causes:

1. Blasting during construction of the highway, steam shovels, trucks, etc. This highway crosses the Indian Reserve [Game Preserve] about the centre in a line running south-east to north-west.
2. Beaver hunting is now forbidden to Indians. Records show that 72% of furs brought out by the Indians were beavers.
3. Too many whites, allowed or not, covering hunting grounds during season. [... north and centre of the Preserve are patrolled, but problems are at the south and east ends.]

I am informed that there are plenty of beavers on this Indian hunting reserve and whenever it is possible to let them hunt beaver again, it would mean practically shutting out relief. These Indians, I might say, know just how to hunt beaver for preservation rather than for destruction.

During this time, numerous complaints were coming from the Algonquins about non-Indian sports hunters slaughtering moose inside the game preserve, because their understanding (shared by Indian Affairs and the RCMP at Amos) was that it was to be only for Indian hunting.

Upon enquiry, the provincial government gave a differing interpretation of the original Order-in-Council, stating that the reference to hunting "fur-bearers" only meant trapping, and that non-Indians were free to harvest fish and game inside the Grand Lac Beaver Preserve so long as they were following the provincial regulations. This was despite the fact that the wording contained on the posters demarcating the preserve boundaries (posters which had been approved by the province) specifically indicated that hunting of big game AND trapping of fur-bearers by non-Indians was prohibited inside the preserve boundaries. (See above.)

Complaints continued about the impact of construction related to the Mont-Laurier - Senneterre highway. In the fall of 1939 Chief Mackakoose of Barriere Lake sent word that the provincial game wardens were forbidding his members from hunting or fishing for 10 miles on either side of the highway. He also complained that camping grounds were being set up on lakes and streams without consultation and without any consideration of his members' prior use of those sites. Quebec's position was that the highway corridor was to become a tourist showcase, and that it was free to amend the terms of the original Order-in-Council setting aside the Grand Lac Preserve as it saw fit.

This led to bitter complaints from the Algonquins of Barriere Lake, Grand Lac, and Lac Simon and protracted negotiations between Canada and Quebec. Initially the Department expressed the hope that

perhaps the local Algonquins could get jobs as guides, and that Quebec would allow them to retain some of the other “privileges” associated with the beaver preserve. Quebec’s opening position was that all such privileges should cease within the area; in order to help recover the capital costs of construction the highway, the corridor would be used to generate tourist revenue.

Mont Laurier-Senneterre Fishing Reserve, 1940.

In December 1940, Quebec removed a corridor of ten miles on either side of the Mont Laurier highway from the Grand Lac beaver preserve by way of Order-in-Council, and designated it as a tourist reserve, “the purpose of this reserve being to take full possible advantage of the road and of the numerous lakes and waterways located in the district to attract tourists”. Indian “privileges” within this new reserve were revoked. Charles Fremont, Quebec’s Superintendent of Fish & Game, explained to Indian Affairs, “This road [...] will cost several million dollars. The Province must therefore draw all possible advantage from the Fishing Preserve, but for sporting and tourist purposes exclusively”. (See Map #3)

Herve Lariviere, the Indian Agent for the newly created Abitibi Agency, gave an initial assessment of the impact of the tourist reserve and concluded that Grand Lac Victoria and Lac Simon would be affected tremendously, and Barriere Lake less so. He indicated that many families would be displaced from their trapping grounds, and that residency and travel patterns would be altered. **He added these communities had been relatively remote until recently, and that “the change is too rapid for them to fully understand or adopt themselves in general”.**

Although the possibility of jobs from guiding had been held out, he said that this did not hold water because the people were not trained, mostly spoke neither French nor English, and none had connections with the agencies that organized the hiring. He recommended that at the very least, the local Algonquin people should be trained and employed as wardens on the new fishing reserve, and also an extension of their trapping rights for another five years, and training for guiding.

But Lariviere was not overly optimistic about the impact of the fishing reserve: “I feel certain this will cause difficulties, add suffering amongst the Indians, and increase the cost of relief to a new high in these sections”. By January, Indian Affairs had developed a response to the provincial position, which was based on accepting the province’s plan to re-dedicate the corridor to tourism, but at the same time trying to obtain some concessions for the Algonquins. A list of points was drawn up and approved.

In 1941, Canada and Quebec signed an agreement concerning the Mont Laurier highway fishing reserve and restrictions/privileges of the Algonquins (we do not have a copy yet). However, some of the key elements of the agreement were that the Algonquins were prevented from camping, hunting and fishing within the 10 mile corridor, although they could trap the area in the winter, and were promised that they could guide the sports fishermen during the tourist season. Over the years, this corridor would be expanded considerably, and in 1950 it was re-named LaVerendrye Wildlife Preserve (see below).

Beaver Season Opens, 1941.

In 1941-42, Quebec opened the beaver season with a limit of ten skins per trapper. The season had been closed since 1929. This coincided with a more organized approach to management of the game preserve by federal authorities. By this time, Indian Affairs had staffed a position of “Fur Supervisor” at Headquarters, to deal with trapping issues and the provincial governments, and a regular budget was dedicated to fur conservation and the promotion of trapping (although it was tiny when compared to relief budgets). Interestingly, the man who was hired as Fur Supervisor was Hugh Conn, formerly HBCo Post manager at Barriere Lake, so he brought with him an intimate knowledge of the facts on the ground. In a retrospective penned in 1943, he explained the arrangements regarding the Grand Lac preserve:

The conditions, speaking generally, are that our Department undertakes the management and protection of the area, assumes all the costs, restocks with live beaver where necessary and controls the Indians participating in the project. [...] To sum up, the Quebec Government furnishes the land, our Branch supplies the money and the Indians do the work.

In a related development, provision was made for regular patrols by Rene Levesque, a provincial game warden operating out of Amos, throughout the 1940's. The Department paid half of his salary and all of his expenses. The diaries of his patrols contain significant detail about circumstances throughout that decade.

On the Grand Lac preserve, the fur-bearing population had actually boomed during the late 1930's, and the local Algonquins felt that left to their own devices, they would be able to manage a sustainable yield. Even though the beaver season had been closed for many years, they had still managed to trap and sell a fair number each season, although they did not get very good prices because they had to sell them on the underground market. For these reasons, explained Hugh Conn, “They are resentful of the intrusion of white interests such as lumbering and the other public works outlined previously [...] and the restrictions imposed by provincial quotas and licences”.

As for enforcement, instead of the original system of two part time guardians and occasional patrols by the RCMP, the Tallyman system was introduced, whereby patrolling was more localized, and the responsibility of the head of the family who held the trapping territory (who was paid around \$50 a year for his trouble). It proved to be far more efficient, at least in terms of catching poachers.

However, the impact of the Mont-Laurier - Senneterre Highway and the fishing reserve on the people of Barriere Lake were noted, and it was suggested that perhaps some concessions could be sought from Quebec on their behalf: “The Barriere Band however are very resentful and disgruntled. I would, therefore, recommend that we ask Quebec for an extension eastward of the reserve to bring their

hunting lands entirely within the [beaver] reserve". When presented with this proposal, Quebec officials indicated that they would consider it, but did not hold out much hope, since it conflicted with the leases of a number of private sports clubs. To our knowledge the boundary was never extended (in fact, this proposal was put forward again by Departmental staff in 1950 - see below).

In the 1943 annual report for the beaver preserve, Hugh Conn mentioned the rise of logging in the area during the war years:

Until recent years, the timber in the area was too inaccessible to permit economical logging practise, but the opening of the Mont Laurier Highway and the truck road to Rapide 7, has opened up the country and the war-time demand for lumber and newsprint has made the logging of this area economical. Four different lumber and pulp companies are operating on the reserve which restricts still further the area available to the Indians for trapping.

This would add to the pressure on the communities and on wildlife populations.

Traditional Tenure & Management Practises Adapted.

One significant thing about the way in which the beaver preserve was managed in the 1940's was that traditional methods were adopted - at least as far as the constraints of a government bureaucracy could allow. The following passage, from a report prepared by Hugh Conn, circa 1943, is quoted at length because it carries a special resonance in light of the work that has taken place regarding the Trilateral process and the IRMP. Conn began by explaining that the Department's efforts to reform management of the hunting preserve had met with approval from at least some of the Algonquin people:

The chief reason for their appreciation is that, once the white man's practises of written leases and agreements are disposed of we adhere to Indian manners of procedure and pattern our organization after their sound, well established custom. The plan of organization used on our six preserves is an adaptation and elaboration of the aboriginal plan of land tenure that from time immemorial has served the Indian population.

Under this system, every square mile in the forested portion of Eastern Canada, was owned and occupied by tribes, bands, finally, families of Indians even as we divide into provinces, counties, townships and lots. True there were no fences, surveyed lines, monuments or other artificial land marks separating the various land divisions but they were nevertheless rigidly bounded by such natural land marks as watersheds, rivers and chains of lakes with their connecting portages.

Land held by families was rarely, if ever, sold in our sense of the word but was generally

acquired by inheritance. In some cases it was acquired by donation when a hunter gave part of his grounds to a favoured son in law who would not be eligible to inherit because, generally speaking, the land passed from father to son. Occasionally it was held in trust by a widow for her sons who had not reached hunting age and once in a while passed from a widow to her new husband if she remarried.

The ownership of such family tracts was, and in most cases still is, recognized by the other Indians. Within band areas a certain amount of tolerance was granted by owners to other family groups of the same band. They were permitted to pick berries, fish and shoot moose or caribou for subsistence when passing through but this privilege was not extended to members of another band unless they were travelling to or from one of the periodic pow-wows, thus having a claim on the hospitality of the tribe they were visiting. Fur bearing animals, especially after the arrival of white traders, were regarded as the exclusive property of the proprietor and woe betide the man who trespassed in this respect. Inter-tribal wars and family feuds were the result of such trespasses in the old day and even today violent quarrels and sometimes fistfights occur over trapline rights. This whole system of individual ownership and exclusive rights is a part of the recognized moral and economic code of the Indians where they have not had contact with the demoralizing effects of the white man's civilization.

Quarrels, feuds and even minor wars were the inevitable result of deliberate poaching but provision was made for the welfare of such band members who, due to cyclic fluctuations of fur bearers or such catastrophes as extensive forest fires, were unable to make a living on their own lands. In such a case the victim had only to apply to the tribal assembly to be given hunting grounds until his own recovered its full production level. This assistance was not infrequently volunteered by some of the well-to-do members of the band. This practise continues to the present time and as will be shown [...] has proved itself of inestimable benefit to our conservation scheme.

The report identified two major conservation methods for beaver: 1) rotation to allow portions of the trapping area to lie fallow for a period of time, and 2) taking some, but not all of the beavers from each beaver house, leaving some to regenerate.

In light of the preceding, Conn pointed out that the boundaries of the hunting preserve were arbitrary and unnatural - portions of some Bands' and/or families trapping territories were left out, and therefore treated differently (for instance, as mentioned above re: Barriere Lake lands on the east side of the preserve). He recommended changing the boundaries of the hunting preserve so that it more accurately reflected the traditional territories of the Bands, which themselves normally conformed to watersheds. To our knowledge this was not done.

But despite Conn's apparent commitment to the application of traditional methods of management and conservation, the communities themselves were not quick to assume good faith on the part of the

government, or to put their trust in the approach that was being suggested. It took at least two years for the Grand Lac people to accept this approach, and longer for the other communities. We again draw from Conn's 1943 report:

The native attitude in common with our other preserves is improving and they are gradually adopting a more co-operative attitude. This improvement is especially noticeable in the Grand Lake Division where the natives turned in their sketches and reported their beaver lodges for the first time.

In the Barriere section, the Indians remain non co-operative but this is in keeping with their general character and a lazier, dirtier, more shiftless band would be difficult to imagine.

In the Lac Simon and Temiskaming sections, the natives are abandoning their antagonistic attitude and it is hoped that the 1944 season will bring full co-operation from them.

In fact, it was not until 1949 that the Barriere Lake people finally agreed to cooperate with the new system (see below).

Dozois Reservoir, 1945-1948.

Despite the positive results brought about by the adoption of traditional management techniques, this could not mitigate the continuing impact from resource development in the area. In his 1945 report, Hugh Conn mentioned that "The Barriere section has been somewhat backward due to flooding by the storage water of the Cabonga Reservoir and extensive logging operations by the Canadian International Paper Company". There was also collateral damage related to this increase in forestry operations: timber workers were poaching in large numbers, increasing competition for game. As well, sports hunters, in search of moose, were coming up in greater numbers every year by way of the Mont Laurier highway.

But more was to come. The creation of the Dozois reservoir and associated dams between 1945 and 1948, with a holding capacity of 95 billion cubic feet of water, led to major flooding. Contractors building structures related to the reservoir feasted their employees on venison, partridge and moose meat. The flooding greatly affected Grand Lac members, but also some Barriere Lake people who had to relocate camps and cabins. Some compensation for improvements was made.

Registered Traplines, 1945.

In 1945, Quebec introduced the registered trapline system in areas adjacent to the hunting preserve.

Although the regulations contained a number of requirements and stipulations which were contrary to Algonquin practise and which stood to actually penalize Indians, overall this development was viewed as a major step forward in management, and a much better alternative to simply alternating between free-for-all and close seasons.

Reserve Request, 1945.

The federal government once again petitioned Quebec for reserve lands for the Barriere Lake people in 1945. This was done as part of it's general effort to obtain reserve lands in Quebec in the post war years to enable it to deliver programs and provide housing, but also because the Department was responding to the specific needs of the community. As Indian Affairs explained, "This section has been opened up by the construction of the Senneterre Mont Laurier highway so it now becomes imperative that we settle them on a reserve of their own instead of them occupying Crown lands as at present". The province declined. As a result, basic programs like education, health care, housing and training could not be extended as they were in other locations where reserve lands existed (ie., Maniwaki, Timiskaming, Caughnawaga, etc.).

It should be mentioned that the 1945 request for a reserve was also made in the context of a planned move by the HBCo of their post from Barriere to Rapid Lake, and similar plans being made by the Oblates. Canada's intention was to take advantage of this opportunity to set up a town site at Rapid Lake.

The rapid and largely negative changes which were taking place, combined with the apparent lack of support from the federal and provincial governments on the reserve issue, did not encourage a spirit of optimism or cooperation in the community. Instead, it bred mistrust and a belief that the community would need to take care of itself, apart from the measures that were being imposed or introduced from outside.

So, between the early 1940's and 1950, many, if not most, of the Algonquins of Barriere Lake refused to cooperate with the Department of Indian Affairs' approaches to managing the hunting preserve. Instead they adopted a strategy of resistance. This appears to be for at least two reasons: first, they had little reason to trust Indian Affairs or non-Algonquins in general, based on previous experience; and second, their own methods of conservation, allocation and resource use had worked effectively when allowed to do so.

As a result, despite the close season they continued to take beaver; they took big game and fish when they needed, without regard to provincial seasons; they did not "make their maps" of the beaver houses in their territories; they did not provide numbers; and they did not generally cooperate with Indian Affairs or the Quebec game wardens who carried out patrols.

Close Encounter of November 1947.

This approach was not without consequence, however. Beaver tags were not issued to Barriere Lake members, so, theoretically, they were not allowed to trap on the beaver preserve (see below). The Quebec game wardens hired by the federal government to patrol the beaver preserve were committed to enforcing the regulations and management system which was meant to apply, so they viewed Algonquins who breached the rules not that much differently than whites who did so. This often meant that Algonquins were subject to observation, search, seizure and, on occasion, prosecution.

From the surviving records, it's clear that the game wardens were certainly prepared to travel on snowshoes, with dog team and on canoe in any weather to do their duty. But things did not always work out as planned, and the wardens were up against a people who were struggling for survival. The pressures and dynamics at play during this period can be seen in the journal entries from Quebec game warden Rene Levesque's diary of a patrol on the beaver preserve in the fall of 1947.

Nov 3. Monday, fair. Left at 8am. Had lunch at Ward Lake and went down the first portage where we happen to meet Xavier Daniel, Frank Thucky, Simon and John Rat coming back with a moose. When I told them they should not trap the beaver when the season was closed and the fir unprime, they answered they had been told by a man from Ottawa¹ that they could trap whenever and wherever they felt like and that the white man had nothing to do with the fur-bearing animals as they were their own. As Jos Forbes who lives with them Indians could not help us, the only thing we could do was to get some help and get these Indians on their way out. Left for Larouche Lake but had to stay overnight on the long portage.

Nov 4. Tuesday, fair. Left early to arrive at McLaren at 11 am. Had lunch there and pulled out immediately for the highway. Arrived at Maniwaki at 8 pm.

Nov 5. Wednesday, cloudy. After meeting the 2 Mounties we finally could make arrangement by phone to get their help to search these Indians who were due to come out soon. Stayed at Forbes Depot that night.

Nov 6. Thursday, rain. Left Forbes Depot at 7 am for Larouche and High Portage which was the best place to watch for these Indians. When they arrived around 4 pm we tried to search every bag they had but as these Indians went wild (the squaws pointed guns at us) we might have missed one where the fur was. As the squaws start to hit us with paddles and whatever they could find I pulled out my revolver which kind of scared them a little. I have been in some mix-up with Indians but never seen the like of this trouble we had. We did the very best we could to find the beaver pelts but as there was 15 Indians and only four of us with only one

¹ The "man from Ottawa" is likely a reference to either Clinton Rickard (Tuscarora) or Jules Sioui (Huron), both of whom were politically active and encouraged the exercise of Aboriginal and treaty rights.

revolver (mine) we had to be very careful not to get hurt. I was lucky to see one squaw who was getting ready to hit Cont [Constable] Christe [Christie] with an axe and stopped her. Finally after they had left by canoe, we search both sides of the portage and found a small bag containing part of the meat of one beaver, **some moose and 6 muskrat pelts not yet dried.** [...]

Nov 10. Monday, cloudy. Left at 8.30 for Ottawa and came back to Maniwaki at 7 pm. When at Mr Conn's office I phone Corporal Maloney of the RCMP to find out if his Department would put a charge against these Indians for what they did when we search their bags, but after talking it over with his Chief they decide not to do it, so in the future, we may as well leave those Indians do whatever they want because if a Mountie has not got any authority with them it is not safe for a game warden to mix up in their business.

Nov 11. Tuesday, snow and rain. On my way back to Senneterre I search the HBCo store at Rapid Lake but did not find any illegal furs. Since I have been told by a friend staying at the Ottawa river that an Indian from Barriere Post had told Mr Dent who operates a sawmill on the Camatose river that Xavier Daniel and his gang did not have the illegal beavers with them but had them cashed somewhere to sell them later on. Stayed overnight at the Park Gate.

As a result of episodes like this, Barriere Lake members were blackballed and for a time they were refused trapping licences. This posture of resistance continued.

The 1948 annual report for the beaver preserve had the following to say about the situation:

The Barriere Indians as usual have declined to make their maps and as they have not been issued any beaver tags, they cannot trap beaver on the reserve. If the trap line system had been well organized in Pontias we could seize every beaver without a tag in their possession, but if they declare that they have trapped the beavers they may have outside the reserve there is not very much we can do. The only way to catch these Indians is to find them trapping on the Reserve and this can only be done by using airplane to cover their old grounds. Many trips were made during the summer and fall to get their cooperation but without any success. I have not lost hope yet because by this contact with the Grand Lake Indians they might realize that we are working for their own benefit. A great help to get the cooperation of the Indians was the 25 dollars checks issued in the favor of the ones who made their maps and if they receive a 50 dollars one this year it will mean more cooperation from them. [...]

The Barriere Band is getting more uncooperative every year and up to now it has been impossible to convince them that we are trying to help, but if they can ever see the good done to the Grand Lake Band with the conservation, they might decide to cooperate.

A few years ago Clinton Richard [Rinkard] had caused trouble there by telling them that the white were interlopers, but now this is done by the [Jules] Sioui.

Even if no success was obtained up to now, it was worth trying again, because with the cooperation the work to be done on the reserve would be much easier.

As most of them claim that their grounds are too small and some ruined by flooding done, I wonder if it would be possible to add up the equivalent of 2 townships width to the East boundary of the reserve.

As late as 1949 they were told by Indian Agent Baker of Maniwaki that if they did not “make their maps” they would be “considered as poachers and if they did not act like the others they would soon be punished for trapping illegally”. But later that year, departmental officials reported that in 1949 the Barriere Indians “rejoined the others and seems satisfied with their results”.

The 1950's and 1960's.

The 1950 annual report for the Grand Lac Beaver preserve highlighted the fact that the Cabonga and Dozois reservoirs had reduced the amount of land contained in the preserve, and requested once again that lands be added specifically for the use of the Barriere Lake Band:

Given that the Ottawa River basin has been flooded in part by the waters of the Cabonga and Dozois dams, I believe that there is reason to ask the Department of Game and Fisheries of Quebec that a strip of land (10) [miles] wide be annexed to the eastern part of the reserve, so as to allow us to place all of the Indians from the Rapid Lake post who wish to better their lot.

This did not occur. But in 1950 the province of Quebec did change the name of the Mont Laurier tourist reserve to its current name: La Verendrye Park, “to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the death of famous explorer Pierre Gauthier de Varennes, Sieur de La Vérendrye, first Canadian of European descent to discover the Rocky Mountains”.

In the late 1950's, timber and tourism continued to impact on the territory. It appeared that the people of Barriere Lake were becoming more involved in the wage economy, but only as a supplement to trapping and hunting. The Agency report from 1957 provides the local Indian Agent's perspective:

Our Barriere Indians fared out alright also - employment as guides were also available, furthermore about 15 families have gone to the States to work as “skinners” on mink farms, this employment usually lasts till the end of December. Four families have gone trapping, and the remaining families are now busily engaged cutting pulp wood for the Canadian International Paper.

I would like to mention that Canadian International Paper company's local Resident manager, Mr. R.H. Montgomery, has to date been very sympathetic toward our Barriere Indians, and a recent interview with him, has resulted in granting contracts for several hundred cords of pulp, to be cut by Indians, in the vicinities of Rapid Lake.

The following year, pulp cutting died down, but was replaced by other activities:

At Barriere although pulp wood operations were at a standstill 90% of our Indian population then went trapping and faired out good. Now most of them are busily engaged in guiding. 3 families have gone to the States to work on mink farms. Considering all factors, I am happy to report that relief is still kept at its minimum, and in fact, we are now showing a slight decrease in the number of recipients.

According to the Agent, things continued in a similar fashion at Barriere Lake for the next few years, augmented by berry picking and with increasing numbers of families going to the USA for "skinning" each year. CIP set aside areas specifically for Barriere Lake members to cut wood on contract.

In September 1961, upon obtaining the consent of the local timber licence holder and the Quebec Department of Game & Fisheries, adopted an Order in Council which provided for the transfer of 59 acres at Rapid Lake to the federal government for the creation of the Rapid Lake Reserve.

By 1967, Barriere members were still relying on a mixed economy which included trapping, seasonal work at the fur farms in the USA, cutting pulp for CIP ("timber stands were provided for them"), and guiding moose hunters (4 days per party; some guides were employed by 4 to six parties).

But things weren't entirely as portrayed by the Indian Agent. There were underlying problems which continued to persist, many of which seemed to stem from provincial government policies or actions which were done without consultation or consideration of Algonquin interests. In the fall of 1968, Barriere Lake members petitioned Indian Affairs asking for it's assistance in getting the province of Quebec to stop using poison to kill wolves.

For the last few years some wardens of the Game Laws of the Province of Quebec had been ordered to scatter out poison to destroy wolves claiming mooses are being killed by wolves. Now, for certain a few moose might be killed by wolves, but nothing compared to the many that are shot and killed every fall by the white hunter and not to mention the many that are wounded and left to die. We have proof of this because we find carcasses in our hunting travels.

As for this poison, it does not only destroy wolves but many hungry birds and fur-bring [bearing] animals which are means of an income to us Indians who trap and hunt in the center and surroundings of La Verendrye Park. Many of our useful dogs have also died though the

effects of this poison now it is time for us Indians of the Barriere Band to plead to the Government of Game Laws to please put a stop to the poisoning of animals before there is an extinction.

We do not have any indication as to the response to this petition, but apparently there was none, because two years later the same complaint still persisted (see below).

Disenfranchisement Persists, 1970's.

An assessment prepared by the Quebec Regional Office of Indian Affairs in the spring of 1970 provides some perspectives on the situation of the community at Rapid Lake. The population at the time was 240, with 40 of those attending residential school at Amos. The principal economic activities were described as: “guiding (2 month duration), trapping (3 months), blueberry picking (1 ½ months), mink skinning (1 ½ months), wood cutting, hunting and a bit of handicraft”. From the report, which is quoted at length below, it is clear that despite the fact that the reserve was set aside in the early 1960's, little if anything had been done to actually establish a community development plan or even core infrastructure.

It is generally accepted that it would be preferable to organize an Indian village on site rather than think about moving this group. This is due to the fact that the village is partially isolated, that the history of the group reveals that the Indians have constantly lived at a distance from the Whites, and finally that this location has valuable economic development possibilities, whether in forestry, tourism, hunting or trapping.

As far as services are concerned, there are deficiencies with respect to firewood, which means that the Indians pitch their tents wherever these resources are available.

The dwellings are not numerous enough, they are inadequate for the number of dependants per family head and in addition they cannot make the tent more easily heated.

There is no grocery store on site and the nearest is 17 miles away from this village. At present, the Indians take taxi rides to Maniwaki and they prefer to use part of their cheques to purchase beer.

The resources that are presently used by the Indians, like game, are heavily affected by an inappropriate use of strychnine against wolves, a poison which also kills beavers and small game.

An open season for moose established by the Department of Game and Fisheries reduces this resource even more for the Indians.

Forestry work is unstable because of the fact that certain contracts have not been renewed and

this work is becoming more and more mechanized.

There is a particular phenomenon added to this, arising from the fact that the Indian brings his family to the work site.

We note that the Indians are being very exploited by the merchants when it comes to fur, blueberries and their work skinning mink (.90 an hour).

Guiding is not organized and a low proportion of Indians benefit from this resource.

With respect to community organization, there is nothing structured. The village is often deserted during the course of the year and the Band Council has since realized that there are only a few weeks possible for presenting written requests.

The same assessment listed a number of problems that had combined to create a situation that was “very serious”, which included, among other things, “Nonexistent resources or difficult access to these resources” - a reference to timber, fish, and wildlife.

At a meeting held with government officials at Rapid Lake in October 1970, elder Paul Matchewan complained about continuing impacts on fish & wildlife which negatively affected the interests of the Barriere Lake people: “the moose, the birds and the fish, things by which his people lived, were being slaughter by licensed hunters from outside. The government derives the benefit”.

In 1974, the Barriere Lake Council adopted a resolution requesting the Indians of Quebec Association to help them recover control over the fish & wildlife resources within their territory:

We, the member of the Rapid Lake Indian Band, are requesting you Chief Ronald Kirby, as our Regional Chief, to help us to keep our hunting territory to ourselves.

This hunting territory was set aside for our people on the Rapid Lake Reserve and the Provincial Government has now given leases to white-men and have built cottages on our hunting territory and they are killing all our game. If this continues we will not be able to hunt much longer.

We are hoping that you and the Indians of Quebec Association can help us in keeping our hunting territory for ourselves.

The BCR was signed by Chief Solomon Matchewan and Councillors Harry Wawatie and Joseph Allan Wawatie.

Negative impacts from continued and expanded use of the La Verendrye Park for sports harvesting

and tourism continued to give rise to not only to complaints from the affected communities, but also the wish to return decision-making power and benefit to the fulltime residents, the Algonquin people. In April 1979, a joint resolution was passed by the leadership of the Maniwaki, Lac Simon, Grand Lac Victoria, Abitibiwinni and Barriere Lake Bands:

Resolving that the area known as Grand Lake Victoria Indian Hunting Preserve, situated within the boundaries of Parc de la Verendrye, be henceforth reserved for hunting, fishing and trapping exclusively by the Algonquin people.

But this did not occur. If anything, the development of the area to accommodate and draw in tourists and sports hunters has increased in the ensuing years. Witness current promotional material for wilderness canoeing packages in the park:

With its 13,615 square kilometres, the La Vérendrye Wildlife Refuge ranks as the second largest government-run wilderness area in the province of Quebec [...] Several bodies of water are particularly huge, such as the Cabonga and Dozois reservoirs, created by the construction of dams to control the water levels of the Ottawa and Gatineau rivers.

Its land is relatively flat, with the highest peaks barely over 600 meters. The La Vérendrye Wildlife Refuge has over 4,000 lakes and rivers, offering canoe camping enthusiasts a large number and variety of routes.

Conclusions.

Although not comprehensive, the preceding survey of documents should have provided readers with a firm idea of the main events and trends which have impacted the people of Barriere Lake and the fish & wildlife of the region for the period under study.

To end, we return to the preliminary conclusions which we provided in the introductory section of this report:

- C Impacts on the community of Barriere Lake have been severe & sustained over a long period of time, and largely negative. Historically, external impacts on fish and wildlife populations have also been severe, sustained, and largely negative, although there have been peaks and valleys in efforts to protect and sustain these populations over the years.
- C Overall, the Provincial government's approach to both the allocation of resources, and the management of those resources, has not adequately considered or accommodated Algonquin needs, interests, practises, or prior use. As a general rule, priority and benefit has been given to non-resident interests, whether they be timber companies, hydro, tourists, or sports hunters.

Also as a general rule, the Algonquins have received little or no benefit, and in fact have suffered hardship and loss as a result.

- C There is a long history of involvement by the federal government to intervene with the provincial government on behalf of the Algonquins of the area generally, and the Barriere Lake people specifically. This began at least as early as the 1870s's with the provision of relief and occasional health care. It continued in the early 20th century with efforts to seek amendments to prejudicial elements of the provincial fish & game laws, and obtain reserve lands. These efforts continued in the 1940's and 1950's with the federal government taking over active management of the Grand Lac beaver preserve and paying for it's operation, as well as signing an agreement with Quebec in 1941 regarding the Mont Laurier highway Fishing reserve. In this respect, the federal government's participation in the original Trilateral Agreement is not something new, but rather a continuation of a long-standing pattern of commitment and acknowledgement of responsibility.

- C Despite years of sustained negative impacts, Algonquin use of fish and wildlife resources within their traditional territory has persisted. Perhaps even more important, Algonquin management techniques have continued to be applied wherever and whenever circumstances have permitted.

As already mentioned, this is a draft report, intended to assist the parties in gaining a better understanding of the historical context in which today's discussions are taking place. Comments, criticisms, suggestions and the like are welcomed.

Maps.

- Map #1: Grand Lac and Abitibi Hunting Reserves, 1928
- Map #2: Grand Lac and Abitibi Hunting Reserves, 1931
Poster re: Trespass, 1931
- Map #3: Mont Laurier Highway Fishing Reseve, 1941