

X-1216D

Tab 147

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**ANNUAL NARRATIVE**

**Babine-Morice Sub-district**

**1983**

**By Terry Turnbull & Denis Burnip**

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The subdistrict serves the communities of Smithers, Telkwa, Quick, Houston, Topley, Topley Landing, Granille, Fort Babine and their respective surrounding areas. Total population is approximately 20,000 people.

## II. FISHERIES

A. Commercial Fisheries1. Babine River Jack-Sockeye Harvest

The Fort Babine Indian Band harvested jack sockeye from the counting fence traps during August 10th to September 5th. The 1983 catch was 199,435 jack; the highest catch in the ten year history of the fishery. Average fish weight was 464 grams, and average fish length was 34.0 cm. Fish were sold to B.C. Packers Ltd. in Prince Rupert for .46¢ a pound, earning approximately \$100,000.00 gross.

B. Sport Fisheries1. Tidal Waters - non-applicable2. Non-Tidal Waters

Sportfish catches for Bear River, Babine River (BR) and Bulkley-Morice system (B-M) - (See Table 1, page 3)

3. Provincial Sport Fishing Licences

- sold in area - (See Table 2, page 4)

4. Sport Fishery Closures for 1983a. New Regulations

No new ones in 1983, see 1981 Annual Narrative for latest gazetted closures.

b. Public Notices - None in 1983

5. Sport Fishery Restrictions Legislated in 1983

Proposed amendments for the 1983 angling season will hopefully be gazetted in 1984, namely roe ban and single hook throughout region 6.

6. Sport Fishing Conditions

a. Bulkley - Morice

Springs - During the 1983 fishery, the average angler had a very difficult time catching springs in the Bulkley or the Morice Rivers. The first springs taken in the two rivers except for those caught at "Idiot Rock", below Morice Town, were taken at the junction of the Bulkley-Morice. (Weekending July 03, 1983)

Coho - Coho fishing was excellent, both at Trout Creek Bar, & at the Bulkley and Telkwa River junction. Catch statistics, indicate a strong return. For approximately 2 weeks the coho fishing remained good (Weekend Aug.21, & Aug.28), as compared to the previous two years.

Steelhead - Steelhead fishing should have been dismal this year, the test fishery on the Skeena called for the worst run in eighteen (18) years. Some fishermen did well, however the general concensus among the "old timers" was a poor run with small fish (3-5 lb. average). Steelhead seem to be the backbone of the sport fishery for the area, as fishermen from around the world come to the Bulkley-Morice Rivers to do battle with the "Wiley Steelhead".

b. Babine River

The sport fishery on the Babine River, to sum up, was extremely poor. Limited success on all species (spring, coho, steelhead) was recorded, as the fish did not materialize. The sport fishery on Babine Lake was better as fishermen had good success, catching rainbow trout and char.

c. Bear River (Sustut River)

Although this system is considered relatively inaccessible, the Bear/Sustut River systems received consistant sportfish pressure, both for springs and steelhead. Spring fishing is excellent. The sportsmen (?) still are able to use roe & treble hooks and have little difficulty catching their limits.

TABLE I

## SPORT FISH CATCHES FOR BABINE RIVER &amp; BULKLEY-MORICE SYSTEM

	<u>SPRING</u>	<u>JACK-SPRING</u>	<u>COHO</u>	<u>*STEELHEAD</u>
1983 (B-M)	65**	UNK	760	
(BR)	UNK	UNK	UNK	
(BEAR)	51	UNK	UNK	

\*Steelhead figures not available until summer. Figures were based on 469 angler checks (B-M), 12 angler checks (BR), and 13 angler checks Bear River.

\*\*(B-M) A large number of springs and jack springs area caught below Moricetown.

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1982 (B-M)	55	25	140	992
(BR)	<u>50</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>UNK</u>	<u>117</u>
TOTAL	105	25	140	1,109

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1981 (B-M)	70	30	245	2,325
(BR)	<u>10</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>151</u>
TOTAL	80	30	280	2,476

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(BR)	<u>20</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>2,700</u>
TOTAL	170	80	935	7,825

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1979 (B-R)	78	70	260	94
(BR)	<u>12</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>63</u>	<u>84</u>
TOTAL	90	70	323	178

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TABLE 2

PROVINCIAL SPORT FISHING LICENCES

YEAR	NON-RESIDENT	CANADIAN RESIDENT	SHORT-TERM	CANADIAN RES. STEELHEAD	NON-RES. STEELHEAD	CANADIAN SENIOR
1983	Figures are not available because of Prov. Government Staff Shortages.					
1982	474	3,660	349	2,047	386	187
1981	673	4,352	240	1,126	412	169
1980	632	4,084	235	1,172	395	164
1979	595	3,750	234	1,007	389	121
	384	2,361	231	2,360	299	268
	365	1,663	240	573	212	53

2. Bear Lake Catch Figures - 1980 to 1983

YEAR	LICENCES	SOCKEYE	SPRING	COHOE	PINK	CHUM	STEELHEAD	TOTALS
1980	9	2,030	40					2,070
1981	22	1,200	500					1,700
1982	3	1,000	200					1,200
1983	8	600	400					1,000

3. Indian Food Fishery Summary - 1983

Fishing dropped from the previous year without any apparent reason. The Babine Fence trap fishery yielded 772 sockeye for the elders of Burns Lake on August 27. In the Bear Lake food fishery, 8 Takla Lake families were issued IFF licences. They fished during August and early September, catching an estimated 600 sockeye and 400 springs.



3. Indian Food Fishery Summary - 1983 continued

The Takla Lake Band population is 367.

The Lake Babine Band office can only find two of five food fish licence books, therefore numbers of fishermen are unknown.

Fishing times changed this year. The fishing season was closed on September 30th, rather than December 31. Fish and Wildlife pointed out we were allowing a fishery on non-salmon stocks, so now the band will have to deal with the Province if band members wish to fish after September.

## XI. ADMINISTRATION

### A. Staff

#### 1. Fishery Officers

T. Turnbull GT-3  
D. Burnip GT-2

#### 2. Wardens

A. Klopfenstein (May 4-December 4)

#### 3. Guardians

H. Blodgett - Bulkley-Morice (June 15-October 31)

#### 4. Trainee

Nil

#### 5. Recommendations

## XII. EQUIPMENT

### A. Vehicles

1980 Dodge P/U truck  
1981 Ford Bronco

## XII. EQUIPMENT CONTINUED

B. Boats

One inboard launch (Legace Bay). one river boat, and one outboard lake boat.

c. Boat Trailer - OneD. Outboards Motors

1. Mercury 50 HP (2) with jets(75 & 77)
2. Mercury 40 HP (1) (1974)
3. Mercury 20 HP (1) (1974)
4. Johnson 18 PH (1) (1974)
5. Johnson 5.5 HP (2) (1974)

The dates reflect the date the outboards arrived in the S/D. The Johnson's are probably from the 1960's. Its time for some new motors in the Smithers S/D.

E. Chain saws - 3F. Long Guns

30-06 (1)

12 guage (1)

G. Hand guns - 357 mag. (3)

## XIII. INFORMATION, EDUCATION &amp; OTHER PROGRAMS

Nothing specific.

**ANNUAL NARRATIVE**

Babine-Morice Sub-district

1984

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3. Pinks
4. Chinooks
5. Salmon Enhancement Projects

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#### **A. Pollution**

1. Equity Silver Mine

#### **B. Environmental Issues**

1. Kemano Completion
2. IHN Virus Fulton & Pinkut Channels

#### **C. Industrial Development**

1. Bell Copper Mine
2. Granisle Mine
3. Equity Silver - Cyanide Plant
4. Crowsnest Resources - Telkwa Coal

V. ENVIRONMENTAL, MULTIPLE WATER USE Continued

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1. Morice River

E. Referrals Processed in 1984

VI. TRENDS IN THE FISHING INDUSTRY

A. Food Fishing

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VII. ENFORCEMENT

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The Babine-Morice Subdistrict consists of: the Skeena River watershed above the confluence of the Skeena and Babine Rivers, the Babine River watershed upstream from the Kisgagos Reserve, the Bulkley River watershed upstream from and including Trout Creek, (in 1985 it will include the areas associated with the sports and food fisheries of Moricetown) and the Zymoetz River upstream from McDonnell Lake. The subdistrict serves the communities of Smithers, Telkwa, Quick, Houston, Topley, Topley Landing, Granille, Fort Babine and their respective surrounding areas. Total population is approximately 22,000 people.

### II. FISHERIES

#### A. Commercial Fisheries

##### 1. Babine River Jack-Sockeye Harvest

The Babine Lake Indian Band removed 39,961 jacks between August 22 and September 03. The fish weighed 492.5 gm (average) and a length of 35.8cm (average); and they were sold to B.C. Packers Fishing Company, Prince Rupert.

#### B. Sport Fisheries

##### 1. Non-Tidal Waters - Sport fish catches

For Babine River (BR), Bulkley-Morice (B-M) and the Bear-Sustut (B-S)  
- See Table 1 page 3.

##### 2. Provincial Sport Fishing Licences

- sold in area - (See Table 2, page 3)

##### 3. Sport Fishery Closures

###### a. New Regulations for 1984

No new ones in 1984.

###### b. Public Notices in 1984

chinook sport catches - non-tidal reduced to one (1) over 50cm in Skeena drainage.

##### 4. Sport Fishery Restrictions

No new restrictions in 1984.

5. Sport Fishing Conditions

a. Bulkley - Morice

Springs - Good catches of springs reported. The first ones being taken week ending July 1/84 at the Bulkley-Morice confluence. Once again the majority of springs being caught below Moricetown at "Idiot Rock". Jack springs were caught quite readily in Moricetown Canyon; fish limits were taken quite often.

Coho - Coho fishing was poor. Reports of large numbers of coho being gaffed at Moricetown would seem to have had a detrimental effect on the run. The first coho reported being caught week ending August 12/84.

Steelhead - Steelhead fishing was reported to have been average. Although larger fish were being caught. The runs should have been stronger, but estimates by the Provincial Government indicate 45% of the Bulkley-Morice steelhead were caught by the commercial gear in the mouth of the Skeena. Compared to other runs (Suskwa-Babine-Kispiox) the Bulkley run was poor.

b. Babine River

The sport fishery on the Babine River was excellent. The prime target being steelhead, which even anglers with limited talent (T. Turnbull) managed to catch. Coho and springs also returned in good numbers and the sportsmen did well.

c. Bear River (Sustut River)

Sport fishing was excellent for springs (once again) reports of limits being caught were quite common. Our friends from the U.S.A. were in once again and left with 26 large springs (13 anglers), having hooked and released approximately 250 more. Who knows how many others did as well. Apparently none of the 26 springs were less than 25 lbs., I'm sure a few jacks went as well.



**TABLE 1**

**SPORT FISH CATCHES FOR 1984 - SMITHERS SUB-DISTRICT**

		<u>Spring</u>	<u>Jack-Spring</u>	<u>Coho</u>	<u>*Steelhead</u>
1984	(B-M)	250**	300	200	
	(BR)	100	U/K	150	
	*** (B-S)	26	50	U/K	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<u>375</u>	<u>350</u>	<u>350</u>	
1983	(B-M)	65	U/K	760	1,526
	(BR)	U/K	U/K	U/K	87
	(B-S)	51	U/K	U/K	57
<b>TOTAL</b>		<u>116</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>760</u>	<u>1,670</u>
1982	(B-M)	55	25	140	992
	(BR)	50	U/K	U/K	117
	(B-S)	U/K	U/K	U/K	U/K
<b>TOTAL</b>		<u>105</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>140</u>	<u>1,109</u>

\* Steelhead figures not available until next summer.

\*\* (B-M) a large number of springs and jack springs are caught below Moricetown, on "Idiot Rock" (not included in estimate.

\*\*\* (B-S) Known catches only.

**TABLE 2**

**PROVINCIAL SPORT FISHING LICENCES**

YEAR	NON-RESIDENT	CANADIAN RESIDENT	SHORT-TERM	CANADIAN RES. STEELHEAD	NON-RES. STEELHEAD	CANADIAN SENIOR
1984						
1983						
1982	474	3,660	349	2,047	386	187
1981	673	4,352	240	1,126	412	169
1980	632	4,084	235	1,172	395	164

Figures are not available until next year

C. Indian Food Fishing

1. Bear Lake Food Fishery Figures - 1984

LICENCES	SOCKEYE	SPRING
1 band licence	300	300

2. Babine Lake Food Fishery Figures - 1984

LICENCES	SOCKEYE	SPRING	COHO	PINK	TOTAL
67	10,000	8	--	236	10,244

3. Indian Food Fishery Summary - 1984

A sudden unexpected windfall of man-days exclusively for patrolling the Babine area, allowed for the most accurate gathering of food fish figures in years. We hope for a similar move of divinity this year.

There was an Elder Fishery this year on August 23rd with a catch of 750 sockeye.

Officer Burnip phoned the Lake Babine Band office weekly for a licence issue update. This strategy worked, all licence books were accounted for.

Prince George fishery office kindly issued a band licence to Takla People. Our observations and secondhand reports give the skimpiest food fish estimate.

Again, the natives continue to snag chinook in the closed area of Bear River. If we are fortunate enough to apprehend a snagger, what does the Department want done? Their sockeye catch has dwindled in recent years, likely as a result of the Area 4 fishery; and the chinook stocks remain strong.

## VI. TRENDS IN THE FISHING INDUSTRY

### A. Food Fishing

#### 1. Bear Lake Food Fishery

As per 1982 - 1981 Annual Narratives.

#### 2. Babine Band Food Fishery

As per 1982 - 1981 Annual Narratives.

#### 3. Moricetown Food Fishery

u SmithersnS/D became responsible for Moricetown in November.

To say what the future holds is a fairly large ? . Policy has not yet been put forward and with the sensitive issues of Indian Self Government, Aboriginal Rights etc., the fishing patterns (proposals) are not yet complete.

4. Food Fishing General

As per 1983 Annual Narrative, lets wait and see!

B. Sport Fishing

It would appear that the sport fish industry is starting to realize just how much it contributes to the B.C. economy. D.F.O. took quite a few well placed "blows" during the two sport fish meetings held in Houston and Smithers.

During the 1984 season, sport fishing for chinooks within the non-tidal portion of the Skeena and its tributaries was altered (by public notice) to reduce the catch limit to 1 chinook over 50cm per day.

A. Staff

1. Fishery Officers

T. Turnbull - GT-3  
D. Burnip - GT-2

2. Wardens

A. Klopfenstein (November 1 - November 19, 1984)  
-on parental leave without pay for the season.

3. Guardians

\* Harry Blodgett (May 4 - November 1, 1984)

\*\*S. Mitchell (July 2 - August 31, 1984)

\* H. Blodgett's position has been cut; he replaced the Warden for this season.

\*\*S. Mitchell's position was one of those midnight and Government Job Creation programs.

4. Trainee

Nil

5. Recommendations

During 1984, A. Klopfenstein took most of the year off. H. Blodgett took over Mr. Klopfenstein's time as H. Blodgett's time (4 months) had been cut. This S/D relies alot on seasonal staff. H. Blodgett and A. Klopfenstein have proven themselves over and over again and are extremely valuable to the successful operations of this S/D. We request that A. Klopfenstein's Warden position be increased to 9 months and H. Blodgett's position increased to 6 months for future years. Also, this office has had a drastic increase in referrals, public enquiries etc. In order to free up the field staff, a clerk should be hired for part days (6 months worth of man-days). These are only a few of many guardians this S/D had once, and are required in order to conserve and protect the resource properly.

X. EQUIPMENT

A. Vehicles

1980 - Dodge P/U truck

1981 - Ford Bronco

1981 - Chevy P/U truck

UNK - Terra Jet

B. Boats

1. One inboard jet boat (Legace Bay) which was not launched for the 1984 season due to cost of repairs and condition of vessel.
2. Two river boats (one aquired from A. Groat's inventory).
3. One rubber raft - needs repairs.
4. One wooden hull lake boat - ready for the "great boat yard in the sky".
5. One 10 foot skiff.

C. Trailers

1. One Kenskill trailer - Morice Guardian.
2. Tee Nee Trailer (utility).

By Terry Turnbull & Denis Burnip

1983

Babine-Norice Sub-district

ANNUAL NARRATIVE

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V. FRY SALVAGE

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1. Equity Silver Mine
2. Omineca Mining Road
3. Noranda Mines Division Babine Lake

B. Environmental Issues

1. Kemano Completion
2. Pine Beetle Epidemic
3. Gitksan-Carrier Tribal Council & Equity Silver
4. Herbicides & Forest Management

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	365	1,663	240	573	212	53

C. Indian Food Fishing

1. Babine Food Fish Figures 1904-1983

BABINE LAKE CATCH FIGURES\*

\*remarks from old FRB Report #882, 1966

1904 750,000  
 1908 8 Indian families obtained all needed by September 5th.  
 1909 Late, but in great quantity.  
 1910 Easiest fishing since 1906.  
 1911 Large number-Indians had enough by October 10, 1911.  
 1912 Indians report poor catches-Indians estimate 80,000.  
 1913 86 families say poor run.  
 1914 Plentiful (sockeye), few (pinks).  
 1915 Indians did "ok".  
 1916 Worst in natives memory.  
 1919 114,000 (95 families, 1,200 fish each).  
 1920 Poor-equal to 1916.  
 1921 Poor (sockeye), large numbers (pink).  
 1922 Up to average of good years (sockeye), very few (pinks).  
 1923 As good as last year (sockeye), exceptional run (pink).  
 1924 Good (sockeye), good (pink).  
 1925 As good as previous years, (sockeye), very thick (pinks).  
 1926 Good (sockeye), not as plentiful (pinks).  
 1927 Good (sockeye), greatest ever known (pinks).  
 1928 Estimate 150,000 caught (sockeye), poor (pinks).

HISTORICAL NOTES BY FISHERIES INSPECTOR A. MCDONELL

1923 100 families gillnetting in Babine River; each family catch averages 600 sockeye.

Historical Notes continued

- 1923 7 families fishing Fulton River; average 600 sockeye per family.
- 1923 15 families took 10,000 sockeye at Sutherland River.
- 1928 Thirty smoke hours and 65 families fishing in the Babine River using 195 nets at night. Nets were 200 feet long by 25 mesh deep by 5 1/2 inch mesh.
- 1928 Food fishery took 9,600 coho and 1,200 sockeye at Sutherland River.
- 1941 Food fishery took 1,953 sockeye at Sutherland River.
- 1928-37 Food fishing families averaged about 70 (families).

BABINE LAKE CATCH FIGURES\*\*

YEAR	SOCKEYE	SPRING	COHOE	PINK	CHUM	STEELHEAD	TOTALS
1928	26,200	1,625	300	6,500			34,425
1929	60,000	1,500	400	1,800			63,700
1930	84,456						84,456
1931	50,250						50,250
1932	33,145						33,145
1933							
1934	37,489						37,489
1935	41,663						41,663
1936	64,630						64,630
1937	35,162	4,225	525	4,610			45,022
1938	41,392	5,503	3,361	500			50,756
1939	53,730	2,745	2,419	6,420			65,314
1940	65,573	1,750		445			67,768
1941	31,563	1,116	1,420	67			34,166
1942	34,396	350	500	937			36,183
1943	24,925	1,920	1,420	57			28,302
1944	38,246	550					38,796
1945	29,133	500					29,633
1946	20,052						20,052
1947	26,109						26,109
1948	26,547						26,547
1949	26,225						26,225
1950	27,449						27,449
1951	19,007						19,007
1952	34,404	286					34,690
1953	26,913	55	51				27,019
1954	21,847	105	78				22,032
1955	10,423	185	227	14		23	10,872
1956	30,582	60	61	4	1	10	30,745
1957	20,434	51	46	31	1	10	20,573

YEAR	LICENCES	SOCKEYE	SPRING	COHOE	PINK	CHUM	STEELHEAD	TOTALS
1958		38,580	57	115	16			38,768
1959		16,727	74	77	5			16,883
1960		16,754	182	188	11		14	17,149
1961		30,856	19	107	16		3	31,001
1962		18,122	41	26	14		11	18,214
1963		20,021	107	92	79		38	20,337
1964		19,855	157	150	1		44	20,207
1965		18,540	172	252	33		17	19,014
1966		18,652	149	137	8		6	18,952
1967		18,992	72	29	18		1	19,112
1968		19,146	49	11				19,204
1969		17,293	65	130	20		30	17,508
1970		20,048	125	400	140		200	21,364
1971		22,950	300	140	50		5	23,445
1972		17,234	25	50			200	17,309
1973		17,015	1,600	10	500			19,125
1974		10,819		50	10			10,889
1975		6,170	15	65	50			6,300
1976		11,095	15	1	13			11,109
1977		10,777	20	50	100		10	10,957
1978		10,920	3	15	152		1	11,091
1979		21,500		75	120			21,695
1980	125	22,635	20	125	200			22,980
1981	98	30,300	21					30,321
1982		42,000						42,000
1983		20,000						20,000

\*\*Figures include catches from Sutherland River, Pendleton Bay, Topley Landing, Old Fort, Smithers Landing, Fort Babine & Nilkitkwa Lake.

## 2. Bear Lake Catch Figures - 1980 to 1983

YEAR	LICENCES	SOCKEYE	SPRING	COHOE	PINK	CHUM	STEELHEAD	TOTALS
1980	9	2,030	40					2,070
1981	22	1,200	500					1,700
1982	3	1,000	200					1,200
1983	8	600	400					1,000

## 3. Indian Food Fishery Summary - 1983

Fishing dropped from the previous year without any apparent reason. The Babine Fence trap fishery yielded 772 sockeye for the elders of Burns Lake on August 27. In the Bear Lake food fishery, 8 Takla Lake families were issued IFF licences. They fished during August and early September, catching an estimated 600 sockeye and 400 springs.

3. Indian Food Fishery Summary - 1983 continued

The Takla Lake Band population is 367.

The Lake Babine Band office can only find two of five food fish licence books, therefore numbers of fishermen are unknown.

Fishing times changed this year. The fishing season was closed on September 30th, rather than December 31. Fish and Wildlife pointed out we were allowing a fishery on non-salmon stocks, so now the band will have to deal with the Province if band members wish to fish after September.

III. SPAWNING SUMMARY

Salmon escapements to the Babine system are counted through the Babine River counting weir (Dave Southgate-1983). The fence panels were installed on July 4, 1983 and removed on September 24, 1983. First sockeye arrived July 10, 1983.

Note on table escapement figures:

\* Sockeye, pink, coho and chinook area qualitative.

\*\* Simply unknown because systems were not flown during 1983.

Note: Where significant escapement may occur in Babine tributaries below the fence, that species has been qualitated.

A. Tables1. SOCKEYE

YEAR	BABINE SYSTEM	**UPPER SKEENA	BULKLEY-MORICE	UPPER COPPER
1983	886,393 (153,700JK)	UNK	4,000	5,000
1982	1,136,344 ( 60,217JK)	UNK	3,000	1,000
1981	1,132,734 (155,549JK)	2,522	1,000	1,200
1980	526,059 (233,855JK)	1,950	650	140
1979	1,160,966 ( 90,498JK)	4,300	1,650	1,100
1978	401,318 (296,274JK)	6,650	600	700

BABINE LAKE SOCKEYE SPAWNERS

1983	1982	1981	1980	1979
257,193	417,000	578,134	164,852	241,988

2. COHO

YEAR	*BABINE SYSTEM	**UPPER SKEENA	*BULKLEY-MORICE	*UPPER COPPER
1983	2,704	N.O.	1,900	50
1982	2,287	N.O.	650	UNK
1981	2,166	N.O.	1,354	150
1980	4,399	N.O.	3,995	N.O.
1979	2,909	500	750	250

A. TABLES CONTINUED

3. PINKS

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>*BABINE SYSTEM</u>	<u>**UPPER SKEENA</u>	<u>BULKLEY-MORICE</u>
1983	504,088	N.O.	30,000
1982	380,348	N.O.	9,000
1981	326,451	N.O.	100(?)
1979	63,703	1,500	5,800

4. CHINOOK

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>*BABINE SYSTEM</u>	<u>**UPPER SKEENA</u>	<u>BULKLEY-MORICE</u>
1983	948 ( 408JK)	3,500	5,000
1982	900 ( 317JK)	3,000	3,100
1981	723 ( 146JK)	5,100	3,290
1980	918 ( 242JK)	9,000	5,075
1979	780 ( 404JK)	3,000	4,675
1978	466 ( 1,111JK)	4,050	6,950
1977	588 ( 768JK)	1,800	4,750
1976	588 ( 251JK)	950	1,835

B. SUMMARY COMMENTS

1. Sockeye

- a. Babine System - This years' sockeye escapement is the 5th highest count since the installation of the fence in 1946. The non-enhanced streams totalled 28,200 fish. Fulton River got 22,000 (1,500JK) in channel #1, 165,000 (23,000JK) in channel #2, and 206,000 (25,000JK) in the river. Pinkut Creek got 99,000 (24,000JK) in channel and 35,000 (3,000JK) in the river. There wasn't an airlift over the Pinkut Creek Falls this year.
- b. Bulkley-Morice System - Nanika River sockeye escapement is above the 1971-1980 average for the second year in a row. Suprising and exciting news for the upper Bulkley River, a few sockeye were reported spawning near Knockholt. Bulkley sockeye were thought to be extinct.
- c. Upper Copper River - Sockeye were observed on the spawning grounds on August 23, 1983. Spawning grounds were fully utilized this year as indicated by the highest escapement on record.
- d. Upper Skeena System - Same comment as 1982. Unfortunately little or nothing is known about the sockeye escapements in upper Skeena systems. Reduced allotment of flying time for the Smithers Sub-district made any enumeration of these systems impossible.



2. Coho

- a. Babine System - Based on "fence" counts, the 1983 return (2,704), shows a decline from its 1980 brood year escapement. These figures may reflect a stock trend as the fence was removed in late September in both years mentioned. Although these coho figures may indicate stock trends and allow some population assessment, coho migrate passed the fence after its removal.

Nichyeskwa River, Nilkitkwa River and other downstream tributary coho stocks do not get counted because of their remote location, so a figure triple the "fence" count may be more accurate for the system.

- b. Bulkley-Morice System - Dave Bustard, Envirocan consultant, estimated 4-500 coho for the Morice River main stem; and 70 coho for upper Nanika during a November 15th count.

Truly, escapement figures are qualitative. Spawning starts in September and lasts through to the end of December depending on the tributary. Toboggan and Kathlyn Creeks had peak spawning during the last week of October and the first week in November. Morice and Nanika Rivers seem to peak around mid-November, but spawning starts in October and goes to christmas. No fish were observed in Owen Creek again.

Kathlyn Creek escapement figures are, historically, the most accurate; this year's 100 fish is a positive trend over the 1980 brood year (1975).

Bulkley-Morice coho seem to have good cyclic strength every three years. Both 1980 and 83 were good escapement years.

The best gauges of coho abundance to date are the Moricetown food fishery catch, the Trout Creek bar sport fishery, and escapement figures from Toboggan Creek and Morice River. A very foggy crystal ball suggest a total system escapement of 6,000.

- c. Upper Copper River - Current strength of coho stocks are unknown. Coho were observed spawning in Silver Creek on November 1, and coho were reported in Passby Creek. A reasonable guess would approach an escapement of 400 for the system.
- d. Upper Skeena - See Upper Skeena System Sockeye comments.

3. Pinks

- a. Babine System - Last year the Babine River pink returned a record number (380,348). This year 504,088 spawning gorbuscha invaded the river.

3. Pinks continued

- b. Bulkley-Morice System - Approximately 86% of the Bulkley-Morice pink salmon spawn between Fenton Creek and Gosnell Creek. 80% of the spawning is done in the side channels of the Morice River. Counting pink salmon spawners in this system can only be done accurately by intensive helicopter searching. The 30,000 pink count includes a fortune telling 500 for the Bulkley River from Houston to Trout Creek.
- c. Upper Skeena System - See Upper Skeena sockeye comments.

4. Chinooks

- a. Babine System - The chinook return of 948 is higher than its brood years (targeting on 4 and 5 year old fish) and parallels the ten year average.
- b. Bulkley-Morice System - Upper Bulkley River chinook return of 400 is consistent with brood year escapement (targeting on 4 year old fish); and it is slightly higher than the ten year average, although not significantly so.

The Morice River chinook return of 4,500 is close to the ten year average. 90% of the chinook spawning occurred between Gosnell Creek and Morice Lake.

Nanika chinook escapement was estimated at 100. Perennial turbid water conditions prevent an accurate count, but it is thought the 1983 count approaches average.

- c. Upper Skeena System - The Bear River chinook salmon return is the only quantitative count in this system. This year's 3,500 parallels the ten year average. In 1982 the Bear River was flown only once on September 15th, this year it was flown on September 17th. As in 1982 the condition of the fish and the amount of carcasses would indicate that the fish were present and spawning near the end of August. It is very possible the run could have been stronger than the 3,500 estimated.

5. Salmon Enhancement Projects

- a. Emerson Creek Facility - 45,000 chinook eggs were taken from the Upper Bulkley River on August 19th. 100,000 chinook eggs were taken from the Morice River on September 9th. Resulting fry production will be released to the Upper Bulkley River.
- b. Classroom Incubators - 300 coho eggs were taken from Toboggan Creek fish for the Smithers High School incubator. Another 1,500 coho eggs were collected from Kathlyn Creek for incubators in Chandler Park Elementary School and two christian schools.

- c. Fort Babine Project - The Lake Babine Band members from Fort Babine have built a sunken incubator and a floating rearing channel in the Babine River - 74,000 coho eggs were collected to fill the incubator from November 15 to 18.

#### IV. WEATHER AND WATER LEVELS

- January 1 - March 15 - cold temp. rivers and lakes frozen. Warmer temp. in February caused some thawing and created an overflow problem on lakes and rivers.
- March 16 - April 15 - Some snow melt, run off during brief afternoon periods.
- April 16 - April 30 - Run off started, still below summer levels, some rain.
- May 1 - May 15 - Sunny with some showers, water levels slightly above normal levels.
- May 16 - June 5 - Sunny and hot, water levels are on an increase, record high temperatures, approaching flood.
- June 6 - 26 - Cool temperatures, water levels dropped - clearing.
- June 27 - July 10 - Cool temperatures water levels above average due to cool temps. & rain. Snow on mountain peaks.
- July 11 - November 1 - Water levels continued to drop to winter levels. weather cool - some rain & snow.
- Nov. 1 - Dec. 1 - Winter flows established, ice forming on rivers and lakes.
- Dec. 1 - Dec. 31 - Winter flows - ice on rivers & lakes, seasonal temps.

MONTH	RAIN (mm)	SNOW (cm)	WATER CONTENT (mm)	TEMPERATURE °C		
				HIGH	LOW	AVERAGE
January	15.5	50.7	41.6	4.2	-16.0	-4.9
February	7.9	13.5	10.6	7.8	-17.6	-1.2
March	1.6	11.2	8.7	11.0	-18.3	-0.1
April	7.1	6.8	8.6	23.1	-5.0	6.4
May	35.2	0.2	0.2	35.8	-0.8	11.3
June	82.7	----	----	26.5	3.3	12.7
July	81.7	----	----	27.8	3.3	14.1
August	35.0	----	----	26.5	1.7	13.2
September	46.0	TP	TP	19.6	-4.8	8.2
October	36.2	4.4	4.4	14.3	-7.9	4.6
November	25.5	22.2	13.9	7.3	-10.0	-0.6
December	----	15.1	15.1	-2.3	-31.4	-14.8
TOTAL	374.4	124.1	103.1			

## V. FRY SALVAGE

- a). Forestry was jostled to keep their Morice River logging road culverts debris free. Migrating coho fry were having a tough time getting to their nursery grounds. Signs designating salmonid nursery areas were erected along the Morice Road. These signs are to alert road graders, etc. to take special precautions during road maintenance.

## IV. HERRING - Not applicable.

## VII. ENVIRONMENTAL, MULTIPLE WATER USE

A. Pollution1. Equity Silver Minea) Equity Silver Surveillance Committee

Chairman - Waste Management Branch

Membership:

- Waste Management Branch
- Equity Silver
- Ministry of Mines
- District of Houston
- Environmental Protection Service
- Buck Flat resident (Glenda Ferris)
- Department of Fisheries & Oceans

The problems associated with Equity Silver Mine development were detailed in the 1982 Annual Narrative. The Equity Silver Surveillance Committee was developed to address these problems & to gain an understanding as to what Equity Silver has been accomplishing and what it has planned to bring the problem of acid generation and associated problems under control.

(ii) Acid Generation Controls

Control tests with Sodium Lauryl Sulphate to kill acid bacteria were carried out in 1983. The results will be known in the new year (1984).

2. Omineca Mining Road

No further progress to report. (See 1981 Annual Narrative)

3. Noranda Mines Division Babine Lake

No further progress to report. (See 1981 Annual Narrative)

R. Environmental Issues

1. Kemano Completion

January 5 - Interior News - A report prepared for the Nechako River Management Committee task force suggests Alcan would require all of its reservoir water if it proceeded with hydro-electric & smelter expansion.

January 5 - Lakes District News - Alcan completes study of Northwest labour force.

January 26 - Lakes District News - Steve Nikleua, chief of the scientific services division at the atmospheric environmental service says that "while it is difficult to assess the importance of the Alcan smelter emissions in increasing the acidity of the precipitation in the Terrace area - the lowering of the  $PH$  content. The smelter is a significant local source of sulfidioxide and gaseous fluoride."

January 26 - Interior News - Alcan reports first financial loss in 50 years.

February 9 - Lakes District News - Alcan Smelters & Chemicals in Kitimat will continue to seek increased productivity and lower operating costs as a means to maintaining a high production level in 1984.

February 9 - Interior News - Alcan & federal fisheries expect the federal government to be an intervener at provincial approval hearings for a hydro electric project.

February 16 - Interior News - Alcan plans to introduce a weekly digest of talk shows, movies and "aluminating insite" - it's called the Alcan Channel.

February 16 - Lakes District News - Alcan releases proposed flow figures for the Nechako River.

- a) Upper Nechako - April to October 1,000 - 1,100 cfs.
- b) Vanderhoof - Early summer 5,000 - 5,500 cfs., late summer 3,000 cfs.

March 9 - Lakes District News - Prince George city council passed a motion to make a strong presentation to Alcan to consider Prince George as the site for Alcans second proposed aluminum smelter. So did Fraser Lake village council.

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March 23 - Interior News - Alcan presents their case for Bulkley Valley water. Combined with resources from the Nechako watershed, redirected flood peaks from the Nanika system would give Alcan sufficient water reserves to power two new smelters in the region. Current maximum and minimum levels of Nanika Lake would be maintained with seasonal flood peaks drawn off. Possible 12% reduction of spawning & rearing habitat.

March 30 - Interior News - save the Bulkley says "Plans don't account for long-term effect".

April 6 - Interior News - Mike Whately, Regional Fisheries Biologist, says "Fish Losses could be catastrophic".

April 13 - Interior News - Alcan official answers natives allegations that Alcan had held secret meetings with D.F.O.

April 13 - Lakes District News - The Gitksan Carrier Tribal Council wants disclosure of documents from a series of closed meetings between D.F.O. and Alcan.

April 20 - Interior News - Alcan is surprised by a Social Credit election add which says its Vanderhoof smelter plan is among projects "awaiting final approval".

April 20 - Interior News - Alcan asks for meeting with save the Bulkley following its claim that the company presented two versions of how fish would be affected by lower flows in the Nanika & Morice River systems. - Branch claims Alcan study of wildlife habitat inadequate.

April 20 - Lakes District News - Alcan announces it intends to proceed with its Kemano completion project, even if the predicted economic recovery does not take place.

April 27 - Interior News - Alcan will meet with Save the Bulkley to discuss the effects on fish populations resulting from its planned diversion.

June 1 - Interior News - MIA Frank Howard claims Bill Bennett has given Alcan the "Green Light" to go ahead with Kemano completion.

June 8 - Interior News - Alcan says the provincial poll commissioned by them, shows the majority of B.C. citizens supports its 3 billion dollar hydro electric and smelter expansion.

Since June 8, 1983, the Alcan issue has remained quiet. There will be a discussion paper coming out sometime in the near future (Dec/83) to outline D.F.O.'s options, regarding Kemano Completion. This paper will give the public approximately six weeks to review these options and voice some opinions etc., during public hearings slated for March of 1984.

2. Morrison River Drainage - Pine Beetle Epidemic  
(Refer to 1982 Annual Narrative)

As a result of the Forestry - Fisheries interactions in the past two years, the Morrison Technical Advisory Board was formed. The representatives area as follows:

Ministry of Forests  
Houston Forest Products  
Northwood Pulp & Timber  
Dave Hooper - Guide  
Department of Fisheries and Oceans

The Advisory board has met numerous times during 1983, the meetings have designated special zones. Forestry - Fish & Wildlife - Fisheries concerns being the criteria for special restrictions in each zone.

Also, during the summer of 83, West Water from U.P.C. began their 3 year fisheries study of Rabine Lake to determine the possible impacts of a lake two system of log storage. The study will continue during 1984 and 85.

Meanwhile, harvesting of bug infested wood has begun. The development of main & spur haul roads, in association with these harvesting plans has also taken place. Stream crossings have been carried out without harmful alteration of fish habitat.

3. Gitksan-Carrier Tribal Council & Equity Silver

No further progress to report( see 1982 Annual Narrative).

4. Herbicides & Forest Management

No Further progress to report (see 1982 Annual Narrative).

C. Industrial Development

1. Bell Copper Mine

No further progress to report (See 1982 Annual Narrative).

2. Granisle Mine

No further progress to report (See 1982 Annual Narrative).

3. North-East Coal Development

No further progress to report (See 1982 Annual Narrative).

4. Crowsnest Resources - Telkwa Coal

Crowsnest Resources excavated preliminary test pits in the Telkwa area. These test pits will be utilized to determine the quality and extent of the coal reserves present, and to substantiate their findings during their preliminary studies.



d) Obstructions and Diversions

The beaver dam problem grew to epidemic proportions during 1983. Beaver dams were removed on Kathlyn, Toboggan & Silver Creeks on a regular basis to allow coho migration up to the spawning beds. Also rearing areas along the Morice River road were blocked and had to be cleared, not only by D.F.O. personnel but by M.O.F. This office has approached Fish & Wildlife and hopefully something will be done to control the drastic increase in population of our "friendly fur bearers".

3) Referrals Processed in 1983

	<u>1983</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1981</u>
1. Water Licences	30	36	50
2. Pesticide Projects	6	1	0
3. Gravel Removal Operations	6	13	7
4. Forestry Referrals	59	19	48
5. Highways	3	1	1
6. Railways	5	--	2
7. Land	6	17	11
8. Mines	26	28	22
9. Dyking	--	2	5
10. Stream Crossings	1	1	1
11. Outfall (W.M.B.)	5	2	3
TOTAL	147	121	152

VIII. TRENDS IN THE FISHING INDUSTRY

A) Food Fishing

1. Bear Lake Food Fishery

As per 1982-1981 Annual Narratives.

2. Babine Band Food Fishery

As per 1982-1981 Annual Narratives.

3. Food Fishing General

Food fishing trends will undoubtedly be set by the Minister of Fisheries as he puts forward the Pearce Commission's recommendations & Indian self government.

B) Sport Fishing

Until such time as we propagate the salmonid species, namely coho & spring salmon, the steelhead will continue to play the key role in the sport fishery. Coho stocks in the area are at all time lows and must be increased.

B. Sport Fishery continued

As long as the coho stocks continue to decline, D.F.O. will eventually lose its political clout amongst the sport fishermen and will have problems convincing industry that we must maintain water quality for salmonids.

IX. ENFORCEMENT

A total of 24 counts were alleged in 1983 for violations of the fishery regulations.

<u>Person Charged</u>	<u>Regulation</u>	<u>Deposition</u>
<u>Bresser</u> , Todd A.	5(2) B.C.F.(General)Regs.	-Still before the courts.
<u>Leiterman</u> , Lee D.	29(8)(a) B.C.F.(General)Regs.	
<u>Dewit</u> , Anthony A.	10(f) B.C.S.F.R.	
<u>Dewit</u> , Peter C.	5(2) B.C.F.(General)Regs.	
<u>Gingerich</u> , Allan J.	57(1) B.C.F.(General)Regs.	-\$75.00
<u>Buchholz</u> , Christine	29(8)(a) B.C.F.(General)Regs. 5(2) B.C.F.(General)Regs.	-Still before the courts.
<u>Smith</u> , Roger	57(1) B.C.F.(General)Regs.	-Stayed.
<u>Juby</u> , Trevor	57(1) B.C.F.(General)Regs.	-Stayed.
<u>Olson</u> , Gary	57(1) B.C.F.(General)Regs.	-Stayed.
<u>Alec</u> , Joe	57(1) B.C.F.(General)Regs.	-Still before the courts.
<u>George</u> , Ben A.	57(1) B.C.F.(General)Regs.	-Still before the courts.

IX. ENFORCEMENT - SMITHERS SUB-DISTRICT

During the 1983 the number of violations took a small increase, although most were related to sportfish offenses, some covered violations in respect to the Indian Food Fishery.

The officers of the Smithers S/D spent quite a bit of time trying to curtail the illegal transport and sale of Indian Food Fish. However, ministerial direction halfway through the season ended these activities.

Enforcement of the sportfish regulations offered some exciting moments, as local F/O's and the RCMP combined to charge 4 rather intoxicated fishermen, much to their disliking. Charges were laid both under the Fisheries Act and the Criminal Code.

IX. ENFORCEMENT - SMITHERS SUB-DISTRICT CONTINUED

The Bear Lake special enforcement activity took up alot of time and effort on behalf of all officers in the Smithers area. Although no charges were laid, information regarding illegal activities in the Bear-Sustut area was gained.

The addition to the Smithers area of a local Crown Council has vastly improved our court appearances. Showing a keen interest in the violations presented to him, it has made our job a lot easier.

With the advent of the ticket system for sportfish offenses the number of violations will undoubtly increase during 1984.

X. PREDATORS

Bears & merganzens were plentiful of Babine Lake and its tributories. River otters were also present on the Babine system.

XI. ADMINISTRATION

A. Staff

1. Fishery Officers

T. Turnbull GT-3  
D. Burnip GT-2

2. Wardens

A. Klopfenstein (May 4-December 4)

3. Guardians

H. Blodgett - Bulkley-Morice (June 15-October 31)

4. Trainee

Nil

5. Recommendations

XII. EQUIPMENT

A. Vehicles

1980 Dodge P/U truck  
1981 Ford Bronco

## XII. EQUIPMENT CONTINUED

B. Boats

One inboard launch (Legace Bay). one river boat, and one outboard lake boat.

c. Boat Trailer - OneD. Outboards Motors

1. Mercury 50 HP (2) with jets (75 & 77)
2. Mercury 40 HP (1) (1974)
3. Mercury 20 HP (1) (1974)
4. Johnson 18 PH (1) (1974)
5. Johnson 5.5 HP (2) (1974)

The dates reflect the date the outboards arrived in the S/D. The Johnson's are probably from the 1960's. Its time for some new motors in the Smithers S/D.

E. Chain saws - 3F. Long Guns

30-06 (1)

12 guage (1)

G. Hand guns - 357 mag. (3)

## XIII. INFORMATION, EDUCATION &amp; OTHER PROGRAMS

Nothing specific.