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Supervisor,
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1975

ANNUAL NARRATIVE, BABINE-MORICE SUB., 1975

1. General Description of sub-district.

Babine-Morice is a large sub-district situated in the North West Interior of District #8, B.C., with head quarters at Smithers an Isolated Posting. The area commencing approximately two hundred miles inland from the coast of B.C., situated just above the 54 degree N. latitude, and between 126 degrees and 120 degrees West longitude.

The sub-district comprises approximately 25,000 square miles, includes the head waters of the Skeena above the confluence of the Kispiox river, the Bulkley river commencing at the Suskwa river including the Suskwa drainage and to Maxam lake, the Morice river, Morice lake, Nanika river and lake, the top end of the Copper river commencing at the outlet of McDonell lake.

The town of Smithers lies centrally in the sub-district is a small remote village of approx. 4 thousand people. The main industry for the people is logging and lumber mills in the close vicinity, small businesses in the town, local farming and ranching and summer tourism, sport fishing being a large attraction for the tourists.

Babine lake in the eastern portion of the sub-district is the largest natural fresh water lake in the Province. The lake is approx. 110 miles in length with an average width of 2 miles, however there are areas where the lake is some 5 miles in width.

Morice lake is the second largest with main drainage being from the Nanika & Kidprice lakes, these drainages provide 85% of the water to the Bulkley river.

Houston village which is 44 miles south of Smithers is the second largest village in the sub-district, the village grew rapidly with the incoming of the Bulkley Valley Sawmill complex in 1970, however a collapse of the complex into bankruptcy in 1973 involved hundreds of people out of work as the mill closed down for some time. North Wood Pulp & Paper from Prince George took over and the growth rate again slowly increased as the complex again become operative.

Other villages; Topley (no increase), Granisle (increasing due to the 2 mines in the area), Topley Landing (some increase, a few new homes & house trailers), Pendelton Bay (tourists camps and lodges operate during summer & fall hunting), Quick (nil).

The above towns and villages with the outlying farmers and ranchers make up a white population of approx. 14,000. Indian population with villages at Moricetown, Fort Babine, Fulton river is given at approx. 1,500 people. A large percentage of the Fort Babine native people now live at Burns Lake which is in the Prince George sub-district.

The sub-district is served by the C.N.R., P.W.A. scheduled aircraft, T.P.A. charter, Okanogan charter helicopter, the Coachways bus service..

The sub-district has some 2,800 miles of rivers and streams. There are 66 spawning streams, the major spawning areas being Babine Lake & river which provide 95% of the Skeena sockeye run, the Morice river provides the greater spawning area for spring salmon and coho with the Babine river providing the larger pink run and the Morice second for importance for the odd years.

2. Fisheries.

- (1) Commercial Fisheries - Nil
(2) Sport Fishery (Tidal waters) - Nil.
Sport Fishery (Non-Tidal waters)

a. Provincial Angling licences sold in the sub-district by Provincial Fish & Game

	Canadian	and other outlets. Non-Can.	Non-Can. short term	Special River	Sthd. Res.	Non. Res.	Senior Cit.
775-	2185	442	172	385	543	345	83
774-	2628	518	248	Not in effect	Not previously reported.		
773-	3300	590	400	"		"	
772-	3004	535	364	"		"	
771-	2168	570	332	"		"	
770-	2379	553	338	"		"	
769-	2201	509	407	"		"	
768-	1946	408	236	"		"	

3. Indian Food Catch and Fishery cont.

Year	Place	Sock.	Coho	Pink	Spring	Jks	Sthd.	Total
1975	Moricetown	59	226	47	826	0	53	1,211
1974		322	181	39	581	0	101	1,224
1973		67	401	11	303	0	92	874
1972		702	482	215	683	0	228	2,082
1971		185	300	309	255	0	54	1,103
1970		844	648	329	728	0	221	2,760

In the Skeena for people who fish above Kispiox and Kiseegas in the Babine River it has been the policy for the Hazelton guardian and Terrace to issue permits and therefore come under the Terrace reporting.

For the Babine Morice sub-district for the Moricetown people a band permit was issued to Dan Michell Chief Councillor with instructions and agreements therein. There was no closed period during the week for food fishing at Moricetown or Bulkley River downstream of Trout Creek to conform with Skeena River fishing.

Fort Babine & Burns Lake a band permit was issued to Ted Lowley Chief Councillor on behalf of the Lakes people. The permit was same as for the Moricetown people, again there was no closed period during the week.

*There were no individual permits issued
of close and Band permits.*

Again in 1975 as in 1974, a special food fishery was allowed at the countin fencefor the Moricetown and Lake bands commencing on August 15 to August 17 for the Moricetown band and August 22 to August 26 for the Burns Lake band. The fishery gives older people, who have no other means of taking food fish, an opportunity to participate in the food fishery. 69 families took a total of 7,726 large sockeye, 401 jack sockeye, 133 pink salmon, 19 coho and 3 jack spring.

Grand Totals: (Moricetown - Babine Lake - Plus Babine Fence.)

Place	Sockeye	Jks	Cohoe	Pink	Spring jks	St'hd
Moricetown	59	000	226	47	826	53
Babine Lake	13,896	401	84	183	15	00
	13,955	401	310	230	841	53

Fort Babine Indian Band list indicates a population of some 860 people covers the whole of the Lake district and includes Burns Lake. There are 25-30 families living at Fort Babine the year round do most of the fishing. Fishing is by gillnet and again for 1975 there was no closed period in the I.F.F. on the Lake, it was found it was serving no useful purpose, the people take what fish they need and it is over.

At Moricetown to conform with Skeena River fishing at Hazelton there was no closed period, high water interferred with any successful gillnet fishing. Peak week for gaff fishing ended July 27, the effort for the week was 415 large spring, the following two weeks fishing dropped off and for two weeks ending August 10 th a total of 286 chinook were taken in the gaff fishery. However for week ending August 3 rd an error was recorded And instead of 143 springs for week was entered as 1143 chinooks. This was checked with the guardian and native people and the error corrected.

3. Spawning Summary

(a) Salmon

(1) The Babine river and tributaries in Babine Lake are the main sockeye spawning areas for the Skeena river watershed. 95% of the Skeena sockeye spawn in this area. The Upper Skeena, Morice and Nanika, have minor early stocks of sockeye. Water levels during the spawning season were adequate due to a long slow run-off and cool summer period.

Sockeye

Sockeye count through the weir on Babine river for 1975 totaled 1,124,847 composed of: 820,795 adult sockeye, 100,942 jack sockeye, 4,429 coho, 197,307 pink salmon, 3 chum salmon, 1,018 adult chinook, 342 jack chinook and 11 steelhead.

Brood year Fence counts: 1970, 20662,000 large sockeye, 166,000 jacks.
1971 - 816,000 " " , 54,600 jacks.

Pinkut channel: Good returns for early sockeye.
River and channels, 100,000 sockeye.
Air lift over falls 40,130 "

Fulton channel: Total for system 395,000 sockeye.
River above Fence 195,000 "
River below Fence 75,000 "
1 channel 17,000 "
#2 channel 108,000 "
Upwelling boxes 1,500,000 " eggs
Upwelling boxes 500,000 chinook eggs.

Upper Babine river: 92,000 sockeye. !

Lower Babine river: 3,000 "

Babine Lake spawners: 105,000 "

The remainder of the streams in the system - Pierre-Twain-Morrison-Grizzly-Tachek and Four mile being the better of the minor spawning streams, while Six Mile-Five Mile-Nine Mile- Sockeye- Pendleton and Cross are the lesser of the minor streams which account for the balance.

Cohoe - cont.Cohoe

The 1975 escapement of coho to the sub-district was less than half of the 1972 brood year escapements, a very noticeable escapement that the run was small could be seen at several check points, the sport fishermen complained of the lack of coho particularly Moricetown canyon fishing, Bulkley and Morice river. In the Babine River which produced most of the stock for the 1975 season, there was double of more than in brood year 1972. The table below illustrates current year stocks compared to brood years;

1975 - Babine fence count	- 4,429	1972 -	3,598
- Bulkley Morice	- 1,655	-	13,964
- Upper Skeena	- 150	-	V/L
- Upper Copper	- 50	-	1,200

Total sub-district stocks for past years;

1975 -	6,284
1974 -	12,656
1973 -	14,550
1972 -	13,964
1971 -	12,150
1969 -	16,500

Chum

The sub-district has no chum producing streams, a few frequent the Bulkley but are not seen, Babine fence recorded 3 through the fence for 1975.

Pink

Odd year pinks to the sub-district are predominate, the Babine River system produces the higher escapement. Unpredictable as the pinks are, in 1970 there was an escapement through the fence of 176,000, this broke a twenty year count which by 1970 stood at 80,000.

Year	Bulkley River system	Babine River system
1975	55,000	297,307
1974	1,000	17,850
1973	17,700	130,000
1972	3,378	32,166
1971	14,015	92,985
1970	3,600	176,000
1969	3,300	75,000

Chinook

Runs of chinook to the Morice River for 1975 was well below the 10 year average of some 7,600 pieces for that system. the 1975 estimate was 2,500 lg. chinook spawners in the 1st three miles below Morice Lake outlet was below the brood year estimates of 4,200 for 1971 & 8,400 for 1972. The Upper Bulkley above Houston fared better than previous years estimated at 534 pieces, the lower Bulkley below confluence Morice was estimated at 350 pieces for a total run to the system of 3,284 chinook.

Bear River 1,500 lg. chinook & 500 jk chinook compared to 800 & 3,000 for brood years.

Babine River fence count for the year 1,018 lg. chinook & 342 jk chinook, this is lighter than brood year 1970 escapements of 1,500 & 1971 for 2,500.

Total chinook population for the sub-district 6,052 lg. & 842 jk chinook, this is far below desirable stocks for this years cycles. The planting of 503,000 chinook eggs in the Fulton channels will help make up the loss in the 1975 cycle for the Babine system, too bad this couldn't have occurred for the Morice river for an additional plant.

3. (11) Weather conditions and water levels.

Again for the winter 74-75 was above average for snow falls, cool weather continued well into the spring of the year keeping normal run offs back to well into July, light rain prevailed during summer months and water levels reached lower conditions. By September rains increased to some 30 inches for the month made good water levels for escapements, however rains continued into October for 53.4 inches and light snow fall of only 6.7 inches there was very mild weather continued to end of year with some mild and rain showers with snow up to December, this produced heavy snow falls in the high country, and it could produce heavy run off water condition in spring of 1976 if weather milds suddenly. The latter part of winter for 1975 was above average temperatures continued into January 1976.

Summary of Temperatures and Precipitation are taken from January to December for 1975 at Smithers Airport.

3. (11) Weather Conditiond and Water Levels.

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Recordings of rainfall, snowfall and temperatures are taken at the Smithers Airport.

January 1, 1975 to December 31, 1975.

Month	Rain	Snow	Water content	Temperature		Average
				High	Low	
Jan.	.17	2.33	1.03	46	-27	15.9
Feb.	.54	5.7	1.05	44	-23	13.3
Mar.	.04	7.7	.55	55	-1	26.5
April	.04	5.0	.36	62	14	38.8
May	1.53	.3	1.56	76	27	47.4
June	1.06	--	1.06	80	35	53.1
July	.80	--	.80	31.1 c	2.2 c	15.9 c
Aug.	2.55	--	2.55	28.4 c	1.7 c	12.0 c
Sept.	30.0	--	30.0 cm	25.1 c	-0.9 c	10.1 c
Oct.	53.4	6.7	58.6 cm	20.9 c	-4.7 c	4.5 c
Nov.	28.2	81.7	95.8 cm	8.8 c	-22.3 c	-5.5 c
Dec.	17.9	76.6	71.1 cm	7.2 c	-25.1 c	-7.5 c

(111) Fry salvage

None necessary.

3.(b) (1) Herring

Nil.

4. Environment, Multiple Water Use.

(A) Pollution

Pacific Inland Resources Sawmill, Telkwa. Clean-up of old mill site appears satisfactory. Inspections continue to ensure stability and watch other operations taking place on the property.

British Columbia Railway. There was no complaints recieved during 1975, which would indicate the railway was not causing further distress within the sub-district.

Chip cars C.N.R., continue to pass through the sub-district on their way to the coast. C.N.R. claim they will not take the cars if they are overloaded, however I still see cars starting out with chips well above the top edges of the gondolas. Again it is suggested that paper mesh nets be made regulations as in the U.S.A., these nets are not returnable and go through the mill with the chips to be made into paper. Pacific Inland Resources brought in the nets for trial, and I inspected heavy over-loaded cars with the nets attached, and it is my understanding the gondolas reached the coast with no loss.

Bradina Mine, Owen Lake. Remains closed, no operation in 1975.

Graniale Mine. Continue to operate satisfactory with rock-work and tailing ponds. Worthy to note they will not be enroaching with further rock work into Babine Lake after 1975, according to Habitat Protection unit they will be discouraged from making any more applications for forshore leases, particularly in the Hagen Arm area which would further reduce entrance.

Noranda Mines. Satisfactory, no pollution found on inspection.

(B) Industrial Development

B.C. Railway - progressing toward Deas Lake slowly, strikes by railway men employed on the line slowed rail laying, the B.C. Govt. is millions of dollars in debt it is understood to Keen Industries the general contractor for the rail line added to the problem, and with the election coming late in the year word appears the railway will progress has come to a stop, it's not known definite if it is to be completed.

Bradina Mine - this mine was in production in 1973, and closed out in 1974. It was thought low returns, bill 31, and or a strike closed the mine however other thoughts was it was a promotional effort for a short time. Close watch will have to be maintained on occasional patrols to ensure the settling and tailing ponds do not break out and cause pollution to Owen Lake.

Equity Mining Capitol Ltd. - the mine situated above Sam Goosly Lake completed a considerable amount of exploratory work, diamond drilling and sunk some 600 feet of shafting, however things remained dormant during 1975 until after the election. News in the local paper has a new start up of the mine. The road is to be completed up Dunningate Creek, power lines installed, and it is understood they will not be taking water from Sam Goosly as previously intended, but will be placing dams on two headwater creeks flowing to Foxy Creek and will recycle the water for the mill. Houston village expects to derive substantial gain as some 400 men will be involved with the mine operation which of course means housing and other amenities to the village.

B.C. Provincial Building - is now occupied by all Provincial Branches except the Forestry Branch. There is no room left for Forestry and it is said a new story will be added to the existing building, or new quarters built. Word had it during the year that Forestry was moving headquarters from Prince Rupert to Smithers.

Other - 1975 was generally a slow down for anything new within the sub-district possibly due to the recession. There was indications a Plywood mill was to be built in Smithers however nothing new has developed on that. The only other project was the Sabine Lake Sawmill, it is not within the sub-district (Burns Lake) but has T.S.'s near Taltapin Lake, Auger Lake and N. of Pendolton Bay road near Donalds Lag. rd.

Sawmills

Fink Sawmill - closed down most of 1975 till after end of year, is now been taken over by Pacific Inland Resources Ltd. This mill is on Tatlow Rd.

Groot Sawmill - this mill is also on Tatlow rd. completed well over a million dollars in improvements, a new smokeless burner, kiln dry and other improvements for lumber cutting. The mill is almost equal to production of the Pac. Inland mill.

Pacific Inland Resources Ltd. - the largest mill within the sub-district also on Tatlow rd. All mills were on a cut back program for most of the year due to world demand, this picked up slightly at year end and were back on 3 shifts. Pac. Inland Resource has taken over the Fink Sawmill & P.I.R. has been bought out by West Fraser Timber Ltd. of Williams Lake, B.C.

North Wood Pulp & Paper Sawmill - North Wood Timber mill at Houston is the largest mill in the sub-district. This mill also were effected by prices, the mill closed down for 6 weeks on a renovation project at or about the time the North Wood Pulp & Paper Co. at Prince George were on a strike, pickets showed up at Houston for 1 day. The mill was back to normal operations last of the year.

Kitsequecla Sawmill - small mill on Kitsequecla rd. handles local cutting and custom cutting.

- (C) Obstructions & Diversions - refer to obstruction removal list attached. Much of the seasons work was directed to removing small jams and beaver dams, the upper Table was again cleared of dams by utilizing the helicopter used for the sockeye air lift at Pinkus Creek. Other areas Upper Bulkley, McBride Creek remained a hand effort by Guardians. A rake device was constructed for use by the A.T.V. which was tested and was effective in pulling out the dams, this combined with a Blaster's cert. would be more effective. There were two diversions proposed, 1 on the Tobogan Crk. & lower outlet of Buck Crk. however no work was done.
- (D) Gravel Removal - Bulkley River and system under gravel removal orders, there was no requests for gravel from streams. Logging operators are using gravel pits for their logging roads.

(E) Logging Operations.

Northwood Pulp & Paper - controls most of southern portion of area, East and West sides of Babine Lake and the Morice river area.

Groot Sawmill - On Tatlow Road, have cutting area near Chapman lake and private sources of timber.

Pacific Inland Resources - Second largest in the area, has timber in the Fulton river and Chapman lake areas. Negotiations are underway to sell P.I.R. to West Fraser Timber Ltd.

Fink Sawmill - Taken over by P.I.R. last September as their Stud Mill Division. Also being sold to West Fraser Timber Ltd.

Small Mills - One on highway 16 near Evelyn, B.C. and one on the Kit seguecla road near Trout creek.

Area Forestry cut.

Smithers:	1975	3316 acres cut;	103,611 CU
	1974	5650 " "	136,865 CU
Houston:	1975	2977 " "	171,656 CU
	1974	4837 " "	217,592 CU
Hazelton:	1975	2859 " "	144,688 CU

Of this total 660 acres and 39,519 CU were cut in the Sushwa river drainage area.

F) Water licence Applications.

1975 - Nil. 50.
1974 - Nil. 6.

(G) Placer Mining

1975 - Nil.
1974 - Nil.

Trends in the Fishing Industry.

Nil.

Enforcement.

(A) Commercial - Nil.

Sport - Nil. Sport licences checked and infractions turned over to the Fish And Wildlife Branch. 1 Infraction of fisherman not having a Special rivers permit on the Morice river, and 3 at Moricetown Canyon of not having a special rivers permit.

Indian Fishery ; One case at Bear river, charges dropped for lack of evidence.
One case, Mable Patrick, under Sec. 32(6), found guilty and fined \$5.00.

Other - Two cases of illegal possession, Sec. 19 Fisheries Act;
One case, Ian Scott, found guilty and fined \$100.00.
One case, Manley Hanberg, case withdrawn and charges laid against Mable Patrick under Sec. 32(6).

- (B) Trends re: Closed Seasons - complaints toward the Upper Bulkley at confluence Morice & Bear River closures were few, most complaint was the roe closure on Moricetown Canyon, however when it was explained they were satisfied. It is expected the most complaint heard was there should be a 1 chinook daily catch limit imposed in the Moricetown Canyon area due to the heavy fishery there.

Indian Food Fish Closures:

1. Babine River- Effective August 18th, 1975, to October 31st, 1975, food fishing by Native Indians will be prohibited in the following described waters.
Those waters of Babine River that are within one and one half mile above the Babine Counting Weir, and a half mile below the weir.
Conservation of Chinook Salmon, by Notice.

Sport Fish Closures:

2. Bear River- Effective July 1st, 1975, to October 15th, 1975, the waters of the Bear river above the confluence of the Sustut river.
Bulkley River- Effective July 1st, 1975, to September 30th, 1975, the waters of Bulkley river above the confluence of the Morice River.
Fulton & Pinkut Channels- Effective August 18th, 1975, to October 31st, 1975, no person shall fish for fish from any portion of the Artificial Spawning channels of the Department of the Environment, Fisheries Service.
The Bear & Bulkley river closures were designed to protect Chinook Salmon, the Pinkut Fulton channels to protect spawning sockeye.

(C) Recommendations

Continue the above closures on the Bear, Bulkley & the Channels to protect spawning salmon.

Moricetown Canyon - that a daily catch of 1 chinook or coho over 20" be imposed. Not only is this relative to further conservation particularly to chinook, but it may stop complaints from fishermen who are not so good at fishing from seeing the better fishermen hauling away spring which are usually in the 25-50 lb class.

Babine River - that a daily catch of 1 chinook over 20" and the usual 3 day possession limit of 3 chinook over 20". This would keep it in line with the Fish & Game limits on trout taken from the Babine River, this is applicable to the Coho. This is to include all people fishing for pleasure, there is closures recommended for one half mile below the weir for I.F.F.

Predators:

- (a) Sea Lions - nil
(b) Hair Seals - nil
(c) Bear - Grizzly & Black numerous throughout.

Sport killed Bear Fish & Game report

1973	10 grizzly	8 black
1974	8 grizzly	10 black
1975	8 grizzly	100 black

(the black kill is an estimate by F&G due to many blacks being killed by farmers not reported, cattle vs bear problem exists with the farmers and ranchers)

- (d) Grayfish - nil
(e) Killer Whale - nil
(f) Other - birds fairly heavy on streams, diving birds, merganser during spring emigrations, eagles, ducks & seagull during spawning migrations also bear.

Administration

(A) Staff

(1) Fisheries Officers:

A.M. Groat GT 3
D.N. Meyers GT 2

(11) F.P.L. Babine River

Protection vessel assigned to Babine Lake, staffed by Donalds Landing Guardian and Fisheries Officers.

(111) Guardians.

Moricetown - ~~A. Dennis~~ - *Brian Lewis*
~~Fort Babine - R. Fitch~~ - *Nil*
~~Donalds Landing - J. Wall~~ - *A KLOPFENSTIER*
Upper Bulkley-Morice - H. Scott

(1V) All Guardian positions were satisfactorily staffed.

Recommendations For 1976

Donalds Landing	6 months
Moricetown	2 months
Fort Babine	2 months
Upper Bulkley	4 months

(B) Equipment

- (1) 2 - 4 wheel drive vehicles; one 1971 dodge pick-up. One 1975 Blazer.
1 - Inboard-outboard Patrol Launch.-
1 - 22 foot, plank, lake work boat.-
1 - 24 foot, plywood, lake work boat.-
2 - 12 foot, aluminum, car top boats.-
2 - 18 foot, aluminum, river boats (Smokercraft)
2 - 2 wheel boat trailers. (Tee-Nee) (EZY loader)
1 - 65 H.P. outboard with jet attachment.
1 - 50 H.P. outboard with jet attachment.
1 - 40 H.P. outboards.
1 - 20 H.P. outboard.
2 - 18 H.P. outboards.
1 - 6 H.P. outboard.
2 - 5 1/2 H.P. outboards.
3 - power chain saws.
1 - ATV Terra Jet.
2 - 30-06 rifles.

(11) Equipment extensively used during season. The oldest 40 H.P. Johnson ~~should be~~ written-off and replaced.

The old 22 foot, plank, lake work boat, has passed the write off stage, ~~it is doubtful~~ if it can be put in shape for the coming season. It should be replaced by a 16-18 foot aluminum river boat.

9. Information, Education and other Programs.

- (a) Public relations visits were made to Industry and other organizations in regard to forestry and pollution. Information given to students on pollution, spawning channels, hatcheries and commercial fisheries. Information given to sports fishermen about closures and Acts and regulations.
- (b) Work closely with other Fisheries Service Branches, Fisheries Research Board and Pollution Branches.
- (c) Many contacts were made and co-operation given to; Town Councils, Fish & Game Branch, Government Agent, Health & Welfare, Dept. of Public Works, Dept. of Forestry, Dept. of Transport, C.N. Railways, Dept. of Indian Affairs, Water Board, Canada Pension Plan, and Rod and Gun Club.

A.M. Groat
Fisheries Officer.

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