



Parks
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WOOD BUFFALO National Park

Aug. 1981

Vol.1 No. 4

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION — A SUMMARY OF YOUR SUGGESTIONS



Parks Canada is developing a long range management plan for Wood Buffalo National Park.

In order to develop the best possible management plan for the park, it is essential that the planning team find out what your ideas and suggestions are regarding the resource management and development issues of the park. The planning team distributed three newsletters last

winter to present information and to inform you of the public meetings that were held from January to March. This fourth newsletter presents the results of those meetings. It summarizes the suggestions and ideas of people who attended the meetings and people who sent briefs or letters to the team.

Eight hundred people came to discuss the issues at the twenty-three public meetings and drop-ins held in the following communities:

Garden Creek, Alta.	Edmonton, Alta.
Peace Point, Alta.	Calgary, Alta.
Fort Smith, N.W.T.	Lethbridge, Alta.
Fort Chipewyan, Alta.	Fort McMurray, Alta.
Hay River, N.W.T.	High Level, Alta.
Pine Point, Alta.	Fort Vermilion, Alta.
Ft. Resolution, N.W.T.	Jean D'or Prairie, Alta.
Yellowknife, N.W.T.	Fox Lake, Alta.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

**PREPARING PARK PURPOSE & OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS
IDENTIFYING ISSUES & COLLECTING INFORMATION**

PUBLIC REVIEW & COMMENT

WINTER, 1981

PREPARING ALTERNATIVE PLANS TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

PUBLIC REVIEW & COMMENT

FALL, 1981

SELECTING A FINAL PARK PLAN

PUBLIC REVIEW & COMMENT

SPRING, 1982

FINAL APPROVAL

SUMMER, 1982

LOCAL LIAISON COMMITTEE

To ensure that people residing in the vicinity of the park have adequate opportunities to express their opinions to the planning team, Parks Canada set up a committee made up of representatives of local communities and organizations.

Members of that committee are:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| RENE MERCREDI | - representing Fort Smith, N.W.T. |
| CATHY MACDONALD | - North Slave Hunters & Trappers Association |
| JACKSON WHITEKNIFE | - W.B.N.P. Hunters & Trappers Association |
| SIMON NANOOCH | - Garden Creek, Alta. |
| MARY JANE STEWART | - Pine Point, N.W.T. |
| CHARLIE SIMPSON | - Peace Point, Alta. |
| HILDA LEPINE | - Fort Chipewyan, Alta. |
| RAY SONFRERE | - Hay River, N.W.T. |

Five members of that committee met recently in the park and discussed the planning program and some of the planning issues. Their recommendations are also included in this newsletter.

CET BULLETIN DE NOUVELLES
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EN FRANÇAIS

THE ALTERNATIVE PLANS

The planning team is now developing alternative solutions for each planning issue. This fall the team will propose several different ways by which each resource management or development issue can be resolved, ranging from a low intensity management and development option to one involving intensive management and development.

The team considers many factors in preparing the plan alternatives, including

Parks Canada policy and regulations, public opinion, environmental concerns, national and regional relationships, costs and visitor benefits. These alternatives and related information will form the basis for discussion during the public review of the second stage.

Only after alternatives have been reviewed by the public will the team advance to the next stage of the process and produce the final plan.

PLAN PRINCIPLES AND PARK PURPOSE

Many groups and individuals who expressed their views during the first stage indicated their approval of the park purpose statement and plan principles which were outlined in Newsletter No. 2, distributed in January. The plan principles stated clearly Park Canada's intentions of preserving the wilderness nature of Wood Buffalo National Park while providing for appropriate visitor use and enjoyment. The plan alternatives, outlining methods of resolving the issues, will be proposed within this framework.

PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE ISSUES

About thirty different issues were discussed at the meetings last winter ranging from fire management to development of visitor facilities. Widely divergent opinions were expressed on each issue. Some topics such as native traditional hunting and trapping privileges and fire management were of particular importance to many people and generated much discussion. Other topics such as the Pine Lake cottages and the park boundary questions were of interest to fewer numbers of people.

NEYOU EYAKOMA OCHA ATCHIMOASINAKIN KA OSETACHIK W.B.N.P. OMA
KAWAY WEASTAK W.B.N.P. PIPONUK KIMAMOPUNIKIWAK OCHA EYAKO EKWATA.

ISEENOWUK KI WETAMUK TANSI ETAYTAKWOW.

KESPIN KINOTE INTOEKISKITINAWOW TANSI KAPIKISASTATOW EYAKWUNIK
OKI KAKAKWACHIMAWUK.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| JACKSON WHITEKNIFE | - Fort Chipewyan, Alta. |
| CHARLIE SIMPSON | - Peace Point, Alta. |
| HILDA LEPINE | - Fort Chipewyan, Alta. |
| RENE MERCREDI | - Fort Smith, N.W.T. |
| CATHY MACDONALD | - Fort Smith, N.W.T. |
| MARY JANE STEWART | - Pine Point, N.W.T. |
| RAY SONFRERE | - Hay River, N.W.T. |
| SIMON NANOOCH | - Garden Creek, Alta. |

RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

WILDLIFE

Some people recommended that all wildlife in the park be totally protected; others were concerned only with the bison, the whooping crane, and the peregrine falcon. Monitoring programs for various species were suggested in particular to guard against the effects of illegal hunting. Some people wanted wolves controlled based upon the assumption that bison and game population would increase. Predator control was thought by others to be unnecessary and even dangerous.

Many people view wildlife as a source of meat and fur, so there was interest in harvesting bison and waterfowl in addition to the game species presently taken. It was suggested that the bison take be controlled through an organized hunt or lottery system.

Specific suggestions in regards to **bison** included the recommendation that bison management is best handled by keeping the present objective of maintaining a free-ranging bison herd with a minimum of human interference. Others recommended stabilizing the herd because of the possible loss of grazing ground due to flooding caused by the anticipated Slave River dam. Particular attention was paid to the possible spread of anthrax, a disease affecting the bison, with recommendations that the herd or a fenced-in portion of the herd be made disease free, and that bison not be hunted because of the possibility of contaminated meat.

Whooping Crane were thought to require continued protection, particularly in present and future breeding areas. Some people thought that the nesting area should be opened to visitors. Others were opposed to this since they considered visitors too great a potential danger to the cranes. **Peregrine Falcons**, an endangered species, were subject to the same considerations. **Waterfowl and fur-bearing animals**, when mentioned at all, were usually considered as game and proposals were made to open seasons or extend seasons.

The **red-sided garter snake**, species of bats, **pelicans** and the **fish** of the region were thought to require proposals for protection and research.



FIRE MANAGEMENT

"In fact wildfire can actually be clearly beneficial in certain situations".

- Edmonton Bird Club.

"Fire suppression... the more you do, the more that has to be done the next year because of greater accumulations of fuel".

- N.P.P.A.C.

"All priority zones should be dropped from the present fire management plan with all areas being considered Priority One. All fires should be fought when small, until out".

- Fort Smith public meeting

"Since much of the area has recently been devastated by fires, more protection should be given to the park for some time to provide a refuge for species of climax forests".

- Yellowknife public meeting

The issue of fire control - to suppress fires in the park or to let them burn - raised considerable comment. Some thought that naturally caused fire should be allowed to burn, since as a natural phenomenon fire is a natural part of the park. Others pointed out the danger of letting any fires burn, since an unactioned fire in a remote location can quickly spread and become too large to control by the time it approaches areas of human habitation or other areas requiring total protection.

Parks Canada's present system of priority zoning - initially actioning all fires, but, recognizing high priority areas

in the event of multiple fires or lack of funds - was of concern to many. These people recommended that **all** fires be fought until out, which would require that unlimited funding be available for fire suppression in heavy fire years. If unlimited dollars are not made available, there were recommendations that all active traplines be considered in the area of greatest priority.

Fire control staffing and management was another area of concern. Recommendations were that local experienced people should be given control over firefighting, that men should be hired to fight fires in their own areas, and that enough fire control staff should be hired to combat all the fires. The recommendation was made several times that the fire crew should be hired for six month positions - well in advance of the fire season - and utilized for other park work projects if there were no fires to be fought.

Other recommendations were that the fire control centre should be upgraded, that a fire base should be opened at Peace Point, and that a fire tower should be constructed in the north end of the park. Several people suggested that trappers should be compensated for lost lines and equipment.

Some people suggested that burnt-over areas be reforested. One other recommendation was that major burns be studied for regeneration patterns and game relationships.

PEACE - ATHABASCA DELTA

The Delta is an ecologically fragile area of international significance which supports a variety of wildlife. In recognition of its resources some people recommended that it be preserved as far as possible in its natural state, which would include limited or no motorized access, no campgrounds and no dam construction.

Others wanted access to the Delta and recommended a vehicular road and a primitive campground. Still others suggested that the Delta water-levels be brought back to the levels before the Bennett Dam was constructed. This would involve further construction of dams and weirs.

RESOURCE EXTRACTION

HUNTING AND TRAPPING

"That's all I can say - that the people still live off the land for many years and that's how (I) want to stay right now".

- Hay River public meeting

"Generally, I feel that no trapping, hunting... should be allowed in the park".

- Letter from Thunder Bay resident

"The Edmonton Chapter of N.P.P.A.C. supports... the principle of hunting and trapping within the park for the support of a traditional lifestyle. However, we remain concerned about the extent and nature of such game harvesting..."

- National & Provincial Parks Assoc.,
Edmonton Chapter

The first stage of the planning program saw some opposition expressed to park hunting and trapping because of its exploitive nature and because modern equipment makes it very easy to over-harvest a resource. However, most people accept it because of its importance to the economy and way of life for local people.

One recommendation often made was that harvest should not increase simply because the demand increases - the primary objective from the park point of view should still be the **conservation** of wildlife. Recommended also was that habitats not be manipulated merely in order to increase the number of animals. Some people thought the technology which is used in hunting should be limited, but others were opposed to this. Regular furbearer surveys were suggested as a way to monitor the take and availability of game.

Many people were concerned with the Wood Buffalo National Park Game Regulations in regards to **trapping areas**. It was suggested that the present group areas be replaced by areas which would be managed by an assigned family who could issue licences and set quotas for their own area. Some thought it important that there be no changes of any kind to the trapping areas without the consent of the trappers of the area. Still others were concerned that the presence of a road made it too easy to hunt, and recommended that hunting and trapping not be allowed within two miles of a road or settlement.

Controlling the number of people hunting and trapping in the park was also of concern to many. Some people recommended limiting the number of full-time trappers, and not allowing any part-time trappers. Other peoples suggested that only

seasonal trapline licenses be issued to people with inherited entitlement but with full-time jobs. Yet others recommended that trapping licenses be issued only to those people leading a very traditional way of life.

There was also the suggestion that inherited entitlements be passed on to only one or two descendants to avoid depleting the resources. Some people thought that any local native person should be able to get a trapping license, so quotas ought to be eliminated entirely, while some were in favour of retaining the quota system but setting the limit higher than the present one. Others thought that hunting permits ought to be available to anyone, but the amount of game taken by a holder of a general hunting license ought to be limited. There was also a recommendation that under the present quota system, non-utilized trapping permits should be issued as hunting permits.

A few people suggested that big game licenses ought to be made available, partly to encourage tourism and outfitting businesses.

LOGGING, HUNTING & TRAPPING AND COMMERCIAL FISHING ARE NOT ACTIVITIES NORMALLY ASSOCIATED WITH A NATIONAL PARK, YET THEY HAVE BEEN ALLOWED IN WOOD BUFFALO NATIONAL PARK, AND ALL BUT THE LATTER PRESENTLY OCCUR. SOME PEOPLE EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO SEE THESE ACTIVITIES CONTINUED WHILE OTHERS CONSIDER RESOURCE EXTRACTION ACTIVITIES TO BE INAPPROPRIATE IN A NATIONAL PARK.

LOGGING

People who thought logging should be allowed did so for various reasons: the regenerative cycle is in the climax stage at present, the trees will be burnt out anyway, and the timber birth provides much-needed employment. Those who are against logging pointed out the environmental costs (stream alteration, loss of animal habitat). Some people also said that the forest resources being harvested are in a national park and therefore deserve protection.

Other people thought logging could continue with some restrictions such as:

Utilize a selective cut so only dead or diseased trees are harvested.

Renegotiate the present agreement so that the operator develops a 5 year plan and pays substantially higher rental and fire protection fees.

Reforest.

Do not harvest river banks as that causes too much erosion.

There were also recommendations that local people be given first chance at logging contracts and job opportunities, be permitted to cut logs for houses, and be allowed to remove deadwood for firewood.



COMMERCIAL AND DOMESTIC FISHING

Since some people feel that the fishing stocks in Lake Claire and Mamawi Lake have reached the point where those lakes could again be commercially fished, they made recommendations that commercial fishing be again allowed. Some of those who supported this idea recommended that only local people be allowed to fish commercially, while others recommended that trappers be allowed to export fish. Regulations governing commercial

fishing were seen to be important, with one suggestion that a park fishing industry be managed similarly to that within the Province of Alberta.

A few people thought commercial fishing would be acceptable as long as the park did not provide financing or personnel support. Others thought that commercial fishing, as an extractive use, was totally unacceptable in a National Park.

SETTLEMENTS

GARDEN CREEK

Garden Creek, or Garden River, as it is also known, is a collection of trappers' cabins on the Peace River. The people there would like to have the land which they now occupy set aside as a reserve, within the park boundary. This would make certain services available to them from both Indian Affairs and Parks Canada. Other people had this to say:

"Garden Creek should not be maintained".

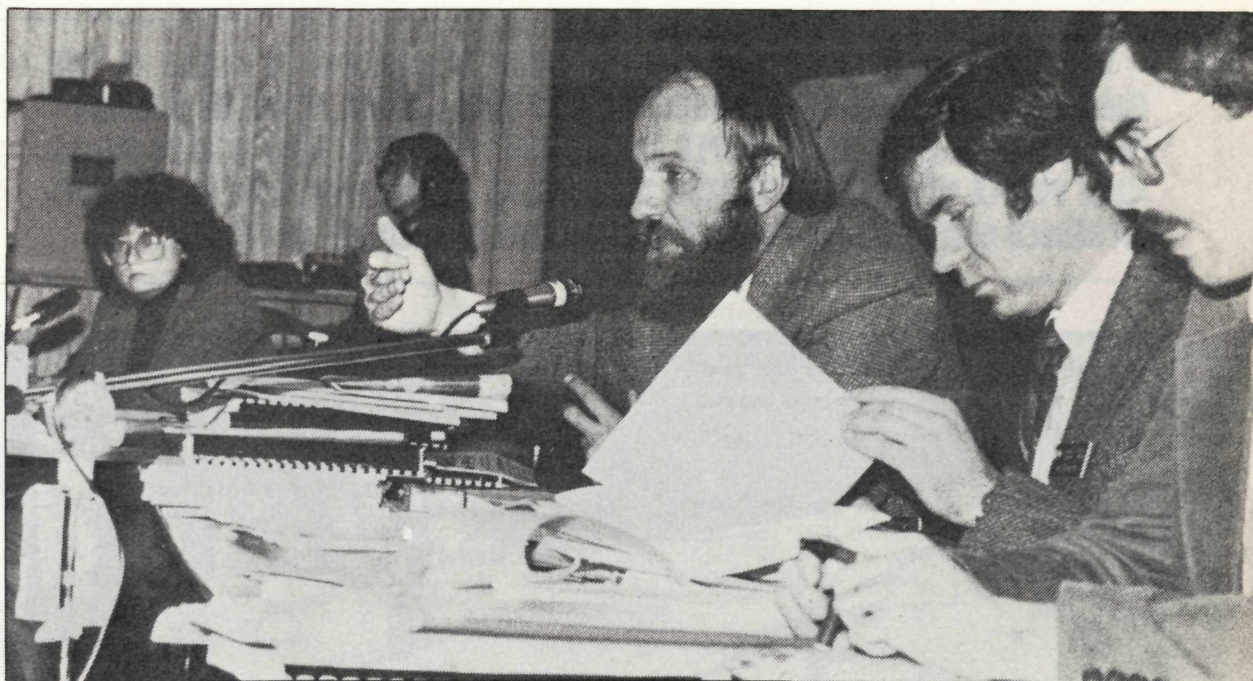
- Public meeting, Yellowknife

"The N.P.P.A.C. discourages the maintenance of the Garden Creek settlement and does not support withdrawal of the Garden Creek area from the park... If the Garden Creek settlement is permitted to remain in the park, utilization of wildlife resources should be regulated to reflect the productivity of the species, not the demands of the settlement".

- N.P.P.A.C. Edmonton Chapter

"It bothers me when I think a community down there could be quite easily shafted out of there because of the park and yet I see no problem with them".

- Hay River public meeting



PEACE POINT

Because of the Peace Point's historical significance, some people thought that an interpretive museum and other tourist facilities should be located here. Others were against any non-traditional uses of the area, and did not want to see a permanent settlement developed there because of the lack of non-traditional employment opportunities.

BURIAL GROUNDS

Burial grounds were of concern to those living near or in the park and a recommendation was made that special burial grounds for the communities of Peace Point and Garden Creek be established.



ROADS

THE QUESTION OF ACCESS GENERATED MUCH DISCUSSION. AT ISSUE IS THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THERE SHOULD BE ADDITIONAL ROADS AT ALL IN WOOD BUFFALO NATIONAL PARK. SOME PEOPLE ARGUED THAT INCREASED ROAD ACCESS MEANS MORE PEOPLE WILL BE ABLE TO VISIT MORE AREAS OF THE PARK. OTHERS SAY THAT INCREASED ACCESS MEANS FURTHER DESTRUCTION OF WILDERNESS VALUES.



LOOP ROAD — WINTER ROAD

The loop road runs from Fort Smith down along the west bank of the Slave River to Carlson's Landing, then along the north bank of the Peace River to Peace Point, and back to Fort Smith. The road between Carlson's Landing and Peace Point can be impassable in the summer. Many people requested that this portion of the road be upgraded to facilitate tourism. A few suggested that this would

create pressures for the road to be completed to Fort Chipewyan and also to High Level, opening up the park to commercial traffic.

The winter road, which links Fort Chipewyan to Carlson's Landing, was thought to require improvements to specific sections and impact studies.



EXTENSION TO HIGHWAY #58

Highway #58 runs east from High Level, Alta. to Jean D'or Prairie. An unimproved road extends east from here to Garden Creek, inside the park, where it meets an unimproved cutline which runs to the all weather gravel road at Peace Point - the park loop road.

This cutline, upgraded, is the favoured route for those who are seeking an access route from the south into the park. Garden Creek residents, however, fear that increased access to their community will bring unwanted social problems.

Possible environmental problems created by the road were concerns of other people.

In the Hay River public meeting, the thought was expressed that the route might result in fewer visitors travelling to Hay River; others thought the existence of a circle route would bring more visitors into the area.

PARSON'S LAKE ROAD

This was the original road into the park but it is presently not maintained. There were essentially two different points of view concerning the upgrading of this road:

Do not upgrade or you will bring people into the salt plains, an environmentally fragile area.

Do upgrade, as you will bring people into the salt plains, a unique environmental feature, with interpretive potential.

Those who proposed upgrading the road generally favoured controlled access to the salt flats.

FORT SMITH — FORT McMURRAY

Some people proposed an all-weather road through the Delta either east or west of Lake Claire. The tourism potential of this route was occasionally stressed, but generally this proposal was felt by other members of the public to be environmentally unsound.

A road on the east banks of the Athabasca and Slave Rivers was recommended also, and favoured for its lack of environmental damage. This route, however, lies outside Parks Canada's jurisdiction.



HISTORIC AND PREHISTORIC RESOURCES

People generally want to see cultural resources protected; however, some sites and features were thought to require more protection than others. Some people suggested displaying cultural artifacts in a central museum rather than on site, but others recommended opening a few select sites while protecting the

remainder. A few thought that the original buildings or camps should be reconstructed to create a historic site, possibly linked by a trail system. A concern of local people was that archaeological findings should be displayed in the nearby communities rather than taken away permanently to distant museums.

LAND USE ZONING

The national parks zoning system is a resource-based approach by which land and water areas of a national park are classified according to their need for protection and their capability to accom-

modate visitor use. Areas suggest for "special preservation", the most restrictive zone designation include:

nesting grounds of whooping cranes	salt flats
karst topography	Peace-Athabasca Delta
hibernating sites of the red-sided garter snake and the four bat species	levee forests
	gypsum deposits at Peace Point

Individuals at the Fort Smith public meetings pointed out the necessity for designating areas to be considered

development zones, as well as designating the types of development to be allowed.



VISITOR USE & ENJOYMENT

People, in their briefs or letters, and in the public meetings, expressed a desire to protect the wilderness nature of the park. No one wanted to see the development of massive recreational areas, but there were proposals made by the public to increase access to the natural features of the park.



"Development within the park should be kept to a minimum. Non-consumptive uses of the park should be stressed - eg. hiking, skiing, canoeing and dog-sledding".

- Public meeting, Calgary, Alta.

VISITOR USE FACILITIES

There were a variety of additional facilities desired by the public:

All vehicle access to a primitive campground in the Delta.

Provide public transportation within the park.

Construct portable observation towers in bison and whooping crane areas.

Extend trail systems, particularly around the Salt Plains and Pine Lake.

Make a circle tour of a week's walk available.

Provide group residential facilities accessible by road, particularly for use by students.

Erect signs denoting a point of interest such as sinkholes or Nyarling River.

Construct truck stops and picnic spots along the highway. (The concern here was a safety one - vehicles parked along the road are a traffic hazard.)

Provide visual displays rather than allow people into fragile areas such as the salt plains or archaeological sites.

Protect the archaeological sites.

Develop facilities near the north end of the Park, Sandy Lake and/or Needle Lake, particularly for fishing. A small primitive campground would suffice, with vehicle access. Stock these lakes.

Show the traditional way of life in a "live" museum.

Provide a boat launch into the Slave River near Fort Smith.

Construct energy efficient facilities to serve as an example of ways to better live in harmony with the environment.

People also thought there were very simple ways to increase visitor satisfaction:

24 hour phone in registration for back country users.

sign out booth at the naturalist's office or the Pine Lake station where you could self register.

information sent off to tourist bureaus in the region notifying the public of various events to take place within the park.

VISITOR SERVICES

"I would like to see a sensitivity towards the potential for local benefits - economic benefits".

- Fort Smith public meeting

Hotels, Restaurants - Hotels, restaurants when specifically mentioned were thought to be better kept out of the park. It was suggested that Parks Canada might assist people who wanted to develop facilities in the nearby towns and should look at developing nearby towns as entranceway communities.

Guiding & Outfitting in park - Private sector guiding and outfitting was encouraged by the public, particularly with the use of non-motorized travel. Canoe tours and guided hikes were suggested. Fort Chipewyan residents in particular emphasized that local people should have first access to developing tourist businesses in the Peace-Athabasca Delta, the area they traditionally use. The Sweet-grass trail was recommended as having potential use for tourism.

Some people thought that snowmobile tours would be a preferable alternative to dog team tours.

Interpretation & Information - One subject brought up repeatedly at public meetings was a desire for current information about scheduling of park related activities, opening dates of the campground, etc. The planning staff indicated

that they would make efforts to advise various tourist bureaus, community newspapers, or other information sources to inform them of the schedule of park events.

Other suggested methods of providing improved information services to visitors included:

Build and staff information centres near the road and water routes, particularly at the entrances to the park.

Design booklets for self-guided walks.

Provide canoe routing information.

Don't wear the uniforms.

Maintain information on accommodations, tours, etc. at the park office.

Make information available to a larger audience than local residents and visitors - publish a book about W.B.N.P., produce a film about W.B.N.P.

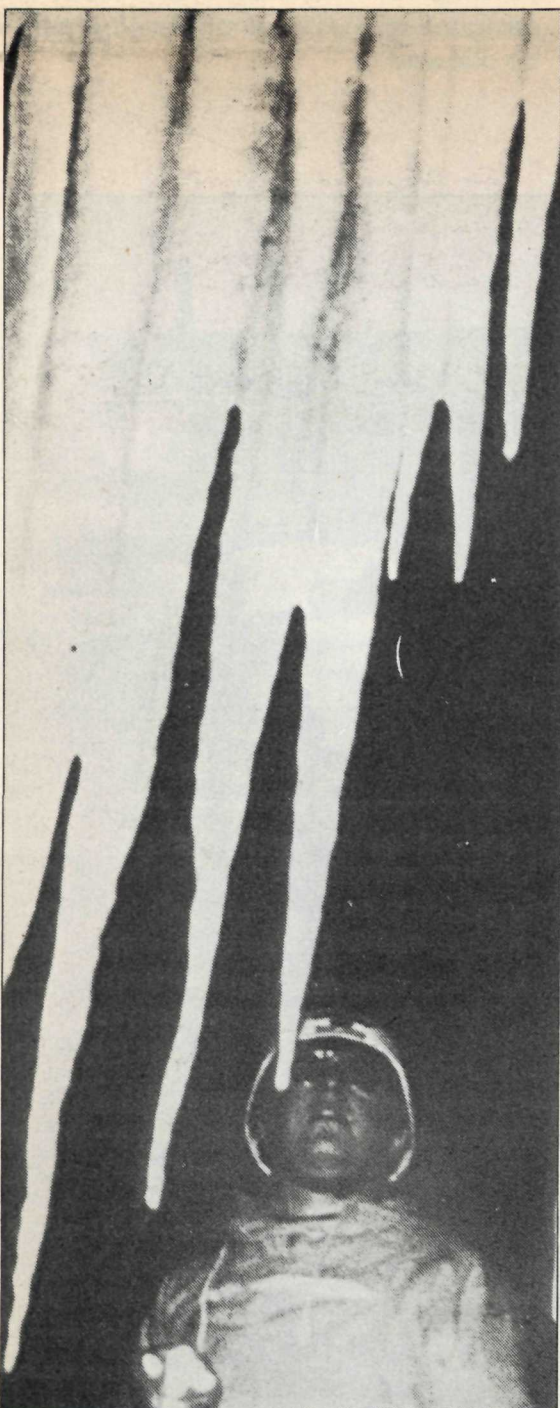
Ensure that information, in particular park brochures, get to tour operators, in the South and the tourist booth at the border.

Extend escorted and controlled visitor opportunities to sulphur springs, sinkholes, and some caves.

Put together slide shows for distribution to schools.

Locate a naturalist in outlying communities.

Develop an interpretive program on the loop road.



ACCESS - People spoke of two different issues when they talked of access - one is access **through** the park; the other is access **into** the more remote sections of it. Access **through** has been discussed in a previous section; here we are concerned with access into the back country.

"I would like to see more access into the park, but it has its dangers... indiscriminate access would possibly destroy it".

- Hay River public meeting.

Water and air access were encouraged rather than road access, particularly non-motorized forms of water access. Tours on the various water routes were suggested,

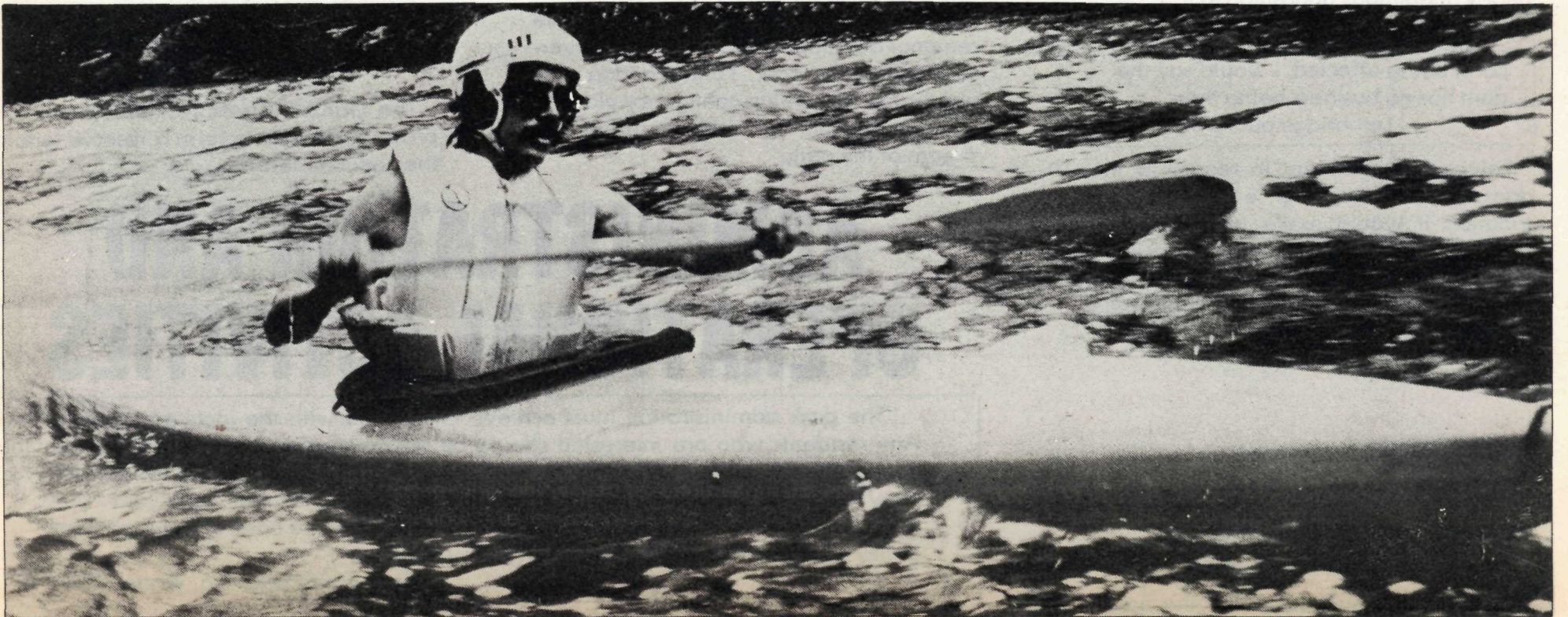
either guided tours with a naturalist or an outfitter, or pamphlets and river guides provided for those travelling unescorted. One person mentioned that he saw no need at present to construct facilities on water routes.

Opinions varied on **air access** from "no air access" to "controlled use of aircraft". Unlimited use of aircraft was not favoured. The high cost of using aircraft was mentioned, while others were concerned about the effect of aircraft on wildlife.

People had general comments to make about **trails** as well as specific places where they would like to see additional

trails developed, including around the Salt Plains and west to the Caribou Mountains and around Sandy Lake. Sandy Lake, on the north boundary of the park, was also suggested as requiring a trail system, and many people wanted to be able to walk into the whooping crane area. Suggested also was the establishment of several loop trail systems varying from a one day to a week-long hike.

Some people want snowmobile and dog-team trails identified in the park, with travel permits issued to non-trappers, and they want Parks Canada to consult with trappers when planning a ski trail so that the trail and the trapline do not conflict.



SPECIFIC GEOGRAPHIC AREAS

PINE LAKE

Pine Lake cottages and the general development at Pine Lake were of considerable interest at public meetings. Opinions concerning the seventeen cottages ranged from the suggestion that the cottages be immediately removed to the suggestion that they be left as they are. An alternative recommendation was for the cottages to remain but with restrictions - septic tanks, and a 100-foot shoreline easement for instance.

As far as development generally around the lake, suggestions generally favoured a somewhat more intensive recreation use, including:

- Open up the far shore for picnics and overnight camping.
- Build a road around the lake.
- Provide more picnic sites generally.
- Continue to stock the lake.

Other people suggested that the campground should be situated in its original site and that it should not be upgraded beyond a primitive nature.

SALT PLAINS

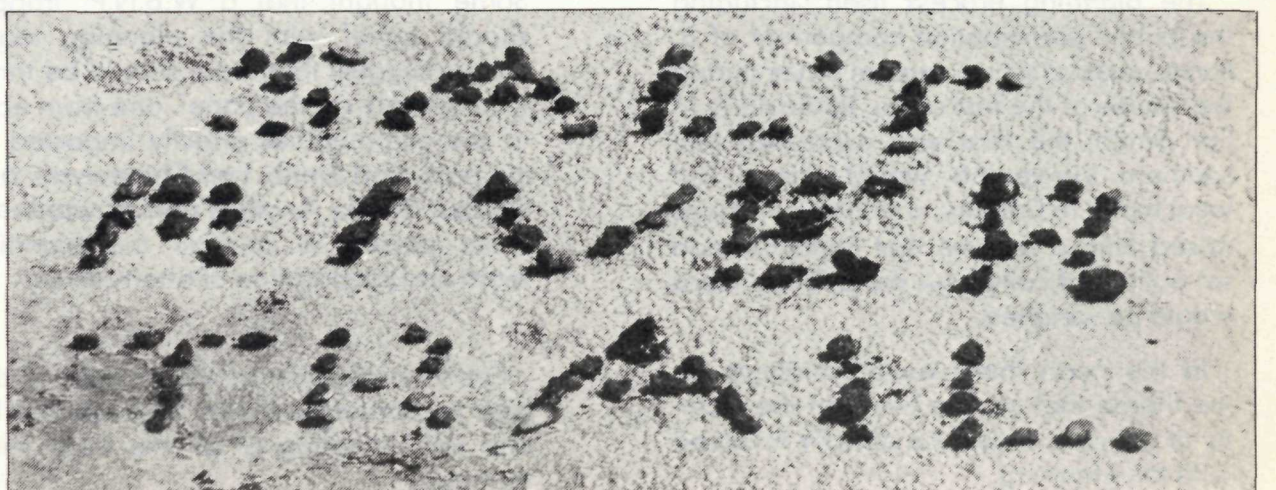
Because the Salt Plains are considered very fragile, most people did not want to see unlimited access to them. However, they did suggest that it would be appropriate to display a small manageable section, perhaps with fenced walkways and "point of interest" signs. Some people recommended the construction of an all-weather road to the old ski hill for those who wanted to walk over to Salt Mountain. Further research into the various types of salt springs was recommended.

RAINBOW LAKES

"The Rainbow Lakes cutline should not be opened to traffic but maintained as a hiking trail with a primitive campsite at one of the lakes".

- N.P.P.A.C. Edmonton Chapter.

People were also concerned about protecting the aquatic habitat, and thought the lake should not be stocked as this would introduce competition with the unusual fishes associated with sinkholes.



REGIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

SLAVE RIVER HYDROELECTRIC PROPOSAL

Parks Canada has no legal jurisdiction over the possible sites for the proposed dam. The subject of the dam was raised at every public meeting and there was nearly unanimous opposition to it.

"If there is some possibility of it (the park) being affected, I would say the dam has no business being there".
- Lethbridge public meeting

Favourable comment in regard to the dam was due to the economic contribution it would make to the nearby towns and the fact that a bridge associated with the dam might provide access to recreational opportunities in the shield country east of Fort Smith.

BOUNDARIES

Many people suggested that the boundary line be cut so that people would know when they are in the park. For this same reason, other people recommended that the boundary along part of Highway #5 be realigned so that the road and boundary follow the same course.

Some people mentioned the need for a buffer zone around the park so that development is precluded close to the park.

Additions to the park were also proposed including the Caribou Mountains, a sample of the Shield country, the first three sets of rapids on the Slave River, and the whole of both Buffalo and Sandy Lakes.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

People urged Parks Canada to maintain a high profile in the region so that the value and presence of the park will be appreciated. They suggested Parks Canada should support compatible regional developments, particularly in the area of tourism, and oppose those regional developments that would adversely impact the park. Parks Canada was also urged to develop contingency plans to combat possible oil spills occurring upstream of the park.

LAND CLAIMS

Some of the land occupied by Wood Buffalo National Park may be subject to Dene land claims arising out of treaties signed prior to the establishment of the park. Parks Canada has no direct jurisdiction over the settling of these claims. Those who voiced concern over the settlement of land claims specified that only traditional uses of the land should be permitted and that native settlements should be integrated as far as possible into park operations.

The Garden Creek residents have expressed a desire to form a reserve within the park boundaries.

ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

"The park administration must achieve integration with the local population. Any residents who are interested should be encouraged to become directly involved in park operation, management, and interpretation on a long term basis. They must also understand that, although Wood Buffalo is their "back yard" it is also a region of much wider importance and thus forms the basis of management policy which to them must often seem fairly restrictive".

- Sherwood Park, Alta. Written Brief

"There is a great need for Parks Canada to encourage a W.B.N.P. Citizen/User advisory link at Fort Smith, Fort Chip and Garden Creek".

-Edmonton public meeting

"A recommendation, our move to negotiate joint management regimes with Parks Canada".

- Fort Smith, Native resident

Many people recommended that the wardens be decentralized to field locations to facilitate staff/user relationships. There were no recommendations that the warden staff remain centralized.

The recommendation was made that local people become more involved in park activities, particularly through employment as conservation and interpretive of-

ficers. Some thought that responsibilities such as road maintenance could be contracted locally. Another recommendation was that local people should sit on park staffing boards.

A few people mentioned that the warden's office in Fort Chipewyan should make at least one warden available at all times.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process itself, including the public participation component of it, came under criticism several times during the course of the first stage. Particularly in Fort Smith, the fear was expressed that southern viewpoints would drown out local input. In Calgary, a similar point was raised with a request that Parks Canada set out specifically how the public's ideas would be weighed.

In the north there were variations on the theme that people living in the vicinity of the park should be directly involved with the planning.

Some thought that a W.B.N.P. trapper should travel with the planning team. Others suggest that there should be three local people on the panel: one from each of the communities directly impacted by the park; Fort Smith, Fort Chipewyan, and Garden Creek. Another person wanted a Dene person to co-chair the planning team and preparation of alternatives.

Every community in the vicinity of the park recommended that there should be one joint meeting of all the local communities.

Some recommendations were:

Devote a newsletter exclusively to the Native perspective on the park, since Native people are so directly impacted by the park.

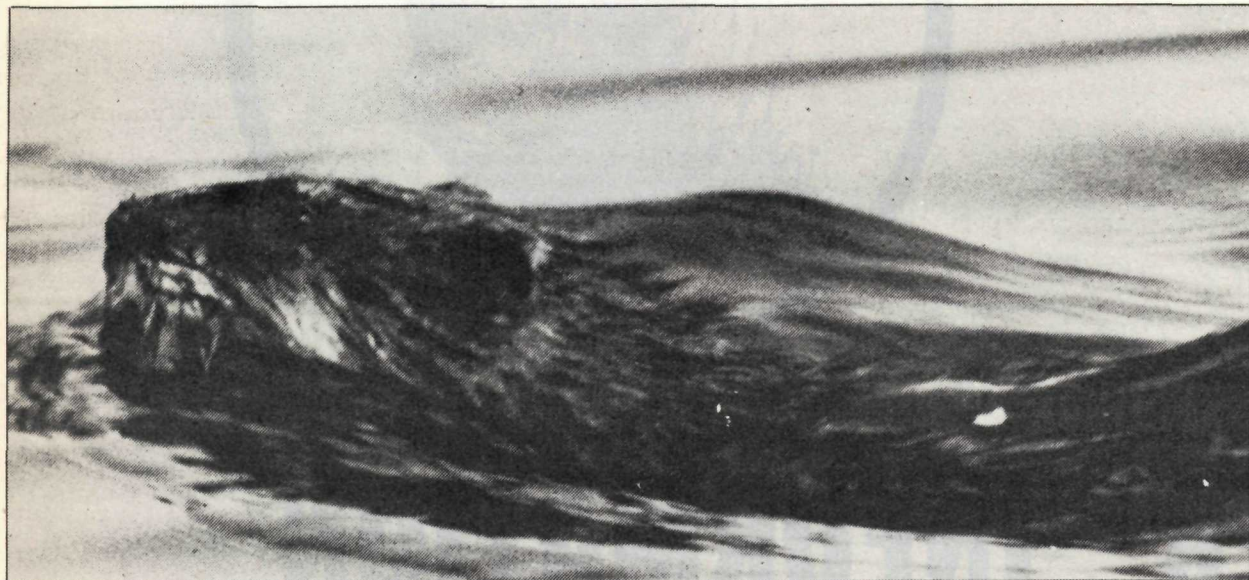
Set a firm deadline for public input so that their suggestions do not arrive too late for impact.

Make the Management Plan a legal document.

Approval of a summary statement by the Minister is unacceptable since it does not require public debate or involvement.

Finally, people expressed a need for flexibility in the plan so that in ten or fifteen years it can be changed or modified if necessary.

LOCAL LIAISON COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS



At the meeting held in May the Local Liaison Committee examined the suggestions made during the first part of the planning program, made some recommendations of their own and pointed out the importance of some recommendations made by the public. Their concerns are included here.

Wildlife - The committee suggested that a lottery system could be used if bison were to be hunted, with care taken that the hides not be wasted. One hundred animals as an upper limit was also proposed.

A continuation of the present preservation policy for whooping cranes was recommended by the committee as was the construction of an observation tower near the feeding grounds, with a limited number of people given access to the tower.

The committee expressed concern about pesticides used outside the park, because of the possible detrimental effects to the peregrine falcon. Its nesting sites were recommended for special preservation measures. "Sow wild rice" is the committee's proposed method of enhancing the waterfowl habitat. The committee thought wolf control by poisoning too dangerous, because of the possible dangers to other wildlife. They also recommended that bears should be left alone. A study of fish habitats was thought to be useful as this would be of interest to the visitor and sport fisherman.

Fire Control - The committee recommended that all fires be suppressed if possible, although they did think that fires around Lake Claire could be left to burn under supervision. They were concerned about fires approaching and entering the park, and thought that these fires should be fought by the agency responsible for the area of initial fire. Five or six month positions for the fire crew were recommended with the crews to reforest when not fire-fighting. The committee also thought that local people

should be given more decision-making responsibilities in regards to fire management, that more clerical help was needed, and that the emphasis should be on utilizing ground crews rather than water bombers when fighting fires.

Peace-Athabasca Delta - The committee thought the main water courses should be left just as they are; however, weirs could be built on the smaller rivers to counteract effects of the Bennett Dam.

Logging should be allowed, according to the committee but with strict conditions. Local people should get right of refusal as job opportunities come open, and local people should be allowed to use park timber for houses outside of the park. Extra precautions against fire should be taken after an area is logged out.

Fishing - The committee recommended that the practice of tagging fish to follow their movements be discontinued, as they see this practice as harmful to the fish. They thought that the park should allow the construction of a dock at Carlson's Landing, with the approval of a haul-through route in the park for commercially caught fish. The committee would like to see the park retain the current domestic fishing practices and allow local people to again commercially fish Lakes Claire and Mamawi, if the stock is up.

Hunting and Trapping - The committee wished to endorse the recommendations of the Wood Buffalo National Park Hunters and Trappers Association.

Roads - The committee had two main concerns here - that Highway #58 not be extended past Garden Creek because of the effects on that community, and that Highway #5 and the other roads presently in the park be upgraded.

Historic and Prehistoric Resources - Cultural resources and artifacts found within the park should be displayed and left in nearby communities, was the recommendation of the local liaison committee.

Visitor Use - Additional visitor use facilities were suggested by the committee:

Open up lakes in different parts of the park - with vehicle access.

Develop a winter campsite.

Access the Slave River from the road.

Provide summer and winter group camping facilities.

Locate a staff member at Garden Creek to register people going down river and to provide other services.

Fence the caves to increase visitor safety.

Maintain a list of home billets for visitors.

Produce pictures and tapes for sale.

Let people know they can duplicate park tapes.

Construct picnic tables and pits at Moose Island and Carlson's Landing.

For Pine Lake the committee recommended a general opening-up of the lake with more picnic sites and motorized access to the far shore, and they considered the development of an artificial lake as an alternative to development at Pine Lake.

Their other concern was that back-country access should be available to more people than just the young and physically fit. They suggested that limited road access could be provided to a designated point near the area of interest, perhaps ¼ mile away, and from there people could walk.

PLANNING PROCESS

The Local Liaison Committee had its own recommendations to make in reference to the planning process itself. They suggested that the public meetings should have a more informal setting, and that the meetings should not be rushed - time should be available for everyone to speak, even if this means more time than was originally scheduled.

The committee considered the presence of a local person on the panel to be very important in terms of ensuring that local people are adequately represented, and they suggested that it was unnecessary for panel members to make rebuttals during the meetings.

They suggested that meetings with local organizations could be arranged along with the next set of public meetings, and they wanted to see the information for the next set of meetings delivered well in advance of the meeting.

In addition the committee thought that a newsletter should be issued summarizing the recommendations of the Local Liaison Committee.

WHAT'S NEXT



The next newsletter in this series outlining the plan alternatives will be distributed before the next round of public meetings this fall. It will present you with the alternative ways of dealing with each planning issue to help you develop your ideas and opinions about them. You can make the planning team aware of your suggestions at one of the public meetings or by writing to them.

FURTHER INFORMATION

It is not too late to get on the mailing list and become a part of the planning program. You can receive copies of the three previous newsletters and more detailed background information on the park issues by writing to:

**WOOD BUFFALO NATIONAL PARK
MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROGRAM
P.O. BOX 750
FORT SMITH, N.W.T.
X0E 0P0**

Copies of the transcripts of each of the public meetings and of all briefs sent to the planning team are available at the following locations:

Parks Canada
Wood Buffalo National Park
P.O. Box 750
Fort Smith, N.W.T. X0E 0P0

Mary Kaeser Library
c/o P.O. Box 147
Fort Smith, N.W.T.
X0E 0P0

Yellowknife Public Library
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X0E 1H0

Edmonton Public Library
#7, Sir Winston Churchill Square
Edmonton, Alberta
T5S 2V4

Parks Canada
Prairie Regional Office
301 - 391 York Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 0P4

This material is also available through each of the local liaison officers in the communities around the park.

To have your name added to the mailing list, or to receive additional information, clip this card and send to the address above.

Add my name to the mailing list ☐

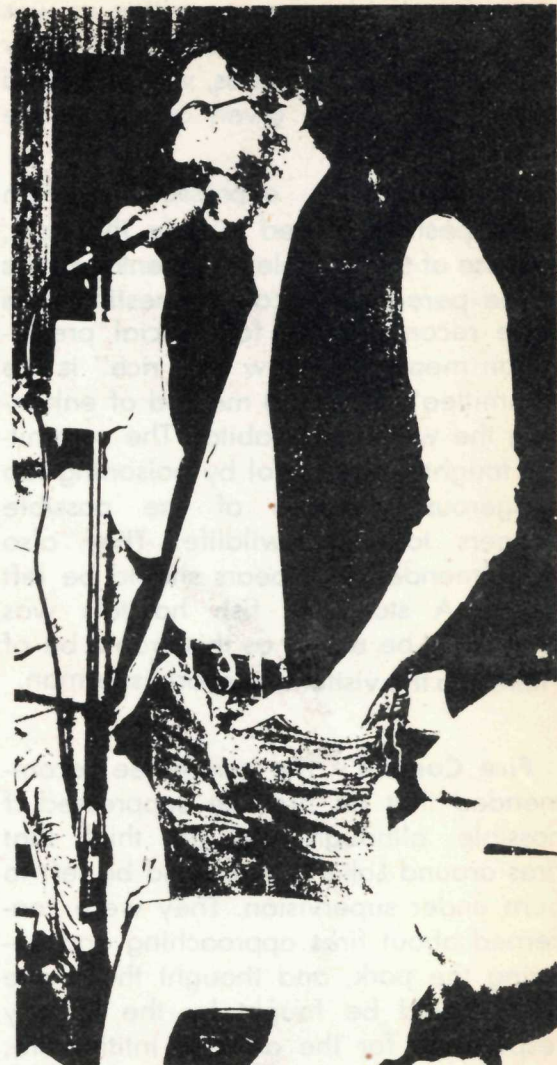
Send copies of Newsletters #'s 1, 2 & 3 ☐

Send background information on planning issues ☐

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