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ROGER HORNBER
SEPTEMBER 10, 1975

VISUAL IMPACT STUDY

NAHMINI WATERSHED

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PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION DIVISION
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VICTORIA, B.C.



Enclosure

J. B. Nyberg
J. B. Nyberg

Yours truly,

Enclosed is one copy of the report Nahmint Watershed Visual Impact Study by S. R. Horner, as per your request of August 19th, 1975. The report Landscape Unit Analysis of the Nahmint Watershed by D. Briere has not yet been submitted. I will be pleased to forward a copy to you when it is received.

Dear Doug:

Attention: Mr. D. Ross
Parks Branch,
Coastal Planning Division,
Parliament Buildings,
Victoria, B. C.
Department of Recreation and Conservation,

OUR FILE: Nahmint Study (D.F. 302)
YOUR FILE:
October 17th 1975

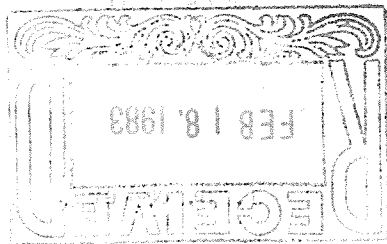
FOREST SERVICE

THE GOVERNMENT OF
THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



OFFICE OF DISTRICT FORESTER
355 Burrard Street
Vancouver V6C 2H1
B.C.

PLEASE ADDRESS CORRESPONDENCE TO
THE DISTRICT FORESTER



HR.
Is this of interest?

R.K.



OCT 22 1975

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VICTORIA, B.C.

ROGER HORNBER
SEPTEMBER 10, 1975

A visual impact study is a method of communicating the
visual experience of the landscape so it can be utilized
by the resource development team.

NAHMINI WATERSHED
VISUAL IMPACT STUDY



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Walt Coward and Sandy Crowe of MacMillan Bloedel Limited for their generous assistance in introducing me to the study area and to the practical realities of logging procedures.

Also, I wish to thank all those in the B. C. Forest Service who assisted me on this report, particularly Brian Nyberg and Doug Herchner.

BACKGROUND

The B. C. Forest Service is now undertaking integrated resource management studies on forest lands where inventory data (1) is available or can be obtained quickly. These studies are designed to produce a wider range of benefits from resource development and to minimize damage to the environment. To date pilot studies have been completed in the Chapman Creek and Toquart River Watersheds. The Nahmint Watershed Study is utilizing the planning system developed out of these previous studies and is expanding on them in areas where appropriate.

Public concern over the inevitable deterioration of the beauty of the Nahmint Watershed prompted the study group to introduce a Visual Impact Study into its planning system.

This study was considered within the study group's terms of reference as set down by the Chief Forester:

"The basic objective, for this area, must be that of superimposing an acceptable pattern and level of logging on a compromised composite base of all other resource uses."

Much of the public concern was directed towards having the Nahmint watershed left as a wilderness area.

(1) Data is collected on soils, timber types and quality, fisheries, wildlife, climate etc.

The visual management system has been developed primarily in the United States. It arose out of people's concern for their visual environment. Concern was so great, in fact, that it was deemed appropriate to consider the 'visual landscape' as a basic resource to be, "treated as an essential part of and

History

INTRODUCTION TO THE VISUAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

present and future generations in British Columbia. experience of the natural environment will be maintained for 'pattern and level of logging', that will ensure that the then, has been initiated to aid in the determination of a carefully protected in the development plans. This study, experience and the good hiking potential would have to be determined that the outstanding fishing and boating as a single use recreational reserve. However, it was The study group did not consider establishing this area

"Integrated use principles are fundamental to the recreation program. No single use recreation reserves are to be established unless exceptionally high recreational value is present."
Forest District recreation policy, which states in part:
This watershed was considered in terms of the Vancouver

and can facilitate access into otherwise remote areas.
In an otherwise monotonous landscape, open areas for viewing,
the landscape may be desirable. Alterations can provide variety
It should also be noted that in some cases alteration of
to recover after disturbances.

variety within the landscape and the ability of the ecosystem
This capacity is a function of how the landscape is viewed, the
Landscape has its individual capacity to accept alteration.
proportion to the degree of landscape alteration; (4) each
Landscape is desirable; (3) adverse visual impact increases in
natural environment; (2) the retention of the character of the
rests: (1) people when entering a forest expect to see a
There are four basic assumptions upon which this analysis

Assumptions

Canada.
and applied in current resource development studies across
however similar visual management systems are being developed
This policy has not been so explicitly stated in Canada,
the land". (2)
receive equal consideration with the other basic resources of

Methods

Essentially, a Visual Impact Study is a method of communicating the visual experience of the landscape for the information of the resource development team. This is accomplished by mapping the visual experience so it can be included in the series of resource folio maps which when analysed together aid in the delineation of management alternatives and the clarification and communication of management goals.

The landscape is first analysed to determine the visual quality of the landscape character types that make up the study area. These are generally described as being either Distinctive, Common or Minimal.

Sensitivity Levels are then determined. These are a measure of people's concern for the scenic quality of the study area. They are a function of the amount of use the area is expected to generate and the manner in which the landscape is being viewed i.e.: whether on foot or by car etc.

Within the sensitivity classification, viewing zones are also delineated into foreground (fg) middle ground (mg) and background (bg). These are used to further describe the part of the landscape being evaluated.

This provides the inventory for the visual analysis.

Visual Quality Objectives - Management Method

The visual quality objective is set in a general way

during the initial stages of the study. This goal is

determined, with reference to the overall beauty and usability of the area. Normally, the greater the usability and natural

beauty the higher will be the visual quality objective. Later

when the visual landscape has been inventoried the objective

is stated with direct reference to measurable standards. Five

visual quality objectives or management methods can be identified.

(1) Preservation - Management activities are prohibited

(in this case, logging).

(2) Retention - Management activities are not visually evident.

(3) Partial Retention - Management activities although visible

remain subordinate to the characteristic landscape.

(4) Modification - Management activities may visually dominate

the original character of the landscape. However,

alteration must borrow from naturally established form,

line, color and texture so completely and at such a scale

that its visual characteristics are those of natural

occurrences within the surrounding area.

(5) Maximum Modification - Alterations may be out of scale or

incongruent with natural occurrences in the foreground or

background. When viewed as background, however, these

The criteria for the landscape quality classification for the Mahant watershed are described in the following table and

Landscape Quality Classification

MAHANT WATERSHED SPECIFIC: INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

ecological, economic or aesthetic. area the most appropriate value whether it be recreational, values. The ultimate goal, of course, is to attribute to each applied and in terms of the compromise made with other resource terms of characteristics of the location in which they are the objectives arise out of their appropriateness both in construed to be of greater value than another. The value of resource study, however, one goal should not necessarily be amount of landform alteration described. Within an integrated The management objectives are listed according to the

folio maps.

and sensitivity level classifications and delineated on the These objectives can then be keyed to landscape quality

ground.

viewed primarily although not entirely in the back- sification is appropriate to areas that will be occurrences with the surrounding area. This clas- visual characteristics must be those of natural

