APPENDIX TO CROOKED RIVER FOREST REPORT

MCLEOD LAKE

Part I (1950)

The McLeod Lake survey was commenced late in the fall of 1950 some time after the major part of the Crooked River Forest had been covered by the planning survey crew. However, the project was gone over thoroughly with Mr. L. Brooks before he left this work and the basis for the commercial layouts was established. There was no intention originally to do the work this year since, to complete a thorough job, it would take four or five weeks and this much time was not available. The District Forester, Prince George, expressed the desire, however, that we should lay out the commercial sites, if no others, since there were so many applications on file. This was done as requested.

McLeod Lake is twelve miles long and it was decided that it could support three commercials - one at the south end of the lake, one at Whiskers Point midway up the lake and one at the north end of the lake - all on the east side. These three areas were examined carefully; reserves for the use of the public, of course, took precedence over other uses and these areas were selected first.
South End of Lake

The south end of McLeod Lake culminates in a small U-shaped bay. At this point, Mile 48, the Cart Highway passes about 450 feet from the bay and continues up the lake. There is a spur which winds down to the bay from the highway and which terminates at an old boat landing. The bay trends in an almost due east and west direction. The south side of the bay has a northern exposure, straight shoreline and rocky beach. The back-shore is quite steep. The north side of the bay has a southern exposure,
reedy shore which is also rocky but to a lesser extent, and a gently rising backshore. It has been extensively used by the Indians for camping upon and numerous old sites are in evidence. It has a pleasing aspect and is very suitable for a public reserve. Cover consists generally throughout the area of a mixed and immature stand of spruce, lodgepole pine and aspen with some Douglas fir and balsam. It is an open type of forest with little underbrush. As the area on the north side of the bay was considered the most desirable for a public reserve the difficulty now lay in choosing a suitable site for a commercial development. After much consideration Block "T" was decided upon and surveyed for this purpose. This block is adjacent to the proposed public reserve, the Park Highway and the lake. It is bounded on the south side by Block "Q", laid out earlier in the year as a summer campsite at the request of the District Forester's office. It was felt that Block "T" could be properly utilized for a gas station, tourist cabins and, probably, small store. It has 500 feet of highway frontage, much of which borders a 10-foot cut or a 7 to 8-foot hill. However, between this cut and fill there is an area which is accessible from the highway and on the same grade. It is felt that at this point a gas station would fit in very well. The ground slopes fairly gently towards the lake but flattens out about 150 feet from it. A very dense willow fringe 75 feet wide exists along the head of the bay and the foreshore is reedy. In addition to some cabins on the high ground overlooking the bay, a boat rental service would certainly be indicated to cater to fishermen especially.
Whiskers Point

This area midway up the lake, which is apparently wholly contained within Lot 9618 has been reserved for the use and enjoyment of the public by the Land Inspector. No better area on the lake exists – it contains a fine beach with southern exposure, year-round stream, ample ground and has a pleasant aspect. The Bart Highway passes within a half mile of it. Block "W", the commercial site, was laid out to take advantage of the recreational resources of the area and, at the same time, to assist in developing them. It in no way infringes on the most desirable ground but is set off to one side and adjoining the reserve. It is not a gas station site. The operator may eventually see fit to put in a pump for convenience sake but, essentially, it is too far from the highway to ever make it a paying proposition. The site was laid out with the idea of an operator constructing an approved type of cabin and operating a store to cater to holidayers. Boat rentals will also play an important part in any operator’s success.

The block was laid out 250 feet from the lake. It is considered that this is not too far back and allows additional expansion for the public reserve if necessary, or, more likely, will provide for access to Whiskers Point when a suitable road is projected.
Scene of destruction left by construction camp
at Whiskers Point

The terrain is very suitable for the construction of a tourist camp, being generally level but with a gentle roll to it. No large timber is to be found on the permit area, cover consisting of an open stand of aspen, spruce and lodgepole pine ranging in diameter from 6 inches to 12 inches, and in height from 60 to 80 feet. Underbrush is noticeably light except near the shore. At the back of the laid-out commercial site the ground breaks suddenly and a steep sidehill rises off the level ground. The back line of the lot was surveyed to follow this abrupt change in topography.
North End of Lake

The choice of a public reserve and a commercial site here caused much more difficulty than at the other two sites.

The Ranger Station contains the most suitable ground for public use within the vicinity of Fort McLeod. Every site suffers from the topography here. The ground rises off the lake as a steep hill (20°) for approximately 300 feet then flattens out to form a bench. It is on this bench that the Hart Highway has been located.

The lakeshore was examined for three-quarters of a mile but no suitable sites existed either for a public reserve or a commercial development. It was felt that to search further down the shore would be to defeat the purpose of securing sites in reasonably close proximity to Fort McLeod. For this reason the Ranger Station was considered to fit the purpose of an area for the public use as well as any in the vicinity. In addition a good stream, Forestry Creek, runs along the property boundary and the tract is close to Fort McLeod.

It was impossible, due to restricted ground between the Hart Highway and McLeod Lake and to the steep bank rising off the lake, to lay out a commercial site within the vicinity of Fort McLeod which would have both water frontage and highway footage. Highway and lake frontage are the ideal requirements for a commercial site to attract diversity so necessary for the success of a small enterprise. However, in the present case this was not possible. A very good location was picked out across the Hart Highway from the Ranger Station and adjacent to Lot 5161. The ground here
is level with a good forest cover although not of much commercial value, and with a moderate amount of underbrush. Forestry Creek is handy as a source of water. It was felt that the location was suitable for a gas station and tourist cabins. The public reserve (Renner Station) is just across the highway and access to the lake is thus open.

Special use permits issued to the applicants for the foregoing commercial sites should contain the following conditions:

1. No buildings are to be constructed until a development plan has been submitted and approved. The development plan must be closely followed.

2. All trees cut must be first marked by Forest Service personnel to ensure adequate cover is maintained on the site and the aesthetic appeal of a forested area is not lost.

3. The site is at all times to be kept in a tidy, sanitary condition and create a favourable impression.

There are still outstanding several requests for sites on McLeod Lake for various purposes.

One applicant, A. Daniluck, C.B.R., Box 338, Prince George, desires a commercial site on the west side of the lake near Hassest Creek. All commercial sites laid out by the planning survey crew have been on the east side of McLeod Lake adjacent to the Pine Pass Highway which closely follows the shore. There would seem little likelihood of an operator making a success on the west shore. No site should be laid out near Hassest Creek without further discussing the matter with Mr. Daniluck.

Mr. J. B. Mitchell has an application on file for a site to be used as a lumber storage and woodworking establishment. The location he desires
is approximately 10 chains north along the shore from Lot 10117. Further details should be gathered on the nature of the woodworking operation. Is it a sawmill, fabricating plant, etc? If an operation of this sort is to be allowed on the east side of the lake it should be as inconspicuous as possible both from the highway and from the lake. It would appear that on a lake this size there will have to be a carefully selected and supervised site or sites for lumbering purposes. It is not practical to prohibit such sites from the east shore and relegate them to the west side as there is no road access to that side. The problem should be taken up with the District Forester, Prince George, and an attempt made to evaluate the importance of forestry operations around this lake. It would appear that much of the west side of the lake has been burned over.

An application has been received from the Roman Catholic church for a site on the east side of the lake some distance south of the Ranger Station. This area was examined but it was felt that the highway passes so close to the lake along here that no sites should be laid out. This application raises the question: Why does the church want a site here? On the other side of the lake and just north of the desired site, the Roman Catholic church is already well established. It would seem that the church desires to take advantage of the new Pine Pass Highway. This is a justifiable reason but the results of such a move are liable to cause much trouble in the future. The church invariably builds up an Indian population around it and this could well happen in the desired new location, especially as the Indians will be drawn to the vicinity of the highway as best travel.
becomes outdated. Thus, the Forest Service could well have a contentious problem with Indian squatters such as exists today in the Babine Provincial Forest at Topley Landing and Mill Bay. It is believed that there will be a steady pull away from the Indian Reservations at Fort McLeod over to the east shore of the lake. This problem should be realized and looked for.

As yet there have been no requests for summer homesites along the lake. These requests will, no doubt, come in when the highway is opened to the public. Where the lake shore is examined this type of use should be kept in mind and suitable areas noted on a map.
Whiskers Point

The area contained within Lot 9618 and known as Whiskers Point has been the recipient of much use and abuse. It has been camped on successively by survey parties, clearing crews and construction crews employed on the Pine Pass Highway. Each camp crew has been progressively worse in their treatment of the area until the site is in the present condition as shown by the attached photos taken in October, 1950. It is believed that the area has been cleared up by the Arnett Construction Company after being requested to do so. A follow-up inspection is to be made by the District Forester's office, Prince George, when weather permits.

At present access to the point is over one-half-mile road which branches off the Pine Pass Highway at Whiskers Creek bridge. This access route was so badly chewed up by construction machinery that it is now impassable. After rendering this road unfit for use, Arnett Construction Company bulldozed a road along the beach from Whiskers Point to the highway.

This beach road was bulldozed out by Arnett Construction Company after they had rendered the old route impassable.
This road will flood out in the Spring and revert to shoreline in a short time. A new route should be located into the beach area.

Whiskers Point is one of the finest camping, picnicking and swimming spots in the Crooked River Forest and, when compared to it, other areas on McLeod Lake seem inadequate. The area should be mapped and topography taken. When this done an extensive development plan should be drawn up.

Remains of camp built by Arnett Construction Company at Whiskers Point.
Conclusion

The foregoing is a resume of the work which has been accomplished on McLeod Lake, problems which may be encountered and future work requirements. It is hoped that this report (an Appendix to L. Brooks' Crooked River Forest report) will be of material assistance in the completion of the McLeod Lake planning survey.

Dilapidated log structure built at Whiskers Point by clearing crew working on the Pine Pass Highway.
Clearing at Whiskers Point which has been enlarged from time to time until it is the present size.
One of the numerous garbage dumps at Whiskers Point.

R. Lowery,
Forester-in-Training
Parks & Recreation Division
View of McLeod Lake from Hart Highway showing Whiskers Point in left background.

Whiskers Point Public Reserve, McLeod Lake.
Small bay at south end of McLeod Lake. In foreground is to be seen the boat landing now falling into disuse with the construction of the Hart Highway. The abandoned river boat shown is a fitting symbol of the passing of this type of transportation from the Crooked River scene. To the right can be seen the waterfrontage of the proposed public reserve for the use and enjoyment of the public travelling the new Hart Highway.
As detailed in last year's report on McLeod Lake, a field survey of commercial sites was completed and along with this a general reconnaissance of the lake. This work was carried out with the use of a boat as the Hart Highway had not yet reached the lake. This year (1951) a more detailed study of the backshore was feasible since all points were accessible from the new highway and in addition it was possible to better assess the value of areas in relation to the finished road and the lake.

McLeod Lake is the last body of water in the Crooked River system, and the most northerly lake within the Crooked River Forest. There are two rivers flowing into the twelve-mile-long lake, the Crooked, at the southern end and the McLeod, at the northern. Of some interest, and quite uncommon, is the spectacle at the northern end of the lake of a strongly flowing river, the McLeod, emptying into the lake while only three or four hundred feet away the Pack River drains out, to Tidyah Lake and eventually to the Parsnip River. In general the lake varies from one mile to half a mile in width but at two points becomes fairly narrow. Agnes Point, a long, broad, tapering peninsula, about two miles from the south end, stretches over two-thirds of the way across the lake in a north-south direction. Again about nine miles up the lake there exists a narrows which almost makes two lakes out of the one. The narrows is about fifteen-hundred feet across and a mile long.
Gently curving along the east shore of McLeod Lake sometimes right on the lake edge and at other times a half mile away, the new Hart or Fine Pass Highway affords an attractive view of typically northern country. The road itself passes through heavy spruce and jackpine forest cover but across the lake can be glimpsed rolling hills at one time burned over and now covered by poplars which in the fall forms a pleasant yellow mantle along the lake edge and up the slopes.

Settlement is concentrated at the north end of the lake at Fort McLeod, an historic old Hudson's Bay Post around which has grown a small settlement. An Indian reserve adjoins and surrounds the Hudson's Bay tract. Across the Pack River from the settlement and adjacent to the highway is McIntyre's trading post and the Forest Service ranger station.

McLeod Lake is certainly the most attractive large lake in the Crooked River Forest. The monotonous dark spruce stands are broken by large openings of poplar cover, the rolling terrain is relieved by low mountains, and swampy backshores are relatively scarce. In addition to these scenic advantages the lake has the most accessible shoreline in the forest reserve. Summit Lake is skirted for only one short stretch by the Hart Highway; Davie Lake is not touched at all; Kerry Lake is skirted at two points; but the new highway follows right along McLeod Lake for the entire twelve miles.

Four large areas on McLeod Lake, totalling about one-hundred-and-eighty acres, ensure that public requirements are well provided for. The
reserves have been adequately spaced along the accessible east shore between
the highway and lake with frontage on both.

A suitable tract of thirty-five acres is reserved at the south
end of the lake where the highway first approaches it. The north shore of
a small, secluded U-shaped bay, once a campground for river freighters and
Indians, is included in this reserve. The ground is ample enough to take care
of campers, picnickers and other related activities.

Midway up the lake a large area comprising 131 acres of varied
land has been set aside for public use. This land, Lot 9610, was origi-
inally preempted by a man whose distinguishing feature apparently was a
long beard. Due to this adornment the sandy promontory jutting into the
lake at this spot has since been known as Whisker's Point. The recrea-
tional value of the land is only exceeded in the Crooked River Forest by that at
Heart Lake. There exists at Whisker's Point a fine, wide, sand beach, well-
protected and with a southern exposure. Behind the beach the ground slopes
up a few feet to a deep flat attractively covered with poplar, spruce and
jackpine. Close by flows Whisker's Creek, a never failing source of pure,
sweet water.

After completion of plans for development at Heart Lake the
one's for Whisker's Point should next be undertaken. This would give the
public two well-spaced stopping places as a start in the recreational dev-
elopment. Some apparent work necessary before plans are drawn up is a re-
running of the boundary lines of Lot 9616. So far two attempts to locate the original corner posts have been unsuccessful. Topography should be taken of the Lot using strips three-hundred-foot apart and a ten-foot contour interval except in areas, quite obvious on the ground, where intensive development will take place. Over these sections strips one-hundred-foot apart with a five-foot contour interval could well be used.

One mile south of Fort McLeod a long narrow tract between the road and lake has been reserved at the instigation of Ranger Campbell. He considered the area of sufficient attractiveness and desirability for public recreation to request this step be taken.

At Fort McLeod itself great difficulty was experienced in attempting to locate a worthwhile public reserve. As most of the land in the vicinity is crown granted and the remainder distinctly unsuitable for our purpose, the wisest course seems to be in attempting to develop part of the ten acre ranger station. The station has extensive water frontage but the backshore for the most part is very steep. The location, close to Fort McLeod, is a favourable factor. The most suitable section so far examined appears to be near Forestry Creek, the south boundary of the ranger station.
Summer Homesites:

There have been no requests at this time for summer homesites on McLeod Lake but it is only a matter of time until this occurs. We are fortunate, on this lake, in having extensive areas of lake frontage suitable for summer homesites. In many cases access roads already exist into these lake side tracts. The roads were built as "tote" roads to assist in construction of the Hart Highway. At present they can not be used because they are cut off from the highway. To be put in usable condition most of them require a small fill at their junction with the main road. Generally speaking these roads branch off from the highway, circle along the lakeshore for half a mile or a mile and rejoin the main road. Extensive homesite layouts could be surveyed along these loop roads which would provide privacy combined with proximity to the lake and at the same time be not noticeable from the Hart Highway. Known locations of such roads have been shown on an accompanying map of the lakeshore.

Millsites:

It is anticipated that there will be some demand for millsites on McLeod Lake and this was kept in mind during reconnaissance work. It is felt that it would be to everyone's interest to have millsites allocated to one section of the lake rather than spread up and down the shore. Upon
examination it is recommended that sites only be granted on the east shore of McLeod Lake to the south of Agnes Point. There are several reasons for this. In general, recreational values of the two miles of lakeshore below Agnes Point are not as great as that to the north. Agnes Point makes an ideal division point, since it will act as a barrier to floating waste and effectively segregate mills from summer homesites, campgrounds, picnic grounds, and the scenic beauty of the lake. Even on that section of lakeshore, already outlined, where it is proposed to group mills, placement is not to take place indiscriminately. Millsites are to be selected in secluded locations out of sight and, preferably, sound of the Hart Highway. The entire policy is to render commercial development as inconspicuous as possible yet not place a handicap on their operation.

SUMMARY OF S.U.P. SITES SURVEYED (1951)

Roman Catholic Church:

The Catholic Church has pressed for some time for a suitable location near Fort McLeod on which a residence for the parish priest could be constructed. This application was delayed until the matter could be discussed with Father Hetrick, the local priest. It was feared the application would in practice cover the construction of a church and with this the birth of an Indian squatter settlement adjacent to Hart Highway. Father Hetrick was very emphatic in stating this was not the intent and that no Indians would be permitted to settle on the Church permit area. At the present time the father, when in the district, resides near the church in the centre of the Indian village. As apparently the church is occupying
the land only through Indian sufferance, conditions are not as satisfactory as they could be. The Indians feel the church cabin is open to them at any time with a consequent lack of privacy for the priest.

A suitable site for a cabin was surveyed on the east side of the lake across from the Indian settlement. A more detailed account of the area can be obtained by examining the field plan on the following page.

J. Mitchell Lumber Entry Site:

Mr. Mitchell proposes to erect a small sawmill on the west shore of McLeod Lake in the vicinity of the narrows. He hopes to supply timber and lumber necessary for the construction of the Parsnip River Bridge. With this in mind, a site was necessary on the east shore near the highway in order to pile the lumber shipped across the lake. After a discussion with Mr. Mitchell an area was surveyed which met his requirements. A line was run around an extensive clearing, bulldozed out by highway construction crews. A two-hundred-foot strip of timber remains between the clearing and highway. For a more detailed layout of the tract the field plan on the following page should be examined.

F. Corless Freighting Headquarters:

At one time the freighting jump-off point for the north country was Summit Lake. The construction of the Hart Highway north from Summit Lake has rendered uneconomical the transshipment of goods at this point. Freighting to the north country now commences at McLeod Lake. In the face of this changing picture Mr. Corless, a river freighter of long standing, has found it necessary to locate on McLeod Lake. He required a site for a
Area completely cleared in long grass, slopes gently up from lake.

Clearing surrounded by heavy cover of medium size spruce, balsam, jackpine & aspen.

1 inch = 200 ft

BLOCK 'G'
T. COOK APPLIC'N.
freight warehouse, boathouse, and several cabins. The cabins are necessary to take care of the few travellers and tourists he customarily accommodates on his northern trips. A satisfactory area for his purposes was surveyed near Mr. Michell's lumber entry site. A two-hundred-foot strip of well-timbered land was left between the two S.U.P.'s. A detailed plan of the site area is shown on an accompanying page.

T. Cook's Trapping Cabin:

Tom Cook constructed a cabin many years ago to serve as a trapping headquarters and home for his itinerant family. Indians, generally, have little regard for legal occupancy of land so no permit was ever sought for the site until the advent of the Hart Highway. With the influx of land seekers Tom Cook has realized that a permit is a worthwhile investment to retain ownership. A survey line was run around the cleared area surrounding the cabin. A more detailed picture of the site and surroundings is contained in the accompanying field plan.

This work completed the survey at McLeod Lake necessary to the issuance of special use permits. An applicant for a piece of land near Hameet Creek on the west side of the lake was interviewed. This man, A. Daniluck, expressed no further interest in the area so the matter was dropped.

R. Lowrey

[Signature]

[Stamp: Parks Div. B.T.S.]