

IN THE MATTER OF APPLICATIONS BY E
(a) CANADIAN ARCTIC GAS PIPELINE L
RIGHT-OF-WAY THAT MIGHT BE GR
CROWN LANDS WITHIN THE YUKON TERRITORY AND
THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, and
(b) FOOTHILLS PIPE LINES LTD. FOR A RIGHT-OF-WAY
THAT MIGHT BE GRANTED ACROSS CROWN LANDS
WITHIN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
FOR THE PURPOSE OF A PROPOSED MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE

and

IN THE MATTER OF THE SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND
ECONOMIC IMPACT REGIONALLY OF THE CONSTRUCTION,
OPERATION AND SUBSEQUENT ABANDONMENT OF THE ABOVE
PROPOSED PIPELINE

(Before the Honourable Mr. Justice Berger, Commissioner)

Yellowknife, N.W.T.

May 3, 1976.

PROCEEDINGS AT INQUIRY

Volume 149

Ritter & Sittichinli
 In Chief

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In this form it has gained wide currency in the technical literature and I follow that practice in this paper simply as a matter of convenience. However, most Kutchin people in Canada are not generally aware of its meaning and do not use it as a designation for themselves but instead recognize the word "Loucheux" as the proper English cover term for all the Kutchin-speaking people. "Loucheux" is itself an Anglicization of the French "loucheux" (squint-eyed), a rather unflattering term introduced by early French travellers and traders. It has made its way into common usage only in Canada, as well befits its origin on the Mackenzie side, and is not generally recognized by Kutchin bands in Alaska.

4. Extent of named areas.

We may now turn to a general overview of the areas for which toponyms have been recorded. As the accompanying maps clearly indicate, the regions named by the three bands are very extensive indeed and encompass virtually all of the Northern Yukon Territory (to the treeline) and a smaller but nonetheless important sector of the N.W.T. In the north the treeline forms the border between lands named by the Kutchin and regions traditionally occupied by the Inuit. Although the Mackenzie Delta is extensively named by the Kutchin, it has been widely used by them only within the present century. Prior to the establishment of the Hudson's Bay trading posts and the subsiding of traditional hostilities between the Inuit and the Athapaskans, the delta was a neutral ground or "no man's land" and

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1 was associated with great danger. The north-eastern
2 boundary coincides roughly with the Anderson River
3 and the border between Canada and Alaska represents the
4 western boundary. Named regions in the south extend
5 to the headwaters of the Porcupine, Blackstone, Hart,
6 Wind and Snake Rivers of the Yukon Territory. Approxi-
7 mate boundaries between lands named by the Arctic Red
8 River, Peel and Old Crow bands will be indicated on the
9 maps. There is considerable overlap at the interfaces.

10 Approximately 320 names have
11 been recorded for the Peel River region, 250 for Arctic
12 Red River, and 110 for Old Crow. They include water-
13 related terms for individual rivers, creeks, lakes,
14 channels, sloughs, eddies, headwaters, and confluences,
15 as well as land-related names for specific islands,
16 points, mountains, hills, rocks, caves, trails, encamp-
17 ments, and one grave site. The Kutchin language con-
18 tains generic terms for -- cover terms -- for all these
19 categories.

20 5. Semantic classification and examples.

21 However, it is the meanings of these names that
22 interest us and in what follows I will examine a number
23 of semantic headings under which individual Peel River
24 toponyms may be categorized and give examples of each.
25 By appealing to a relatively transparent and uncompl-
26 cated system of classification, we can note the
27 following major categories of names.

28 (1) Names which describe fauna or faunal activities.

29 This is a relatively well-
30 populated category containing about 50 names which read

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1 almost like an abbreviated catalogue of individual
 2 species of birds, fish, small creatures, game and fur-
 3 bearing animals found in the Peel River habitat.
 4 Individual creeks, lakes, hills and other features are
 5 named for the following: common loon, golden eagle,
 6 eagle nests, seagull, duck eggs, raven, scoter, water-
 7 fowl (in general) and the noise made by waterfowl on
 8 their return in the spring; otter, wolverine, and wolf;
 9 moose, moose calf, caribou, running caribou, caribou
 10 breeding grounds, sheep, grizzly bears, animal horns,
 11 worms and frogs; fish (in general), and several species
 12 including dog salmon, sucker, minnows, crookedback, jack-
 13 fish, loche, inconnu, and fish spawning places.

14 The examples here include the
 15 following. The first example, edigii (kak), literally
 16 "on it breeding", and the understood reference there
 17 is to caribou, and this is a high plateau in the
 18 upper Peel region which has long been recognized as
 19 a breeding ground for caribou. The creek which flows
 20 along the base of this plateau to the Peel, Edigii njik,
 21 has come to be known as Caribou River in English, and
 22 Edigii (kak) itself is simply called Caribou Mountain.

23 Another example is Tidigeh van
 24 "seagull lake", is a small lake located inland from the
 25 Peel a few miles below Road River and is so named
 26 because of the presence of many seagulls which feed on
 27 the fish in the lake. Fairly straightforward.

28 Chehluk jal k'it, literally
 29 "loche jiggle place", is located near the mouth of the
 30 Peel River and is a favorite site for jigging for loche

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1 with hooks under ice after freezup.

2 (2) Names associated with particular individuals.

3 Certain creeks and sites bear
4 the names of people who have lived there for consider-
5 able lengths of time. Some areas (especially in the
6 Mackenzie Delta) are named for people still living;
7 others are associated with the names of people who have
8 died within the last 50 years; and others still bear
9 names of individuals who died long ago, i.e. were
10 not living when the oldest members of the present-day
11 band were themselves children. Interestingly enough,
12 however, the identities of these people are known to
13 this day, at least by the older residents.

14 Brass vizheh, "Brass house"
15 is now the side of a cabin once owned by a white man,
16 perhaps a Hudson's Bay Company employee, who lived
17 in the Peel River area before the turn of the century.

18 In the delta one finds names
19 such as Elijah viteetshik, "Elijah's Creek", John Robert
20 veteetshik, "John Robert's Creek"; and Johnny Semple
21 viteetshik, "Johnny Semple's Creek", all of recent
22 provenance definitely dating from a period after World
23 War I when most of the band trapped and hunted muskrats
24 there each spring.

25 (3) Names associated with flora.

26 12 toponyms contain references
27 to various species of trees such as birch, poplar,
28 willow, and spruce; others refer to the presence of
29 grass or berries; and a third group makes mention of
30 timber, dry wood and driftwood.

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1 "Vichi' t'ik ts'iivii", literally
2 "on its top spruce". It means there's spruce on its top,
3 is the name of a well known hill in the upper Eagle River
4 area which is said to be covered with spruce trees, a
5 very direct correlation.

6 A second example, "Tl'oondii",
7 which means something like "grass growing down the sides",
8 is located not far above Fort McPherson. The sloping sides
9 of this range of hills are completely covered with
10 vegetation.

11 "Doo tat gwitshik", literally,
12 "amongst the driftwood creek" and this is one of the
13 principal channels flowing into Husky River at the upper
14 end of the Mackenzie Delta.

15 Category four, names associated
16 with aspects of material culture. Twenty-two names
17 refer to tools, artifacts, and traditional activities,
18 associated with subsistence pursuits. Some of these
19 names mention articles no longer in use and reflect con-
20 siderable antiquity. Included in this category are names
21 which refer to caribou fences, caribou snares, rocks used
22 for cooking in pre-contact times, crystal and flint for
23 making fire. Other names mention such items as red ochre,
24 used for decorating snowshoes and toboggans, caches,
25 fishnets, rafts, lobstersticks and even dog food.

26 "Vakak chii natr'oondak", Vakak
27 chii natr'oondak van", literally, "on it rocks are
28 habitually picked up" is a lake in the upper Peel region
29 which was once important because the people there obtained
30 special rocks which could be heated and used for cooking

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1 food.

2 "Deeddhoo goonlii". "Deeddhoo
3 goonlii", "there are lots of stone scrapers" is a small
4 hill located approximately ten miles above Fort McPherson
5 where in early days stones were obtained which were
6 suitable for fashioning into scrapers used in tanning
7 skins.

8 "Tthall njuk", "caribou fence
9 creek", located in the area of Rat Pass, is so-named
10 because of the presence of a traditional wooden corral
11 once used for capturing large numbers of caribou before
12 guns were introduced into the culture. And for those of
13 you who happened to catch "Science Magazine" last night,
14 you know what's being referred to here.

15 Category five, names associated
16 with historical events. Included in this category are
17 names which commemorate events which were significant
18 in the history of the band. These events include en-
19 counters and wars with the Eskimo, drownings, the killing
20 of a man by a black bear, starvation, encampments in
21 Peel River country by miners making their way to the
22 Klondike gold fields and the more recent vintage, the murder of
23 an R.C.M.P. officer by Albert Johnson so-called "Mad
24 Trapper of Rat River".

25 THE COMMISSIONER: Excuse me,
26 Mr. Ritter. Just pausing there, you may come to this
27 but when I was in McPherson, people referred to "Destruc-
28 tion City" which I take it was an encampment of the
29 Klondikers. Do you know if -- and it was down the Peel
30 from McPherson. Do you know whether there are any

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1 historical records made by white people of that encampment;
2 how many Klondikers stayed there? This is irrelevant to
3 your paper.

4 A I don't know of any histori-
5 cal records, the people who were there. There is one
6 book, recent book entitled "The Golden Grindstone"
7 written by a man who did come through in '98 and he
8 in fact, however, camped at this place they call "Wind
9 City" which we'll come to in a minute. During the course
10 of his journey through he broke his knee, and he was
11 taken in by the chief of the Peel River band and the
12 Chief's mother and another lady performed surgery on
13 him. He stayed with the band all winter and eventually
14 they brought him back down to McPherson. That's the
15 only account I'm aware of of actually first-hand accounts
16 of people travelling through the country, but I'm sure
17 Jim knows about Desruction City.

18 WITNESS SITTICHINLI: Destruc-
19 tion City got the name after 1898 when the miners were
20 going through there. That's as far as they can go with
21 the boat, to Destruction City. Before that, my people
22 have been travelling into there and that's where they
23 leave their canoe during summer when they go out to get
24 their flint, ^{and} caribou skin. It's a place where they -- I
25 would call it like boat landing. Tr'ih zhi tagodi',
26 a place where they land and leave their boats, their canoes
27 while they are hunting.

28 Now, since the gold rush days,
29 in 1898, a lot of white names have come into that area.

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1 Just beyond there is Bell River. Well, that used
2 to be called chii vee njik. Now, a lot of names have been
3 changed since 1898 but before that, they had Indian
4 names like (Indian names)
5 all them names.

6 Q Just one question before we^x
7 leave this fascinating subject, why is that boat landing
8 where the Klondikers presumably camped, why is it called
9 "Destruction City"? What happened? Did something happen
10 there?

11 A Yes. Some of them came in
12 with quite a outfit but they can't go past Destruction
13 City. The water started to get rough, shallow. No more
14 big boats. So, they put up camp there, tear up all
15 their boats, destruct all their boats you^{know} structure and
16 then haul them over to Bell River in the winter. Now,
17 this Bell River was called after Doctor Bell. He had a
18 big outfit. He had a little steam boat and he also tore
19 up all his little steam boat and then they portaged over
20 Summit Lake into Bell River and they rebuilt that boat
21 again at Bell River and since that time, it's called "Bell
22 River. Yes, it's by Dr. Bell.

23 THE COMMISSIONER: Well, thank
24 you very much Mr. Sittichinli.

25 A Yes. O.K.

26 Q Well, carry on Mr. Ritter,
27 sorry to interrupt.

28 WITNESS RITTER: So, these
29 are names associated with historical events.

30 One example I'd like to call

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1 attention^{to} is a creek called "Taa'aii Khanjilnaii", literal-
2 ly, "broken up paddles", now called "Paddle Creek" in
3 English is located approximately mid-way between
4 Caribou River and Snake River. It bears this name
5 because, according to report at one time a small band
6 of Eskimo intruders managed to penetrate that far south
7 into the heartland of Peel River country. It is said
8 that by the time the Eskimos had travelled that far up
9 the Peel, they were compelled to stop at the mouth of
10 this creek and fashion new paddles because their old ones
11 had become worn out after such lengthy and difficult
12 travel.

13
14 It is not clear whether this
15 was an isolated event or whether the Eskimos managed on
16 more than one occasion to penetrate that deeply into
17 undisputed Kutchin country.
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1 It may be impossible to resolve
 2 this issue, but the event must have occurred in pre-
 3 contact times because none of the historical accounts
 4 of the Kutchin-Inuit encounters make reference to this
 5 particular region and all reported skirmishes and battles
 6 took place in the lower Peel region. The evidence
 7 provided by the place name thus suggests that in some
 8 pre-contact period the Mackenzie Eskimos were able to
 9 make at least one lengthy incursion into what must have
 10 been, at the time, hostile foreign territory.

11 Another example is Wind City,
 12 located only a few miles above the mouth of the Wind
 13 River, was the site of a large encampment of miners
 14 during the winter of 1899-1900, and here I've footnoted
 15 this book by Graham entitled "Golden Grindstone" which
 16 describes the hardships that the miners suffered.

17 6. Names associated with mythological events.

18 According to traditional lore,
 19 at least two rock formations in Peel River country were
 20 created by supernatural means. Shiǰdii, for which no
 21 one seems to have a translation that satisfies everyone,
 22 shiǰdii is a sandstone formation located on top of a
 23 small hill several miles above Fort McPherson. It is
 24 said to represent the fossilized remains of two brothers
 25 who were turned into stone when their younger sister
 26 inadvertently violated a taboo imposed on her at puberty.
 27 The second example is Eketsii va'an, "Eketsii's Cave",
 28 is a large hole located at the base of a cliff situated
 29 at the lower end of the Peel River Canyon. Eketsii,
 30 a legendary Peel River man, was the sole survivor of a

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1 group of people who were massacred by Slavey Indians,
2 possibly Mountain Indians. According to the legend,
3 Eketsii was being pursued by the enemy when he shouted
4 out to the cliff which immediately opened up to permit
5 him to enter and escape the fate which had befallen
6 his kinsmen. Quite a story behind this cave.

7 7. Purely descriptive names.

8 This is a general category
9 which includes names about which little can be noted
10 other than the fact that they describe some defining
11 physical features of their reference in a fairly
12 concrete way. Numerically it is a large category and
13 comprises approximately 70 names. Included here are names
14 of various water courses (creeks, rivers, channels) which
15 are described by particular characteristics of their
16 currents.

17 To wit, vinidiinlaid, "water
18 flows against its base" is the Kutchin name for Mount
19 Deception located approximately 15 miles above the
20 point at which the Wind River enters the Peel. The
21 current flows right along the base of the mountain.

22 Nitainlaid, literally "water
23 flowing over the rocks", is now commonly called Eight
24 Mile in English because of its distance from Fort
25 McPherson. The creek, which shares its name with the
26 surrounding area, is distinguished only by the presence
27 of a small waterfall.

28 THE COMMISSIONER: Is that
29 in the vicinity of the crossing of the Dempster?

30 A It's right there, it's

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1 right there. That's where the Vittrewka encampment is,
2 I think you were up there.

3 Q Yes.

4 A The third example here,
5 shrehtadhadlaili, "water splits up into several
6 channels", this describes the general area at the mouth
7 of the Husky River on the lower Peel. You may note
8 that all three of these names end in essentially the
9 same syllable, "laili" -- vinidiinlaili, nitainlaili,
10 shrehtadhadlaili, all three of these names are actually
11 verb forms, and this last part of "laili" is a basic
12 stem which simply means "water flows". The rest of the
13 word is sort of, the prefixal part which sort of adds
14 the adverbial signifi- cance of the flow of water.

15 Also included in this category
16 of pure descriptive names are those which describe the
17 colors of rocks and sand found in particular areas.
18 The Kutchin name for Bell River is Chii vee njik "grey
19 rocks river", the Bonnet Plume River is traditionally
20 called "Tsaih tl'ak njik, "dark sands river", and the
21 Blackstone River, one of the very few which bears an
22 official English designation which comes close to captur-
23 ing the native name, is known as Tth'oh zraili njik,
24 "black shale river".

25 8. Metaphorical names.

26 This is not an extensive cate-
27 gory but is an interesting one, nonetheless. Hart River
28 -- spelled H-A-R-T -- in the Northern Yukon (named after
29 an early prospector in the region) is called Edrii njik
30 "heart river" by the Kutchin because a large rock

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1 formation, edrii, "heart" is located midway up the
2 course of the river. The rock is said to bear a
3 striking resemblance to a moose heart.

4 Eltin ts'ik nyuudlii, "jackfish
5 guts lying about", is an extremely contorted section of
6 Caribou River and is said to look like twisted fish
7 guts.

8 Dachan ch'ik ddhaa', "wooden
9 plate mountain", now known in English as Scow Mountain
10 or Steamboat Mountain, is reputed to resemble an old-
11 fashioned birch-bark dish because one section of it is
12 conspicuously hollowed out.

13 Lishuunii ddhaa', "chimney
14 mountain", located in the upper reaches of the Peel,
15 is said to resemble a stone chimney. So these are
16 metaphorical names.

17 9. I've revised and I'd like to read this into the
18 record, It's different from the previous version.
19 Category 9 are what I call names of foreign origin.

20 Only a small number of names
21 of foreign origin have been assimilated into the
22 corpus of Peel River geographical terms. Included in
23 this category are from the Han or possibly Northern
24 Tutchone language, Ts'ok iitlin, which I think
25 means "lots of spruce", a wooded area located near
26 Chapman Lake in the upper Blackstone River area; and
27 from French, La chute, a creek located across the
28 Richardson Mountains from Fort McPherson on the trail
29 to La Pierre House.

30

THE COMMISSIONER: You said

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1 from the Han language, and what did you say after
2 that?

3 A If may be from Northern
4 Tutchone , I'm not --

5 Q From where?

6 A The Northern Tutchone
7 language. It could well be from the people of Stewart
8 River area. I'm not really sure of the origin except that
9 "ts'ok" is the word for spruce in both those languages,
10 and there's some uncertainty. But definitely it's not
11 of Peel River origin. It's a borrowing of some sort.

12 Names adopted from English
13 require a separate comment. In this regard, a
14 distinction must be drawn between names from English,
15 which were introduced from the outside, and have
16 subsequently been assimilated into colloquial usage,
17 and names which have been coined in English by the
18 Kutchin. The former category include such names as
19 Rat River, Bell River, Porcupine River, and Hungry Lake.
20 In each case these terms coexist with the traditional
21 names, although the meanings of them are quite
22 different in each case. I am as yet unable to tell
23 when these English names were first introduced and
24 recognized as official by the Canadian Permit Committee
25 on Geographical Names, but they have in any case become
26 commonly used and recognized by the native people.

27 English names originating
28 among the Kutchin include Three Cabin Creek, a relative-
29 ly recent designation for Tr'ineediaii,
30 a creek which enters the Peel approximately 30 miles

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1 above Fort McPherson and Frying Pan Creek, located
 2 between the Snake and Bonnet Plume Rivers. Also to be
 3 mentioned here is a phenomenon of what I term name
 4 shifts, cases in which the native Kutchin term coexists
 5 with or is being replaced by an English term which
 6 approximates the meaning of the Kutchin original; but
 7 whereas the traditional names may be quite descriptive,
 8 when translated into English they become shortened
 9 and abbreviated, often quite severely, and the
 10 resulting names can bear an indirect and ^{sometimes} even misleading
 11 relationship to the original. So for example, shoh diidhat khai
 12 /^{tshik}literally, "a black bear killed one of us", has become
 13 in English, Bear Creek.

14 Divii daaghoo njik "sheep bleating
 15 creek", is colloquially called Sheep Creek.

16 Ddhah diik'ee njik "sharp ridged
 17 mountain creek" is simply called Mountain Creek.

18 So you can get an indication
 19 there of what's lost in translation when they enter
 20 English.

21 Returning to the main body of
 22 the text.

23 10. Unanalyzable or opaque names.

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1 Aside from those geographical
2 names with clear or relatively transparent meanings,
3 there remains a residue of perhaps twenty toponyms
4 names for which it seems impossible to determine satis-
5 factory translations. In some cases moreover, the names
6 easily become subject to folk-etymologizing and to
7 various guessing games and much confusion vis à vis "the
8 ture meaning" abounds, even among the most knowledgeable
9 older members of the band.

10 However, this is not an unusual
11 or even unexpected result, simply because some names are
12 so old that in the course of time their original meanings
13 descriptive or otherwise have been forgotten and they
14 survive as fossilized terms tout court. This general
15 process is apparently universal among the languages of
16 the world.

17 To conclude this section on
18 categories of Kutchin place-names, it may be fitting to
19 draw attention to one theoretically possible category
20 which is, in fact, not at all attested; "honorary" names.
21 Whereas in our own culture it has become common place to
22 name mountains, rivers, glaciers, etc., after individuals
23 who may be well known or distinguished in some sense, but
24 who may never have seen the areas in question, this prac-
25 tise is unknown to the Kutchin.

26 THE COMMISSIONER: We confer
27 names and then we take them away again.

28 A Not quite.

29 Q I'm thinking of Mt.

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A And the Cape Kennedy.

1
2 I gave Cape Kennedy as an example but apparently it's
3 no longer the case.

4 This practise is unknown to
5 the Kutchin. A person's name becomes attached to a
6 specific site only if he has lived there for a consider-
7 able length of time or some striking event involving an
8 individual has taken place there. There is no Kutchin
9 equivalent to such English place names as Mt. Burgess, Mt.
10 McKinley or Cape Kennedy; and things of that sort.

11 6. A brief apercu
12 of Peel River history since time of contact. We shall see
13 below that certain generalizations concerning Kutchin
14 land use will emerge from the toponymic data which we
15 have just reviewed but in order to provide a context in
16 which those generalizations may be understood it will
17 be necessary to give a brief sketch of Peel River history.
18 Following Slobodin's carefully detailed exposition, we
19 can note the following stages in the history of the band
20 since 1839 when the Hudson's Bay Company explorer John
21 Bell first made contact with the Teetl'it Gwich'in at
22 Vihtl'oo tshik, present-day Road River.

23 It is known that at the time
24 of contact, the Peel River people spent most of the
25 winter months hunting caribou in the mountainous regions
26 of the upper Peel drainage, especially in the Richardson
27 and Ogilvie mountain ranges. During early spring, the band
28 gathered at a place called "Khatainlaih ehdi", located
29 near the mouth of the Bonnet Plume River and there they
30 constructed skin boats which, after the break-up of

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1 During the summer months, the people fished, using tradi-
2 tional traps at various places along the Peel. The
3 lowest stretches of the river were generally avoided
4 because of the possible presence of Eskimos.

5 When John Bell first met the
6 Kutchin chief Vihshriiniintsaiti at Road River, he was
7 urged to erect the proposed trading post at that very
8 site because it was an established gathering place for
9 the band and would easily serve their needs. However,
10 the Hudson Bay Company was equally intent on trading
11 with the Mackenzie Eskimos and the Arctic Red River
12 Kutchin and so it was decided that the post would be
13 constructed further downstream at an area which is today
14 called Zheh gwajat, Old Fort, approximately four
15 miles above Fort McPherson.

16 During the first twenty years
17 of its existence, Peel River post was visited only
18 occasionally by members of the Peel River band who did
19 not become quickly involved in the fur trade. As
20 Slobodin has noted, very little fur was sold by members
21 of the Peel River band and most of the post's return
22 consisted of furs brought in by the Eskimos and the
23 Arctic Red River Kutchin. However, as time passed,
24 members of the band began to visit the post more
25 regularly during the summers and many families began to
26 fish at points further south than had previously been
27 their custom. Points further north, I'm very sorry.
28 Further north downriver.

29 By the last decade of the

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1 post and had become extensively involved in trapping
2 for fine furs during the winters.

3 During the same period, Eskimos
4 began to trade at the post on a regular basis during
5 the summers. Hostilities between the two groups
6 gradually subsided.

7 This pattern, winter in the upper
8 Peel, summer on the lower Peel; continued until the
9 time of the Klondike Gold Rush. At that time, there
10 occurred a dramatic shift in the band, a definite
11 realignment to the upper Peel areas. Once the frenetic
12 activity in the Dawson gold fields had begun, the band
13 found that it could easily and profitably sell meat to
14 the mining camps in the area and could, at the same time,
15 sell its winter furs to dealers in Dawson for prices
16 often higher than had been offered in Fort McPherson.

17 During this period, most of the
18 Peel River band spent the entire winter and spring in
19 the upper Blackstone, Hart and Wind River regions and in
20 summer moved to the Han Village of Moosehide, located a
21 few miles below Dawson to fish in the Yukon River.

22 This pattern continued until
23 approximately 1912 when the band once again shifted its
24 locus of activity back to the lower Peel region. During
25 this period, fur prices began to rise dramatically and
26 many families began to spend spring in the Mackenzie
27 Delta hunting muskrats. Winter hunting could be carried
28 out in the area of the northern Richardson Mountains and
29 sojourns to the upper Peel drainage became more and
30 more infrequent. The Peel River band became firmly

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1 realigned toward the Mackenzie Delta and the lower Peel.

2 This pattern has continued to
3 the present with one important exception. During World
4 War II, fur prices again rose sharply and a number of
5 families began trapping once again in the upriver regions
6 which were at the time well populated with marten.
7 In some cases, the people did not even return to Fort
8 McPherson for traditional Christmas and New Year's
9 festivities. This marked the first time in 20 years that
10 any Peel River people had passed the entire winter in
11 the mountains upriver.

12 But by 1946, the cycle had
13 changed once again and the people had returned to the
14 lower Peel. Even so, as Slobodin notes, the people had
15 kept up the franchise on that portion of their habitat
16 and:

17 "It may be therefore maintained that the Peel River
18 Kutchin have occupied virtually the same overall
19 habitat during their known history."

20 It is important to note,
21 finally, that even within the last several years a few
22 families and individuals have spent a part of the winter
23 months trapping in the Upper Peel drainage.

24 A few general observations may
25 be made on the basis of this severely abbreviated account
26 of Peel River Kutchin place names and post-contact
27 history.

28 1. The traditional names which have proven to be the
29 most difficult to translate including those for which no
30 adequate translations can be agreed upon at all designate

Hillem & Sittichinli
In Chief

1 in most cases areas in the upper Peel regions. Conversely,
2 place names of the lower Peel and the delta are relatively
3 transparent and, as previously noted, often refer to
4 specific individuals whose identities are generally
5 known. This situation is explained by the fact that
6 movement into the Mackenzie Delta and exploitation of
7 the resources of the lower Peel are both relatively
8 recent phenomena whereas the upper Peel regions have no
9 doubt been inhabited for many generations.

10 Recall that the Teetl'it Gwich'in
11 are the "people who live at the head of the waters" Evi-
12 dence provided by Kutchin place-names independently
13 confirms therefore, what is known about the post-contact
14 history of the Peel River people.

15 2. A cursory inspection of the accompanying maps will
16 immediately reveal that certain areas within the general
17 borders of Peel River country are more densely named
18 than others. This clustering together of named sites is
19 a reflection of intensive, sustained land use patterns
20 in these regions. These areas include , for example,
21 the entire course of the Peel from Fort McPherson south
22 to the Snake, Bonnet Plume, Wind, Hart, and Blackstone
23 Rivers. Other regions, particularly the more southern
24 areas of the Peel Preserve are less well represented
25 with traditional names and are not recognized as having
26 been widely exploited by the band at any particular part
27 of its known history.

28 3. Although Fort McPherson itself lies within the
29 Northwest Territories, the vast majority of lands

Ritter & Sittichinli
In Chief

1 technically bounded by Yukon Territory borders. Once
2 consequence of this fact is that the band has over the
3 years had to deal with two sets of game officials and
4 regulations. Although few difficulties have arisen in
5 the recent past and although the band maintains the
6 group trapping zone officially recognized by the Yukon
7 Game Branch, we do know that in earlier years poor
8 communications regarding limits and open season often
9 resulted in confusion and difficulties for the band,
10 including on more than one occasion, fur confiscation.
11 This border issue has other ramifications as well and will
12 no doubt be seriously taken into consideration at such
13 time as land claims are negotiated between the band
14 and the Federal Government.

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Ritter & Sittichinli
In Chief

1 8. Conclusions.

2 Finally, we have seen that
3 traditional Kutchin place names serve collectively
4 to define the extent of lands occupied by three indi-
5 vidual bands. An examination of Peel River history has
6 revealed that population shifts have occurred periodically
7 since the time of contact and these are to some extent
8 reflected in the nature of the geographic nomenclature
9 itself. Finally, we have seen that a body of traditional
10 knowledge can illuminate and explain patterns of land
11 use and occupancy by the original inhabitants of one
12 part of the Canadian north.

13 THE COMMISSIONER: Thank you,
14 sir. I wonder if, where you interpolated a page or
15 two dealing with the adoption of English place names
16 and so forth, you might just give those pages to Miss
17 Hutchinson and perhaps she could photostat them and
18 we could just insert them in our -- in the prepared
19 statement, if it's something that is in a state where
20 it could be photostated this afternoon.

21 A Yes. That's no problem.

22 MR. BELL: Mr. Commissioner,
23 Mr. Sittichinli is well known to all of us. However,
24 I think perhaps for those who come later, I might ask
25 Mr. Sittichinli for a little information about himself.

26 Mr. Sittichinli, you're
27 a member of the Loucheux Band at Aklavik.

28 WITNESS SITTICHINLI: That's
29 right.

30

Q And which of the three

Ritter & Sittichinli
In Chief

1 groups of Peel River Indians, of Louchéux Indians would
2 you consider yourself a member of?

3 A Well, I'm of Peel River.

4 Q Peel River, the head of the
5 waters people.

6 A M-hm.

7 Q And are you familiar with
8 the area that Mr. Ritter described in his study?

9 A Not too much up the Peel
10 River way because I gave up my Indian way of life quite
11 early in my days, 19 years old. That's when I gave up
12 hunting and trapping very much, but I've been up the
13 river, I've been one time I was up the river to hunt.

14 Q And you're familiar with
15 many of the names that are mentioned?

16 A Very much, every time,
17 although I've never seen the place I heard so much about
18 it, it just give me exact spot where the places are.

19 Q So you would say that
20 Mr. Ritter is accurate in his study concerning where
21 these place names are and what their names are?

22 A Yes, although as I told
23 you before I haven't been to many places, but still by
24 the name I know exactly just whereabouts, with the
25 Indian name. Some, as I told Judge Berger, that's
26 since the Klondike Days, lots of these names have
27 grown into English, they are changing, so we call them
28 by English now and since when the R.C.M.P. patrol was
29 working between Dawson and McPherson they have changed
30 a lot of these names into English.

Ritter & Sittichinli
in chief

1 whenever they mention it in Loucheux, I just know
2 exactly whereabouts it is.

3 Q Thank you.

4 A So it's no problem.

5 THE COMMISSIONER: May I ask
6 you a question, Mr. Sittichinli? What do you think of
7 Mr. Ritter's pronounciation of these names, how is he
8 doing?

9 A Right on.

10 (LAUGHTER)

11 He never leave one word out. On T.V. you listen with
12 this day you'll find out.

13 MR. BELL: The exhibits for
14 this panel, sir, are the statements of evidence and the
15 appendices, and maps that you see on the wall there.
16 Or a copy of the map that you see on the wall there.

17 THE COMMISSIONER: You were
18 going to, I think, enlarge on the --

19 WITNESS RITTER: Yes, I was
20 going to point out some of the details here. As you
21 can see, here we have basically two sets of maps. The
22 ones on the left are the provisional --

23 THE COMMISSIONER: Excuse me,
24 before you go further, do you want Mr. Ritter to use
25 a microphone?

26 A The ones on the left are
27 the ones in blue and white are 1:50,000 scale maps
28 of the delta region; whereas the ones on the right are
29 1:250,00 scale maps. Basically when we focused our
30 attention on the delta region

Ritter & Sittichinli
In Chief

1 can see up here, there wasn't room on these maps
2 to cover -- to make allowance for all the names we
3 had recorded. So on the left here basically this
4 is Fort McPherson and covers the area above Fort McPherson
5 on the Peel down and it passes onto the Husky River
6 around the points on the Peel to the Mackenzie. This
7 is the Mackenzie flowing north and down toward the
8 delta and eventually to Inuvik.

9 However, let's look first at
10 the map on the right because these will give you a general
11 idea. We could review the sort of outline of
12 areas of named territories.

13 THE COMMISSIONER: You might just
14 point out where McPherson, and Arctic Red and Inuvik
15 are on this map so we can orient ourselves.

16 A All right. This is not
17 very clear. Fort McPherson is right here. There's
18 Arctic Red River; Aklavik is down below, and Inuvik
19 is somewhere right about here. To the right you have
20 the Mackenzie River flowing from the south, and this
21 is the whole Peel-Mackenzie Delta. This white
22 area you see here is the background -- the backbone
23 of the Richardson Mountains. If we look first at --

24 Q Is Old Crow on that map
25 too?

26 A Old Crow is over here on
27 the left. At the top we have Crow Flats, with all the
28 lakes. If we look first at the Arctic Red River side
29 you can see at the far north here this green and
30 roughly

Ritter & Sittichinli
In Chief

1 to the east name that we have named by the Arctic
2 Red River people is the Anderson River, which is called
3 Shryuh choo njik . Names in through this region, and
4 this is Travaillant Lake right here. This is a fairly
5 flat expanse of country and as I said in the presenta-
6 tion, the name of the Arctic Red River people is
7 Gwichyah Gwich'in and Gwichyah refers to a large flat
8 expanse of land.

9 The Arctic Red River itself
10 starts in this general region and flows like this. Here
11 is Old Martin House, right down to the mouth of Arctic
12 Red on the Mackenzie, and basically everything to the
13 right on the map is named by the Arctic Red River
14 people. I don't have the boundary drawn because this
15 is the only set of originals we have; but basically
16 everything to the east of the line like this would be
17 named by the Arctic Red River people.

18 Now if we can focus our
19 attention first on the Old Crow side, I'd like to point
20 out that although we have names recorded, our art work
21 is lagging somewhat behind. In fact the names we've
22 recorded in this area have not yet been put on the
23 maps. But basically those areas include of course all
24 of Crow Flats , the area up the Porcupine River, the
25 headwaters of the Porcupine and this region would be
26 the Old Crow territory.

27 Now what's left between, what's
28 sandwiched in between are areas occupied by the Peel
29 River people, and I don't know how well you can see from
30 a distance. I suspect not very well; but the main course

Ritter & Sittichinli
In Chief

1 going up-river is something like this. You wind your
2 way up about here, and you have a Snake River flowing
3 in. The next large river is the Bonnet Plume River. The
4 next one is the Wind River. Then you have the Hart River
5 and the Blackstone. On this side the Ogilvie, the
6 headwaters of the Ogilvie. So basically all these rivers
7 flow south and collectively form the main body of the
8 Peel. There's a bend right here and it flows down to
9 the delta.

10 Now to briefly recap some of
11 the points I've made in the concluding sections of the
12 report. Road River, which is located right here,
13 called Vihtl'oo tshik in the native language, was a
14 site of the first contact by Hudson's Bay people with
15 the Peel River Band. It was here that John Bell
16 met chief Vihshriiniintsaiti' and discussed the
17 possibility of erecting a fur trade post.

18 At that time it was known that
19 during the winters the Peel River Band spent most of
20 its time in this upriver region, and through here.
21 So basically the headwaters of the Bonnet Plume, the
22 Wind, the Hart, the Blackstone, this is, if you like,
23 as far as we can extrapolate, the ur-heimat of these people.
24 In fact their name for themselves, Teet'it Gwichin means
25 "head of the water-people" which refers to this general
26 area. So by and large in winter this is where the
27 band spent its time hunting caribou.

28 Along the course of the Peel
29 here, just before the mouth of the Bonnet Plume, there's
30

Ritter & Sittichinli
In Chief

1 language it's called Chuu tr'adaodiich'uu.
2 Literally it means hateful, hateful waters, rough hate-
3 ful waters. A very narrow stretch of the Peel, and
4 above that right about here is a place called Khatainlaii ehdi',
5 and every spring the band would gather here and build
6 skin boats. Once the waters -- once the ice had broke
7 up and the waters were flowing again they would descend
8 the Peel down to this region and would spend the summer
9 fishing at various points along this stretch of the
10 Peel.

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Ritter & Sittichinli
In Chief

1 In general, they did not exploit
2 the lower sections of the Peel region because of the
3 hostilities that existed between them and the Mackenzie
4 Eskimo. So again the chief suggested that the post
5 to be built here at Road River, but in order that the
6 post serve the other groups as well, it was built
7 approximately right here.

8 During the first years that
9 the post was open, the Peel River people still wintered
10 in this region and fished in summer in this region.
11 There were not immediately drawn into the fur trade
12 and it was only much later towards the end of the century
13 that they gradually began to shift in summer their base
14 of activities further down towards ^{present day} Fort McPherson.

15 So this pattern continued until
16 about the time of the Klondike Gold Rush, namely winters
17 in the upper Peel and summers in the lower Peel. Then
18 Dawson City, which is down right here, was of course the
19 site of all the gold rush activity, and there was a shift
20 in the band, they began to move into this general region,
21 and would spend all of winter and spring in this
22 region in the upper Blackstone and upper Hart, and here
23 they would hunt, trap, and they would travel into Dawson
24 and into the mining camps and sell meat and furs, and
25 they were during that period of about 12 years, this
26 was their locus. In summertime they would fish again,
27 but only down the Klondike River.

28 That pattern continued again
29 until about 1917 or so when the price of muskrats shot

Ritter & Sittichimli
In Chief

1 and began to hunt on an annual basis in the Mackenzie
2 Delta for muskrats.

3 Some of the places which I've
4 mentioned I'd like to point out to you now. This is
5 Peel River Canyon, again chuu tr'adoodiich'un means "hateful
6 waters". It was here that the stone formation
7 called shiɫdii was found. This is sort of fabled
8 region, it's very, very much traditional country. Here
9 is Hungry Lake or Van choo, it's called
10 in Loucheux, and this area was quite actively trapped
11 even in the '40s. Further down, this region encircled
12 here is Edigii kak, this is a plateau which we
13 described as being one of the caribou breeding areas,
14 and this creek which flows along there and into the
15 Peel is called Edigii njik or Caribou River.

16 The next major river is Trail
17 Creek, it's fairly reasonable of a translation of Tr'atr'aataii tshik
18 which is "people's trail" creek. The next one is Road
19 River, called Vihtl'oo tshils, and Vihtl'oo actually
20 is flint. It was in the headwaters of this creek that
21 flint was taken aboriginally and used for making fire.

22 Paddle Creek or Taa'aii Khanjilnail
23 is right here. That was worthy of note because it's
24 quite a distance, as you can see, from the Mackenzie
25 for a group of outsiders to penetrate. It was quite a
26 long trip, especially by canoe, I'm sure, against the
27 current. This apparently was a site of the Eskimos
28 gathering to build themselves new paddles.

29

KILLUI & SITTICHINLI
In Chief

1 which means something like "Eskimos draw their bow
2 strings." So you can see there had been some intrusion
3 into this country by the Mackenzie Eskimos.

4 The area of Rat Pass, which is
5 approximately here, is a well-travelled route, and it
6 was in fact this route followed by some of the miners
7 in '98, Destruction City is roughly here, I think.
8 The miners would make their way by portage over through
9 Bell River, come down and could follow that route.
10 I'd like to point out one simplification we have made
11 all along here, and that has to do with the area around
12 La Pierre House. It used to be a fur trading post in
13 the late 19th century, and in fact it was a fourth group
14 of Kutchin people who lived in this general region. We
15 know that they were called the Dagoo gwich'in and they
16 were never as populous as either the people who now
17 live in Old Crow or the ones who now live in Fort McPherson.
18 But by the end of the century the band had split up and
19 its few remaining members had affiliated either with the
20 Fort McPherson Band or with the Old Crow Band. So there
21 was this middle area, and in fact today this region of
22 Eagle River flowing up this way has been exploited both
23 by people from Old Crow and from Fort McPherson. There
24 is some overlap in land use in this area.

25 The Caribou Fence region is
26 up here. There are some others further up but we don't
27 have the map for that region; but tthał njik
28 Caribou Fence Creek is located in this area in the Rat Pass.
29 There's another area along here called tthał daii dha'aii
30 which means "caribou corral opening" in this general

Ritter & Sittichinli
In Chief

1 region. O.K., so basically if we use the place names
2 we get a good overview of land occupied by these bands
3 for as long as we've known them. Again, I think we
4 should look too to see where the border is here. Basi-
5 cally the N.W.T. border and Yukon goes something like
6 this and up like this, in which case we see that the
7 most ^{of the} traditional Peel River country in fact is in the
8 Yukon Territory.

9 THE COMMISSIONER: Where does
10 the border cut across the Peel again?

11 A Approximately here, which
12 I think is only 30-odd miles from Fort McPherson.

13 Finally, sketsii va'an
14 "the rock" supposedly opened by supernatural means, is
15 located here. I'm sure every man, woman and child knows
16 the story behind that formation.

17 On the right again, this is a
18 much more detailed map of the region extending from a
19 few miles above Fort McPherson down to the mouth of the
20 Peel and Mackenzie River. There are more names in the
21 delta, we don't have them all sketched in yet. Husky
22 Lakes, Freckail van', and here again is Fort McPherson.

23 So basically then I think from
24 this complex, the composite areas named we gather a
25 fairly clear picture of the extent of lands occupied
26 by these bands.

27 MR. BELL: Mr. Ritter and Mr.
28 Sittichinli are now available for cross-examination.

29 MR. GOUDGE: Mr. Bavlly is not

MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE INQUIRY

IN THE MATTER OF APPLICATIONS :

- (a) CANADIAN ARCTIC GAS PIPELINE
RIGHT-OF-WAY THAT MIGHT BE GRANTED ACROSS CROWN LANDS WITHIN THE YUKON
THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, and PUBLIC VIEWING
- (b) FOOTHILLS PIPE LINES LTD. FOR A RIGHT-OF-WAY
THAT MIGHT BE GRANTED ACROSS CROWN LANDS
WITHIN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
- FOR THE PURPOSE OF A PROPOSED MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE

and

IN THE MATTER OF THE SOCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND
ECONOMIC IMPACT REGIONALLY OF THE CONSTRUCTION,
OPERATION AND SUBSEQUENT ABANDONMENT OF THE ABOVE
PROPOSED PIPELINE

(Before the Honourable Mr. Justice Berger, Commissioner)

Yellowknife, N.W.T.

April 29, 1976.

PROCEEDINGS AT INQUIRY

Volume 148

Asch, Ritter, Rushforth, Kodakin
In Chief

1 A Yes, at Fort Franklin
2 during the time of the study, simply by averaging all of
3 the different kinds of beef ^{together} and coming up with the
4 dollar figure. I did the same thing for fish and for
5 birds. For birds for example I used the replacement
6 cost for chicken, as simple as that.

7 MR. BELL: I'd like to turn to
8 Chief Kodakin now. Perhaps you could pass the micro-
9 phone down to Chief Kodakin. Chief, has Scott Rushforth's
10 paper been explained to you in your own language?

11 WITNESS KODAKIN: Say that
12 again.

13 Q Has Mr. Rushforth's
14 paper been explained to you in your own language?

15 THE INTERPRETER (FOR WITNESS
16 KODAKIN): Yes, he say yes, Scott explained to him and
17 I translated for him, and then he told all his people
18 in Franklin.

19 Q And chief, do you agree
20 with Mr. Rushforth, ^{with} what he says in his paper?

21 A What's "agreeing with",
22 another way of putting it? Correct. He says yes,
23 yes, it's correct.

24 MR. BELL: Thank you very much.
25 Perhaps now if there is any cross-examination of
26 Chief Kodakin, counsel could direct their questions
27 to him at this time so that we can enable him to get
28 back home.

29 THE COMMISSIONER: Just Chief
30