

BRIEF SUMMARY

This report summarizes available information on renewable resources in Edézhíe, their current and potential future uses, and their economic value. The purpose of the study was to assess the use of wildlife, fish, trees, plants, art and craft materials, wilderness and renewable energy. The results were based on minimum accounts, estimates and professional judgement. The economic value of resources was calculated through replacement values (the money saved by harvesting resources instead of buying them) or estimates of income.

Wildlife, fish and trees were found to be the resources with the highest importance. Subsistence hunting, trapping, subsistence fishing, and free fuel wood harvesting were found to be highly valuable in terms of both economic and traditional values. All other resource uses were found to have a comparatively lower value.

Subsistence wildlife harvesting and trapping are both important resource uses with high future potential. Recreational hunting also occurs but is less important in Edézhíe. There are no big game outfitters operating in Edézhíe. Wood bison trophy hunting has happened in the area east of Edézhíe in the past, and there is potential for wood bison outfitting in the future, but big game outfitting is opposed by Dehcho First Nations. There is no commercial wildlife harvesting in Edézhíe, and the future potential for a commercial harvest is limited.

Limited information suggests that subsistence fishing is an important resource use in Edézhíe with high future potential. Sport fishing is thought to be of minor importance and there are no sport fishing lodges. However, there is potential to increase recreational fishing in Edézhíe by promoting the area. There are no commercial fisheries or fish hatcheries in Edézhíe. It is believed that commercial fishing and hatcheries would not be economically feasible.

Free fuel wood harvesting is an important resource use with high future potential. There are also commercial fuel wood operations near Jean Marie River and Fort Simpson, but none inside Edézhíe. There is no commercial logging happening in Edézhíe. The closest commercial logging operation is near Jean Marie River. Future potential for large-scale export logging is limited, but there is potential for community-based sustainable forestry in the areas south and west of Edézhíe. There is potential for good timber growth in Edézhíe in the future, especially

on the southern-facing slopes of the Horn Plateau, but current timber potential is low because of recent fires.

Berry picking and medicinal plant harvesting are thought to be widespread in Edézhíe, but there is not enough information to properly assess this resource use. There are no agriculture operations in Edézhíe. Agriculture would be limited by climate and economic factors, but there is some limited agriculture potential in the Mills Lake area.

Renewable resources such as birch bark, porcupine quills, and animal hides are used to make arts and crafts. Some of these resources could come from Edézhíe, but the amount and value are not known.

Within Edézhíe, Mills Lake is currently the most heavily used tourism area. There are no counts of the number of tourists visiting Edézhíe, but they are thought to be few. There are other well-developed attractions in the Dehcho region that attract more visitors. However, there is potential for further development of the tourism industry within Edézhíe. The Mackenzie River and Mills Lake have high tourism potential, and some other parts of Edézhíe have moderate tourism potential.

Limited information suggests that Edézhíe could have the natural resources to generate wind power or hydro electricity. However, there could be many obstacles to renewable energy development, including environmental issues, financial viability, and lack of local support. Feasibility studies have not been done.