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UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS

# SETON LAKE

## INDIAN LANDS TAKEN

### 1914 - 1915

The McKenna-McBride Commission's decision to make the cut-offs was against the wishes of the Band, against the recommendations of the Indian Agent, against the terms of reference of the Commission, and against long established Indian land policy.

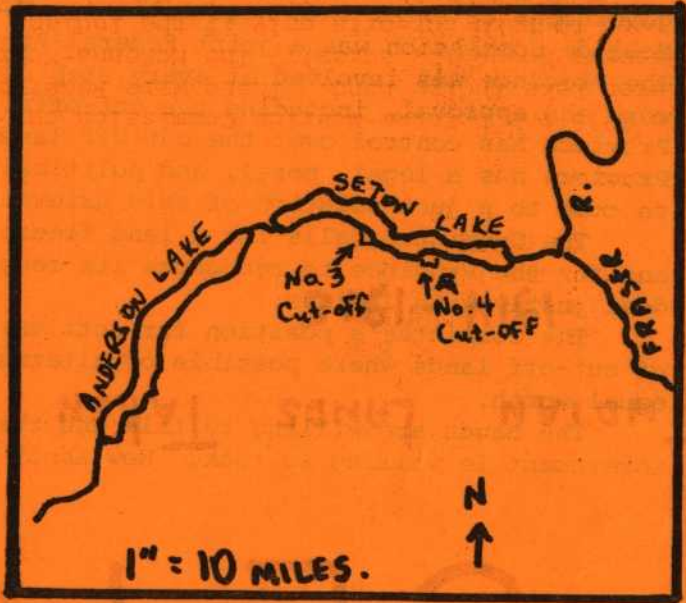
In 1915 the McKenna-McBride Commission cut-off two reserves from Seton Lake Indian Band. These were Reserve No. 3 (22 acres and Reserve No. 4 (27 acres). The McKenna-McBride Commission had power to make cut-offs only if the Indians agreed or consented.

Several months earlier, in November 1914, the McKenna-McBride Commission had met with Seton Lake Band. No consent was given to any cut-offs. The McKenna-McBride Commission did not even mention the possibility of cut-offs to the Indians.

Chief Peter, Seton Lake, protested the injustices done to the Band when the reserves were first set up in the 1880's. He made claims for additional lands, talked of the problem of finding land for the Band's growing population, and did not consent to any cut-offs.

Chief Peter testified that both Reserve Nos. 3 and 4 were used by the Band for hay fields. Reserve No. 4 had formerly been the site of potato gardens, but it was not as productive as before because whites had taken the water rights.

These two reserves are examples of the Province's regulation of water rights and how it discriminated against Indians. The usefulness of the reserves was ruined by the Province's taking the water from Indians.



## McKENNA - Mc BRIDE COMMISSION CUT OFFS

In 1915 some lands were added to Seton Lake reserves, but these lands were cliffs, rocky hillsides, or mountain tops.

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# CUT-OFF LANDS TODAY

The 23 Bands with McKenna-McBride cut-offs have formed an Action Committee to push for a just settlement of this issue. The Committee seeks negotiations with both the Federal and Provincial governments. The Federal government has recently said it is ready and willing to come to a settlement.

The Action Committee calls upon the Provincial government to enter into negotiations. The McKenna-McBride Commission was a joint Federal-Provincial Commission. The Province was involved at every step of the Commission's work and approval, including the cut-offs. Today the Province has control over the cut-off lands. The Province has a legal, moral, and political responsibility to come to a just solution of this grievance.

The Committee calls for a land freeze on cut-offs and for the Province to recognize its responsibility to deal justly with Indians.

The Committee's position for settlement is: return of cut-off lands where possible of alternate lands of equal worth.

The Bands are willing to talk and the Federal Government is willing to talk. How about the Province?

