

Greater Vancouver in the southwestern corner of British Columbia within a three-hour drive from the Skagit Valley.

For the people living in this large urban centre the Skagit Valley is one of the last remaining unspoiled wilderness areas which is both easily accessible and well-suited to human use. British Columbia has an abundance of lakes but very few streams in flat-bottomed valleys. The province's steep canyons and rugged mountains, while possessing a special beauty and character, provide opportunities for outdoor activity for a very limited number of people.

While conceding the importance of the valley as a recreational resource, those favouring its flooding have argued that the lake which could be created by flooding would be as attractive for recreation as the existing valley. Apart from the effect of the flooding on unique ecological features, and from the fact that B.C., as stated above, already has numerous lakes, this argument fails to recognize that a reservoir regime designed to meet power generation needs will not be operated for the benefit of those using the lake for recreation. The prospect of yet another reservoir simply does not compare with the value of unspoiled wilderness in a highly accessible setting.

It is pertinent to note that, as an earnest of its concern in this matter, the British Columbia Government on October 15, 1973, declared the Canadian portion of the Skagit Valley to be a "recreational area". In announcing this decision the British Columbia Government states "We are committed to fostering recreation facilities near the major concentrations in the province and the firm establishment of