Seasonal Rounds- Shushap area (Southern Interior Region)

Secwepemc (She-whep-m)

In spring, summer and fall the Secwepemc would travel to different resource areas. However, during the harsh winters they would settle in winter villages. Each locale had different environmental rhythms. In areas where resources were particularly scarce, the people would move to other sites more frequently. Consequently, areas with great abundance and variety would be settled at for longer periods of time.

In winter people moved to their winter villages and settled in the underground pithouses Short day trips were made for ice fishing and hunting local game. Families would also rely on their winter stores of dried salmon, deer, elk, plants and berries.

In spring the Secwepemc would venture from their winter villages in pursuit of fresh food sources. After a long winter, fresh edible green shoots of fireweed, cow parsnip, balsam root and Indian celery were welcome treats. Each plant was harvested as they became available and immediately consumed or preserved for future use.

By the end of June saskatoon berries would be ready for picking. Large amounts of these berries were harvested and dried for future use. Other berries such as strawberries, thimble berries, soapberries and raspberries soon followed. Much of the summer was spent gathering a variety of berries.

Towards the end of summer, families would begin fishing for spring and sockeye salmon at different weir sites and riverbanks. The salmon would be dried and stored for winter usage.

From September to October the primary activity was hunting. The game hunted included deer, elk, caribou, bear, mountain goat, and beaver. Small animals such as grouse, ducks, and mixed with berries and fat and made into dried cakes for storage. As the winter stores grew fuller, the Secwepemc would once again settle into their winter dwellings.

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