

# ***Quantifying the impact of one film, still generating tourist traffic and revenue 40 years later***



OCT  
**7-10**  
2022



# ***Land Acknowledgement***

**We would like to acknowledge that the Advantage Hope, Community Futures Sun Country and the movie location and events are and have been held on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the Stó:lō people, particularly the Chawathil, Union Bar and Yale First Nations.**

**We acknowledge that Community Futures Sun Country provides services within the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territory of the Nlaka'pamux, Secwepemc, St'átl'imx, and Stó:lō Nations.**

# ***Historical Information***

- 1981 Scouted Locations – picked Hope, BC and Coquihalla Canyon
- Filming began November 16, 1981 and brought \$1 million to Hope (\$3.3 M in 2023)
- Filming completed April 16, 1982
- Overall budget was \$15 million
  
- October 22, 1982 – film release date
- Rambo topped US box office for first three weeks
- Opening weekend \$6,642,005 US
- Earned \$125 million worldwide
- Rambo launched ***Hollywood North*** – now worth \$4.8 billion [according to the Vancouver Economic Commission.](#)

# ***Advantage Hope - data gatherers***



- The **Keeper of the data** . . . **Sarah Brown** is our fierce visitor centre leader who oversees the day-to-day operations of the Hope, Cascades & Canyons Visitor Centre, as well as the management of our museum artifacts.
- When we think about the visitor experience and your time spent in the Hope, Cascades & Canyons region, like many other regions in B.C., it is full of excitement, awe inspiring views, and memories that will last a lifetime. **But the one thing that we can offer you that is different from every other destination is Brian McKinney! Brian is also the unofficial Filmed in Hope, B.C. Rambo expert!** Welcoming on average more than 15,000 fans a year, Brian can share years full of stories and what it was like to be on set during the filming.

# ***What data sources were used?***

- We collect various **visitor statistics** as part of our agreement with Destination BC and the District of Hope to operate the Visitor Centre. In addition to the required categories, we can select several “**custom**” categories and one of these for us year over year is “**Rambo**”
- We also consulted our **social media team for analytics** on the “Rambo First Blood Tourism” Facebook page, looked at our **own financial statements**, and had a staff member go **door to door** on Wallace Street after the event to get impressions from local businesses.



# ***What process for collection and analysis is used?***

- In person collection of visitor stats is marking down the information on a clipboard – it is later entered into a web portal for Destination BC and aggregate reports can be downloaded from there.
- Other method of data collection used was a staff member interviewing people directly.
- Keep it quick and easy or won't get done!

Visitor Services Network Statistics Program – Daily Form

Visitor Centre:  Event/Roaming # of hours of in-person support:  
 Date: # of hours on 'Alt-types' of support (no in-person available):

VISITORS TO THE CENTRE (Face-to-face) engagements ONLY – put # of visitors in party in square (1 square per party)													Total Vis.
8 am													
9 am													
10 am													
11 am													
12 pm													
1 pm													
2 pm													
3 pm													
4 pm													
5 pm													
6 pm													
7 pm													
Total Number of Parties:												Total Number of Visitors:	# of Buses:

ALTERNATE TYPES OF SUPPORT (use ticks)		Information Requested (use as many ticks as apply)	
Phone		Accommodation	
Email		Adventure Recreation	
Social		Attractions/Tours	
<b>Visitor Origin</b>		Maps/Directions	
Local Resident		Events & Conferences	
BC		Food & Beverage	
Alberta		Transportation	
Other Canada		Shopping	
Washington		Parks	
California		First Nations	
Other US/Mexico		Community Services	
Europe		Investment/Moving	
Asia/Australia		Site Facilities (e.g. washroom)	
Other		Other	
<b>Nights in Community</b>			
Same Day			
1			
2			
3			
4 - 6 (1 week)			
7 - 13 (2 weeks)			
14+			
<b>Community Specific Info</b>			
Museum			
Rambo			
Othello			
Fraser Canyon			
Hiking			
Fish			
Camping			
Biking			
Route/Highway			
Chainsaw			

# ***What questions were you trying to answer? What is the economic impact of doing events?***

**Questions we get are . . .**

“Is Rambo still relevant?”

“Why should we keep the Rambo Tourism page?”

- We always record “Rambo” statistics at the Visitor Centre
  - useful in showing **ongoing interest** on a tourism front (for ordering retail products, having events, requesting funding or permission for various groups for events, ordering the “Rambo” themed carvings etc)
  - as the actual numbers hold more value in some of these areas than anecdotal evidence that “a lot” of people ask about it.
  - Rambo: First Blood Tourism page has over **41,000 followers**
- We also collected some less specific data from local businesses and our own expenses to gauge the economic impact of an event like this for Hope.

## ***What barriers you had to overcome?***

- **Lack of capacity** – at this time we had two full time staff (including me), one part time staff and a seasonal student who was just working for the weekend.
- For the event there were **space challenges** as well as there is not space to hold events at the Visitor Centre location.
- Events are challenged by **weather**. 40<sup>th</sup> had great weather.







## ***What funding you received for project?***

- About half of the funding for the project came from Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) funds allocated by Destination British Columbia for shoulder season events.
- The other half was a combination of retail sales \$10,000 and community donations over \$11,000

# ***What outcomes you found? What is the economic impact of events?***

- The Visitor Centre typically sees **3000-4000 “Rambo” related inquiries per year (pre COVID)**
- “First Blood” souvenirs tend to be among our top sellers - this is a **group that spends money in town.**
- Interest in Rambo related offerings remained high throughout the pandemic – this was a surprise as we normally think of this as an **international market** asset rather than one directed **at local travellers from within BC.**
- We heard from many visitors during the event that they felt very welcomed in the community and this played out in support of the event.
- **\$11,000+ was raised in donations from local businesses and community members.**
- Several businesses on Wallace Street told me they have had their **best sales days since opening during the event** weekend.
- The Visitor Centre did around **\$10,000 in retail over the weekend** as well (this was the amount that we had expected to earn over the entire year in 2022 so this surprised us as well).
- We made an effort to **keep sourcing for the event as local as possible** (all of the printing and signs were created locally, and as much of the merchandise as possible was created in or around Hope, and services like DJ, paintball and limo service were from the lower mainland) so the funds brought in by the event would stay as close as possible to our community. This also has the benefit of a “greener” event as there is very little shipping involved.

# ***What you learned? What would you do differently for events?***

- For future events we would create a “wrap sheet” for businesses to calculate economic impact in the community
- **Collect more “hard” evidence** from outside the Visitor Centre itself.
- Additionally, there is some data that I **wish we had collected** at the events themselves (data was collected in the Visitor Centre but **demographics at the events** themselves were estimated and this could have been a great place to collect some representative info about what types of visitors attend the events – especially free events – who might not have gone into the Visitor Centre)
- An interesting feature of the continuing economic impact of “First Blood” is also that many pivotal scenes were **filmed in the downtown core** area (on the corner of Wallace and 3<sup>rd</sup> and surrounding area) – due to the layout of the highways it can be **challenging to get visitors into the downtown**, especially if they are not stopping at the Visitor Centre, so a draw into the downtown **benefits local businesses** even if they do not have specific “Rambo” offerings by drawing foot traffic to the area.

# ***Estimated economic impact of 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary events?***

Event Tickets and merchandise (VC)	16,188.00
Ticketed Events spending (Brewery, movies, Chalice)*	44,010.00
Accommodations (motels, AirBnBs, campgrounds)*	209,250.00
Restaurants, coffee shops, pubs, brewery*	306,000.00
Retail (gift shops, grocery, other)*	208,050.00
<b>Estimated Direct Impact</b>	<b>783,498.00</b>

\* Estimates are based on volunteers' observations and discussions with local businesses we are confident that the actual results would be higher

# ***What we can do better . . .***

- We need to do a **full budget**, measure and **track all of the impacts** and layers of impacts, and do a follow up **quantification** (more actual results) with local and regional businesses. Assigned to a staff member.
  - **Actual results are stronger** than conversational estimates
  - We know that most of the **purchasing for the event was local this should be factored into the ROI** calculation as it leads to a more accurate benefit and **enhances the value to sponsors**
  - This allows us, our partners and funders to know the **full ROI of the event**.
  - Allows us to encourage ongoing **community support and sponsorships**
- Measure attendees at all events (especially open venue events) to better understand the mix of attendees this should allow us to know whether **we attracted the audience we were targeting** and what were their **feedback** about the activity and the overall event. Assigned to a staff member or partner staff member.
  - This helps future event planning – do we need to **refine the marketing** to focus on an additional audience.
  - Allows us to use **attendee feedback as quotes in marketing**.
- Use the actuals and results to **report back to the Board, partners and community** so that future events are well supported
  - Answers questions whether Rambo based carvings should be funded to bring in additional tourist traffic (annually rather than event only)
  - Allows us to ensure **support and sponsorship for future events**.
- We recommend that a **dedicated person be tasked with measurements** to ensure a more complete and accurate ROI is tracked.

# ***Community Futures Sun Country***

- CFSC Recovery Advisor Arnice Asquin's family restaurant was the unofficial office, green room and craft food location during filming. Cast, crew, stunt personnel, extras all mixed with locals and tourists.
- Advantage Hope, Hope and District Chamber of Commerce and Community Futures Sun Country collaborate on many projects.
- Arnice will present the data on behalf of Advantage Hope and Hope, Cascades & Canyons Visitor Centre.



# ***Links related to event***

- [https://tourismhcc.ca/first-blood/?fbclid=IwAR3ZUUKjdmmZUxSdWGLFOKRawF\\_WV0rBcCwPOidzqm6Mzyy1sSwvtfrMEdE](https://tourismhcc.ca/first-blood/?fbclid=IwAR3ZUUKjdmmZUxSdWGLFOKRawF_WV0rBcCwPOidzqm6Mzyy1sSwvtfrMEdE)
- [https://www.facebook.com/FirstBloodHope?comment\\_id=Y29tbWVudDoxMDE1OTQzMzk0NjcxNzg3OV82Nzg5ODczNjA5MDIxOTc%3D](https://www.facebook.com/FirstBloodHope?comment_id=Y29tbWVudDoxMDE1OTQzMzk0NjcxNzg3OV82Nzg5ODczNjA5MDIxOTc%3D)
- <https://www.facebook.com/FirstBloodHope/videos/569233564784926>
- <https://www.bctourismandhospitalityconference.com/2023-award-finalists>
- John J. Rambo “**Nothing is Over**” see you for the 45th

***Thank you . . .***

