

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Department of Environment  
COVID-19 response**

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Environment

**Recommended response:**

- As the state of emergency in response to COVID-19 has ended, following the guidance outlined in Forging Ahead: The Yukon's Continuing Response to COVID-19, the Department of Environment is shifting from a pandemic world to an endemic one.
- We will continue to follow the advice of public health professionals and monitor the situation as it evolves.
- Since the pandemic started, the Department of Environment maintained services to Yukoners, and our front counters remained open every weekday. We did this while continuing to ensure potential risks for staff, clients and our partners were minimized.
- As we move towards managing and living with the virus, the department is re-evaluating the delivery of services. While they may have been altered to meet previous public health guidelines, moving forward, we may have better ways to serve the public.

**Additional response:**

- We have continued to fulfill our responsibilities and support the public's and industry's sustainable pursuits in the environment through essential roles like conservation, parks and environmental protection officers services.
- We successfully supported licensed hunting and fishing activities, selling 18,444 fishing licences and 5,755 hunting licences in the 2020-21 season.
- Parks staff worked to make sure necessary travel, sanitation, hygiene practices and staff training were in place to allow for a safe and early

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opening of Yukon's campgrounds this season, which began on April 30, 2021.

- The department contributed a significant amount of staff time to the front-line of *Civil Emergency Measures Act* enforcement and border check stops.
- Several departmental staff were also temporarily deployed to assist the Emergency Coordination Center, the Health Emergency Operations Centre and to assist with the vaccine rollout effort.
- I am proud of the work of Environment staff to support government-wide efforts to respond to COVID-19 and continue providing services despite the uncertainty this pandemic has caused.

**Third response:**

- The department's remote work arrangements have helped ensure the ongoing health and safety of employees and communities while still delivering essential services.
- On August 4, the requirement to wear masks in Department of Environment workplaces was lifted. However, mask-wearing continues to be strongly encouraged in public-facing services, in crowds and where physical distancing is a challenge.
- As we move into this post-emergency world, I look forward to welcoming more staff back to the office.

**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- The Opposition may ask what impact COVID-19 has had on the Department of Environment's service levels.

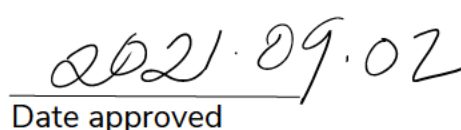
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- There may be questions on staff returning to work and a resumption of in-person services in response to the August 4 loosening of COVID-19 restrictions on mask-wearing.

**Background:**

- On March 18, 2020, Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of Health, under the *Public Health and Safety Act*, declared a public health emergency in Yukon in relation to COVID-19.
- On March 23, 2020, employees were directed to work from home.
- Yukon began gradually reopening in May 2020, as outlined in *A Path Forward: Yukon's Plan for lifting COVID-19 restrictions*. Employees were able to return to the workplace on July 2, 2020, if it was safe to do so.
- On December 4, 2020, supplementary guidance to reduce the number of employees physically in the workplace was released. This guidance was effective through to May 31, 2021.
- As of August 4, people in Yukon do not have to wear a mask in a public indoor space or self-isolate when travelling into the territory domestically.
- After being in place for 17 months, the Yukon's state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic expired on August 25, 2021.
- Although public health restrictions were lifted and there are no longer legal limits on gathering sizes, the Department of Environment strongly encourages staff and clients to follow the safe 6, plus 1 guidance.

**Approved by:**  
Deputy Minister of Environment  
Date approved

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Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon recognizes the concerns raised by a segment of the agricultural community regarding the Takhini Valley elk population and its impacts on crops and infrastructure on farms.
- To mitigate these concerns, the Government of Yukon is engaged in a two-year plan to manage elk conflict through increased funding for fencing, reduction of herd size through increased harvesting and the development of elk-specific mitigations for new agricultural land releases.
- The Elk-Agriculture Conflict Hunt aims to condition elk to stay away from conflict areas and to reduce the elk population in the eastern Takhini area.
- We continue to have discussions with affected landowners, farmers, interest groups and Yukon First Nations to address elk-agriculture conflicts.

**Additional response:**

- The Yukon's 2016 Elk Management Plan prioritizes addressing conflicts between elk and agriculture. The Department of Environment is currently reviewing the plan and will update it with information from an upcoming survey in addition to what has been gathered over the past five years.
- Farmers who lose crops due to elk conflict within the buffer zone may be eligible for compensation.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- For many Yukoners, including hunters and other outdoor enthusiasts, it is important to have a sustainable elk population.



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- For many farmers, there is a need for property protection. The ruling by the Supreme Court issued in June 2021 on a case involving damage caused by wild elk has drawn media and public attention to the issue.
  - Following amendments to the 2021-2022 conflict hunt to restrict harvest to bulls with five points or fewer, the Yukon Agricultural Association adopted an official position against the conflict hunt and the Government of Yukon's overall approach to elk-agriculture conflict and has requested that its membership not participate in the elk-agriculture conflict hunt.
  - To date, the response to the Yukon Agricultural Association's request has been varied, with some farmers refusing hunters' requests for access to their property while others have allowed hunters to access their property.
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**Background:****Court Case**

- The owners of the El Dorado Ranch filed a case with Yukon's Supreme Court alleging that the Government of Yukon is responsible for damage caused by wild elk on their property because the Government of Yukon had not fully implemented the 2016 Elk Management Plan.
- In the court ruling issued on June 23, 2021, the Chief Justice determined that the property owners were not able to prove a 'special relationship' existed with the Government of Yukon that would establish a duty of care and responsibility for the damages caused by wild elk.
- The court ruling noted that the government's zoning of the land, selling the land to the property owners, and engaging with them in the creation of the elk management policy did not create a duty of care.
- The property owners remain adamant that the government compensation programs for fencing and for damage caused by elk are inadequate.

**Elk Herds**

- Annual counts of the Takhini Valley herd are the number of animals observed during aerial surveys conducted at the same time each year and, therefore, reflect the minimum number of animals in the herd at any one time. The count varies from

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year to year due to survey conditions (i.e., visibility, snow cover) and herd dispersal on the land. Since 2017, minimum herd numbers have been:

- 2017 - 229 animals
- 2018 - 88 animals (the herd was more dispersed and in smaller groups)
- 2019 - 146 animals (poor survey conditions)
- 2020 - 231 animals
- 2021 - 134 animals

**Multi-pronged approach to managing elk in Yukon includes:**

**Elk Population Reduction:**

- The goal is to reduce the elk population in the Takhini Valley by up to 40 per cent over two years, relative to the 2020 minimal count (231 animals).
- In 2018–19, 23 elk were harvested through the conflict hunt and permit hunt authorization. The 2019–20 conflict hunt was bull-only. Eleven elk were harvested through the conflict hunt, and an additional seven were removed by other means for a total of 18 elk.
- As of October 26, 2021, for the 2021-2022 season, 12 elk have been reported as being removed from the Takhini herd. The specifics are: three were harvested through the Permit Hunt Authorization (PHA) process, two were likely killed by a poacher, five were believed to be killed by predators, one died after being wounded, and one died after colliding with a motorized vehicle. None have been removed through the conflict hunt although hunters have been out on the land.
- To achieve a reduction in elk numbers in 2020–21, the government liberalized the conflict hunt by issuing five permits bi-weekly, for two weeks in August and between October 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021. Conflict hunt permits were not issued in September to ensure the permit hunt authorization was not disturbed.
- Initially, permits allowed conflict hunters to hunt in any permissible areas within the eastern buffer zone and hunt either sex of elk with the harvest of male elk confined to small bulls. Later, we saw a larger number of older bulls killed. To maintain a balance, we introduced a restriction, confining the hunt to females and younger bulls.
- In addition, 14 hunting permits were issued to First Nation hunters for the length of the season (October 1, 2020, to March 31, 2021).

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- Under this new hunting approach, 35 elk were killed through the conflict and permit hunt authorization hunts, and an additional 12 elk were removed due to road kills, exclusion hunts and illegal kills, for the total removal of 47 elk in 2020-21.
- Conservation Officer Services Branch reports that complaints pertaining to elk encroachments are considerably fewer this year in comparison to previous years.
- The Government of Yukon developed a “permit of last resort” that can be issued to a farmer as a last resort for dispatching a problem elk. Farmers need to meet certain conditions to obtain this permit. To date, no permits of last resort have been issued.

**Funding Programs:**

- The departments of Environment, and Energy, Mines and Resources are presently partnering on a project to test the efficacy, cost and limitations of an electrical fence for excluding elk from an area. This type of exclusion fence might be a viable option for some producers who are affected by elk.
- Through the Canadian Agriculture Partnership, the Government of Yukon is continuing to provide financial assistance to farmers to prevent or compensate for damage caused by elk in the buffer zones. In the past eight years, the government provided \$350,000 to support preventative measures and in compensation.
- In 2021, an additional funding program of \$225,000 was established to support the construction of exclusion fencing on properties in the eastern buffer zone. To date, four farmers have accessed the fund and others have requested support.
- As of October 2021, \$110,000 has been spent on elk fencing and it is anticipated that number will increase to about \$150,000 by the end of the year.

**Elk-Agriculture Working Group**

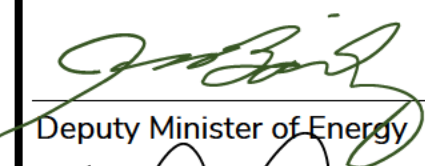
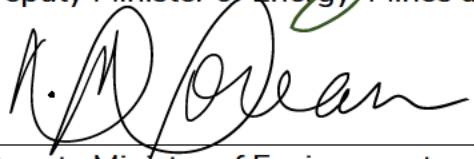
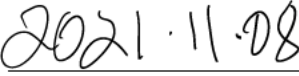
- The Elk-Agriculture Working Group was established out of the 2016 Elk Management Plan to improve communication and cooperation between landowners, government and other agencies involved in elk-agriculture conflicts.
- The group is comprised of representatives from the agricultural community, the Government of Yukon, Yukon First Nations, Renewable Resources Councils, the

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Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the Yukon Fish and Game Association.

- The Elk-Agriculture Working Group last met in Oct 2020; no future meetings have been set.

**Approved by:**  
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Deputy Minister of Energy Mines and Resources  
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Date  
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Deputy Minister of Environment  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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**Recommended response:**

- I want to thank the public, retailers and other key stakeholders for taking the time to provide feedback and share their perspectives on the proposal to ban single-use bags.
- We have now completed the *Reduction of Single Use Bags Regulation* that bans single-use plastic and paper shopping bags, with the ban on plastic bags taking effect on January 1, 2022 and paper, a year later on January 1, 2023.
- Banning single-use bags, both plastic and paper, supports the broader shift away from single-use products to readily available, reusable alternatives.
- It will also reduce the amount of plastic waste in the Yukon's environment and decrease the release of harmful emissions and chemical byproducts associated with the manufacturing of plastic and paper bags.
- Recycling and waste management is an evolving system, and we will continue to engage Yukoners on what products we should divert next from our landfills.

**Additional response:**

- The implementation of the ban is based on feedback we heard from retailers, who suggested we avoid back-to-school and Christmas shopping seasons and retailers will have several months to use up their stock of bags prior to the bans coming into effect.
- Exemptions to the ban are in place for bags with no readily available alternatives. This includes food takeout bags, pharmacy bags and bags for carrying bulk grocery store items like vegetables and fruits, as well as hardware bags for items like bolts, screws and nails.

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- Even before this ban comes into effect, I encourage all Yukoners to bring reusable bags along on their errands. We all have a role in decreasing our reliance on single-use products, and together, we can create a future with less waste.
- From a COVID-19 transmission standpoint, I also want to assure you the Yukon Chief Medical Officer of Health advises reusable bags are safe to use.

**Third response:**

- The Yukon's ban on single-use bags supports the upcoming federal ban of single-use products. We are actually one step ahead, as the federal ban is not expected to be implemented until 2023.
- The federal ban on other single-use items, such as plastic straws and cutlery, will complement our broader efforts in the Yukon to reduce waste created by single-use products and packaging.
- We continue to collaborate with other provinces and the federal government on solutions like the *Canada-Wide Action Plan on Zero Plastic Waste*.
- We also continue to look for ways to ensure recycling in the Yukon remains sustainable by working closely with our municipal partners, the public, recycling processors, industry and retailers.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- From January 7, 2021, to March 8, 2021, the Department of Environment launched an online public engagement survey and directly contacted retailers, their associations, and other key stakeholders on a detailed proposal to regulate single-use products in the Yukon.
- There may be questions about how the Yukon's ban will align with the pending federal ban on single-use plastics.

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- In the 2021 Confidence and Supply Agreement between the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus, the parties agreed that the legislation and regulations needed to enable a ban on single-use plastics should be in force by December 31, 2021.
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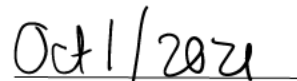
**Background:**

- In October 2018, the Yukon Legislature passed Motion 294, committing to work toward the elimination of single-use plastics in the territory.
  - In October 2018, the European Union passed a resolution for a complete ban on single-use plastics by 2021.
  - In Spring 2019, the public and stakeholders were engaged about adding a surcharge to single-use bags. The response from many Yukoners and the business community concluded that a ban was preferred.
  - The bill to amend the *Environment Act* enabling the regulation of single-use products and packaging was introduced on the floor of the Yukon Legislative Assembly on October 5, 2020. The bill received assent on December 22, 2020.
  - Environment engaged the public and stakeholders on the ban from January to March 2021, to solicit input on the kinds of bags to be exempted from the ban and how it should be implemented.
  - The majority of respondents indicated support for the ban. Some have voiced concerns about banning paper and plastic. Many indicated they would prefer to see more types of bags banned than not. Many advised takeout bags should be exempted, and many suggested avoiding the summer and Christmas season would be a good time for implementation.
  - In January 2020, the federal government reinforced its June 2019 announcement, committing to banning “harmful” single-use plastics by 2021.
  - The Villages of Mayo and Carmacks, in 2010 and 2019 respectively, implemented a ban on single-use plastic shopping bags (but still provide paper bags).
  - The City of Dawson passed a Single-Use Plastics Bylaw, which came into force as of April 22, 2020.
  - Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia have passed legislation to ban bags in 2020.
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- On October 7, 2020, Canada announced it would ban certain single-use items made from hard-to-recycle plastics (e.g., grocery checkout bags, straws, stir sticks, six-pack rings, plastic cutlery, and food takeout containers) by the end of 2021. While the draft regulation will be put forward in 2021, implementation is not expected until 2023.
- The federal ban will be achieved by adding these items to the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*.
- Between October and December 2020, Canada published a discussion paper (*Proposed Integrated Management Approach to Plastics Products to Prevent Waste and Pollution*) asking key stakeholders and the provinces and territories to participate in this national discussion.
- The department provided comments on the proposed integrated management approach document. In addition to technical comments, the department requested jurisdictions have opportunities to shape national plastic legislation, particularly the bans.

**Approved by:**  
A/DM  
Deputy Minister of Environment  
Date approved



**CONFIDENTIAL****#4****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon Wetlands Policy**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon is committed to and plans to complete a Yukon wetlands policy in 2022.
- The policy will help the Government of Yukon make decisions that respect the importance of wetlands and the benefits they provide and support a diverse, growing economy.
- Together, we can build a strong, consistent approach to wetland stewardship that reflects the values and interests of Yukoners.
- We want to hear from you on the draft wetlands policy via a public survey that is running from October 4 until December 3.
- Please go to [EngageYukon.ca](https://engage.yukon.ca) to learn more and find out how you can participate.

**Additional response:**

- Development of the draft Yukon wetland policy was based on input from First Nations, transboundary Indigenous groups, federal and municipal governments, industry, and other key organizations through roundtable-facilitated discussions.
- I am happy to convey that a final roundtable took place over November 16 and 17 which provided an opportunity for in-depth discussion and valuable feedback on the draft policy.
- Wetlands are important in the Yukon because they are essential to maintaining water flows, flood protection, purifying water, recharging and discharging groundwater, and providing habitat for fish and wildlife.

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- In addition, certain types of wetlands support traditional subsistence and cultural activities, such as harvesting and recreation.
- Natural ecosystems, including wetlands and forests, represent significant carbon reservoirs, meaning they can draw more carbon out of the atmosphere than they release back into the atmosphere.
- Yukon's wetlands, in particular peatlands, represent a significant carbon reservoir. Much of this carbon is currently stable and removed from the carbon cycle due to permafrost.
- Disturbance to these ecosystems, by either human activity or climate change, can result in release of significant amounts of carbon.
- The Government of Yukon will continue to explore the role of land-use changes, protected areas and habitat restoration with respect to carbon emissions and our climate change actions.

**Third response:**

- The wetland policy is just one way to address wetland stewardship.
- In addition to this policy:
  - We are managing placer-mining impacts on wetlands within the Indian River area using sector-specific policy guidance (see [BN #90](#)) and are evaluating the wetlands-management guidance within the Dawson Regional Land Use Plan (see [BN #6](#)).
  - We are currently evaluating a tool to assess the health of open-water wetlands, focusing this year on the assessment of disturbed and undisturbed sites in the Indian River watershed.
  - We have completed detailed mapping for the Indian River and Beaver River watersheds, and a similar mapping project focused

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on the Mayo and McQuesten watersheds is underway. This detailed mapping will assist future planning, assessment and regulatory processes in these areas.

- The wetland policy is intended to align with regional land-use planning and work by assessors and regulators like the Yukon Water Board and Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board.
- We look forward to hearing feedback on the draft wetland policy and finalizing it with our partners in the coming months.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- Minister Clarke's mandate letter committed to completing a Yukon wetland policy by May 2022, and the public review of the wetland policy will likely attract media attention.
- Management of wetlands is of high interest and often a polarizing issue to First Nations, industry, non-governmental organizations and members of the public.
- The need for a wetlands policy has appeared in media intermittently since 2016.
- Wetlands as carbon sinks is a current topic of interest. Although very little is known about Yukon's wetlands, current estimates are that northern wetlands contain 26 billion tonnes of carbon, which is equivalent to approximately 130 years of Canada's industrial greenhouse gas emissions.

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**Background:**

- The 2014 Yukon Water Strategy and Action Plan directed the Government of Yukon to develop a policy for managing Yukon wetlands, including support for wetland inventory and monitoring, in partnership with other governments, stakeholders and the public.

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- The Yukon wetlands policy began under a roundtable partnership approach, with collaborative development among many partners and shared responsibility to develop solutions and decisions related to the policy content.
- Four roundtable meetings were held with the policy development partners, including Yukon First Nations, transboundary Indigenous groups, municipal and federal governments, boards and councils, environmental non-governmental organizations and industry. Roundtables were held in April 2018, June 2018, October 2018, and March 2019.
- Roundtable partners reviewed a draft policy in 2020, and the department met with 21 partners to discuss feedback. The roundtable feedback and internal discussions shaped the current draft for public review.
- Public engagement is via an online survey.
- An invitation to attend a final meeting was sent to the roundtable partners on September 15, 2021; this included an advance opportunity to review the draft policy.
- Due to requests from the Northern Chiefs (Vuntut Gwitchin Government, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, and the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun) and concern from other roundtable partners, the public engagement period for the draft wetland policy was extended by one month. Additionally, the final roundtable meeting was delayed until November 16 and 17, 2021, to fall after the closing period of the draft Dawson Regional Land Use Plan public review.
- The fifth and final roundtable was held on November 16 and 17 with partners during the public engagement period to provide clarity about the policy and to provide an opportunity to discuss how the policy will be implemented.
- Status and further updates on the development and review of the wetland policy is publicly available on the Government of Yukon's website.
- A document summarizing all of the feedback heard at the roundtable meeting, any written submissions received and the results of the public survey will be prepared and posted.

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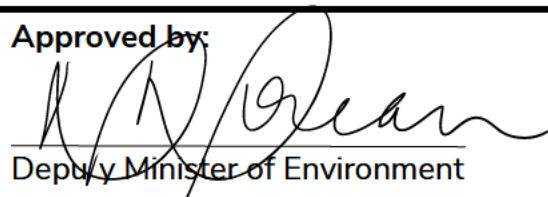
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- The draft policy will be revised based on all the feedback and consultation with First Nation, Inuvialuit, and other Indigenous governments, which will be completed prior to bringing the final draft forward for approval.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2021-11-29  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Our Clean Future**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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**Recommended response:**

- We live in a world that is rapidly changing.
- Climate change is impacting ecosystems, harvesting, infrastructure, leisure activities, and many other aspects of our lives.
- The Yukon population is growing. And this comes with a growing need for reliable, affordable and renewable energy to continue to power our lives, work, and economy.
- New economic opportunities are also emerging in the sustainable, green economy.
- Implementing the actions in *Our Clean Future* is our answer to the climate emergency and in recognition of the urgency of the climate crisis.
- We have increased the territory's greenhouse gas reduction target from 30 per cent to a 45 per cent reduction by 2030, compared to 2010 levels.

**Additional response:**

- We have already made progress in taking action on climate change following the release of *Our Clean Future* in fall 2020.
- We released the first annual report on *Our Clean Future* on August 13, 2021. This outlines the status of all of the actions in the strategy and shares data on a number of key performance indicators, including updated greenhouse gas emissions data.
- We are working across our government to identify which *Our Clean Future* actions can be accelerated to meet our new 45 per cent reduction target.

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- We will also be working with experts and stakeholders across the territory and beyond to identify opportunities and approaches to reach this ambitious target. This will include working with the new Yukon Climate Leadership Council

**Third response:**

- We know the Yukon's road transportation sector is currently the largest emitter of greenhouse gas emissions. To support emissions reductions, we have already made progress by launching new clean transportation rebates – issuing rebates for 29 battery-powered electric vehicles, 41 plug-in hybrid vehicles and 355 e-bikes as of the end of September 2021.
- We are also making advancements in renewable transportation fuels.
- In order to reach Yukon's 2030 greenhouse gas reduction target, the use of renewable fuels for transportation is necessary. We will establish requirements to blend gasoline and diesel with renewable fuels beginning in 2025.
- We estimate that applying renewable fuel requirements in Yukon will achieve around 20 per cent of the necessary emissions reductions.
- We will engage with major fuel suppliers, users and work with our counterparts at the federal level to develop a new regulation for Yukon's own fuel blending requirements.
- Further progress on *Our Clean Future* actions includes increasing our rebate for smart electric heating devices, launching the [second](#) Youth Panel on Climate Change and supporting building and energy efficiency retrofits.

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- We are also on track to set an intensity-based target for greenhouse gas emissions from Yukon's mining industry by the end of 2022.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- The first annual report on *Our Clean Future* was released on August 13, 2021. Yukoners will want to know the Government of Yukon's progress in delivering on the commitments in the strategy.
- The 2021 Confidence and Supply Agreement between the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the NDP Caucus committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 45 per cent by 2030, compared to 2010, creating a Yukon Climate Leadership Council and a policy implementation committee that will report to the public every six months. There may be questions from the public and the Opposition as to how the Government of Yukon plans to meet and support these commitments.

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**Background:**Cost and economic impact

- The total cost to implement *Our Clean Future* over the next 10 years was estimated to be over \$500 million, including existing departmental expenditures and secured federal funding. Additional actions needed to achieve the new 45 per cent greenhouse gas reduction target are likely to result in additional costs.
- Over \$400 million of the original \$500 million investment will directly support economic development and recovery by investing in local renewable energy, infrastructure and building projects, encouraging purchases of green technologies such as zero emission vehicles and e-bikes, and supporting Yukon businesses and workers to develop new skills for the green economy.
- The implementation of *Our Clean Future* is taking place over three phases. At the end of each phase, we will review our progress and reassess spending for the upcoming phase to ensure our investments continue to align with our goals and priorities.
- Departments have budgeted over \$50 million for *Our Clean Future* initiatives in 2021-22. This amount is consistent with our original commitment to invest over



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\$500 million in climate change, energy and green economy initiatives over the next 10 years.

- The Government of Canada's 2021-22 budget includes \$25 million for Yukon's climate change priorities, this is expected to go toward a combination of Our Clean Future initiatives and related renewable energy projects.
- Our Clean Future is estimated to create or support 115 jobs each year for retrofits to residential, commercial and institutional buildings, including installation of renewable heating systems.

Targets

- Our Clean Future sets several targets for 2030 :
  - Yukon's greenhouse emissions will be 45 per cent lower than they were in 2010 (increased from 30 per cent by the Liberal-NDP agreement);
  - 97 per cent of the electricity on Yukon's main grid will be generated from renewable sources on average;
  - 30 per cent less diesel will be used to generate electricity in off-grid communities, compared to 2010;
  - 50 per cent of our heating needs will be met by renewable sources; and
  - Yukon will be highly resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- By 2050, Yukon's total greenhouse gas emissions will reach net zero. This aligns with the Government of Canada's announcement to legislate a national target of net zero emissions by 2050, with legally-binding five-year milestones.
- Our Clean future commits the Government of Yukon to legislate greenhouse gas and renewable electricity generation commitments. These commitments are included in the proposed Clean Energy Act, which is out for engagement with the public, stakeholders and Yukon First Nations until January 7, 2022.
- The current actions were estimated to get us three-quarters of the way to the 30 per cent greenhouse gas reduction target by 2030. We will support the Yukon Climate Leadership Council in their development of a plan to achieve the more ambitious 45 per cent target.

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- Any gap to reaching the 45 per cent target after this work is completed will be closed over time as we learn which actions are working well, what can be improved, and as new technologies emerge over the next 10 years. This approach would be consistent with British Columbia and Canada.
- We expect that announcements in the new federal Strengthened Climate Plan, including planned increases to the federal carbon price – will help Yukon get closer to our 2030 greenhouse gas reduction target. The increase to the federal carbon price will be reflected in updated modelling included in the first annual progress report.

Progress

- The actions outlined below provide a snapshot of progress to date. The annual public report, released in summer 2021, provides official information on the status of all actions and progress indicators, including greenhouse gas emissions.
- *Our Clean Future* contains 131 actions, 104 of which are new commitments with deadlines. The remaining 27 actions are commitments to continue with existing successful initiatives.
- Of the 11 actions listed for completion in 2020, nine have been **completed**
  - Increase the capacity in Yukon Wildland Fire to prevent wildfires and respond to extended fire seasons by investing in staffing in 2020 (CS).
  - Continue to provide rebates for residential, commercial and institutional biomass heating systems and smart electric heating devices and increase the current rebate for smart electric heating devices beginning in 2020 (EMR).
  - Provide rebates to encourage the purchase of electric bicycles for personal and business commuting beginning in 2020 (EMR).
  - Provide a rebate to Yukon businesses and individuals who purchase eligible zero-emission vehicles beginning in 2020 (EMR).
  - Provide rebates to support the installation of smart electric vehicle charging stations at residential, commercial and institutional buildings in collaboration with Yukon's public utilities beginning in 2020 (EMR).

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Our Clean Future**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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- Create a Youth Panel on Climate Change in 2020 that will provide advice and perspectives to the Government of Yukon on climate change, energy and green economy matters that reflect the diversity of Yukon youth (ECO).
- Incorporate support, where possible, for local food producers into the Government of Yukon procurement processes beginning in 2020 (HPW).
- Incorporate fuel efficiency into purchasing decisions for the Government of Yukon fleet vehicles beginning in 2020 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and fuel costs (HPW).
- Provide direction to the Yukon Utilities Board in 2020 to allow Yukon's public utilities to partner with the Government of Yukon to pursue cost-effective demand-side management measures (YDC).
- While the remaining two actions due for completion in 2020 are in progress, the delay is due to limited resources or shifting priorities:
  - Update the Government of Yukon's procurement policies and standards in 2020 to better support sustainable and local procurement (HPW). Anticipated completion in December 2021 (HPW).
  - Implement a glacier monitoring program in 2020 to improve our ability to predict the impacts of glacier melt on hydrological systems and hydroelectricity generation (EMR). Anticipated completion in January 2022.
- There are 19 actions in *Our Clean Future* listed for completion in 2021, and three have already been completed:
  - Increase the Government of Yukon's participation in intergovernmental initiatives related to mine resiliency, low-carbon mining and innovation (EMR).
  - Improve modelling of the impacts of climate change on hydroelectricity reservoirs and incorporate this information into short, medium and long-term forecasts for renewable hydroelectricity generation (YEC).
  - Establish a partnership between the Government of Yukon, Yukon Energy Corporation and ATCO Electric Yukon that will collaborate on the delivery of energy and capacity demand-side management programs (EMR & YEC).

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Our Clean Future**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

- Ministers receive an update on the progress of action items for our Clean Future at the halfway point of each calendar year.
- A 2017 Auditor General of Canada report was critical of the Government of Yukon on its climate action. *Our Clean Future* addresses the report's recommendations, including through the commitment to clear and transparent annual reporting.
- The *Our Clean Future* strategy was developed in partnership with Yukon First Nations, transboundary Indigenous groups, and Yukon municipalities over the course of three years. The Government of Yukon will continue to work collaboratively with Yukon First Nations on climate change initiatives, including through the new Yukon Climate Leadership Council.

**Approved by:**

November 17, 2021

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister of Environment\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**CONFIDENTIAL****#6****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Dawson Regional Land  
Use Planning**Energy, Mines and  
Resources  
Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- The Dawson Regional Land Use Commission has met [12](#) times, with the most recent meeting held [October 26 and 28, 2021](#), in Dawson. The Commission has been meeting with stakeholders and holding public events to gain feedback on their Draft Plan.
- The Recommended Plan is on schedule to be concluded in 2022, with a Final Recommended Plan, if required, to follow in 2023.
- [The Commission's efforts to achieve a balance between many competing interests is appreciated.](#)
- [The Yukon Government has responded to the Draft Plan asking for further clarity on some aspects of the plan and the integration of climate change impacts throughout the plan. Our response focused on six key topics including: designations and land management unit boundaries; cumulative effects; wetlands; culture and heritage; missing and murdered indigenous women, girls and two spirited people; and implementation.](#)

**Additional response:**

- [The Government of Yukon and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in have provided comments to the Dawson Regional Land Use Planning Commission on the Draft Plan and these comments will be posted on the Dawson Regional Land Use Planning Commission website shortly.](#)

**CONFIDENTIAL****#6****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Dawson Regional Land  
Use Planning**Energy, Mines and  
Resources  
Environment

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**CONFIDENTIAL****#6****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Dawson Regional Land  
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- The First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation have yet to comment, and recently the Commission has indicated that if they wish to do so, these First Nations should offer their comments before December 1 if possible. This opportunity is not expected to affect the timeline of the Recommended Plan.
- The input gathered by the Commission will influence the location and amount of land ultimately set aside for conservation, economic and other activities in the Recommended Plan.
- With a Recommended Plan and a Final Recommended Plan still to come, the Parties to the plan and the public will have further opportunities to provide input into the planning process.
- When the Draft Plan was released for review, we passed an interim withdrawal of lands identified for conservation by the Commission. [These withdrawals will be updated at the Recommended Plan stage.](#)

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**Context – this may be an issue because:**

- Public consultation on the Draft Plan by the Dawson Regional Land Use Commission started on June 15, 2021 [and ended November 1, 2021.](#)

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**Background:**

- The Chapter 11 process provides the Commission with the autonomy to develop a Draft Plan independently and then “recommend” the plan to the Parties for their consideration.

**CONFIDENTIAL****#6****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Dawson Regional Land  
Use Planning**Energy, Mines and  
Resources  
Environment

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Use Planning**Energy, Mines and  
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- The Parties agreed to a land-use planning process for the Dawson region in 2010. This process was paused in 2014, pending the outcome of the Peel court case.
- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation agreed to a common northern boundary for the Dawson planning region, which resulted in the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation no longer being a party to the Dawson planning process.
- The Government of Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in formed the Dawson Regional Land Use Planning Commission in December 2018.
- In October 2020, the Parties to the plan provided their conservation area analysis to the Dawson Planning Commission. The analysis was recently made public by the Commission on its website.
- The Government of Yukon has coordinated internal input into the review and was prepared to provide feedback on the Draft Plan to the Commission by the November 1, 2021 deadline. However due to an extension request by Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, the Parties elected to wait until there was greater clarity on how the extension request would be addressed by the Commission, and both Parties submitted their comments on November 5, 2021.
- The Government of Yukon's response to the Draft Plan focused on six key topics within overarching themes of clarity and integrating climate change. The six key topics were:
  1. Designations and Land Management Unit BoundariesFurther clarification, guidance and recommendations were requested on:
  - Land use designations such as the Special Management Area II designation;
  - How existing claims will be honoured and/or developed;
  - The importance of critical minerals;
  - Restrictions in the Yukon River Corridor land management unit;

**CONFIDENTIAL****#6****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Dawson Regional Land  
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- A more fulsome incorporation of the Fortymile and Clear Creek caribou herds ranges into protected areas;
- Land management unit adjacency; and
- Tombstone – Ddal Ch'el recognized as a protected area under the Plan.

**2. Cumulative Effects**

Concerns were raised regarding:

- Linking linear feature density and surface disturbance thresholds;
- Further developing socio-economic indicators;
- Thresholds that reflect upcoming mapping (to be provided by the Government of Yukon in spring 2022), and
- Need to develop values-based reclamation guidance.

**3. Wetlands**

It was requested that the Commission takes the draft territory-wide wetlands policy into consideration when developing the Recommended Plan. This would include the mitigation hierarchy when managing human impacts on wetlands and identifying wetlands of special importance.

**4. Culture and Heritage**

The Government of Yukon would like to see culture and heritage resources and their relationship to Chapter 13 of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement better reflected throughout the plan.

**5. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two Spirited People**

Yukon Government encourages policy recommendations relating to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two Spirited People and resource extraction to be extended beyond the Parties to pronouncements to ensure further action may be accomplished.

**CONFIDENTIAL****#7****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Flood Response**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- High-water flows influenced by river ice breakup and snowmelt are the main drivers of flooding in Yukon communities. Glacial melt also plays a role in influencing peak water levels in basins with glaciers.
- This year, we had a record season for high water in many lakes and rivers, especially in the Yukon River basin.
- We saw higher than average snowpack in many watersheds in the territory, and the Upper Yukon River Basin had historic snowpack levels, almost twice when compared to an average year.
- Combined with a wet and cool spring and above normal summer temperatures, this led to a fast melt and a perfect combination for high water.
- Hydrologists from the Water Resources Branch at the Department of Environment monitor information and data from a variety of sources to forecast high-water events. They also ensure the most up-to-date information is provided to both the public and staff in emergency response services.
- The Water Resources Branch issued flood forecasts, river ice breakup forecasts, high water advisories, flood watches, and flood warnings beginning in early April through to early October.

**Additional response:**

- This summer, we had flood warnings in effect for the Southern Lakes, Lake Laberge and the Yukon River at Carmacks; flood watches in effect for Teslin, Kusawa Lake and Takhini River; and high-water advisories for Nordenskiöld River, Klondike River, Pelly River, Liard River, and Yukon River at Whitehorse.

**CONFIDENTIAL****#7****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Flood Response**Environment

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- Climate change can significantly alter water flows in the North. We also know that climate change is behind an increasing amount of extreme weather events, such as flooding, so we can expect to see more extreme variation both on the event and seasonal scale in the future.
- Changes to winter and spring temperatures, winter storms, snowpack, snowmelt, rain events, river ice, permafrost and glaciers that control flows in Yukon rivers can result in dramatic changes to the timing, volume of flow and water levels.
- Going forward, we can expect larger snowfalls on average, more precipitation overall, and more extreme events like the heatwave we experienced in late June. These types of extreme events, in turn, will affect the water levels we experience throughout the year.

**Third response:**

- We are investing in our abilities to predict and monitor floods so we can be prepared as early as possible. Projects identified under *Our Clean Future* include investments in flood mapping, improvements to our hydrological monitoring and forecasting systems, and community risk management planning. (see [BNs #5 & #27](#))
- Information gathered from monitoring and models informs our understanding of flood potential resulting from spring conditions and allows us to communicate this to emergency response agencies.
- Further information on snowpack is communicated in the Yukon Snow Survey Bulletin and Water Supply Forecast, issued in March, April and May each year.

**CONFIDENTIAL****#7****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Flood Response****Environment**

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- Information on water levels for some Yukon lakes and rivers, including current advisories and flood warnings, is available at [Yukon.ca/water-levels](http://Yukon.ca/water-levels).
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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- 2021 was a record season for high water in many lakes and rivers, especially in the Yukon River basin.
  - As climate change is projected to impact water levels, snowpack, precipitation and other factors that influence flooding, Yukoners may be concerned about flooding occurring more regularly.
  - Increased flooding potential can directly impact the health and security of people, in addition to infrastructure, transportation and other physical assets.
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**Background:**

- The Yukon Snow Survey Bulletin and Water Supply Forecast are issued three times annually by the Water Resources Branch. It provides a summary of winter meteorological and streamflow conditions for all major Yukon watersheds, as well as current snow depth and snow water equivalent observations for 57 locations.
  - The Government of Yukon, in partnership with the Water Survey of Canada, conducts long-term monitoring of large rivers and lakes in the Yukon. This monitoring provides daily mean and instantaneous flows and water levels in near real-time.
  - Additional internal and external partnerships with the federal government, First Nations governments, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and Department of Community Services in the Government of Yukon support snowpack and meteorological monitoring efforts throughout the territory.
  - Flood information is communicated through the annual Fire and Flood briefing, which took place between April 27 and April 29 this year. It was coordinated by Emergency Measures Organization and included briefings for Ministers, Opposition, Deputy Ministers, and Media.
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**CONFIDENTIAL****#7****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Flood Response****Environment**

- Additional briefings and community meetings were organized throughout the spring and summer to communicate information on the flood situation and response.
- In 2019-2020, Water Resources Branch accessed federal funding from the National Disaster Mitigation Program to improve flood forecasting capabilities by upgrading hydrometric stations and developing and improving streamflow and ice breakup forecasting models. The project also included steps to advance efforts to create flood maps for flood-prone communities in the Yukon.
- Water Resources Branch uses satellite imagery, along with river aerial surveys, to monitor ice conditions upstream and downstream of the communities of Dawson and Old Crow in advance of spring breakup.
- In 2020, the Government of Yukon released *Our Clean Future*, which identifies actions to strengthen our understanding of how water levels may change due to climate change and ways to adapt to these changing conditions.
- In 2021, Southern Lakes water levels peaked on July 10/11 at 17 to 23 centimetres higher than the previous water levels recorded in 2007, while Lake Laberge exceeded the 2007 peak level by 44 centimetres. The Southern Lakes typically peak in late August at an average height approximately one meter below the peak 2021 water level.
- Based on limited data, it appears groundwater levels in unconfined aquifers around the Southern Lakes are high, and as a result, levels are expected to will be higher than usual next spring. High groundwater levels can increase the probability of surface and groundwater flooding, especially if groundwater recharge in 2022 is again high.

**Approved by:**  
a/Deputy Minister of EnvironmentOctober 4, 2021  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Executive Committee Screening of  
the Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project  
(BMC Minerals)**Executive Council  
Office**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon government continues to consult with Kaska First Nations on the Kudz Ze Kayah project in a way that meets our obligations and supports our commitment to build strong relationships with First Nations.
- We are concerned that the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board's Executive Committee issued a Referral Conclusion stating that the four participants were "deadlocked" in its reconsideration of the screening report.
- We are considering the results of the Executive Committee's Referral Conclusion and screening report and collaborating with the federal decision bodies to reach a decision on the project.

**Additional response:**

- Our government supports responsible mineral resource development and remains committed to finding efficiencies in the assessment and regulatory review of projects.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- YESAA states that the Executive Committee is composed of three members; one appointed on nomination of the Yukon, one appointed on nomination of the Council of Yukon First Nations and one appointed by Canada. However, four members of the Executive Committee issued the Referral Conclusion that included individual statements from each of the four individuals.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Executive Committee Screening of  
the Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project  
(BMC Minerals)**Executive Council  
Office

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- BMC Minerals continues to reach out to decision bodies expressing concerns about the delay in the issuance of a decision document and interest in the process of reaching a decision.
  - Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) and Liard First Nation (LFN) have identified concerns related to impacts of the project on the Finlayson caribou herd and how the Executive Committee has addressed those impacts. The Kaska Nations are requesting the project be rejected.

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**Background:**

- On October 21, 2020 the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board's Executive Committee (EC) released the final screening report for the project recommending it proceed subject to specific terms and conditions.
- On January 22, 2021, the federal decision bodies referred the recommendation issued by the EC back to the EC for reconsideration on the basis that the analysis in the screening report was insufficient to support the recommendation.
- YG issued a statement on January 22, 2021 indicating it was satisfied with and supported the final screening report issued by the EC on October 21, 2020 and was prepared to accept the recommendations.
- On March 29, 2021 the EC issued the Referral Conclusion stating that its four members were "deadlocked" in its reconsideration of the screening report. Two members determined the project is likely to result in significant adverse effects that can be mitigated by the application of terms and conditions; the other two members determined the project is likely to result in significant adverse effects that cannot be mitigated, but that effects may be addressed through a review by a panel of the Board.
- As a result of the "deadlock", the EC concluded that the original screening report issued October 21, 2020 stood as the reconsidered recommendation.



**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Executive Committee Screening of  
the Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project  
(BMC Minerals)**Executive Council  
Office

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- YG, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Natural Resources Canada are decision bodies and are required to consult with each other with a view to making their decision document(s) conform.
  - YG continues to meet regularly with the Northern Project Management Office, which is coordinating on behalf of the federal decision bodies, to discuss any issues and concerns and collaborate in reaching a decision.
  - YG, in collaboration with federal decision bodies, must decide whether to issue a decision based on the October 2020 screening report to accept, reject or vary the recommendations or refer the project to a panel review.
  - On July 16, 2021 the decision bodies notified the EC that they will continue work on the project, in consultation with Kaska, with the goal of making a decision in approximately the next three months.

**Consultation with First Nations**

- In May 2021 the Kaska First Nations submitted a letter to YG stating their view that “there is no viable option other than to reject the KZK Screening Report and Recommendations”. The letter is signed by the Chiefs of the RRDC, LFN, Dease River First Nation and Kwadacha Nation and is the first correspondence received by YG indicating a collective Kaska position.
- On July 5, 2021 the decision bodies wrote to the four Kaska Chiefs to request a meeting to discuss the project. The letter indicated that the decision bodies have been engaged in discussions to consider varying the terms and conditions recommended by the EC in an effort to address the Kaska concerns.
- On July 16, 2021, a follow up letter was sent to the four Kaska Chiefs reiterating interest in meeting and indicating that the decision bodies would like to continue work on the project in consultation with Kaska,
- In August 2021 YG received a letter from Chief Charlie of LFN responding to the decision bodies and indicating a willingness to meet on the project at a technical level. Chief Charlie requested that the decision bodies provide LFN with an outline

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Executive Committee Screening of  
the Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project  
(BMC Minerals)**Executive Council  
Office

and draft language of the varying recommendations in advance of any proposed meeting with sufficient time for LFN to do its internal review.

- The decision bodies are currently preparing information to share with the Kaska to inform discussions on the project at a future consultation meeting. The package will contain the proposed varied terms and conditions and rationale for the variance describing how the terms are intended to address concerns raised by RRDC and LFN and impacts of the project on the Finlayson caribou herd.
- During the referral reconsideration public comment period, RRDC identified significant concerns about the impacts of the project to the Finlayson caribou herd and indicated that the recommendations may not mitigate those effects. LFN requested that the EC refer the project to a panel review or recommend the project not proceed also referring to the impacts to the Finlayson caribou herd.

**Approved by:**

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

September 9, 2021

Date

**CONFIDENTIAL****#9****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Park Fees**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- In order to help sustain service levels in our parks, we will be increasing camping fees starting in January 2022.
- Currently, camping fees only cover about 10 per cent of the costs of services provided; the new fees will cover approximately 22 per cent. For comparison, cost recovery in Alberta in 2018 was 39 per cent.
- Our campground fees have not increased since 2002. Even with the new increases, they will remain some of the lowest in Canada.
- There will continue to be no fees for park entry, day use, parking, boat launch use, and interpretive programs where offered, and camping fees will continue to include firewood.

**Additional response:**

- The public was extensively engaged on the issue of updating park fees in 2018 and 2019 as part of the Yukon Parks Strategy public engagement.
- During public engagement, we heard that Yukoners view parks as an important public service that needs government funding with a reasonable amount of cost recovery from park users.
- People expect to pay a fair share of the cost when they use facilities and services but also expect basic park services to be provided.
- All of these benefits rest on our firm commitment to ensure quality camping experiences for Yukoners and visitors by financially sustaining our parks and campgrounds over the years ahead.

**CONFIDENTIAL****#9****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Park Fees****Environment**

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**Third response:**

- The decision to raise fees is consistent with the report delivered in 2017 by the Yukon Financial Advisory Panel to recover costs for providing services and is a strategic action in the Yukon Parks Strategy.
- The Yukon is the only jurisdiction in Canada that currently provides free camping for seniors, and many parks systems in Canada do not offer a seniors discount on camping.
- Applying a discounted seniors fee will align our rates with other jurisdictions while still ensuring affordable access.
- The Yukon's 50 per cent seniors discount will remain among the most generous in Canada.
- The fee changes include:
  - Increasing a night of camping from \$12 to \$20, or \$18 if paid in advance through a new online system.
  - Increasing the annual Yukon resident camping permit from \$50 to \$100 in 2022; and \$200 in 2023.
  - Moving to a 50 per cent seniors' discount on all camping fees instead of the current 100 per cent discount.
  - A new \$10 reservation fee will be introduced starting in 2022 for online reservations for backcountry campsites.
  - A new \$40 park permit application fee will also be introduced for activities requiring a permit, such as commercial filming and land use.

**CONFIDENTIAL****#9****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Park Fees****Environment****Context — this may be an issue because:**

- The public will want to know about the new fees and when they will come into effect for the 2022 camping season.
- The increase to park fees may be questioned in light of platform commitments made during the territorial election, such as the Yukon NDP committing to maintaining the \$50 annual camping permits and free camping for Yukon seniors and offset costs by increasing fees for out-of-territory guests.

**Background:**

- Over 1,500 Yukoners, 200 non-residents, 10 Yukon First Nations governments and 28 Yukon organizations provided input on the draft Yukon Parks Strategy in 2018 and 2019.
- There were conflicting views about the best approach to camping fees for seniors. Some people felt that seniors should continue to enjoy free camping, while others felt that free camping for this age group put an unfair financial burden on taxpayers and fee-paying campers including young families. There were concerns about the financial viability of our parks as seniors will make up an even larger proportion of the population in the decade ahead.
- In to the Yukon's planned 50 per cent daily discount for seniors, British Columbia offers a 50 per cent daily camping discount for seniors in the shoulder season only, whereas Newfoundland and Labrador offer a 35 per cent discount.

**Approved by:**

Deputy Minister

Department of Environment

2021.09.09

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Outfitter Quotas**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- Sustainable harvest management is a complex issue, and the Government of Yukon recognizes the conservation of wildlife populations and First Nations subsistence harvest rights are of paramount importance.
- We are also committed to providing opportunities for resident hunters and supporting an outfitting industry in the Yukon.
- Outfitting is a valued industry in the Yukon that benefits communities through employment opportunities, the purchase of goods and services and, in many cases, a donated supply of fresh meat.
- As it no longer reflects how wildlife is conducted in the territory, the Department of Environment intends to review and modernize the 25-year old *Guidelines to Establish Outfitter Quotas* currently used to establish moose, caribou, and sheep quotas.
- Quotas limit the number of animals of a particular species that clients of an outfitter may harvest in any given year.

**Additional response:**

- Once we initiate this review process, we intend to work with First Nations, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, Renewable Resources Councils, the outfitting industry, and the public.
- Modernizing the quota process will align the industry with the wildlife values of Yukoners and provide a consistent, transparent approach to quota allocation for big-game outfitters.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Outfitter Quotas**Environment

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- Outfitters will continue to operate during this review, and we welcome an open dialogue as we move forward.

**Third response:**

- During the review process to modernize the outfitter quota guidelines, the department will use an interim process to establish outfitter quotas for the 2022-2023 season, ensuring it aligns with the *Wildlife Act*.
- All outfitters operating in the Yukon will be assigned a moose and/or caribou quota for the 2022-2023 hunting season.
- Outfitters with existing moose and/or caribou quotas will see their previous quota extended one year at a time with similar conditions unless there is a conservation issue.
- The grizzly bear quotas allocation process will remain the same for the 2022-23 season.
- Goat, sheep and bison quotas, where applicable, will also remain the same for the 2022-23 season but will be renewed annually.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Department of Environment officials met with the Yukon Outfitter Liaison Committee to discuss issues facing outfitting in the Yukon on October 26, 2021. Updates to the quota allocation process were discussed in the meeting, and there was reference to developing new harvest allocation guidance more broadly.
- 74(1)(a)

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Outfitter Quotas**Environment

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- First Nations governments, Renewable Resources Councils, and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board were sent letters to relay the department's intent to review wildlife harvest allocation, including modernizing the quota guidelines.

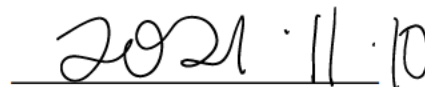
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**Background:**

- The *Guidelines to Establish Outfitter Quotas in Yukon* (1996) have been used to establish harvest quotas for moose, caribou, and sheep.
- The Guidelines are now 25-years old and require modernization for a variety of reasons, including:
  - To bring them into conformity with the *Yukon Wildlife Act*.
  - To reflect the Government of Yukon's consultation obligations to First Nations.
  - To integrate modern adaptive management tools.
  - To increase clarity and reduce conflict (they are interpreted by the Government of Yukon, Renewable Resources Councils, and outfitters differently).
  - To bring consistency across outfitting concessions and big game species.
- Allocating quotas for all outfitters for all species will provide a level playing field for the industry in the Yukon and business predictability to individual outfitters.

**Approved by:**

Deputy Minister  
Department of Environment



Date approved



**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Mining Emissions  
Intensity Target**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon remains committed to establishing intensity-based greenhouse gas emissions targets for the mining industry in 2022. Mining emissions are included in the Yukon's long term goal of becoming net-zero by 2050.
- An intensity-based approach encourages low-carbon efficiencies in operations without hampering the development of a healthy mining sector in the Yukon.
- We are using third party consultants to help develop options for intensity-based targets, as well as options to help reach those targets. We will use this work for future engagement with the Yukon's mining industry.

**Additional response:**

- An intensity-based approach recognizes the potential for substantial year-to-year fluctuations in the Yukon's mining emissions.
- Intensity-based targets encourage mine operators to innovate and adopt low-carbon practices, regardless of how many mines are in operation.
- Mining emissions targets will help the mining industry contribute to a sustainable future while supporting the Yukon's overall economy. More than one target may be needed due to differences in activities between types of mining operations and lifecycle phases.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Mining Emissions  
Intensity Target**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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**Third response:**

- We are considering the implications that the Government of Canada's output-based carbon pricing system may have on intensity-based targets in the Yukon. We are working to establish regulatory and reporting efficiencies for mining companies.
- In addition, the Government of Yukon will launch new greenhouse gas emissions planning and reporting requirements for quartz mines, starting in 2022.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- At the announcement for Our Clean Future's first annual report, the media repeatedly asked for an update on the mining intensity-based target.
- During the public engagement on *Our Clean Future*, there were some members of the public, Indigenous and municipal governments, and stakeholder groups that did not support the intensity-based approach to mining emissions. They raised concerns that the Yukon's total emissions may increase or that industry is getting a "free ride."

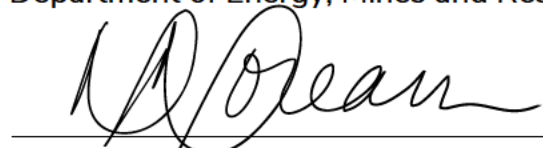
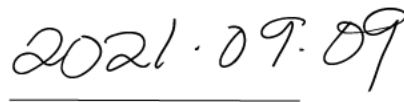
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**Background:**

- Action 19 in *Our Clean Future* is to establish an intensity-based greenhouse gas reduction target for the Yukon's mining industry and additional actions needed to reach the target by 2022.
- The greenhouse gas emissions target of net zero by 2050 from the Yukon's entire economy includes mining emissions. Mining accounted for 10 to 15 per cent of the Yukon's total greenhouse gas emissions from 2009-2018.
- Greenhouse gas emissions from mine remediation projects, including the Faro Mine Remediation project, will be captured under the mining intensity-based targets, not under the Yukon's 45 per cent by 2030 reduction target.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Mining Emissions  
Intensity Target**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

- Through fuel blending, we expect to reduce mining emissions by 25 kilotonnes in 2030, according to the modelling by Navius Research. This is a significant emissions reduction that may or may not be adequate to reach the targets, depending on the level they are set at.
- New greenhouse gas emissions planning and reporting requirements for quartz mines will be incorporated into the existing reporting required under a Quartz Mining Licence. Currently there is no requirement to report on greenhouse gas emissions. The new requirements will make it possible for Yukon government to track the sector's progress toward achieving the targets.
- The Output-Based Pricing System is part of Canada's approach to pricing carbon pollution for emission-intensive trade-exposed industries, such as mining. It is designed to encourage industrial emitters to innovate and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions while maintaining competitiveness and minimizing carbon leakage. Quartz mines in the Yukon may be subject to the Output-Based Pricing System depending on their size.
- The Yukon New Democratic Party's election platform included a commitment to include mining emissions in the Yukon's 2030 greenhouse gas emissions reduction target, rather than treating mining separately.

**Approved by:**  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Energy, Mines and Resources  
Date approved  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Environment  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Climate Risk Assessment** Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon is nearing the completion of a Yukon-wide climate change risk assessment.
- This risk assessment will help us determine how vulnerable Yukoners are to climate risks and the different ways climate change will impact people and communities.
- It will assess how our built, natural and social systems need to adjust to climate change and moderate potential damages. It will also help us determine how we can take advantage of opportunities and cope with the consequences.
- We are making sure Yukoners' perspectives inform the assessment, incorporating scientific, local, and Indigenous knowledge.
- Specifically, we are working with experts in Yukon First Nations governments, municipalities, and stakeholders in the health, social and economic sectors.
- We expect to release the final Yukon-wide climate change risk assessment report winter 2022.

**Additional response:**

- The results of this Yukon-wide assessment will inform decisions related to adaptation and offer ideas for action to enhance climate resilience in Yukon.
- These results can also help First Nations and communities plan their actions to support local climate change adaptation and address local climate risks.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Climate Risk Assessment** Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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**Third response:**

- Understanding climate impacts and the potential risks that they present is a first step in adapting and becoming resilient to climate change over the long term.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- There have been public commitments to support climate change adaptation planning for Yukon communities to ensure they are resilient to climate change risks. The recent flooding in the Southern Lakes may have increased public awareness about climate change risks.
- There may be questions about what a Yukon-wide climate change risk assessment will provide and when it is expected to be completed.
- Completing a territory-wide risk assessment to prioritize climate change adaptation actions, as recommended by the Office of the Auditor General, is a 2021 Department of Environment mandate letter commitment.

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**Background:**

- The 2017 Office of the Auditor General's climate change audit found that the Government of Yukon must complete a comprehensive, territory-wide risk assessment to prioritize adaptation actions. All provinces and territories across Canada received this recommendation.
- Risk assessments are typically carried out on an ongoing basis. Action 128 in *Our Clean Future* commits to: "Assess climate hazards and vulnerabilities to those hazards across Yukon every three to four years between 2020 and 2030 to prioritize climate change adaptation actions."
- The corporate and Yukon-wide risk assessments were funded through Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada's Climate Change Preparedness in the North program.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Climate Risk Assessment** Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

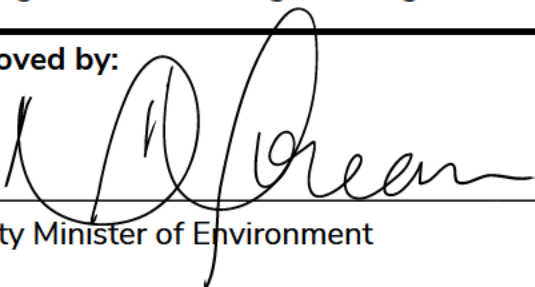

- The Yukon-wide risk assessment project is funded with \$137,000 for 2020-2021. The corporate climate risk assessment was funded with \$160,000 from 2018-19 to 2020-21.

Yukon-wide climate risk assessment

- Consistent with other jurisdictions, the Climate Change Secretariat is now carrying out the Yukon-wide risk assessment to align with future updates of *Our Clean Future*.

Corporate climate risk assessment

- In spring 2020, a high-level assessment of climate change risks to the Government of Yukon was completed. The findings of this corporate climate risk assessment informed the adaptation objectives and actions in *Our Clean Future*.
- The assessment found that climate change-associated hazards such as wildfires, flooding, and thawing permafrost are anticipated to impact government services, assets, and operations in a variety of ways, such as increased human resources needs for emergency and healthcare branches and damage to public infrastructure.
- We are sharing the findings of this corporate climate change risk assessment with government departments to help them address climate change risks in their strategic planning and decision-making.
- We are also building capacity to undertake climate change risk assessments across government through training and education.

**Approved by:**  
Deputy Minister of Environment2021.10.26  
Date approved  
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources25/10/2021  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Youth Panel on  
Climate Change**Executive Council Office  
Energy Mines and Resources  
Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- Since the winter of 2021, the Youth Panel on Climate Change has been working to develop recommendations to inform Government of Yukon actions committed to under *Our Clean Future: A Yukon strategy for climate change, energy and a green economy*.
- The panelists have been exploring key themes related to climate change and engaging experts, Elders and other Yukon youth to develop recommendations on how government can accelerate work on climate action.
- They presented their recommendations to the Government of Yukon on October 15, 2021. The recommendations span a wide range of issues, including education, capacity building, land use planning, Indigenous sovereignty, local transportation and food production, knowledge and policy creation, and mining and industry.
- We are currently reviewing their recommendations in detail and have committed to report back to the panel with our response.

**Additional response:**

- The recommendations report is available online on BYTE's website and on the Government of Yukon webpage about the youth panel.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- The public may be interested to know more about how the Government of Yukon will respond to the Youth Panel's recommendations.
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**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Youth Panel on  
Climate Change**Executive Council Office  
Energy Mines and Resources  
Environment

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**Background:**

- Our Clean Future: a Yukon strategy for climate change, energy and a green economy was released on September 14, 2020. It includes a commitment to creating a Youth Panel on Climate Change in 2020 to provide advice and perspectives to the Government of Yukon on climate change, energy, and green economy matters that reflect the Yukon youth's diversity.
  - The recommendations are linked to the seven areas of Our Clean Future: Transportation, Homes and buildings, Energy production, People and the environment, Communities, Innovation, and Leadership.
  - Highlights of the recommendations include:
    - Ensuring that education and training related to climate adaptation and renewable energy are available to Yukon youth.
    - Building capacity within the Government of Yukon to incorporate climate change into decision making.
    - Increasing focus and support for addressing impacts related to invasive species.
    - Completing Land Use Planning, guided by Yukon First Nations perspectives.
    - Prioritizing co-governance with Indigenous peoples.
    - Ensuring local food and public transportation are increasingly accessible for all Yukoners.
    - Ensuring climate change policy is informed by scientific findings and traditional knowledge through the creation of an unbiased panel or third-party body to advise the Government of Yukon.
    - Addressing the impacts that mining and extractive industries have on ecological degradation and greenhouse gas emissions.
  - The youth panel has met with and interviewed youth participating in the Yukon First Nation Climate Action Fellowship, established under the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Assembly of First Nations Yukon Region.
  - The Executive Council Office has entered into a Transfer Payment Agreement with BYTE for their provision of secretariat support for the youth panel. BYTE will continue to provide support for the panel for the coming year.
  - A call for applications to form the next Youth Panel on Climate Change will be announced later this year.
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**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Youth Panel on  
Climate Change**Executive Council Office  
Energy Mines and Resources  
Environment

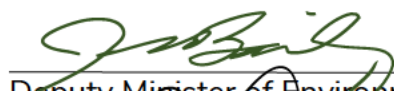
- The panel began meeting in January 2021, and has met virtually 11 times and twice in person over the last year.
- The panel presented their recommendations to the Premier and Ministers Clarke and Streicker.
- Youth panelists were appointed for one-year; a second cohort of panelists will be selected in late 2021 and will be tasked with making additional recommendations to government about the implementation of Our Clean Future by August 15, 2022.

**Approved by:**

Deputy Minister of Executive Council Office

Oct 19, 2021

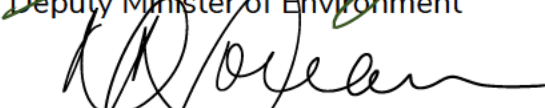
Date approved



Deputy Minister of Environment

19/10/2021

Date approved



Deputy Minister of Energy Mines and Resources

19/10/21

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Climate Change Lens**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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**Recommended response:**

- Across the Government of Yukon, departments are developing structured approaches to ensure that climate change considerations are built into government decision-making.
- This work is often referred to as applying a climate change lens.
- A climate change lens involves assessing anticipated greenhouse gas emissions of planned projects and addressing climate change impacts and risks in the project planning stage.

**Additional response:**

- By embedding climate change considerations into decision-making, the Government of Yukon can:
  - Assess an initiative's impact on greenhouse gas emissions;
  - Identify appropriate greenhouse gas mitigation measures; and
  - Identify and address how initiatives may be affected by climate change-related risks, such as building highways so they do not crack and buckle as permafrost thaws.
- To support these processes, the Climate Change Secretariat is working to build capacity across the Government of Yukon by developing guidance materials and delivering training on how to incorporate a climate change lens into decision-making.

**Third response:**

- The Government of Yukon also undertakes federal climate lens assessments that consider greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Climate Change Lens**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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measures for proposed infrastructure projects valued at \$10 million or more.

- The Government of Yukon's major projects that receive federal funding, such as transportation infrastructure, community infrastructure and building projects, benefit from these assessments.
- One example is the Copper Haul Road fuel break project. As a result of the federal climate lens assessment, the project proponents identified measures to reduce equipment usage, which will result in lowering the project's greenhouse gas emissions. The project also increases resiliency to climate change by reducing wildfire risk to the Whitehorse community.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- Incorporating a climate change lens into the decision-making process for major Government of Yukon policies, programs and projects is a 2021 mandate commitment for Executive Council Office, with support from the Department of Finance and the Public Service Commission.
- On October 15, 2019, the Leader of the Third Party put forward a Notice of Motion (#35) urging the Government of Yukon to develop and implement a climate lens. A similar motion may be called forward for debate in the 2021 Fall Sitting.
- On May 31, 2021, a petition signed by *For Their Future Yukon* was tabled, urging the Government of Yukon to incorporate a climate lens into decision-making processes and launch the information and social marketing campaign in *Our Clean Future* in consultation with the Yukon Leadership Council.

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**Background:**

- Climate change impacts are considered in decision-making by applying a climate change lens.
- Three action items in the *Our Clean Future* strategy commit to continuing climate risk assessments of:

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Climate Change Lens**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

- All major transportation infrastructure projects;
- All major building projects; and
- All major community infrastructure projects above \$10 million, such as through the federal Climate Lens assessment.
- The Government of Yukon is undertaking corporate climate risk assessments to:
  - Enhance awareness and knowledge of current and future climate change impacts and how this might affect the Government of Yukon's departments and their activities;
  - Ensure that departments whose activities are exposed to climate risks systematically consider those risks in their policies, procedures and processes; and,
  - Develop and implement targeted risk reduction measures.
- Notice of Motion #35 urges the Government of Yukon to develop and implement a climate lens to assess the climate impact of all government infrastructure, policy, legislative initiatives, and projects by:
  1. Measuring the anticipated greenhouse gas emissions impact of a project;
  2. Encouraging the adoption of alternatives that reduce any proposed project's carbon emissions; and
  3. Assessing the climate change resiliency of each project and decision.
- Petition Number 1 of the First Session of the 35<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, signed by For Their Future Yukon, was reported to be in good standing by the Clerk on October 7, 2021.

**Approved by:**  
Deputy Minister of Environment

2021.10.26

Date approved

  
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

25/10/2021

Date approved

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**#25**

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Fall 2021**

### **Climate Change Adaptation and Emergency Response**

Environment  
Energy, Mines  
and Resources

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#### **Recommended response:**

- This past summer was unlike any other. A heatwave resulted in the rapid melt of the record-breaking snowpack, creating flood conditions in some areas and at the same time, the extended hot and dry weather heightened forest fire risk.
- Climate change impacts will continue to pose risks to the Yukon, including forest fires, floods, and other changes such as permafrost thaw, glacier retreat and shifting habitat.
- Through actions under *Our Clean Future*, we are working to build climate-resilient communities across the Yukon and put systems in place to effectively predict and respond to fires, floods and other emergencies.
- We will need to keep working together to adapt to these changes, including anticipating, planning for, and responding to climate-related emergencies.

#### **Additional response:**

- There are a number of actions committed to in *Our Clean Future* that support emergency preparedness (See [BN #5](#)); for example, we are mapping flood and permafrost risks for all communities, improving our ability to forecast floods, and making sure that communities have wildfire protection plans and emergency management plans in place. (see [BN #7](#))

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**#25**

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Fall 2021**

### **Climate Change Adaptation and Emergency Response**

Environment  
Energy, Mines  
and Resources

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- We are also working to safeguard our homes and buildings to make sure they are built to withstand risks from fire, flood, and permafrost thaw.
  - We recently completed a Yukon-wide climate risk assessment, which will point to ways that we can further strengthen our climate resilience. The assessment points to how we can reduce our exposure to climate hazards like flooding and wildfires, decrease how sensitive we are to those hazards, and increase our capacity to adapt. (see [BN #22](#))

#### **Third response:**

- In *Our Clean Future*, our approach to adaptation recognizes the importance of reducing the risks we all face while also acknowledging that one size does not always fit all and that community-based solutions are required.
- To support resilience, the Government of Yukon is working to alleviate the conditions that can make people more vulnerable to climate change.
- This is why we will continue to work with government departments, municipalities, and First Nations to prepare for and respond to future emergencies.
- Our actions will be informed by Indigenous, local and scientific knowledge and ways of knowing, doing and being.

**CONFIDENTIAL****#25****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Climate Change Adaptation and  
Emergency Response**Environment  
Energy, Mines  
and Resources**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- Increased potential for an emergency response to flooding and wildfires can directly impact the health and security of people, in addition to infrastructure, transportation and other physical assets.
- As climate change is projected to increase the frequency of environmental hazards, Yukoners may be concerned about future flooding and fires.

**Background:**

- In 2021, Southern Lakes water levels peaked on July 10/11 at 17 to 23 centimetres higher than the previous water levels recorded in 2007, while Lake Laberge exceeded the 2007 peak level by 44 centimetres. The Southern Lakes typically peak in late August at an average height approximately one meter below the peak 2021 water level.
- As of August 13, 2021, there were 112 fires recorded so far this year, covering a total of 103,133.7 hectares. Yukoners can receive up to date information about wildfire on Yukon.ca

**Our Clean Future**

- In 2020, the Government of Yukon released *Our Clean Future*, which identifies actions to strengthen our understanding of how water levels may change due to climate change and ways to adapt to these changing conditions.
- The following actions in *Our Clean Future* directly address climate risks related to flooding, fires, and emergency management:

**Flooding**

- C2. Develop flood probability maps for all Yukon communities at risk of flooding by 2023 that incorporate climate change projections.
- C8. Expand monitoring networks and improve modelling tools to generate reliable daily flood forecasts and relevant warnings for all at-risk Yukon communities by 2024.

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Emergency Response**Environment  
Energy, Mines  
and Resources

- T27. Analyze flood risk along critical transportation corridors at risk of flooding by 2023.

**Fires**

- C9. Work with First Nations and municipalities to develop Wildfire Protection Plans for all Yukon communities by 2026 and complete the forest fuel management activities outlined in the plans by 2030.
- C10. Increase the capacity in Yukon Wildland Fire to prevent wildfires and respond to extended fire seasons by investing in staffing in 2020.
- L11. Begin participating in the National Forest Inventory monitoring program in 2022 to gather information about forest carbon stocks, potential biomass energy supply, pest and forest fire risks, and climate impacts on Yukon's forests.

**Emergency management:**

- C1. Expand geohazard map coverage to all Yukon communities with a high risk of permafrost thaw by 2025.
- C11. Complete hazard identification and risk assessments (HIRAs) for all Yukon communities by 2022 that include climate change risks.
- C12. Work with First Nations and municipalities to complete emergency management plans for all Yukon communities by 2022, informed by community hazard identification and risk assessments (HIRAs).
- C13. Develop a territorial disaster financial assistance policy by 2022 to support recovery from natural disasters that result in extensive property damage or disruption to the delivery of essential goods and services.
- H14. Adopt and enforce relevant building standards by 2030 that will require new buildings to be constructed to be more resilient to climate change impacts like permafrost thaw, flooding and forest fires.



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**#25**

**Session Briefing Note**

**Fall 2021**


**Climate Change Adaptation and  
Emergency Response**

Environment  
Energy, Mines  
and Resources

Approved by:

  
Deputy Minister of Environment

2021.10.26  
Date approved

  
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

25/10/2021  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon Climate  
Leadership Council**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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**Recommended response:**

- As outlined in the 2021 Confidence and Supply Agreement, the Government of Yukon is working with the NDP Caucus to establish a Yukon Climate Leadership Council.
- The Yukon Climate Leadership Council will provide evidence-based recommendations to the Government of Yukon on plans to reach a 45 per cent reduction in the Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions, excluding mining emissions, by 2030 compared to 2010 levels.
- The Council will provide its advice through a written report to be released by summer 2022. The report will be publicly available online.

**Additional response:**

- [We are](#) pleased to report that [12 people have been selected for](#) the Yukon Climate Leadership Council through mutual agreement with the Yukon NDP Caucus.
- The Yukon Climate Leadership Council members were selected using a merit-based pre-screening process.
- [The selected Council members represent a balance of experience and expertise and reflect the diversity of the territory.](#)

**Third response:**

- The Yukon Climate Leadership Council will be a forum for information sharing and collaboration.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon Climate  
Leadership Council**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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- [The Minister of Environment](#) will be working directly with the Chair of the Council to support its work and fulfill its mandate.

**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The public may want to know about the Climate Leadership Council's mandate and membership eligibility criteria.
  - The private sector may be concerned and even oppose additional restrictions or costs that may be proposed to achieve the 45 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.
- 

**Background:**

- The Government of Yukon declared a climate emergency in 2019.
- In April 2021, the Confidence and Supply Agreement was signed by the Yukon Liberal Government and the Yukon NDP Caucus.
- The Confidence and Supply Agreement commits to new emissions reductions targets of 45 percent [by 2030](#) to reflect the climate emergency.
- Plans to reach the new 45 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions are to be developed by a Yukon Climate Leadership Council.
- Other jurisdictions, including British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Northwest Territories, established similar climate councils in recent years.
- In August 2021, 54 applications were received for the Council from individuals representing Yukon First Nations, municipal governments, environmental organizations, the renewable energy sector, industry, labour, youth and the Yukon University. The applicants reflect the Yukon's cultural, regional, gender and other diversity.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**# 26**

**Session Briefing Note**

**Fall 2021**

**Yukon Climate  
Leadership Council**

Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

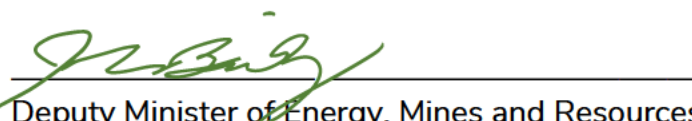
Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2021-10-07

Date approved



Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

06/10/2021

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Federal Climate Change  
Funding**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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**Recommended response:**

- In the Government of Canada's 2021 Budget, \$25 million is committed to supporting the Government of Yukon's climate change priorities. It is anticipated all this funding will likely be allocated to projects beginning in 2022/23.
- This commitment demonstrates the continued partnership between the Government of Yukon and the Government of Canada to support tangible climate action in the territory.
- The Government of Yukon will use this funding to support the actions and commitments that align with the goals and targets outlined in *Our Clean Future*.

**Additional response:**

- This funding is in addition to existing programs, like the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program and Low-Carbon Economy Fund which are already supporting climate change and energy initiatives in the Yukon.
- It will be instrumental in supporting projects that reduce the territory's greenhouse gas emissions and enhance climate resilience while building a greener, low-carbon economy.

**Third response:**

- This new funding will support initiatives such as:
  - community-based renewable energy projects;
  - low-carbon transportation infrastructure;
  - enhancing food security;
  - hazard mapping; and
  - emergency preparedness initiatives.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Federal Climate Change  
Funding**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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- While this funding will not be directly available to external partners, several other Government of Yukon and federal funding sources support clean energy and climate resilience projects.
- 

**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- The Government of Canada's 2021 Budget commits \$25 million, in 2021-22, to the Government of Yukon to support its climate change priorities, in collaboration with Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada.
  - There is interest in what the funding will be used for and whether First Nations and Yukon communities will be able to access this funding.
- 

**Background:**

- The \$25 million committed by the Government of Canada is in response to requests made at the political and departmental level for additional federal funding to support the implementation of *Our Clean Future*.
  - 76(1)
  - The funding commitment is likely to be accessed by a number of Government of Yukon departments and agencies to support a range of climate change and energy initiatives, including Environment, Energy, Mines and Resources, Community Services and the Yukon Development Corporation.
- 76(1)

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**#27**

**Session Briefing Note**

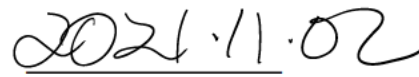
**Fall 2021**


**Federal Climate Change  
Funding**

Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

Approved by:

  
Deputy Minister of Environment

  
Date approved

  
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

  
Date approved

**Recommended response:**

- If the tailings at the Wellgreen abandoned mine site are not remediated, significant environmental impacts are likely.
- Based on an August 2020 remediation design report, the site represents a \$16 million liability of closure remediation costs.
- The Department of Environment has initiated discussions with the Government of Canada and former owners of the site about cost recovery or cost sharing. However, securing funding could take several years to negotiate.
- We anticipate active remediation can be completed in one to two years.
- The proposed remediation approach reduces liability over the next three fiscal years by aggressively remediating the site, followed by monitoring over the subsequent three to five years.

**Additional response:**

- We understand the concerns raised by both Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation about the risks posed by the abandoned tailings.
- These concerns and other considerations are addressed in the remediation plan which was submitted to the Yukon Environmental Socio-economic Assessment Board in 2020.
- In spring 2021, the Yukon Environmental Socio-economic Assessment Board recommended the project proceed subject to terms and conditions. The Government of Yukon accepted the board's recommendation.



**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Wellgreen Site**Environment

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**Third response:**

- Even though the Wellgreen mill was operated in the 1970s and permitted by Canada prior to devolution, the site remains under the care and control of the Government of Yukon.
- Cleaning up contaminated sites continues to be a priority for the Government of Yukon.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- There may be questions about this project as the assessment recently concluded and is posted on the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board website.
- Both the Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation have indicated support for the remediation goals and interest in involvement in the work required

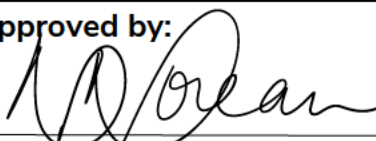
**Background:**

- The Wellgreen site is an abandoned mine originally developed to take advantage of the copper nickel sulphide deposit in the early 1970's. The site contains a mill and tailings pond used to process the ore from the mine. Mining was carried out for a brief period of time in the early 1970's milling 171,652 tonnes of ore.
- The mine was decommissioned during the late 1970's and the mill was repurposed elsewhere. However, the footings of the mill along with the tailings pond were left in place. The mill and tailings pond area are the focus of this closure and reclamation project.
- The site is located within the Traditional Territory of the Kluane First Nation and the White River First Nation's asserted traditional territory. It is within the Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary.
- Under the Devolution Transfer Agreement, the site was not listed as a Type II site.
- The site is located on a former lease currently controlled by the Government of Yukon through an Order in Council to prevent mineral development until the site is remediated.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Wellgreen Site****Environment**

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- In 2015, the Access Consulting Group (commissioned by the Government of Yukon's Department of Energy, Mines and Resources) produced a closure report on the former Wellgreen Mill and Tailings Site with options for closure and remediation.
  - In 2019, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources transferred management of the mine's closure planning to the Department of Environment.
  - Recent assessment work has included an options analysis, an engineering study (30% design) for closure and reclamation, a third-party review of the engineering study, and preparation of technical specifications for a request for proposal for a design-build contractor.
  - The total time span to remediate the site, including post closure monitoring, is expected to be approximately five to eight years.
  - 67(3)(a), 67(3)(b)
- 
- At a minimum, the site will be returned to an industrial standard, in compliance with the territorial *Contaminated Sites Regulation*, although efforts to return the site to a boreal forest state will be made if it is feasible to do so.
  - The total time span to remediate the site, when including post closure monitoring, would be five to eight years with a completion target of end of fiscal 2025, depending on regulatory approvals, although most active remediation will be complete in one to two years with post remedial monitoring and revegetation making up the remaining timeline.

**Approved by:**

Deputy Minister

Department of Environment

2021.08.17

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Compliance Enforcement  
for Major Mines - 2021**Energy, Mines and  
Resources  
Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- The Major Mines and Monitoring Unit of the Compliance Monitoring and Inspections branch in Energy, Mines and Resources was created in 2020 and consists of three Natural Resource Officers and several environmental technicians to increase oversight and inspection capacity for operating, closed, or abandoned mines.
- The Major Mines and Monitoring Unit works closely with the Environmental Protection and Assessment and Water Resources branches of the Department of Environment on quartz mine files.
- Quartz mines in the Yukon are licensed, regulated and monitored to ensure operations are conducted in an environmentally protective manner. However, periodic spills do happen at mine sites.

**Additional Response:**

- The spills that have occurred at major mine sites have been reported and inspected according to regulations and, where necessary, corrective action is being taken.
- Reporting and remediation of spills is a legal requirement.
- Following receipt of a spill report, an investigation is conducted to discover the cause or reason for the spill.
- Appropriate corrective actions include changes to operational protocols or infrastructure. Depending on the circumstances, enforcement action like fines could also be undertaken.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Compliance Enforcement  
for Major Mines - 2021**Energy, Mines and  
Resources  
Environment

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- There has been recent attention on spills at major mines and more generally on the enforcement and monitoring of major mines in the Yukon.
- 

**Background:****Compliance Monitoring and Inspections Branch**

- The Compliance Monitoring and Inspections Branch has 26 Natural Resource Officers, with 21 officers stationed in eight communities across the territory.
- The officers enforce nine different statutes and multiple regulations that manage public lands, forests, waters and mineral resources.
- The officers are designated under the Quartz Mining Act, Waters Act and sections of the Environment Act related to quartz mines in the Yukon.

**Victoria Gold, Eagle Mine**

- Eagle Gold Mine went into production July 1, 2020. Four cyanide process solution spills have been reported at the site.
- In each event, the spill was contained to active mine infrastructure and all contaminated material was recovered and placed on the heap leach facility.
- Since July 2019, there have been 33 spills reported at the mine site.
- The most recent spill reported on August 14, 2021 involved 150 litres of nitric acid.
- 72(1)(b)(i)

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Compliance Enforcement  
for Major Mines - 2021**Energy, Mines and  
Resources  
Environment

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- On June 8, 2021, the Government of Yukon issued a \$460 fine to Victoria Gold for the release of a contaminant and failure to contain a hazardous substance that occurred on March 15, 2021.
- Natural Resources Officers continue to inspect the site to verify compliance and follow up on corrective measures as required for each spill and non-compliance issue.

**Eagle Gold Mine**

See EMR BN #71

**Minto Mine**

- Minto Explorations is presently in compliance with their mining and water licenses.
- In mid-July 2021, the Government of Yukon directed Minto to take corrective action to address non-compliance at the solid and special waste facilities. The company addressed the non-compliance. (See EMR BN #78)

**Alexco Keno Hills Mine**

- The mine site was inspected by Energy, Mines and Resources' Natural Resource Officers in mid-September and several non-compliance issues were identified under the Quartz Mining Act, the Waters Act and Environment Act:
  - exceedances in effluent quality;
  - non-compliance with solid waste and commercial dump conditions;
  - construction of unauthorized settling ponds;
  - improper labeling and storage of special waste; and
  - required maintenance of dry-stack catchment ditches.

(See EMR BN #65)

- Alexco has exceeded its licensed effluent discharge of zinc, arsenic and ammonia at its water treatment facilities on several occasions over the past 12-months.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**#5**

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**Fall 2021**

**Compliance Enforcement  
for Major Mines - 2021**


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- The company has taken measures to improve treatment performance and has implemented changes of additional treatment measures to resolve these periodic exceedances.
- Alexco was issued a ticket for violating the conditions of their Commercial Dump Permit. Future violations of the Environment Act could lead to additional enforcement action.
- Public concerns were raised regarding blocking trail access with debris, Alexco has since restored public access.
- Natural Resources Officers continue to inspect the site to verify compliance and follow up on corrective measures as required for all non-compliance issues.
- Alexco has been given until October 31, 2021, to correct many of the identified concerns. Officers will be inspecting the site in early November to verify compliance.

**Approved by:**

  
Deputy Minister of Environment

  
Date approved

  
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****End of Life Vehicles**Environment

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**Recommended response**

- Many end-of-life vehicles are managed effectively through community landfills and vehicle processors like Sale' Salvage or Urban Auto Recyclers.
- Some end-of-life vehicles are stockpiled and stored on private or leased property, which can be a safety and aesthetic issue. Others are abandoned on roadways, in the forest, and in waterways. These vehicles can present an environmental risk when they are not adequately de-polluted.
- The Government of Yukon works across multiple departments to develop a coordinated interdepartmental approach to end-of-life vehicles.

**Additional response:**

- Currently, the Government of Yukon has a number of tools at its disposal to manage abandoned and end-of-life vehicles.
- The Department of Community Services accepts end-of-life vehicles at most Government of Yukon solid waste facilities. Fees for disposal range from no cost to \$300 per vehicle if the fluids and tires are not removed.
- Community Services has also provided funding to support the recycling of historic end-of-life vehicles located on Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation lands.
- The Departments of Highways and Public Works, and Energy, Mines, and Resources facilitate end-of-life vehicle removal from specific areas like roadways, forested areas, public and leased land.
- The Department of Environment authorizes special waste permits for vehicle processors that drain vehicle fluids or handle lead-acid batteries, addresses complaints of abandoned vehicles through the TIPP line, and regulates spills or complaints related to salvage facilities.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****End of Life Vehicles**Environment

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- If abandoned vehicles are on the road or right-of-way and may interfere with traffic, visibility or road clearing, Yukoners are encouraged to contact the RCMP to have them addressed.
- If Yukoners see an abandoned vehicle or a property containing many end-of-life vehicles that may be an environmental concern, we recommend they call the TIPP Line at 1-800-661-0525.

**Third Response:**

- In other parts of Canada, the inherent value of scrap metal encourages the recycling of end-of-life vehicles, which is typically handled by the private sector.
- In the Yukon and across the north, metal prices have to be high enough to overcome the costs of transportation to a recycling market.
- The Department of Environment is working with other departments to consider additional tools to manage end-of-life vehicles.
- Broadly speaking, future tools could be used to incentivize responsible end-of-life vehicle recycling where vehicle owners pay for disposal while their vehicle is operational and/or through increasing requirements and providing supports for end-of-life vehicle processors.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- On November 4, 2021, CBC News featured a story on end-of-life vehicles in Yukon.
- A report commissioned by Zero Waste Yukon in 2018 estimated that 10,000 end-of-life cars will need to be dealt with by 2036.
- Raven Recycling Society started recycling end-of-life vehicles a year and a half ago. Other end-of-life vehicle processors are also available to the public.
- The clean-up costs for end-of-life vehicles abandoned on a piece of land on Boulder Road is expected to be over one million dollars.

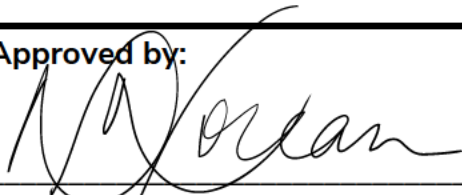


**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****End of Life Vehicles**

Environment

**Background:**

- An interdepartmental committee, made up of members from the departments of Highways and Public Works, Community Services, Energy Mines and Resources, and Environment, is working toward a coordinated approach to end-of-life vehicles.
- 300 to 400 end-of-life vehicles are estimated to be produced annually in Yukon.
- End-of-life vehicles can become problematic when they are not adequately de-polluted and then stockpiled. De-polluting reduces environmental risks, but safety hazards and aesthetic concerns remain if the vehicle body is not removed and recycled.
- Yukon government is working on *Extended Producer Responsibility Regulation*. Waste oil and other hazardous automotive parts are considered a priority for Extended Producer Responsibility implementation.
- There are currently no incentives in the Yukon to ensure that vehicles are brought to waste management facilities and/or are de-polluted. Some vehicle parts, like catalytic converters and batteries, are highly valuable. These parts are often taken out of a vehicle and sold, while the rest of the vehicle may be left due to the high cost of shipping metals.
- The Department of Community Services has provided funding to support the recycling of historic end-of-life vehicles located on First Nations traditional territories.
- The Department of Environment is reviewing approaches taken in other jurisdictions within Canada to ensure environmentally responsible vehicle recycling.
- In accordance with the polluter pays principle, individuals should bear responsibility for the waste they produce, which includes their end-of-life vehicles.
- Within Canada, only British Columbia, Ontario and Prince Edward Island have regulations for end-of-life vehicle management.

**Approved by:**

Deputy Minister, Department of Environment

2021.11.23

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Animal Protection and  
Control Legislative  
Review**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon understands that animals are important to Yukoners, and we support responsible stewardship of animals - both livestock and pets – that are under Yukoners' care.
- Following the 2015 death of an individual by uncontrolled dogs, the Chief Coroner recommended a review of the legislation to improve the government's ability to address public safety concerns.
- Between 2016 and 2019, we completed a comprehensive review of our animal control and protection legislation in the Yukon. This included the legislation and policies that regulate family and exotic pets, livestock, and feral animals.
- We are developing new legislation to better support enforcement when uncontrolled animals threaten people, property, or the environment. The new law will also provide broader protection of animal welfare.

**Additional response:**

- This new act will reflect the values of Yukoners and meet our duty to provide humane care and responsible control of companion animals and livestock.
- It will provide tools to control and prevent feral livestock from damaging the environment. These concerns were identified by the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and Renewable Resources Councils.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Animal Protection and  
Control Legislative  
Review**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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- Implementation of the new act and regulations will be done jointly by the departments of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources.

**Third response:**

- In late 2018, we engaged Yukoners with a public survey, receiving over 900 responses. We also had ten community meetings. The “What We Heard” summary is available on [engageyukon.ca](https://engageyukon.ca).
- In fall 2019, we re-engaged with First Nations, communities, the agriculture industry, veterinarians, animal rescue operators, mushers, the RCMP and other stakeholders who work with animals.
- With this input, we developed a comprehensive animal protection and control framework, addressing current legislative gaps, including:
  - requirements for owners to control their animals;
  - standards for animal welfare;
  - management of feral and exotic animals;
  - regulation of animal-based activities in commercial and recreational organizations and sectors, such as farming, mushing, and outfitting; and
  - offer better tools to support enforcement in communities.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- There may be questions raised about the status of this work as public engagement took place in late 2018 and through 2019—the complex issues specifically related to the mandate for livestock species required extended consultation.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Animal Protection and  
Control Legislative  
Review**Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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**Background:**

- Yukon's animal protection and control legislative framework is outdated and limits the Government of Yukon's ability to manage animals in the territory.
- In September 2016, following an inquest into dogs that killed a Ross River resident, the Chief Coroner recommended the *Dog Act* be reviewed to improve government's ability to address public safety concerns from dogs at large.
- The Animal Protection Office receives, on average, 115 complaints per year. The complaints include dogs running at large, escaped or feral animals interfering with highway traffic, dogs fighting or attacking other animals, and dogs threatening or biting people.
- The *Pounds Act* was amended in fall 2017 to align legislation with the *Highways Act* to improve the Government of Yukon's ability to respond to stray livestock across the territory. 67(3)(b), 74(1)(a)

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**Fall 2021**


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Review**

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Energy, Mines and Resources

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67(3)(b), 74(1)(a)

**Approved by:**



Deputy Minister of Environment

2021-09-21

Date approved



Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

20/09/2021

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Implementation of Domestic  
Sheep and Goats Control  
Order**Environment  
Energy, Mines and  
Resources**Recommended response:**

- On January 1, 2020, we issued a Control Order requiring owners of sheep or goats to meet testing and fencing requirements to prevent disease spread to wild thinhorn sheep and mountain goats.
- The order was issued because healthy domestic animals can carry the bacteria *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* [my-co-plas-ma oh-vah-na-moan-ee-yay], known as *M. ovi*, which can cause devastating respiratory disease if spread to wild sheep and goats.
- The Control Order is a precautionary measure to safeguard the health of the Yukon's iconic wild sheep and goats.
- While the bacteria has not yet been documented in these species, our concern is that it would be virtually impossible to control if it did occur.

**Additional response:**

- The Government of Yukon is committed to growing agriculture in the Yukon and ensuring the production of healthy, sustainable local food.
- We have been working with farmers since 2019 to complete animal testing and upgrade fencing to ensure compliance with the order.
- There is no cost to farmers for testing and they can apply for compensation for eligible costs incurred while meeting the order.
- Over \$195,000 of federal funding has been paid to owners for fencing costs, and almost \$200,000 of the Government of Yukon funds has

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Implementation of Domestic  
Sheep and Goats Control  
Order**Environment  
Energy, Mines and  
Resources

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been paid to compensate owners for losses and the destruction of animals that tested positive.

**Third Response:**

- Since the Control Order came into effect, one farmer in the Yukon was convicted of an offence under the *Animal Health Act* for failing to comply with the Control Order.
- I cannot comment further on this as an appeal is currently before the courts.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- The Government of Yukon has made commitments to support the agriculture industry and economy to promote self-sufficiency and sustainable growth.
- There may be questions about the charge and subsequent court action regarding non-compliance with the Control Order.
- There have been recent requests by farmers to reconsider the Control Order, because individuals feel fencing rules should be adequate and no animals should be ordered destroyed.
- There was an appeal of compensation filed in September 2020, requiring review by an appeal board.

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**Background:**

- The Yukon has the largest population of wild thimhorn sheep in Canada. This iconic species is of great intrinsic and commercial value.
- Domestic sheep and goats are of potential value for the Yukon's livestock industry.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Implementation of Domestic  
Sheep and Goats Control  
Order**Environment  
Energy, Mines and  
Resources

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- The Control Order came into effect on January 1, 2020, and requires the following:
    - approved enclosures for domestic sheep and goats;
    - testing of domestic sheep and goats for the bacteria of concern;
    - restricting the keeping of domestic sheep and goats to areas below 1,000 metres in elevation. Currently, there are no agriculture parcels above this elevation; and
    - import permits for all domestic sheep and goats entering the territory.
  - The agriculture industry expressed concern that they were not sufficiently consulted before the order was announced. Information sessions were held in Whitehorse and Dawson City on multiple occasions to provide updates to farmers on the results of the testing and on the import permit requirements.
  - A pilot research trial was conducted in a flock of positive sheep to assess a treatment option, but the protocol was not successful in eliminating *M. ovi*.
  - In 2019, farmers could apply for funding to pay for 100 per cent of the cost for fencing materials to meet fencing requirements. Farmers had to provide the labour, but the new fencing standards have improved biosecurity and protection from predators on these farms.
  - Funding assistance and compensation is still available for anyone affected by complying with the Control Order, including losses due to the destruction of domestic sheep or goats that test positive.
  - Import permits are being issued. Currently there is funding support provided to offset the cost of testing prior to importation because in three cases, animals imported subsequently tested positive for *M. ovi* and had to be destroyed.
  - One farmer has been charged for failing to comply with the Control Order because they possessed goats that were not within an enclosure approved by an inspector.



**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Implementation of Domestic  
Sheep and Goats Control  
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Resources

- On October 23, 2020, the farmer was found guilty of failing to comply with the fencing requirement. The farmer was granted an appeal on April 22, 2021. Supreme Court Justice Edith Campbell has reserved decision on the appeal for the time being.
- An appeal for compensation filed in September 2020, requiring the formation of an appeal board under the *Animal Health Act*, which was approved this past August.
- Approval and appointment of the appeal board was delayed due to the territorial election, as well as challenges associated with recruiting board members.
- The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is in the process of setting up the board and arranging a hearing for review of the appeal.

**Animal Testing Results**

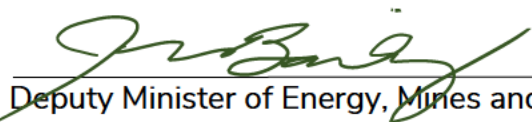
- In 2019, herds were tested three times at approximately 30-day intervals, and positive animals were ordered to be destroyed.
- In 2020, a testing protocol was established for each farm based on the risk that *M. ovi* had been introduced since the last test.
- Testing was minimized to reduce stress to the animals if the risk was deemed to be low.

**Approved by:**

Deputy Minister of Environment

16/09/2021

Date approved



Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

14/09/2021

Date approved

**CONFIDENTIAL****#42****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Shared Trails and Sled Dogs**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- The Animal Protection Officer has completed an investigation of a potential offence under the *Dog Act* involving a team of sled dogs.
- The investigation was turned over to the office of the Prosecutor, who decided not to pursue charges.
- While it was admitted that the unfortunate incident in February 2021 involving a sled dog team injured a person and killed her companion dog on a shared trail, the Prosecutor determined that there was no chance of a conviction within the scope of the *Dog Act*.

**Additional response:**

- Trails around communities that are used to train sled dog teams are increasingly shared with families, pets, and young children.
- Community members can work together to manage the risks from conflict and prevent injuries.

**Third Response:**

- The outdated *Dog Act* and *Animal Protection Act* will be replaced by new legislation that requires owners to control their animals at all times. This change reflects the opinion of Yukon stakeholders. (see [BN #40](#))
- 'Control' will mean that the animal cannot damage or injure a person, property, or the environment.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

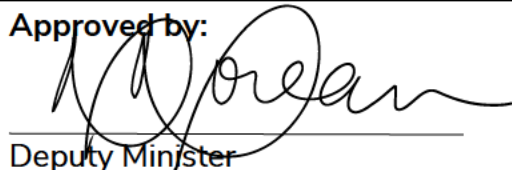
- On October 13, 2021, the Yukon News published a letter to the editor from the individual who raised the complaint.

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- This incident has received considerable attention on social media, specifically from sled dog owners in defense of their use of trails.

**Background:**

- An individual from the community of Mount Lorne was walking her dog on a trail near the community. The trail is known to be used by sled dog trainers to train their teams. A team of 10 dogs overtook her from behind, attacked and killed her dog, and bit her multiple times.
- This incident was reported to the Chief Veterinary Officer as part of the rabies risk assessment process, and she collected initial information from the patient. The investigation was completed by the Animal Protection Officer.
- The Crown Prosecutor considered a charge under Section 6(1) of the Dog Act. This is related to dogs in a harness within 1 km of “a settlement” that must be under control to ensure the dog will not harm the public or create a nuisance. However, the Prosecutor determined there was doubt whether the Mount Lorne community met the definition of “a settlement,” and therefore, the prosecution was not justified.
- The Chief Veterinary Officer attended a meeting of the Mount Lorne Community Association on May 4, 2021. While she was not able to discuss the actual incident, she spoke to existing and proposed legislation for domestic animal control and care.

**Approved by:**

Deputy Minister

Department of Environment

2021.10.19

Date approved

**CONFIDENTIAL****#46****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Wildlife Act Regulations -  
Moose Management**

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Environment

**Recommended response:**

- Moose is the most-harvested species by Yukon hunters and are an important species culturally.
- In some areas, the combined licensed and subsistence harvest of moose is at, or above, sustainable levels – especially in areas that are easy to access.
- It is important that our management approach keeps harvest within sustainable limits and respects First Nations Final Agreements.
- At a community's request, the Government of Yukon is committed to supporting moose management planning at the regional and traditional territory scales.
- This future planning work can result in collaborative recommendations for harvest restrictions and additional, more flexible, and responsive moose management tools.

**Additional response:**

- Harvest restrictions help to ensure long-term viable moose populations and continued licensed harvest opportunities.
- For example, proposed by the Mayo District Renewable Resources Council, the Government of Yukon is committed to implementing a moose threshold hunt in the Mayo area and establishing Permit Hunt Authorizations in the South Canol and Sifton-Miners Range Moose Management Units for the 2022-2023 hunting season.
- Due to timing considerations, no changes were implemented for the 2021-2022 hunting season.

**CONFIDENTIAL****#46****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Wildlife Act Regulations -  
Moose Management**

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Environment

**Third response:**

- Conducting targeted moose surveys supports our commitment to increasing data collection, when and where possible, ensuring the most up-to-date information is available for decision-making. (see BN #55)
- Weather-dependant, the Department of Environment intends to conduct four moose surveys this fall. Three of the planned moose surveys will be for the Lower Stewart River, Teslin River Moose Management Unit and the Sifton-Miners Range Moose Management Unit.
- For the fourth survey, the department plans to survey moose in the Whitehorse South area, which includes the Fish Lake, Wheaton River, and Mt. Lorne Moose Management Units in partnership with the Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council.
- We are also looking into opportunities for additional surveys, including the Nsutlin River/Quiet Lake and South Canol Moose Management Units.
- Department staff prioritize which Moose Management Units to survey based on a combination of factors, including harvest levels, access, community concerns, land-use planning data needs, how long it has been since an area was last surveyed, and human activity occurring in the area.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- Hunters and outfitters may feel that establishing permit and threshold hunts limit their opportunities for harvest.
- The 2021-22 Hunting Regulation Summary (in print and online) states that a threshold hunt is under consideration for the Mayo area and directs hunters to check Yukon.ca to see if the threshold hunt is in effect before hunting this year.

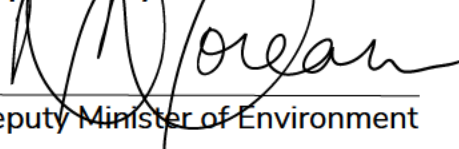
**CONFIDENTIAL****#46****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Wildlife Act Regulations -  
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**Background:**

- Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board (YFWMB) and the Department of Environment have a process reviewing proposed regulation changes for fish and wildlife management in the territory. The Board conducts a public review of the proposals.
- There were four moose-related regulation proposals in the YFWMB 2019 public engagement process: a Mayo threshold hunt, territory-wide adaptive management, and permit hunt authorizations for the Sifton-Miners Range and South Canol Moose Management Units.
- The proposals for territory-wide adaptive management and permit hunt authorizations for the Sifton-Miners Range and South Canol Moose Management Units were separated from the bulk of the proposed wildlife regulation changes and provided an extra public engagement period into summer 2020.
- The Minister communicated to the YFWMB that the Government of Yukon would proceed with a Mayo threshold hunt and permit hunt authorizations for the Sifton-Miners Range and South Canol Moose Management Units. In accordance with the Umbrella Final Agreement, this means the Government of Yukon must implement the harvest restrictions 'as soon as practicable.'
- On July 30, 2021, the Minister of Environment sent letters to affected First Nations, the YFWMB, the Mayo District Renewable Resources Council, and the Yukon Fish and Game Association, indicating the proposed harvest restrictions would not be in place for the 2021-22 hunting season.
- The letters committed to implementing the threshold hunt and permit hunt authorizations for the 2022-23 hunting season and informed the partners of the anticipated survey work.

Approved by:

  
Deputy Minister of Environment2021-10-14  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****First Nations' Hunting Concerns**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- No matter where you hunt in the Yukon, you are in the traditional territory of a First Nation or the Inuvialuit.
- In the Yukon, the public has a right to access public land that is not Settlement Land or private land, for recreational purposes, including hunting.
- We acknowledge that Liard First Nation and the Ross River Dena Council have requested that non-Kaska hunters refrain from hunting in their asserted traditional territory this fall. The reasons are varied, and some are in response to COVID-19 and, for some areas, an increase in hunting pressures.
- Licensed hunters do not require permission to hunt on non-Settlement Lands in any traditional territory; however, licensed hunters require written permission from First Nations before hunting any species on all Category A Settlement Lands and before hunting wood bison or elk on Category A and B Settlement Lands.

**Additional response:**

- The Government of Yukon and First Nations governments share a common interest and the mutual goal of wildlife conservation.
- We will continue to work with our First Nations partners in implementing and respecting self-government agreements.
- I want to thank our First Nations partners, the Renewable Resources Councils, and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board; together, we have been working on many complex wildlife management issues, such as sustainable harvest management,

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****First Nations' Hunting Concerns**Environment

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subsistence harvest data reporting, habitat protection and conservation initiatives.

**Third response**

- In June 2021, the Department of Environment released a booklet about subsistence hunting, fishing and trapping by First Nations, Inuvialuit and other Indigenous Peoples in the Yukon.
- This booklet is not a legal document but an introduction to the rights of Indigenous Peoples to hunt, fish and trap in Yukon.
- It is intended for Indigenous people who want a summary of their rights and non-Indigenous people who want to have a better understanding of subsistence hunting, fishing and trapping.
- This reference booklet is available on Yukon.ca and will be updated regularly, reflecting feedback the department receives.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- Liard First Nation and Ross River Dena Council have each “issued” hunting bans for this upcoming hunting season through the media.
- There have been questions about the Government of Yukon’s position on some First Nations’ requests that non-citizens refrain from hunting in their traditional territories.

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**Background:****Hunting closure announcements by First Nations**

- Liard First Nation announced over CBC radio on August 6, 2021, a “ban” for non-Kaska hunters seeking moose and caribou in Frances Lake, Frances River, the Rancheria area and the Nahanni Range Road on the Liard River.
  - The intent of Liard First Nation’s announcement is to protect wildlife resources for its own members.



**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****First Nations' Hunting Concerns****Environment**

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- Liard First Nation land guardians will be informing hunters where they can and cannot go. They are not interested in conflict but “bringing forward our message and respectful for the privilege to hunt in our traditional territory.”
  - This is the second year in a row that Liard First Nation has requested non-Kaska hunters not hunt in their asserted traditional territory.
- Ross River Dena Council placed an advertisement in the Yukon News on August 4, 2021, announcing a “ban” for all non-local and non-Kaska hunters in the entirety of asserted traditional territory.
  - Non-Kaska hunters who already reside in the “Ross River Area” are required to obtain a permit and adhere to protocols from the Ross River Dena Council.
  - This announcement intends to keep the community safe from COVID-19.
  - This is the third year in a row that Ross River Dena Council has announced a hunting “ban,” albeit for different reasons each year.
- A number of Yukon and British Columbia First Nations announced hunting closures in their traditional territories for the fall 2020 hunting season stemming from increasing harvest pressures and concerns about COVID-19.
  - On July 27, 2020, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation gave notice of a hunting restriction in the Taku River Tlingit First Nation asserted traditional territory. The declaration stated hunting would be restricted to Taku River Tlingit citizens and the residents of Atlin. Taku River Tlingit First Nation set up an information checkpoint on the Atlin road to inform outside hunters of these restrictions.
  - On August 7, 2020, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun posted a notice in local newspapers advising that moose hunting within their Traditional Territory will be restricted to Na-Cho Nyäk Dun citizens only.
  - In an August 10, 2020 advisory, the Liard First Nation declared hunting would be restricted to Kaska Citizens and residents of the Kaska communities including, Frances Lake, Frances River, Alaska Highway, side roads in the Rancheria area, Nahanni Range Road, and Liard River. Liard First Nation stated these restricted areas would be monitored and inspected closely.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****First Nations' Hunting Concerns**

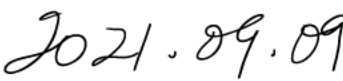
Environment

**Court case**

- In the spring of 2019, Chief Justice Veale dismissed a court case brought by the Ross River Dena Council alleging a failure by the Government of Yukon to consult the Council over the issuance of hunting licences and seals in the Ross River area for 2015, 2016, and 2017 hunting seasons. The Court of Appeal heard the appeal on November 14, 2019, and dismissed it on April 30, 2020.

**Subsistence harvest booklet**

- The Department of Environment developed a *Subsistence hunting, fishing and trapping by First Nations, Inuvialuit and other Indigenous Peoples in Yukon* booklet to respond to requests for clarity about subsistence harvest rights.
- The department sent consultation letters with the draft booklets to all Indigenous rights holders in January 2020 to ask for their feedback.
- The department received three responses to the consultation from Liard First Nation, Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. The comments from these First Nation governments were addressed to the best of the department's ability.

**Approved by:**  
Deputy Minister of Environment  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Transfer Payment Agreements**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- The Department of Environment supports a number of organizations, other levels of government and universities through transfer payment agreements.
- This funding, provided based on jointly developed work plans, helps carry out the goals and objectives of the government's policies and programs.
- We support a wide range of initiatives, including participation in government processes and implementing specific projects.
- The department must make difficult decisions in allocating limited resources to various organizations.

**Additional response:**

- During the fiscal year 2021-2022, the department provides approximately \$3 million to fund organizations and other parties who provide public services on behalf of the government.
- The main non-governmental organizations funded by the Department of Environment include the Yukon Wildlife Preserve, the Yukon and Dawson humane societies, the Yukon Conservation Society, the Yukon Fish and Game Association, Yukon Trapper's Association and WildWise Yukon.
- These are not the only funding arrangements provided by the department to non-governmental organizations, but they represent the largest.
- We strive to divide the available funding among organizations to ensure Yukoners enjoy the most services for the best value.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Transfer Payment Agreements**Environment

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**Third response:**

- Communications protocols are used, as appropriate, to ensure that our joint projects – made possible through these funding agreements – are communicated clearly, consistently and collaboratively.
- These are a normal aspect of funding agreements with the government. For example, the Department of Environment has communications protocols in their agreements with the Yukon Fish and Game Association, WildWise Yukon and all recipients of the Environmental Awareness Fund.
- Nothing in our agreements prevents the funding recipients from speaking to their own projects paid for with funding raised by their members or other sources.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- The Yukon Party platform stated it would rebuild and repair the relationship with the Fish and Game Association, including restoring the funding cut and ensuring that there are no ‘gag orders’ in transfer payment agreements.
- The Official Opposition’s environment critic has raised this issue in the last three sittings of the Legislature.

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**Background:**

- Of the seven comparable Department of Environment transfer payment agreements with non-governmental organizations in 2020-21, one had increased, one had decreased, and the remainder stayed the same for 2021-22:
  1. Yukon Wildlife Preserve Operating Society will receive a transfer of \$747,000 – an increase of \$15,000.
  2. Yukon Fish and Game Association will receive a transfer of \$60,000 - a decrease of \$10,000. (Note - this is a two-year agreement, and the funding schedule with decreases was agreed to in 2020)

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Transfer Payment Agreements****Environment**

3. Humane Society Yukon will receive the same transfer of \$110,000. (Note – this is \$10,000 less than the amount transferred in 2019-20)
  4. Yukon Conservation Society will receive the same transfer of \$50,000.
  5. Wildwise Yukon will receive the same transfer of \$40,000.
  6. Yukon Trappers Association will receive the same transfer of \$35,000.
  7. Humane Society Dawson will receive the same transfer of \$25,000.
- Although amounts can vary from year to year, depending on competing priorities, we provide an annual financial contribution to the Yukon Fish and Game Association to help ensure the continued availability of important educational programs and community outreach activities for the Yukon's hunters and anglers.
  - This programming remains a priority for both the Yukon Fish and Game Association and Conservation Officer Services Branch, and we will continue to plan and deliver high-quality, relevant programs for the Yukon's hunting community.
  - The COVID-19 outbreak in the Yukon restricted our ability to deliver on planned workshops and other educational programming.
  - We also engage frequently with the Yukon Fish and Game Association for input on fish and wildlife management, including review of Yukon regulations.

**Approved by:**  
Deputy Minister of Environment

2021.09.10  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon Forum Working Group on Fish and Wildlife**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- We are committed to working collaboratively on fish and wildlife management priorities with Yukon First Nations through the Yukon Forum.
- In 2018, together we have established the Fish and Wildlife Working Group, which includes officials from the Council of Yukon First Nations, First Nations governments, and the Department of Environment.
- A top priority of this working group is reviewing the instruments established under Chapter 16 of the Final Agreements.
- This included a third-party review of the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, which was completed in 2019.
- The Yukon Forum's Fish and Wildlife Working Group is currently working with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and Canada to implement the 27 recommendations from the review, with a focus on implementing those that will improve the Yukon's fish and wildlife management structure.

**Additional response:**

- I am proud of the relationship that the Department of Environment has with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board.
- Our Director of Fish and Wildlife meets weekly with the Board's executive to discuss common issues and to align efforts.
- Together, we continue to tackle complex issues to foster an environment where Yukoners can continue to enjoy their culture of hunting and fishing and their contact with sustainable fish and wildlife populations.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon Forum Working Group on Fish and Wildlife**Environment

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**Third response:**

- The third-party review of the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board was presented to the Yukon Forum and is publicly available at Yukon.ca.
- Periodic review and evaluation is good practice for any organization, particularly one that serves the public interest in an evolving world of self-government, reconciliation, and land and resource management.
- The review also provided recommendations that apply to all “actors” in the Yukon’s fish and wildlife management structure, including First Nations, the Government of Yukon, the Government of Canada, and Renewable Resources Councils, in addition to the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board.
- The Yukon Forum Fish and Wildlife Working Group continues to work collaboratively on various issues, including the ethical issues related to fish and wildlife harvesting, harvest management, and support for trappers.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- The third-party public review of proposed regulation changes in December 2019 generated questions regarding the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board’s role and the duration and quality of engagement opportunities.
- 74(1)(a), 76(1)

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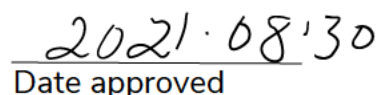
**Background:**

- The Yukon Forum Fish and Wildlife Working Group was established under the Yukon Forum Joint Action Plan in June 2018; priorities were identified in September 2018.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon Forum Working Group on Fish and Wildlife**

Environment

- The Yukon Forum Fish and Wildlife Working Group strives to meet four times per year at mutually convenient dates. Four meetings were held in 2020. In 2021, the working group met on January 12, May 19, and June 16; the next meeting will likely occur in September 2021.
  - The Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board is a publicly-funded board established in the Final Agreements that plays a central role in helping manage the Yukon's highly valued fish and wildlife resources.
  - The third-party review of the Board included interviews with Yukon First Nations, Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board members, staff and alumni, Government of Yukon officials, and others. It also included a public survey.
  - The report included recommendations related to how fish and wildlife are managed by various parties; how the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board's activities relate to their mandate; governance and management (e.g., planning and procedures, board member orientation, board meetings); and others (e.g., representation and appointments, Yukon Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Trust).
  - The report also recommended sequencing the key action areas into two phases, recognizing that it is not realistic to implement them all at once.
  - 76(1)
- 
- To address Recommendation #1 from the third party review, a workshop is planned for November 2021 for the parties to discuss how they can work together to improve Yukon's fish and wildlife management structure and function.
  - In addition to this review, other fish and wildlife management topics of interest at the Yukon Forum include harvest support programming, wildlife legislation consistency with Final Agreements, and moose harvest pressures.

**Approved by:**  
Deputy Minister of Environment  
Date approved



**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Fortymile Caribou**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- By 2017, the Fortymile caribou herd recovered from a 1973 low of 6,500 to an estimated 84,000 animals.
- This is a success resulting from the efforts of partners in the Yukon and Alaska.
- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Government of Yukon signed the Fortymile caribou harvest management plan in December 2020.
- The completion of this plan is the culmination of 25 years of collaborative efforts between Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, the Dawson District Renewable Resources Council, the Government of Yukon, and many parties in Alaska.
- Since January 2020, we have had four licensed Yukon resident hunts for the Fortymile caribou herd, and, as of September 3, a total of 20 caribou have been harvested.
- A larger number of caribou have been harvested by Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in during this period.

**Additional response**

- We have worked closely with our partners, in particular Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, to ensure the design of the Fortymile caribou hunt balances all interests and we have an adaptive management framework in place.
- Over the last two years, however, ongoing monitoring results of this herd indicate the population has naturally declined due to the herd reaching a peak on Alaskan summer habitats.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Fortymile Caribou**Environment

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- In response to this, the State of Alaska implemented a substantial harvest of Fortymile caribou in 2020 to reduce the herd size with the intent to avoid a larger population decline.
- While the Government of Yukon agrees a harvest was needed to reduce the risk of a large decline, we are currently engaging with the State of Alaska to ensure Yukon interests are considered in any actions the State takes.

**Third response:**

- The Yukon harvest management plan guides licensed and subsistence harvest and overall herd management in the Yukon portion of the herd's range.
- Significant research into the herd's needs over the past six years points to the significance of maintaining habitats and migratory pathways, particularly during the summer period.
- Management of habitat, particularly summer habitat, is also critical in maintaining the Fortymile caribou herd's presence in the Yukon.
- The Government of Yukon is working with the Dawson Land Use Planning Commission, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Dawson District Renewable Resources Council, and through the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* process, ensure significant habitats are managed to maintain the needs of the herd.
- The Government of Yukon will continue to seek a shared management approach that protects Yukoners' interests with respect to long-term sustainability and continued access to the Fortymile caribou herd.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Fortymile Caribou****Environment**

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- Alaska's harvest approach of allowing substantial harvest of both bulls and cows may drive the herd to a much lower population size. A smaller herd may migrate into the Yukon less frequently, thereby limiting harvest opportunities for Yukoners.
  - Fortymile caribou are a significant value being considered in the Dawson regional land use planning process and environmental assessments being conducted on proposed activities in the area.
- 

**Background:**

- In 2019 a 25-year hunting moratorium was lifted due to the herd's recovery.
- The recently completed Harvest Management Plan for the herd has identified a resident licensed hunt that may occur:
- The total number of caribou to be harvested is set each year based on management objectives of the parties in the Yukon and Alaska.
- Starting in January 2020, we have provided licensed Yukon resident harvest opportunities for the Fortymile caribou herd.
  - There was a threshold hunt from January 1 to March 31, 2020. 14 caribou were harvested during that period.
  - From August 1 to September 9, 2020, we had a registration hunt with a limited number of permits. Two caribou were harvested during that period.
  - From December 2020 until March 31, 2021, we had a threshold hunt (with a limit of 300 caribou), and three caribou were harvested. There were limited numbers of caribou in Yukon during this period.
  - From August 1 until September 9, 2021, there was a registration hunt with a limited number of permits. Only a single caribou was harvested as the herd entered and then left the summer range earlier than in past years.
- Significant harvest potential exists in the Yukon in both summer and winter as hunters have relatively easy access via roads, trails, and the Yukon River in the herd's range, as long as the herd is large enough to migrate into the Yukon.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Fortymile Caribou****Environment**

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**Fortymile caribou and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in**

- The Yukon's licensed hunt is enabled through the adaptive management provisions under *Wildlife Act* regulations approved in 2015.
- The limited licensed harvest opportunity for Yukon resident hunters has been designed to uphold Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in rights outlined in the Final Agreement. It aligns closely with the discussions of the Fortymile Caribou Harvest Management Committee, which includes Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in members.
- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizens have subsistence harvest rights and do not require permits to harvest. They have had a modest subsistence hunt since 2017.
- Creating the limited harvest opportunity is supported by the Dawson District Renewable Resources Council and was recommended by the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board.
- 74(1)(a), 76(1)

The department manages this by reducing the risk of incidental moose harvest by managing season dates, adjusting hunt boundaries and being mindful of the foundational principles of harvest sharing under the Umbrella Final Agreement.

**Fortymile caribou and harvest quotas with Alaska**

- The Yukon and Alaska have established harvest quotas for each jurisdiction, with 65 per cent of the sustainable harvest going to Alaska and 35 per cent to the Yukon.
- The Government of Yukon, together with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, and the Dawson District Renewable Resources Council, have participated in recovery planning and Alaska harvest management plans approved by the Alaska Board of Game.
- Evidence in recent years indicates that the herd reached a peak in 2017 based on the habitat capacity of its summer range. Parties had hoped the herd would expand into abandoned historic summer ranges, particularly those in the Yukon.
- The current Alaskan harvest management plan (2019-2023) contains a provision for either jurisdiction to harvest the other's allocation should the herd be unavailable for the other jurisdiction to harvest.

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**Session Briefing Note**

**Fall 2021**

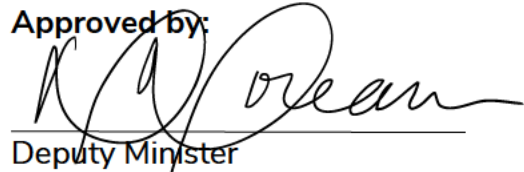
**Fortymile Caribou**

Environment

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76(1)

Approved by:



Deputy Minister

Department of Environment

2021.09.10

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Human-Wildlife Conflict**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- We all must do our part, every day, to prevent conflicts with bears, foxes, lynx, and other wildlife.
- Restricting year-round access to potential food sources like garbage, birdseed, poultry, and livestock is the most important and effective thing Yukoners can do to avoid property damage and keep ourselves and wildlife safe.
- Keep your pet close or on a leash while in the bush, and carry bear spray all year round.
- Yukoners dealing with aggressive wildlife or who witness someone feeding wildlife, such as foxes, are encouraged to contact conservation officers by calling the Turn in poachers and Polluters (TIPP) line.

**Additional response:**

- It is not uncommon for wildlife to visit rural residential properties at certain times of the year, especially in vegetated areas where plants are available to feed.
- Most wildlife simply passes through residential areas; however, they can become aggressive if they feel cornered or threatened.
- Ensuring public safety is a priority for conservation officers. They have a range of tools to help residents discourage wildlife from coming onto the property and reduce human-wildlife conflict generally.
- Conservation officers approach each incident on a case-by-case and species-specific basis. This may include site visits to assess the risk to the public and the animal.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Human-Wildlife Conflict**Environment

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**Third response:**

- So far in 2021, conservation officers have euthanized 24 bears, with an additional 13 being destroyed by members of the public in defence of life or property. All but 2 of these euthanized bears were black bears.
- Killing a bear is a last resort, only after preventative measures have failed or if the bear's behaviour poses an immediate public safety risk.
- It is not unusual to see bear activity at any time of year. We are increasing public education on winter bear awareness and encouraging Yukoners to be alert, carry bear spray and manage attractants, whether it's January or July.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- Living so close to the wilderness, the public often has concerns about human-wildlife conflict and is frequently raised in the media or brought up in the Legislature.
- Yukoners typically want to know how many conflict bears were killed. There may also be interest in this year's bear translocation and collar work.
- The department regularly receives reports of wildlife incidents, including fox and moose conflicts. In some cases, conservation officers euthanize bears, and this action can invoke a negative public reaction.

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**Background:**

- Prevention is the best way to avoid human-wildlife conflict. The Department of Environment continues to raise awareness with brochures and communication initiatives to help minimize conflicts between people and wildlife.
- A big part of the human-wildlife conflict conservation officer's role is to proactively minimize human-wildlife conflicts by providing education on managing attractants.
- Managing waste and compost remains a responsibility of the City of Whitehorse within city limits. Through the Whitehorse Bear Working Group, the Department of Environment, City of Whitehorse and Wildwise Yukon work to prevent human/bear conflicts.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Human-Wildlife Conflict**Environment

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- Whitehorse and surrounding residential areas can provide foxes with unnatural shelter and food, and with this comes unplanned consequences, with foxes becoming problems. The guide “Living with Foxes” includes advice for preventing conflict and the use of deterrents with foxes in backyards and neighborhoods.

**Approved by:**  
a/Deputy Minister of EnvironmentOctober 4, 2021  
Date approved



**Recommended response:**

- Most other jurisdictions have legislative tools to list and conserve species at risk. Such legislative tools are also a priority for the Government of Yukon.
- With foresight and planning, the Yukon has an opportunity to benefit from the hard lessons learned in other parts of Canada and the world and prevent the endangerment of species such as woodland caribou and grizzly bears as our territory further develops its infrastructure and economy.

**Additional response:**

- A timeline to complete a new legislative framework for species at risk depends on several factors, including determining how new legislation would interact with existing federal and territorial laws and requirements.
- In the interim, the Government of Yukon will continue to actively manage and steward species at risk using various existing legislative tools.
- This includes the Boreal Caribou Section 11 Conservation Agreement signed in 2019 with Canada, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and the Gwich'in Tribal Council to protect the species and its critical habitat.

**Third response:**

- We continue to work collaboratively with our partners in the territory, including First Nations, the Inuvialuit, wildlife management boards and councils, and interest groups and other government orders on species at risk conservation.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon Species at Risk Act**Environment

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- Our efforts to ensure that species such as wood bison, woodland caribou and grizzly bears continue to have viable populations in the Yukon are guided by management plans the Government of Yukon developed with First Nations, Inuvialuit, the Wildlife Management Advisory Council – North Slope, and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board.
- The Yukon Conservation Data Centre continues to track the locations and status of lesser-known and globally rare species that are Beringian in origin and unique to northwestern North America. This information is used in global reporting of biodiversity change, as well as environmental assessments.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- 74(1)(a)
- Opposition members and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (Yukon) regularly criticize Yukon's lack of species at risk legislation; Yukon is one of the few remaining jurisdictions in Canada without discrete legislation.
- Canada and national conservation organizations may look to Yukon to protect populations of wide-ranging, iconic species that are doing well here but poorly elsewhere in Canada or the world (e.g., bison, caribou, bats, bears, and wolverine).

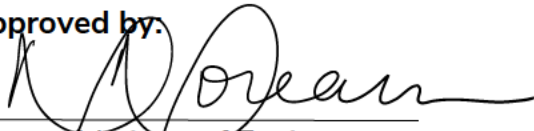
**Background:**

- National status assessments identify species at risk in seven levels. These are extinct, extirpated (meaning lost from the wild), endangered, threatened, special concern, not at risk, or data deficient.
- Yukon South Beringia is home to many rare, unique, and at-risk species found only in this region, including plants known nowhere else in the world and wide-ranging species at risk caribou, grizzly bears, and wolverine.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon Species at Risk Act****Environment**

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- Currently, 43 species listed as being at risk under the federal Species at Risk Act exist in the Yukon, and another 10 species have been recommended for listing.
- Species assessed and listed under the federal Species at Risk Act as Threatened or Endangered have legal protection and undergo mandatory recovery planning at a national level under the federal Species at Risk Act.
- There are no legal protections for those listed as Special Concern in the federal act because they are at a lesser level of endangerment. However, a management plan is legally required to ensure that they do not become further endangered.
- The Government of Yukon has received funding from the federal government for species at risk work in ground research, monitoring, and stewardship, including \$299K for bats, bears, bison, caribou and wolverine (2020-2021), and \$188K for Boreal caribou (2018 -2022).
- The Department of Environment has undertaken research and policy work, including a jurisdictional scan to review existing legislation, enforcement mechanisms and management tools to address species at risk.
- The jurisdictional scan identified that most provinces and territories within Canada have either standalone species at risk legislation or species at risk legal provisions within their existing wildlife acts.
- The Yukon does not offer any discrete legal protection for species at risk. A March 2019 Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society report focused on the need for a Yukon-specific act.

**Approved by:**  
Deputy Minister of Environment

2021-09-09

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon North Slope Wildlife  
Conservation and Management Plan**

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Environment

**Recommended response:**

- The Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope) has formally recommended a final Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan for the Yukon North Slope to The Governments of Yukon, Inuvialuit and Canada.
- While many Yukoners may never visit the Yukon North Slope, this unique area is subject to a special conservation regime established in the Inuvialuit Final Agreement.
- Yukon's co-management of this area with the Inuvialuit is an important part of reconciliation.

**Additional response:**

- The recommended plan focuses on conservation for diverse wildlife and habitat, including the Porcupine caribou herd and its range, adaptation to climate change, and managing activities to conserve traditional Inuvialuit use of the area.
- Implementation of the plan is supported through federal funding that the Government of Yukon receives specifically to implement the Inuvialuit Final Agreement.
- Before the end of year, the Government of Yukon will be undertaking government-to-government consultation with affected indigenous governments prior to communicating endorsement of the plan.

**Third response:**

- The plan recommends considering Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas in the Eastern Yukon North Slope to formalize the conservation regime for this area.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon North Slope Wildlife  
Conservation and Management Plan**

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Environment

- The Government of Yukon is discussing this recommendation with all the parties of the Inuvialuit Final Agreement.
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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- There may be interest in the final recommended plan as it has now been formally recommended by the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope), and they are seeking endorsement from the Inuvialuit, Yukon, and Canada.
  - The Yukon North Slope is an important area for Porcupine caribou, which are an important subsistence food source. Conservation of wildlife and habitat is at the heart of the plan and is considered integral to conserving Inuvialuit traditional use.
- 

**Background:**

- The Inuvialuit Final Agreement mandates the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope) to prepare a Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan for the Yukon North Slope and directs them that the area's highest values are conservation and continued Inuvialuit use.
  - The Council is a co-management advisory body, which provides advice to the appropriate ministers on management, regulation and administration of wildlife, habitat and harvesting for the Yukon North Slope.
  - The existing plan was created in 2003 and required updating. Although the 2003 plan was not formally endorsed (signed) by the Parties to the Inuvialuit Final Agreement, it has been used to inform and guide research and management activities on the Yukon North Slope.
  - The Inuvialuit Final Agreement does not require the plan to be signed by the Parties. The Council recognizes the value of endorsement from the Parties.
  - The Parties (the Inuvialuit, Canada and Yukon) received the final recommended plan from the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope) on July 28, 2021, after it completed an extensive engagement with affected First Nations, communities, and the general public.
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**CONFIDENTIAL**

**#53**

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Fall 2021**

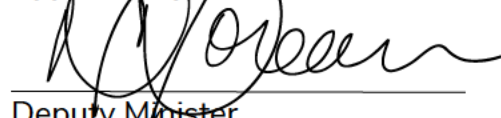
### **Yukon North Slope Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan**

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Environment

- Due to delays resulting from the territorial election, the Council conducted the public review without formal support from the Government of Yukon.
- The recommended plan focuses on:
  - An integrated conservation management regime for the Yukon North Slope, including expanding opportunities for conservation-based economic activity.
  - Conservation of habitats that support a diversity and abundance of wildlife.
  - Management of risks from human activities to ecosystems and wildlife and to the safety and quality of harvested foods.
  - Advancing discussion regarding a potential Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area designation for the area.
- Consistent with the Inuvialuit Final Agreement, withdrawal and prohibition orders remain in effect east of the Babbage River to the Northwest Territories border. These orders restrict entry under the *Quartz Mining Act* and the *Placer Mining Act*, prohibit disposal of lands under the *Territorial Lands (Yukon) Act*, and prohibit oil and gas development under the *Oil and Gas Act*.
- 75(1)(b)(i), 76(1)
- Independent of the planning process, the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope) has received federal funding to support discussions amongst the Parties on Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas for the Eastern Yukon North Slope.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister

Department of Environment

2021-09-03

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Tagish River Habitat Protection  
Area Management Plan**

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Environment

**Recommended response:**

- Establishing the Tagish River Habitat Protection Area and completing a management plan is a commitment under the Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final Agreement and an important step in reconciliation.
- The Tagish River Habitat Protection Area encompasses the Six Mile River, an important channel connecting Tagish Lake to Marsh Lake in the upper Yukon River drainage system.
- Thank you to all of those who provided feedback on the draft management plan online and during the public meetings last fall. Your input and dialogue is important.
- The Steering Committee has carefully considered the input received and has provided a final recommended management plan to the governments of Canada, Carcross/Tagish First Nation and the Yukon for review.

**Additional response:**

- The plan speaks to revitalizing First Nation culture in the Tagish River area and takes a unique approach in integrating traditional knowledge and storytelling to form the basis of the plan.
- It also speaks to recreational use like fishing, boating and off-road vehicles, shoreline development, and opportunities for stewardship, research, and monitoring.
- A primary issue raised by community members during the planning process was related to a recommendation to reduce shoreline development and use, specifically docks.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Tagish River Habitat Protection  
Area Management Plan**

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Environment

- Once the plan is approved, an implementation committee consisting of the same Parties to the plan will consider how best to address this recommendation and all others in the plan.

**Third response:**

- I would like to thank the Steering Committee for its dedicated work, which began in 2015. The committee has demonstrated exceptional intergovernmental collaboration in navigating challenging issues.
  - You can find more information at [Yukon.ca](http://Yukon.ca) and [tagishriverhpa.com](http://tagishriverhpa.com).
- 

**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- During the public engagement on the draft plan, some members of the public expressed strong opposition to potential dock removal on their property. This opposition was also expressed through a petition signed by 42 waterfront property owners.
  - On September 24, 2021, the Steering Committee submitted the final recommended management plan to the Parties (the Government of Yukon, the Government of Canada and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation) requesting review and approval of the plan.
  - Carcross/Tagish First Nation has expressed interest in having the plan approved as soon as possible.
- 

**Background:**


- The Tagish River Habitat Protection Area is within the Traditional Territory of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation; it does not encompass any Settlement Lands.
  - The planning process was initiated in 2015 through a Steering Committee with representatives from the Carcross/Tagish First Nation, the Government of Yukon (departments of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources) and the Government of Canada, with participation by the Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council and the Tagish Local Advisory Council.
-



**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Tagish River Habitat Protection  
Area Management Plan**

Environment

- In developing the plan, the Steering Committee held **extensive** community meetings and events. They met with Carcross/Tagish First Nation Elders, **the Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council and the Tagish Local Advisory Council. They also engaged** with subject area experts (e.g., water quality, fisheries, land management, etc.), sent a questionnaire to residents, and conducted interviews with citizens.
- The committee heard concerns regarding the shoreline, water use, swan (and wildlife in general) disturbance, and access to the Tagish River.
- A What We Heard Report reflecting the comments received during public engagement **is available on Yukon.ca and tagishriverhpa.com**
- 67(3)(b)
- **Carcross/Tagish First Nation and Canada are following their review and approval processes.**
- **The Government of Yukon has an obligation to keep the Taku River Tlingit First Nation informed about the planning process** 76(1)  
Regular updates have been distributed 76(1)  
)
- **Government of Yukon staff from the departments of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources are working together to ensure consistency in process and approach between the Tagish River Habitat Protection Area and the Tagish Local Area Plan.**

**Approved by:**  
Deputy Minister of Environment

10.22.2021

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Wildlife survey and data collection**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- The Department of Environment is committed to collecting robust data to make high-quality, up-to-date information available for decision-making.
- This year, weather permitting, we are planning **four moose** surveys for **Lower Stewart River**, Whitehorse South, Teslin River and the Sifton-Miners areas. Combined, these four moose surveys will cover an area of over **thirty thousand** square kilometres.
- 74(1)(a)
- Aside from moose and caribou, we are also conducting surveys this year for other harvested species like wolves, deer, and fish, as well as for non-harvested species like pika, bat, and ground squirrel.
- Biologists from the Department of Environment use this data in combination with available harvest information to make decisions about harvest allocation and the sustainability of wildlife populations.

**Additional response:**

- In addition to wildlife surveys and data collection, the Department of Environment conducts ecological assessments to better understand the Yukon landscape, the habitat needs for fish and wildlife, and the potential impacts of human activities and a changing climate.
- These assessments are essential to interpreting the results of wildlife surveys and data collection and forecasting the long-term viability of wildlife populations.
- We prioritize which areas to survey based on a combination of factors, including harvest levels, access, community concerns, land-use

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Wildlife survey and data collection**Environment

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planning data needs, how long it has been since an area was last surveyed, and human activities taking place nearby.

- The Government of Yukon's research and monitoring activities are publicly available at Yukon.ca by searching the term 'current research.'

**Third response:**

- Department staff work closely with our First Nations partners and Renewable Resources Councils to better understand fish and wildlife populations and seek solutions addressing subsistence and licensed harvest.
- An example of this collaboration is the Whitehorse South moose survey we have planned for this fall; this is a partnership with the Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council.
- First Nations harvest information, where available, can be an important source of information.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- Minister Clarke's mandate letter commits to increased support for wildlife surveys and data collection.

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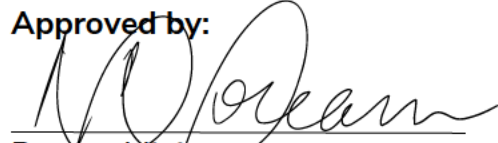
**Background:**

- Resources to conduct surveys are limited.
- The Department of Environment conducts targeted population inventories, collects harvest data, and performs ecological assessments annually to collect up-to-date information.
- The department also takes part in special projects in response to land use planning, specific research goals, and community requests.
- The need to increase tracking and monitoring of fish and wildlife populations is pressured by the Yukon's growing human population, advances in fishing and hunting technology, increased access to remote areas, and the effects of a changing climate.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Wildlife survey and data collection**Environment

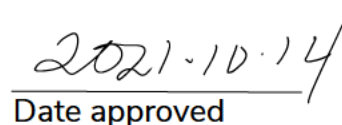
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- This year, the department plans to spend \$316,000 for moose surveys and \$260,000 for caribou-related data collection.
- The Whitehorse South moose survey will include the Fish Lake, Wheaton River, and Mt. Lorne Moose Management Units, areas where the local First Nations have expressed an interest in having updated population estimates due to increased trail and road access for hunters.

**Approved by:**

Deputy Minister

Department of Environment



Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Finlayson Caribou Herd**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- The size of the Finlayson caribou herd peaked in 1990 and since then the department has monitored a declining trend in the size of the herd.
- We continue our efforts to work with Liard First Nation and Ross River Dena Council to stabilize the number of Finlayson caribou, including addressing harvest levels.
- In order to address our shared concerns for the herd, no resident hunting permits have been issued for Finlayson caribou since the 2018-2019 hunting season.
- Outfitter quotas are also set at zero for this herd. This was a commitment we made and communicated in 2018 that continues today.

**Additional response:**

- Population estimates were 4,537 animals in 1996, 4,130 animals in 1999, 3,077 animals in 2007, and 2,712 animals in 2017.
- The most recent herd estimate, conducted in 2017, was 2,712 animals. The rate of the herd's decline slowed between the 2007 and 2017 censuses.
- Composition surveys, which provide estimates of adult sex ratios and calf recruitment, are conducted annually on the Finlayson caribou herd, which allows us to monitor long-term population trends.
- Since the closure of licenced harvest, we have continued to monitor the herd's demographic trends with annual composition surveys, we plan to conduct a census survey in March 2022 to update the population size, and we've updated population modelling to evaluate potential changes to demographic trends and harvest scenarios.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Finlayson Caribou Herd**Environment

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**Third response:**

- The department introduced a Permit Hunt Authorization for the Finlayson caribou herd in 1998, issuing 30 permits annually up until 2018.
- Between 2012 and 2016, the licensed harvest of Finlayson caribou, including outfitter guests, averaged fewer than 10 bulls per year.
- Due to the timing of management actions, outfitters had an exclusive harvest opportunity in 2018.
- No licenced hunting opportunities have been made available for the Finlayson caribou herd since 2018.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- On November 10, 2021, MLA Wade Istchenko asked a number of questions about the Finlayson caribou herd, including: what is the status of the herd management plan, what data collection and wildlife surveys have occurred and what actions have been taken to promote the recovery of the herd itself.
- Ross River Dena Council has strong concerns about caribou populations and potential overharvest within its asserted traditional territory.
- One outfitter has appealed the reduction of their Finlayson caribou quota from seven animals per year to zero. The Concession and Compensation Review Board heard the appeal on December 3, 2019; the Government of Yukon did not support the appeal board's recommendation for providing a caribou quota.
- On October 2, 2020, the outfitter filed a petition in the Yukon Supreme Court disputing the Government of Yukon's decision. The matter is still before the court.

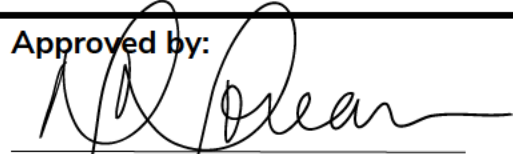
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**Background:**

- The Finlayson caribou herd has always been valued highly by the Kaska people in their culture and for subsistence.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Finlayson Caribou Herd****Environment**

- The construction of the Campbell Highway in the 1960s greatly increased access to the main Finlayson caribou winter range in addition to increasing hunting opportunities during the fall.
- In the early 1980s the herd was thought to be declining rapidly due to a non-sustainable hunter harvest and high predation rates.
- There were wolf reduction efforts from 1983 to 1989 to address concerns about high predation. About 85 per cent of wolves were culled, which resulted in a doubling of the herd's size to approximately 5,950 animals in 1990.
- However, after the culling of wolves ended, wolf numbers quickly rebounded. This experience contributed to the lessons learned that has shaped the *Wolf Conservation and Management Plan* and the department's position that large-scale predator control efforts are ineffective at improving long term improving prey outcomes.

**Approved by:**

Deputy Minister

Department of Environment

2021.11.15

Date approved

**CONFIDENTIAL****#68****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Parks Strategy Implementation**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- Since the Yukon Parks Strategy was released in fall 2020, the Department of Environment has been working to implement many of the actions outlined in this ten-year strategy.
- Short-term actions that have already been completed or currently underway include:
  - Introducing a longer serviced campground season, from May 1 to September 30;
  - Establishing regulations to update park fees; (see [BN #09](#))
  - Developing an online payment system to pay nightly camping fees at a discounted rate;
  - Providing opportunities for public input to modernize park regulations, including ensuring public safety, environmental and heritage protection;
  - Initiating the development of a system plan to guide the establishment of new parks; and
  - Engaging with First Nations on the development of a new campground within two hours of Whitehorse (see [BN #69](#)).

**Additional response:**

- Other initiatives we will roll out over the next five years include:
  - Creating more year-round recreation opportunities in territorial parks;
  - Providing more accessible wilderness experiences through enhanced front-country and backcountry trails;



**CONFIDENTIAL****#68****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Parks Strategy Implementation**Environment

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- Working closely with First Nations and Inuvialuit to co-develop a collaborative park management framework and developing partnerships with Indigenous guardians;
- Piloting a new campsite reservation system; and
- Adding more campsites at some existing campgrounds.

**Third response:**

- The Yukon Parks Strategy sets the long-term direction for Yukon's territorial parks system through to 2030.
- The vision for our parks system incorporates four building blocks:
  - Protection of ecological and cultural values;
  - Reconciliation through collaborative management;
  - Public service that is sustainable, efficient and accountable; and
  - Public benefits including healthy people, healthy land, and a healthy economy.
- Implementation of this strategy will continue to involve collaboration with First Nations and Inuvialuit, partnerships, and opportunities for public participation.

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**Context – this may be an issue because:**

- The Yukon Parks Strategy was publicly released on September 24, 2020, and there may be questions about its implementation.

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**Background:**

- The Yukon Parks Strategy identifies 24 strategic actions to implement a vision focused on protection, reconciliation, public service and public benefits.

**CONFIDENTIAL****#68****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Parks Strategy Implementation**

Environment

- Ten priorities for the period from 2020 to 2030 are:
  - Keep doing what's working
  - Develop a parks system plan
  - Welcome year-round park use
  - Enrich and diversify park experiences
  - Make it easier to get a campsite
  - Establish and operate new parks
  - Ensure protection
  - Advance reconciliation
  - Modernize regulations
  - Financially sustain our parks
- Over 1,500 Yukoners, 200 non-residents, 10 Yukon First Nations governments and 28 Yukon organizations provided input on the draft Strategy in 2018 and 2019.

**Approved by:**

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Deputy Minister of Environment

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Sept 10, 2021

Date approved

**CONFIDENTIAL****#69****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****New Campground Planning**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- I am pleased to share that work is already underway to develop a new campground.
- Six Yukon First Nations, whose Traditional Territory lies within two hours drive of Whitehorse, have been invited to discuss possible campground locations and partnership opportunities with the Yukon Parks Branch. Pending these initial conversations, we will consult with First Nations to establish a new campground at a chosen location.
- Yukoners will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the new campground after a final location has been selected.
- To get to the construction phase, we will also need to complete the necessary planning and design work.
- We are aiming to have the new campground ready for use by 2025.
- The new campground will provide economic opportunities for First Nations and the private sector. There will be opportunities to bid on tenders for campground design, construction and ongoing operations.
- The new First Nations procurement policy will be followed to enhance economic outcomes for Yukon First Nations people and businesses.

**Additional response:**

- The Yukon Parks Strategy outlines a number of desirable features for the new recreation park and campground.
- In addition to being located within a two-hour drive from Whitehorse, it:
  - May be a larger campground with up to 150 campsites;

**CONFIDENTIAL****#69****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****New Campground Planning**Environment

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- have a rustic atmosphere with well-spaced campsites;
- have a quiet zone available; and
- provide active recreation opportunities, like hiking trails and access to a water body.

**Third response:**

- In addition to developing a new campground, we will continue to add sites to existing campgrounds over the next few years.
- For example, seven new walk-in campsites have been added to Marsh Lake campground, and the day-use area was upgraded with a new change house and more accessible parking.
- Planning is also underway to upgrade day-use areas at Lake Laberge and Pine Lake campgrounds, and additional walk-in campsites are being planned for Twin Lakes and Little Salmon Lake campgrounds.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- There may be questions about where the new campground will be located and when construction will begin.
- The Yukon NDP may bring forward its platform commitment to building a second campground within two hours of Whitehorse.
- There may be questions about why it takes so long to develop and build the new campground.

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**Background:**

- The Yukon Parks Strategy was publicly released on September 24, 2020. The strategy identifies 24 strategic actions to implement a vision focused on protection, reconciliation, public service and public benefits. (see [BN #68](#))
- Strategic Action 4.5.1 of the strategy commits to developing at least one recreation park (campground) within two hours of Whitehorse.

**CONFIDENTIAL****#69****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****New Campground Planning****Environment**

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- Approximately \$2.2 million over five years has been committed to funding the development of a new recreation park and campground.
- It is anticipated that campground design, environmental assessment, and construction will take three years once a location is chosen.
- Development of the new campground is expected to occur in four broad phases:
  - Phase 1: First Nations Engagement and Location Selection
    - Parks Branch has started to solicit input from First Nations to discuss campground location possibilities, share selection criteria, project timeline and future procurement process. The final location will be selected by the Government of Yukon.
  - Phase 2: Park Planning and Establishment
    - First Nations consultation is initiated.
    - Park planning, environmental assessment and regulatory approval process begin and will continue throughout Phase 3.
  - Phase 3: Campground Design and Construction
    - The procurement process, incorporating the new First Nations procurement policy, will be used to select contractors for campground design, construction and operations.
  - Phase 4: Campground Launch and Operation

**Approved by:**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
a/Deputy Minister  
Department of EnvironmentOctober 4, 2021  
Date approved

**CONFIDENTIAL****#70****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Status of Parks, Protected Areas and Management Plans**

Environment

**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon works closely with First Nations governments and the Inuvialuit to develop parks and protected area management plans to guide conservation and use of these special places.
- Management plans set out the long-term vision as well as strategic direction to guide decision-making on site. Management plans are reviewed and updated in order to respond to changing issues and on-the-ground scenarios.
- Fourteen management plans are currently in place; two for special management areas, eight for habitat protection areas, and four for territorial parks.
- Management plans are reviewed collaboratively on schedules as mandated by the Final Agreements, legislation or the plans themselves. In any given year, there can be several management plans under review or various stages of development. At present, there are fifteen active management planning projects.

**Additional response:**

- Parks and protected areas are culturally and ecologically important places. They tell the story of our past and are critical to the environmental health and biodiversity of our future.
- Protected areas conserve ecosystems and enable cultural and traditional connections. They demonstrate our commitment to managing this land together.

**CONFIDENTIAL****#70****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Status of Parks, Protected Areas and  
Management Plans**

Environment

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- We recognize that Canada has committed to protecting 25 per cent of Canada's lands and waters by 2025 and 30 per cent by 2030. Yukon has not adopted a percentage target of its own but has agreed, through the One With Nature agreement signed in 2018, to contribute to Canada's efforts to meet international commitments to establish protected areas.

**Third response:**

- As outlined in the Yukon Parks Strategy, we are now working on developing a parks system plan to guide the development of existing and emerging parks and the establishment of future parks.
- A parks system plan will provide transparency on how, where and when new parks will be established to help meet the Yukon's needs for long-term landscape conservation, recreation, tourism, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- We will develop guiding principles to support a more consistent and effective approach to park management.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- The public and the Opposition may be interested to know the status of protected area management plans and engagement opportunities.
- A new parks system plan is being developed to help guide future park establishment and management efforts.
- The public and the Opposition may be interested to know Yukon's contribution to Canada's commitment to protecting 25 per cent of Canada's lands and waters by 2025 and 30 per cent by 2030.

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**Background:**

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Prepared for Minister Clarke  
Department of Environment

Date prepared: August 20, 2021

Last Updated: N/A

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**CONFIDENTIAL****#70****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Status of Parks, Protected Areas and Management Plans**

Environment

**Park and protected area establishment**

- Typically, the Yukon's territorial parks and protected areas are identified through Final Agreements or regional land use planning.
- To date, each area has required legal designation and a management plan (except for recreation parks) under the *Parks and Land Certainty Act* or the *Wildlife Act*.

**Management planning process**

- First Nations Final Agreements and the *Inuvialuit Final Agreement* provide specific guidance for preparing and reviewing management plans for areas established under those agreements.
- Steering committees develop management plans for parks and habitat protection areas. The parties nominate members to the steering committee, which recommends a management plan to the respective governments of the parties. A planner from the Parks Branch or Fish and Wildlife Branch acts as Secretariat to the steering committees and drafts the plans on their behalf.

**Current establishment and planning work for territorial parks**

- The **Herschel Island – Qikiqtaruk Territorial Park** Management Plan was completed in 1991 pursuant to the *Inuvialuit Final Agreement*. A revised plan was approved on July 3, 2019.
- **Kusawa Territorial Park** is identified in the Final Agreements of the Carcross/Tagish and Kwanlin Dün First Nations and was legally designated in July 2016. A draft management plan was developed with Carcross/Tagish, Champagne and Aishihik and Kwanlin Dün First Nations. The plan was recommended in January 2016 but has not been signed by all parties.
- **Asi Keyi Territorial Park** was identified in the Kluane First Nation Final Agreement and is not yet legally designated. Management planning is underway with Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation, and the steering committee is currently waiting for approval from all three parties to undertake community and public engagement on proposed management goals and approaches.
- **Daadzaii Vàn Territorial Park** is identified in the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan. Management planning is underway with Vuntut Gwitchin Government.



**CONFIDENTIAL****#70****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Status of Parks, Protected Areas and Management Plans**

Environment

Once completed, it will be legally designated under the *Parks and Lands Certainty Act*. The park management plan is in the drafting stage, and Gwich'in Tribal Council and Tetlit Gwich'in are being consulted.

- The **Tombstone Territorial Park** Management Plan is currently in a 10-year review with the joint Park Management Committee that includes Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Parks Branch.
- **Agay Mene Territorial Park** is identified in the Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final Agreement. Legal designation and management planning work remains pending.
- Management planning has been initiated for eight recreation parks designated under the *Parks and Land Certainty Act*. Planning is in the information-gathering phase, and First Nation engagement has not been initiated yet.

**Current establishment and planning work for habitat protection areas**

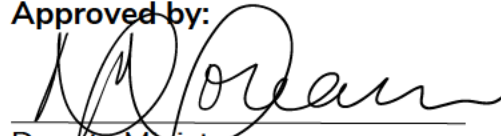
- **Pickhandle Lakes Habitat Protection Area** was identified under the Kluane First Nation Final Agreement. A steering committee with Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation was formed in 2010. The committee is now close to finalizing a draft of the management plan.
- **Tagish River Habitat Protection Area** was identified under the Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final Agreement. A steering committee was formed in 2015 with Carcross/Tagish First Nation and the Government of Canada, and with participation from the Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council and the Tagish Local Advisory Council. A public review of the draft plan occurred in October 2020. The Steering Committee is preparing the final plan and will recommend it to the parties.
- **Ch'ihilii Chik** was identified for protection in the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan. The parties agreed to the area's designation as a habitat protection area in 2014. The management plan was approved in May 2019, and the area was designated under the *Wildlife Act* in October 2019.
- Planning has not started on **Lewes Marsh Habitat Protection Area**.

**Management plans in place**

**CONFIDENTIAL****#70****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Status of Parks, Protected Areas and  
Management Plans**

Environment

- Territorial park management plans are in place for Tombstone, Ni'iinlii Njik (Fishing Branch), Wilderness Preserve and Ecological Reserve, as well as Herschel Island – Qikiqtaruk.
- Habitat protection area management plans are up to date and in place for Ch'ihilii Chik, Ddhaw Ghro, Tsâwnjik Chu – Nordenskiöld, Van Tat – Old Crow Flats, Łútsāw Wetlands, Ni'iinlii'Njik (Fishing Branch), Horseshoe Slough, and Devil's Elbow and Big Island.
- Ta'tla Mun Special Management Area and Mandanna Lake have management plans in place in recognition of the importance of these waterbodies as food fisheries to the Selkirk and Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nations (respectively), as identified in their Final Agreements.

**Approved by:**

Deputy Minister

Department of Environment

2021.09.09

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****McIntyre Creek Park**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- We are committed to beginning the process of creating McIntyre Creek Park.
- As part of creating this new park, we have initiated discussions with the City of Whitehorse, and will be following up with the affected Yukon First Nations, Yukon University, and local stakeholders.

**Secondary response:**

- The McIntyre Creek area supports a diversity of habitats important to wildlife including wetlands and is an important space appreciated by Yukoners.
- The area is known to be an important cultural area for both the Kwanlin Dun First Nation and Ta'an Kwach'an Council. Additionally Yukon University recognizes the importance of the area to support field based learning and research.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- Beginning the process to create McIntyre Creek Park is a commitment in the Minister of Environment's 2021 mandate letter.
- There has been a longstanding interest from a number of groups and stakeholders to establish a park in this area, including Friends of McIntyre Creek, Yukon Conservation Society, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, and the Porter Creek Community Association.
- Concern has been voiced that the existing City of Whitehorse designation of a portion of the area as a regional park does not provide adequate protection.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****McIntyre Creek Park****Environment**

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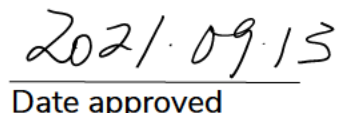
**Background:**

- The area of interest covers approximately 4600 hectares, divided into three zones: upper, middle, and lower McIntyre Creek.
- The majority of the area is the City of Whitehorse lands. The government of Yukon, Ta'an Kwach'an Council and Kwanlin Dun First Nation all have lands within the proposed area.
- Additional interests include mineral tenure holders, aggregate extraction, other commercial and institutional land tenures (e.g., Icy Waters, Yukon University).
- Several concurrent related planning processes are underway in the area: development of the City of Whitehorse's new Official Community Plan: Whitehorse 2040, the development of the Yukon University Campus Master Plan, the Lu Zil Mabn (Fish Lake) Local Area Plan.
- A major point of contention is that the City's current Official Community Plan designates a portion of the area ("Porter Creek D") for future residential development. Interested stakeholder groups have lobbied for more than two decades for this area to be included as a protected area, not for residential development.
- It is not clear at this point if the City can confer permanent protection to the lands under their control. This will take further discussion.

**Approved by:**

Deputy Minister

Department of Environment



Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon Guide for Water Quality Objectives and Effluent Quality Standards for Quartz Mining**

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Environment

**Recommended response:**

- I am pleased to announce the release of the *Yukon Guide for Water Quality Objectives and Effluent Quality Standards for Quartz Mining*, which is available on Yukon.ca.
- This guide is a “how to” document. It will help Yukon quartz mining proponents determine their particular projects’ water quality objectives and effluent quality standards to address and reduce impacts on water in the Yukon.
- Having a standard guideline for industry to access and use will help protect the Yukon’s freshwater and promote sustainable water use.

**Additional response:**

- These guidelines will help quartz mining water licence applicants understand their environmental obligations and prepare their environmental assessment and water licence applications.
- The guide requires proponents to gather three years of baseline data, this supports what all major quartz mining projects undergoing assessment and licencing are already doing.

**Third response:**

- I would like to thank Yukon First Nations governments and the quartz mining industry representatives for providing important feedback during the development of this guide.
- The most recent engagement was undertaken in 2020 based on feedback received during discussions on a previous draft of the guide in 2017. This included input from industry on the three year baseline

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon Guide for Water Quality Objectives and Effluent Quality Standards for Quartz Mining**

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Environment

requirement and the guide's implementation by the Yukon Water Board.

- The re-engagement held from May to December 2020 was supported by providing a revised draft guide and implementation plan, a fact sheet, an introductory video and technical overview video.
- Applying the guide is important to ensure we have healthy freshwater for Yukoners now and in the future.

**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- On October 15, 2021, the Government of Yukon released the guide.
- As Quartz mining proponents are now expected to use these guidelines to support their environmental assessment and water licence applications, there may be questions on how this will impact current industry operations.

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**Background:**

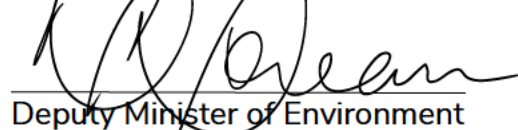
- The development of the guidelines was a commitment of the Yukon Mining Memorandum of Understanding Table and drafting was initiated in 2015.
- Two rounds of public engagement (2017 and 2020) and three peer reviews, representing Industry, were undertaken.
- In 2020, Assistant Deputy Ministers from the departments of Environment, Energy, Mines and Resources, and Executive Council Office supported the release of the draft guidelines for public engagement.
- Public engagement concluded in December 2020. Feedback was received from seven organizations, including mining companies, and the guidelines were revised based on comments.
- In May 2020 an extended (and phased) re-engagement period commenced and ran until December 2020 on the draft guidelines and implementation plan. This included targeted letters with an offer to hold meetings, a fact sheet, and links to two overview videos (introductory and technical aspects).

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon Guide for Water Quality  
Objectives and Effluent Quality  
Standards for Quartz Mining**

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Environment

- Assistant Deputy Ministers approved the final draft on April 22, 2021.
- This guidance will assist the quartz mining industry to address and reduce impacts on water in the Yukon and provides quartz mining proponents with methods for determining water quality objectives and effluent quality standards for projects.
- It will serve as important guidance during Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board assessments to determine and build a shared understanding of water use goals, the appropriate water quality management approach, and the information required.
- The Yukon Water Board endorses the guide and expects applicants to use them for water licence applications going forward. Applicants who have previously submitted water licence applications may also choose to use the guide.

**Approved by:**  
Deputy Minister of Environment  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon Forum Working  
Groups-Regional Land Use  
Planning**Environment  
Energy, Mines, and  
Resources

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**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations are working together through the Yukon Forum to advance reconciliation and collaborate on important Yukon issues.
- Members of the Yukon Forum's Regional Land Use Planning Working Group identified priority actions to ensure regional land use planning is well managed and progresses efficiently.
- These actions include supporting regional land use planning processes, completing a legislative review, and leading a funding review under Chapter 11 with the Government of Canada.

**Additional response:**

- These priorities will guide future regional land use planning and can help ensure success for planning commissions.
- The Premier, Ministers and Chiefs met in Ottawa with the federal Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations in December 2018 to discuss the funding needed to complete the remaining regional land use plans.
- The 2019-2020 funding adequacy review found that there was \$4,338,622 remaining in the federal funding allocation for Regional Land Use Planning.
  - This represents adequate funding for Regional Land Use Planning through to 2024. Yet sub-regional planning, plan reviews and conformity checks are not currently funded by Canada.



**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon Forum Working  
Groups-Regional Land Use  
Planning**Environment  
Energy, Mines, and  
Resources

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- The Government of Yukon often hears that more regional land use plans need to be advanced and completed.
- Mandate letter commitment: Complete the Dawson Regional Land Use Plan and advance the planning process for other regions to ensure proactive engagement (2021).


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**Background:**

- In accordance with the Yukon Forum's Joint Priority Action Plan that identifies Chapter 11 land use planning as a priority, leaders of the Government of Yukon, First Nations and the Council of Yukon First Nations developed a strategic approach to restarting and improving regional land use planning in the Yukon.
- The approach entails working together to implement a number of strategic recommendations to fulfill four Priority Objectives:
  1. Set up Commissions for success by:
    - examining the roles of the Yukon Land Use Planning Council, Planning Commissions and the Parties;
    - reviewing and agreeing on a broadly applicable process for regional land use planning; and
    - reviewing the information requirements of regional land use planning.
  2. Support several land use planning processes concurrently inside and outside of Chapter 11.
  3. Conduct a legislative review of First Nations and the Government of Yukon laws.
  4. Lead the 2019-2020 review of funding adequacy for regional land use planning under Chapter 11.
- The Yukon Forum Working Group has been meeting with the Yukon Land Use Planning Council monthly to continue to move forward with the implementation of Priority Objectives 1 and 2 (see above).

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon Forum Working  
Groups-Regional Land Use  
Planning**Environment  
Energy, Mines, and  
Resources

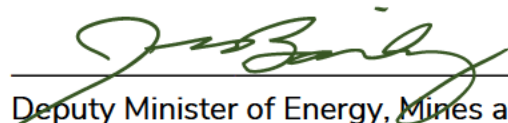
- Priority Objective 3 is being implemented through multiple initiatives, including the Successor Resource Legislation Working Group, which is advancing work to replace the *Lands Act* and *Territorial Lands (Yukon) Act* with new lands legislation.
- Executive Council Office leads Yukon Forum coordination, corporate communications and funding adequacy negotiations on behalf of the Government of Yukon in order to address Priority Objective 4.
- The Premier, Cabinet Ministers, the Grand Chief of the Council of Yukon First Nations, and Chiefs of Yukon First Nations sit at the main table and speak to agenda items.
- Representatives from First Nations organizations (e.g. Assembly of First Nations) and transboundary First Nations groups may attend meetings as observers.

**Approved by:**

Sept 9, 2021

Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved



13/09/2021

Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**#7**

**Session Briefing Note**

**Fall 2021**

**Management of  
Wetlands in the Indian  
River Watershed**

Energy, Mines and  
Resources

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**Recommended response:**

- The interim approach for the protection and reclamation of wetlands affected by placer mining in the Indian River watershed is intended to strike an appropriate balance between conservation and development interests in the area.
- We recognize this is a challenging issue: we are committed to working with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the placer mining industry, and all involved parties on refining the interim approach and finding solutions that support environmentally responsible development.
- We are carefully considering the draft Dawson Regional Land Use Plan and its recommendations for special protections in the upper Indian River watershed.

**Additional response:**

- To support the development of a final policy in this area, the Government of Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in are interested in working together on a scientific study of the Indian River Wetlands.
- We will continue to work together with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in to develop our knowledge about wetlands in northern environments so that decision bodies can make evidence-based decisions.

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**#7**

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Fall 2021**

### **Management of Wetlands in the Indian River Watershed**

Energy, Mines and  
Resources

- 
- We thank the Yukon Water Board for holding its public interest hearing on 'Placer Mining in Wetlands' and are currently considering their recommendation about the establishment of a technical advisory committee on wetlands.

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#### **Context — this may be an issue because:**

- A number of parties including First Nations and the placer mining community, are closely watching the Government of Yukon's progress on wetlands management.
- The Draft Dawson Regional Land Use Plan, currently under review by the Parties, recommends broad wetland protections for the region, with additional special protection in areas including the upper Indian River watershed.
- Questions may be asked as to whether the Government of Yukon supports the Yukon Water Board's recommendation to work with First Nation Governments, industry and other key stakeholders to establish a *Technical Advisory Committee for the Protection, Use and Reclamation of Yukon Wetlands*.

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#### **Background:**

- In January 2017, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Government of Yukon signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work collaboratively to resolve the Indian River wetlands issues. This includes a commitment for the two governments to develop reclamation guidelines for placer mining in the Indian River area.
- Both parties agreed to certain elements of an interim approach, including to:
  - collaborate on wetland research by undertaking a multi-year study of wetland/water function and value of the Indian River Wetlands to inform future policy/management decisions; and

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**#7**

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Fall 2021**

### **Management of Wetlands in the Indian River Watershed**

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Energy, Mines and  
Resources

- develop a wetland reclamation guide.
- Options for interim protection were discussed, but no agreement was reached.
- In letters from January and June of 2019 and September 2020, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in communicated their view that no mining should be permitted in wetlands in the Indian River watershed until a wetland study is complete and a final policy is developed.
- The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources communicated to the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Chief that the Government of Yukon would proceed with an interim approach to protection that allows placer mining to continue.
- The interim approach came into effect January 15, 2020 and includes the following components:
  - avoid mining in wetlands wherever possible;
  - do not mine in bogs;
  - leave 40 per cent of fens intact; and
  - the requirement for a wetland protection and reclamation plan that is approved by the regulator following consultation with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and other affected First Nations.
- The Government of Yukon continues to meet with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in under the 2017 Memorandum of Understanding process.
- Discussions have focused on scoping a wetlands study as the next step in working towards finalizing a policy and guidelines for the protection and reclamation of wetlands affected by placer mining in the Indian River watershed.
- In May 2021, Minister Streicker sent a letter to Chief Joseph to re-engage discussions that have been inactive since March 2020.

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**#7**

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Fall 2021**

### **Management of Wetlands in the Indian River Watershed**

Energy, Mines and  
Resources

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- Representatives from the Governments of Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in resumed discussions in August 2021.
  - In addition to the study with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, we expect that a number of other initiatives and developments could inform revisions to the interim approach and a final policy for the protection and reclamation of wetlands in the Indian River. These include:
    - Anticipated completion of the Yukon Wetlands Policy led by the Department of Environment by May 2022.
    - Finalization of a land use plan for the Dawson Region (which recommends landscape-wide protections to wetlands and additional protections within the Upper Indian River watershed) and the incorporation of feedback and experience about how the interim approach is working.
  - The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is working closely with placer mining proponents in the Indian River area that are required to submit wetland protection and reclamation plans. Several valid and pending licences require wetland reclamation plans, some are subject to the interim approach.
  - Some recently submitted projects are also located in the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Traditional Territory.
  - To date, the Government of Yukon has received three wetland reclamation plans that are currently undergoing regulatory review; no reclamation plans have been approved under the interim approach.
  - The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources continues to communicate with the Klondike Placer Miners' Association. Its interests and concerns include:
    - protection and reclamation plan requirements;
    - permitting uncertainty and long timelines; and

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**Fall 2021**

**Management of  
Wetlands in the Indian  
River Watershed**

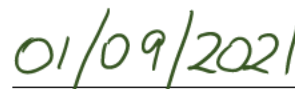
Energy, Mines and  
Resources

- participation roles in policy and resource development for industry.
- In October 2020, the Yukon Water Board held a Hearing in the Public Interest on “Placer Mining in Wetlands”; its ‘What We Heard’ report was released in August 2021.

**Approved by:**

  
Deputy Minister

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

  
Date approved

**CONFIDENTIAL****#91****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon State of the Environment Report**Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- I am pleased to discuss the release of the 2021 State of the Environment Report, which is available on Yukon.ca.
- This annual report brings together scientific and technical data from across government agencies and helps identify trends about the health of Yukon's environment.
- The 2021 report includes information available up until the end of the 2020 calendar year.
- The State of the Environment Report is an information-rich resource for environmental researchers, industry and businesses, other government agencies, including First Nations, government staff, and public members.
- It reports on a number of different environmental indicators, including climate change-related data.
- We can see that the effects of climate change have started in the Yukon and we can expect them to continue, impacting the distribution and abundance of water, vegetation, fish and wildlife, and our infrastructure, economy and communities.

**Additional response:**

- A few highlights from the 2021 State of Environment Report include:
  - In 2019, 33 per cent of waste was diverted from the Whitehorse landfill through recycling and composting. This is a three per cent increase from 2018.
  - From June 2019 to June 2020, the Yukon's population increased by 1.9 per cent or 794 people.



**CONFIDENTIAL****#91****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon State of the Environment Report**Environment

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- Overall, Yukoners enjoy good air quality, with levels of fine particulate matter in Whitehorse remaining some of the lowest across urban areas in Canada.
- In 2020, the spawning escapement goal for the Yukon River Chinook Salmon was not met, with an estimate of just under 31,000 fish reaching their spawning grounds in the Yukon. This is the second time the spawning escapement goal was not achieved since 2013.
- After testing more than 400 thinhorn sheep in the Yukon between 2015 and 2020, the *M. ovi* bacterium was not detected.

**Third response:**

- The 2021 report shows the effects of climate change are happening across the Yukon.
- Over the past 50 years, annual temperatures in northern Canada have increased by 2.3°C, with the temperature rising most rapidly in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.
- Similarly, precipitation in the Yukon has increased by six per cent over the same time period.
- Between 2009 and 2019, Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions increased by 23.7 per cent.
- Through *Our Clean Future*, the Government of Yukon is taking ambitious action on climate change to curbing our emissions by 2030 to 45 per cent below 2010 levels.
- More information on our progress during the 2020 calendar year can be found in the *Our Clean Future* annual report. (see [BN #5](#))

**CONFIDENTIAL****#91****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Yukon State of the Environment Report****Environment****Context — this may be an issue because:**

- While some indicators demonstrate positive trends, the report highlights some negative trends associated with the challenging impacts of climate change in the Yukon.
- The Opposition may be interested in discussing the government's progress in addressing certain high-profile environmental indicators of concern, such as climate change and greenhouse gas emissions.
- The Government of Yukon recently released the first *Our Clean Future* annual report, including more detailed information on greenhouse gas emissions and progress in meeting commitments outlined in *Our Clean Future*.

**Background:**

- The Yukon has been preparing State of the Environment reports since 1995.
- Tabling the report annually in the Legislative Assembly is a legal requirement under the *Environment Act* (s. 47-50). Complete reports are tabled every three years, and interim reports are tabled in the intervening years. The 2021 report is an interim report.
- This report includes compiled information available at the end of the 2020 calendar year. The base year for comparing trend data in this report is 2017 because several agencies require up to 36 months to complete the data collection, compilation, analysis and reporting to the Government of Yukon.
- Numerous national and sub-national governments prepare similar reports to share information with their citizens about the status of the environment.
- The 2021 State of the Environment Report will be tabled in the 2021 Fall Sitting.

**Approved by:**


Deputy Minister of Environment

November 18, 2021

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****ATAC Access Road/Beaver River  
Land Use Planning Process**Environment  
Energy, Mines and  
Resources**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon and the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun continue to work toward finalizing a land-use plan for the Beaver River watershed, located north of Mayo.
- In November 2020, the Government of Yukon denied ATAC Resources Ltd. a permit to construct a tote road.
- If ATAC Resources Ltd. wishes to submit another road access management plan, they will need to reconsider the mitigations proposed to better address issues identified in the Record of Decision.
- The Government of Yukon will continue to accept and review applications from all claim holders in the area who are planning to carry out exploration programs. All applications submitted will follow the regular assessment, review and approval processes.

**Additional response:**

- We have reached some milestones in this process and have completed three stages of public and stakeholder consultation.
- Yukon.ca was updated May 20, 2021, to reflect that the fall 2020 update for the Beaver River land use plan and agreement work plan timeline of March 2021 has been delayed.
- The Committee is currently drafting the land use plan, and land designation discussions are underway between the Government of Yukon and the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun.
- Recently, ATAC Resources Ltd. has proposed that a facilitated meeting with the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and the

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****ATAC Access Road/Beaver River  
Land Use Planning Process**Environment  
Energy, Mines and  
Resources

Government of Yukon could be a good idea to “reset” the planning process. We support this idea.

- The First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun has indicated that they want to work towards completing the plan by March 2022.
- The Committee will update the work plan as soon as all parties agree to the revisions.

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**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- Work to fulfil and meet the terms of the 2018 ATAC Road Agreement has missed original timelines and is the focus of considerable interest from industry and non-government organizations.
- Mandate letter commitment: Complete the Dawson Land Use Plan and advance the planning process for other regions to ensure proactive engagement (2021).

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**Background:****ATAC Mining Land Use Application**

- ATAC’s proposed 65-kilometre all-season road development project, north of Mayo, includes upgrading existing trails, construction of a new road, three access control gates and numerous river crossings and culverts, including the potential building of fords.
- In May 2017, the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board issued its evaluation report recommending the all-season access road development project proceed, subject to appropriate terms and conditions.
- In February 2018, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun signed the ATAC Road Agreement (2018 Agreement).
- The Government of Yukon reviewed ATAC’s Class 3 mining land use application to construct the Rau access road proposed in 2016. A proposed route that

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****ATAC Access Road/Beaver River  
Land Use Planning Process**Environment  
Energy, Mines and  
Resources

crosses Settlement Land was the preferred route, and an alternate route that did not cross any Settlement Land was included in the application for amendment.

- ATAC had submitted a Road Access Management Plan and a Wildlife Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan that reflects their interests with their application.
  - The Chief of Mining Land Use reviewed the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun's input regarding the impacts of the proposed road, alongside ATAC's application. On November 27, 2020, concluded that an authorization to construct the road would not be issued at that time. This decision was made on two grounds:
    - The company did not demonstrate sufficiently in its application how the significant adverse environmental and socio-economic effects identified in the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board evaluation would be appropriately mitigated.
    - The First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun identified a number of significant adverse impacts that may occur on its treaty rights, including implications to hunting, fishing and trapping and its use of the area for traditional pursuits if the project was to proceed at this time. The Government of Yukon agreed with these concerns and determined the application did not indicate how these impacts would be mitigated.
  - As per the agreement, the Committee worked with ATAC on a Road Access Management Plan and a Wildlife Adaptive Monitoring Plan that were intended to be incorporated into ATAC's Class 4 mining land use application. It is the Government of Yukon's assessment that these plans were not reflected in ATAC's application. If ATAC chooses to re-apply, the Government of Yukon can advise the company on incorporating these plans into their application. 76(1)
- 
- This decision does not affect the Government of Yukon's ability to decide regarding a future application for an all-season road. The nature of any future

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****ATAC Access Road/Beaver River  
Land Use Planning Process**Environment  
Energy, Mines and  
Resources

submission will determine what assessment and regulatory review processes may be required.

- According to the agreement between the Government of Yukon and the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, the land use and road access management plan must be finalized before any road construction occurs.
- The What We Heard document from the fall 2020 stakeholder engagement meetings documenting community priorities for this planning area is posted on Yukon.ca.

**The Planning Committee**

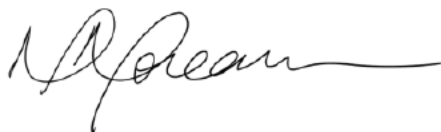
- In 2018, the Government of Yukon and First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun approved a work plan which includes the following deliverables, all of which could be incorporated into a future regional land use plan:
  - a recommended land use plan;
  - a fish and wildlife harvest regime; and
  - a fish and wildlife monitoring and adaptive management plan.
- The Beaver River Land Use Planning Committee was established in June 2018 with two representatives from the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and two from the Government of Yukon.
- Since September 22, 2020, the planning committee has held seven online stakeholder engagement sessions to gather feedback on work completed to date.
- The Government of Yukon made a funding commitment of \$325,000 to the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun as part of the 2018 Agreement. An amended funding agreement increased the commitment to \$525,000. The First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun has received \$325,000.
- The funding agreement expired on March 21, 2021<sup>76(1)</sup> and the Government of Yukon must now determine how to proceed.

**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****ATAC Access Road/Beaver River  
Land Use Planning Process**Environment  
Energy, Mines and  
Resources**Prohibition Orders**

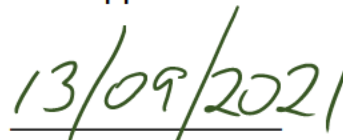
- An Order-in-Council under the Quartz Mining Act and Placer Mining Act prohibiting entry for mineral staking is in effect until January 1, 2022, for a one-kilometre-wide area along the length of the proposed road. Existing claims in good standing are not affected.

**Moose Management**

- We are aware that harvest pressure on moose in the Mayo area is a crucial concern through public input and population estimates.
- Moose population estimates in the Moose Management Unit around Mayo cover a portion of the Beaver River area, indicate a declining population. The proposed route of the ATAC road would bisect two Moose Management Units and could negatively impact those populations.

**Approved by:**

Sept 9, 2021

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister of Environment\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**CONFIDENTIAL****#79****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Placer Mining in  
Wetlands**Energy, Mines and Resources  
Environment

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**Recommended response:**

- We are committed to an approach to wetlands management that supports environmentally responsible development and manages the impacts of activities, including placer mining, on wetlands.
- We continue to work with partners and stakeholders to complete a Wetlands Policy that will provide a framework for how we make decisions. (see ENV BN#4)
- We are carefully considering the recommendations within the draft Dawson Regional Land Use Plan, which includes guidance for wetlands use and conservation.
- We are following an interim approach for placer mining in the Indian River area. This approach protects the most sensitive areas (bogs and fens) and requires proponents to develop a wetland reclamation plan for all projects that overlap wetlands.

**Additional response:**

- We continue to improve our knowledge and understanding of wetlands, their extent, function and the effectiveness of restoration activities.
- We thank the Yukon Water Board for holding its public interest hearing on 'Placer Mining in Wetlands.' We are currently considering their recommendation about the establishment of a technical advisory committee on wetlands.



**CONFIDENTIAL****#79****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Placer Mining in  
Wetlands**Energy, Mines and Resources  
Environment**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- The issue of placer mining in wetlands is important and complex; increasing development pressure from placer mining in wetland areas has launched wetlands to the forefront of public discussion.
- Placer mining in wetlands is a complicated issue, and a number of parties including, First Nations and the placer mining community, are closely watching the Government of Yukon's progress on wetlands management and regulatory permitting.
- The Draft Dawson Regional Land Use Plan, currently under review by the Parties, recommends broad wetland protection for the region, with additional special protection in areas including the upper Indian River watershed.

**Background:**

- Placer mining in wetland areas has been going on for decades. With the onset of rising gold prices 15 years ago, the pace and scope of these activities accelerated along the Indian River. (ENV BN#90)
- In January 2017, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Government of Yukon signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work collaboratively to resolve the Indian River wetlands issues.
- In 2017, the Department of Environment received government direction to develop a Yukon-wide wetlands policy in collaboration with partners and have held a number of workshops and roundtable discussions with First Nations, the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board, the Water Board, industry and other stakeholders.
- Public engagement on the draft wetlands policy is currently underway and will run from October 4 until December 3, 2021. An online roundtable meeting with partners is scheduled for November 16 and 17, 2021.
- The Government of Yukon brought the Indian River interim approach into effect on January 15, 2020.

**CONFIDENTIAL****#79****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2021****Placer Mining in  
Wetlands**Energy, Mines and Resources  
Environment

- In October 2020, the Yukon Water Board held a hearing in the Public Interest on "Placer Mining in Wetlands."
- In August 2021, the Yukon Water Board released its "What We Heard Report" for the Public Interest Hearing on Placer Mining in Wetlands. The Board recommended that Yukon work with First Nation Governments, industry and other key stakeholders to establish a *Technical Advisory Committee for the Protection, Use and Reclamation of Yukon Wetlands*.
- Released in June 2021, the Draft Dawson Regional Land Use Plan, currently under review by the Parties, recommends broad wetland protection for the region, with additional special protection in areas including the upper Indian River watershed.

**Approved by:**

Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources



Date approved



Deputy Minister of Environment



Date approved

**Recommended response:**

- It is expected that COVID-19 will present an endemic risk for many years to come, but with our high vaccination rates and effective testing and tracing approaches we are able to move beyond the State of Emergency while continuing to provide targeted public health measures to directly address COVID-19 where and when it emerges.
- *Forging Ahead: Yukon's Continued Response to COVID-19* outlines our goals for ensuring the safety and well-being of Yukoners and how we will adapt to COVID-19 becoming a normal part of our lives.
- This plan includes the steps we are taking to limit the spread of disease, ensure Yukoners are connected to the social, mental and physical health supports and services they require, and move forward with our plan to help Yukoners to succeed.
- Throughout the pandemic and the Yukon's safe and measured reopening, our government has followed the advice and recommendations of the Chief Medical Officer of Health. We will continue to do so.
- While the State of Emergency has been lifted, should the need arise – we will respond quickly and effectively, as we have throughout the pandemic as informed by evidence and the needs of Yukoners.

**Additional response:**

- COVID-19 continues to have a disproportionate impact on our most vulnerable, including seniors, elders, and women, those with precarious or insecure housing, individuals living with chronic conditions, and unvaccinated individuals and those who do not yet have access to a COVID-19 vaccine.

- Forging Ahead reaffirms our commitment to ensuring all Yukoners remain safe, and outlines the steps we are taking to keep these vulnerable populations protected from COVID-19 and its unintended consequences.
- Our one government approach and close collaboration with communities, First Nations, local partners and non-government organizations allows us deliver the appropriate level of health and social care required to meet our community's needs and remain responsive to their concerns.
- Once a pediatric vaccine for individuals under the age of 12 is approved, our immunization teams will be ready to quickly reach this subset of the population.
- We are well-positioned to increase supports and surge capacity should the need arise. Rapid Response Teams will remain available to provide targeted COVID-19 testing when necessary, and all eligible Yukoners who wish to receive their COVID-19 vaccine will be able to do so.
- We expect to keep a self-isolation facility in Whitehorse operational until at least March 2022, and person-centered social supports and services are being provided in Whitehorse and in communities.
- Targeted public health measures developed by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health are in place for settings such as schools, Whitehorse Correctional Centre, the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter and health care facilities, including Yukon hospitals.
- Moving forward, we are focused on reducing the number of people susceptible to COVID-19 and its variants through partnerships with First Nation governments and First Nations, increased vaccination,

maintaining our testing capabilities and the capacity of our health and social care system, providing supports to our most vulnerable, and implementing targeted measures to the areas of highest risk.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- With the lifting of many public health measures on August 4, 2021 and the state of emergency on August 25, 2021, there is interest in the Yukon's plans for moving forward while COVID-19 continues to present a threat.
  - The Yukon's previous reopening plans have received some scrutiny with confusion around the metrics for the easing or reinstating of public health measures.
- 

**Background:**

- The Yukon initially declared a State of Emergency on March 27, 2020.
  - Under the *Public Health and Safety Act*, the Chief Medical Officer of Health is responsible for monitoring, investigating, and responding to a communicable disease. The Act and the *Communicable Disease Regulations* provide the Chief Medical Officer of Health with a number of authorities to ensure the health and safety of Yukoners.
  - The Yukon's original reopening plan, *A Path Forward: Yukon's Plan for Lifting COVID-19 Restrictions*, was released on May 15, 2021 and was informed by the available evidence on COVID-19, risk assessments and timelines for developing and delivering a vaccine.
  - On March 5, 2021, an updated plan, *A Path Forward: Next Steps*, was released and outlined the thresholds for easing public health measures while also ensuring the health and safety of Yukoners.
  - An endemic can be understood as the stable spread of a disease from person-to-person without significant exponential growth amongst a population; or, the
-

presence of a disease within a population but at a rate that does not see widespread transmission.

- Despite having one of the highest vaccination rates in Canada, the Yukon was one of the first jurisdictions in the world to see how quickly COVID-19 could spread amongst a highly vaccinated population.

Approved by:



September 10, 2021

Deputy Minister, Health and Social Services

[Date approved]

# ENVIRONMENT

**VOTE 52**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT**

**MINISTER**

**Hon. N. Clarke**

**DEPUTY MINISTER**

**M. Moreau**

- To contribute to a healthy, sustainable and prosperous future through environmental stewardship and the effective management of Yukon's natural resources.

<b>SUMMARY (\$000s)</b>	<b>2021-22 VOTED TO DATE</b>	<b>SUPPLE- MENTARY NO. 1</b>	<b>2021-22 REVISED VOTE</b>
<b>Supplementary Amounts to be Appropriated</b>			
<b>Operation and Maintenance (Vote 52-1)</b>	47,791	(706)	47,085
<b>Capital (Vote 52-2)</b>	3,458	(1,232)	2,226
<b>Total Appropriations</b>	51,249	(1,938)	49,311



## ENVIRONMENT

### EXPLANATIONS OF VARIANCES

(000's)

The department is requesting a decrease in total appropriations of \$1,938,000. The following details the requests.

#### **OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE (Vote 52-1)** \$ (706)

The decrease in operations and maintenance is a result of:

Climate Change Secretariat - Climate Change Preparedness in the North (100% recoverable from Canada). \$ 286

Policy and Planning - Inuvialuit Final Agreement (IFA) - (100% recoverable from Canada). \$ 334

Fish and Wildlife - Mapping, surveying, and other 100% recoverable agreements. \$ 163

Fish and Wildlife - Moose Survey work in the Sifton-Miners Range, Whitehorse South, and Quiet Lake and Nisutlin River regions. \$ 620

Parks - Deferred to a future year to align the budget with the new Yukon Park Strategy plan - MBM#52-0006. \$ (209)

Deferral of the remediation work for the Old Crow Health Centre project the result of the COVID-19 pandemic. \$ (1,900)

#### **CAPITAL (Vote 52-2)** \$ (1,232)

Deferral of a boat purchase because it will not be delivered in 2021-22 due to reduced market supply in boats and required construction materials. \$ (187)

Additional funding for campground road maintenance. \$ 80

Deferral to future years due to a lack of contractors able to complete the work this fiscal year. These projects will be re-tendered next fiscal year in smaller bundles to attract more contractors. \$ (1,125)

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# **ENVIRONMENT**

## **Operations and Maintenance**



## ENVIRONMENT

DETAILS (\$000s)	2021-22 VOTED TO DATE	SUPPLE- MENTARY NO. 1	2021-22 REVISED VOTE
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### Supplementary Amounts to be Appropriated

#### Operation and Maintenance (Vote 52-1)

Corporate Services	12,281	563	12,844
Environmental Sustainability	28,308	631	28,939
Environmental Liabilities and Remediation	7,202	(1,900)	5,302

<b>Total Operation and Maintenance (Vote 52-1)</b>	<b>47,791</b>	<b>(706)</b>	<b>47,085</b>
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#### Capital (Vote 52-2)

##### Corporate Services

Operational Equipment	434	(187)	247
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##### Environmental Sustainability

###### Parks

Capital Development - All Regions	1,197	80	1,277
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Investing in Canada Infrastructure Programs			
Boat Launch and Dock Replacements	1,475	(1,125)	350

<b>Total of Other Capital</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>352</b>
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<b>Total Capital (Vote 52-2)</b>	<b>3,458</b>	<b>(1,232)</b>	<b>2,226</b>
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<b>Total Appropriations</b>	<b>51,249</b>	<b>(1,938)</b>	<b>49,311</b>
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## ENVIRONMENT

### EXPLANATIONS OF VARIANCES

#### OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

##### Corporate Services

###### Climate Change Secretariat

Climate Change Preparedness in the North agreement has been extended until January 2023 (100% recoverable from Canada). The extension of this agreement includes an additional \$250,000 in funding as well as \$36,000 in unutilized funding from the 2020-21 fiscal year.

286

###### Policy and Planning

Inuvialuit Final Agreement (IFA) updates to align with planned project under this years agreement (100% recoverable from Canada). This include \$6,000 in new funding and \$327,000 in deferred funding.

334

###### Internal Transfer

A reallocation of the fleet vehicle budget amongst branches.

(57)

563

##### Environmental Sustainability

###### Fish and Wildlife

Two new agreements with Environment and Climate Change Canada (100% recoverable from Canada):

Mapping of Beringian lowland habitats.

36

Bioblitz program.

31

A new agreement with the Gwitchin Renewable Resources Council for Muskox surveys in the Mackenzie Delta (100% recoverable).

10

A new agreement with the Government of Northwest Territories to facilitate Beaufort Polar Bear Recapture project (100% recoverable).

30

A new agreement with the Carcross Tagish Renewable Resource Council to facilitate South Yukon Moose Survey project which will be conducted in the Fish Lake, Wheaton Valley, and Mt. Lorne areas (100% recoverable).

33

A new agreement with the US Geological Survey agency for a Porcupine Caribou Herd survey in the Ivavik National Park area (100% recoverable).

23

Additional funding for Moose Survey work in the Sifton-Miners Range, Whitehorse South, Quiet Lake and Nisutlin River regions. These surveys are updated on a 10 year basis and these locations are due to be updated.

620

###### Parks

Deferral to a future year to align the budget with the Yukon Park Strategy plan.

(209)

###### Internal Transfer

A reallocation of the fleet vehicle budget amongst branches.

57

631

##### Environmental Liabilities and Remediation

Deferral of the remediation work for the Old Crow Health Centre project the result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

(1,900)

#### **TOTAL NET INCREASE (DECREASE)**

**(706)**

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# **ENVIRONMENT**

## **Capital**

## ENVIRONMENT

DETAILS (\$000s)	2021-22 VOTED TO DATE	SUPPLE- MENTARY NO. 1	2021-22 REVISED VOTE
<b><u>Supplementary Amounts to be Appropriated</u></b>			
<b>Operation and Maintenance (Vote 52-1)</b>			
Corporate Services	12,281	563	12,844
Environmental Sustainability	28,308	631	28,939
Environmental Liabilities and Remediation	7,202	(1,900)	5,302
<b>Total Operation and Maintenance (Vote 52-1)</b>	<b>47,791</b>	<b>(706)</b>	<b>47,085</b>
<b>Capital (Vote 52-2)</b>			
<b>Corporate Services</b>			
Operational Equipment	434	(187)	247
<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>			
<b>Parks</b>			
Capital Development - All Regions	1,197	80	1,277
Investing in Canada Infrastructure Programs			
Boat Launch and Dock Replacements	1,475	(1,125)	350
<b>Total of Other Capital</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>352</b>
<b>Total Capital (Vote 52-2)</b>	<b>3,458</b>	<b>(1,232)</b>	<b>2,226</b>
<b>Total Appropriations</b>	<b>51,249</b>	<b>(1,938)</b>	<b>49,311</b>



## ENVIRONMENT

### EXPLANATIONS OF VARIANCES

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#### CAPITAL

##### Corporate Services

###### Client, Business and Technology Solutions

###### **Operational Equipment**

Deferral of a boat purchase due to reduced market supply of boats and related construction materials brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

(187)

##### Environmental Sustainability

###### Parks

###### **Capital Development - All Regions**

Additional funding for campground road maintenance on the Aishihik, Kusawa, and Ethel Lake roads.

80

###### **Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program - Boat Launch and Dock Replacements**

Deferral to future years due to a lack of contractors able to complete the work this fiscal year. These projects will be re-tendered next fiscal year in smaller bundles to attract more contractors. The following locations were slated to be worked on this fiscal year: Pine, Nunatuk, Frenchman, and Quiet Lake. Flooding concerns would have also impacted the department's ability to complete this work this fiscal year.

(1,125)

##### **TOTAL NET INCREASE (DECREASE)**

**(1,232)**