

Department of Environment
Briefing Binder for Spring Legislative Sitting 2023
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Outfitting in the Yukon

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Quick Facts

- There are 20 active outfitting concessions in the Yukon, with all concessions having moose, caribou and grizzly bear quotas.
- Outfitters were issued 675 non-resident hunting licenses in 2022; the highest volume to date.
- 2022 also saw the largest harvest of moose by non-residents to-date.

Recommended response (Relationship):

- As the Yukon emerged from the pandemic, our government worked with the Yukon Outfitters Association to re-establish regular Yukon Outfitter Liaison Committee Meetings to support the recovery of the industry and ensure clear lines of communication.
- In addition to these meetings, department staff continue to regularly hold one-on-one meetings with outfitters to answer questions and address their concerns.
- In response to concerns from First Nations, the public and outfitters, we have stepped up our wildlife surveying over the last two years. This survey data has been made available to outfitters and the Yukon Outfitters Association.

Additional response (Multi-year Quotas):

- We recognize the reassurance and certainty that multi-year quotas had provided to Yukon outfitters. However, multi-year and over-harvest quotas do not comply with the *Wildlife Act*.
- The Department of Environment has implemented an interim solution to provide certainty and predictability to outfitters.

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- This interim process allows outfitters to carry-forward their annual moose and caribou quotas from the previous term, and to access unused quotas from the previous four years up to a maximum value.
- We are reviewing our processes for issuing outfitter quotas and will work with the outfitting industry, Renewable Resources Councils, Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, and First Nations to ensure a fair, transparent and sustainable solution.

Third Response (Quota Appeals):

- Prior to the 2022 hunting season, the Department of Environment worked with outfitters to place all outfitters on quotas.
- Given the changes made to the quota process and the fact that some outfitters were assigned quotas for the first time in 2022, the Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee and the Concession and Compensation Review Board received an unprecedented number of appeals.
- Nine outfitters submitted appeals to the Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee; two have since withdrawn and three were dismissed by the committee.
- Two outfitters also submitted appeals to the Concession and Compensation Review Board.
- Our government has responded to all timelines and information requests from the coordinating Secretariat on these hearings, but the number of appeals has created significant delays in the appeal processes.
- To-date, one appeal has been heard by the Concession and Compensation Review Board on December 19, 2022, and I have since received their report.
 - The Government of Yukon responded to the Concession and Compensation Review Board report on April 14 in a letter that

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addressed the opinions of the Board and concluded that the 2022-23 quota imposed for the outfitting concession was reasonable and appropriate.

- In addition, two appeals were heard on March 8, 2023, by the Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee, and another was held on March 31st.
 - The Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee has provided their recommendations following the March 8th appeal hearings. These recommendations are receiving due consideration before the Government of Yukon provides a response.
- The last appeal hearing has not yet been scheduled.
- These are complex matters and we are allowing the outfitter appeals to work through the process before any decisions or changes are made.
- The deadline for outfitters to submit appeals for their 2023 season quotas was April 18, 2023. A number of outfitters have requested appeals and those requests will now follow the appropriate process and procedures.

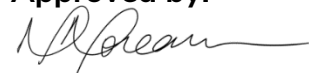
Context—this may be an issue because:

- Ongoing questions have been raised in the Legislative Assembly and in the media regarding outfitter guidelines, outfitter harvest quotas the quota appeal process.

Background:

- Allocating quotas for all outfitters for all big game species provides a level playing field for the industry in the Yukon and business predictability for individual outfitters.
- The Department of Environment is responsible for making decisions about wildlife management to conserve all wildlife, including their interrelationships with each other and their environment, while respecting treaty rights and the diverse needs of Yukoners.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-04-25

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Yukon Wetlands Policy

Spring 2023
Environment

Quick Facts:

- To date, broad regional wetland mapping has been completed for approximately 16% of the territory, with more detailed local mapping covering approximately an additional 5%.
- Within these mapping areas, wetlands cover between 6% to 9% of the landscape, with fen and swamp wetlands being the most common.

Recommended response:

- Work to implement the Yukon Wetlands Policy is already well underway.
- I am pleased to share that we have already started actioning a number of implementation initiatives, including:
 - Completion of broad-scale wetland mapping within the Peel, Beaver River, Mayo and McQuesten watersheds,
 - Initiating comprehensive territory-wide wetland mapping,
 - Finalizing an updated Yukon wetland classification system by summer 2023,
 - Development of draft wetland mapping standards,
 - Working across government to develop guidelines and standards for proponents where developments may impact wetlands, and
 - Initiating a multi-party research project designed to explore the extent of carbon release and potential for carbon sink restoration following placer mining. (Ref BN #54)
- We are committed to implementing this work and annually reporting on our progress.

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Yukon Wetlands Policy

Environment

Additional response:

- The policy provides for the establishment of a framework to be able to nominate and legally designate Wetlands of Special Importance.
- As described currently under the policy, Wetlands of Special Importance may be nominated by an Indigenous, federal, territorial, or municipal government; or a board or council, such as a Renewable Resources Council, a Regional Land Use Planning commission, or a wildlife management advisory board or council.
- In order to support the nomination process, additional implementation guidance is required to fully describe how wetland benefits and impacts will be measured.
- Developing specific guidance for evaluating wetland benefits in the Yukon is another important near-term implementation action for this policy.

Third response:

- We recognize that we must be responsive to new information as we continue to build our knowledge and improve our understanding of Yukon's wetlands.
- This includes recognizing and respecting all sources of knowledge, giving equitable consideration to traditional, local, and scientific knowledge.
- We will continue to engage with other governments, departments, agencies, regulatory bodies, external partners and land use planning interests to discuss specific aspects related to the policy's implementation.

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Yukon Wetlands Policy

Environment

- In addition to working through policy implementation tasks, we remain committed to addressing wetland stewardship and protection within ongoing land use planning discussions to address more regional or local needs.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- A Policy for the Stewardship of Yukon's Wetlands was publicly released on January 10, 2023. Implementation of the policy and the ongoing management of wetlands is of high interest to Yukoners.
- The Minister of Environment 2023 mandate letter commits Government of Yukon to begin implementation work on the policy.

Background:

- Developing a wetlands policy is a commitment under the 2014 Yukon Water Strategy and Action Plan.

Engagement

- 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 in-person roundtable meetings and one virtual roundtable meeting were held with the policy development partners, including Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups, municipal and federal governments, boards and councils, environmental non-governmental organizations and industry.
- The Government of Yukon conducted an online public survey from October 3 to December 3, 2021, to gather feedback on the draft policy. A What We Heard report was released on March 1, 2022. First Nations consultation began on August 3, 2022, and was extended to the end of October 2022, at the request of several First Nations.

Approved by:


A/Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-04-11
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Elk–Agriculture Conflicts**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources**Recommended response:**

- In 2022, a focus group was appointed by the Deputy Ministers of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources to identify options for the Takhini Herd and to develop a two-year implementation plan to reduce elk-agricultural interactions.
- This new plan looks at the effectiveness of replacing the elk-agriculture conflict hunt with an elk-hunt adaptive management approach.
- In 2023, a Steering Committee was established to implement and advance the recommendations from the focus group. These recommendations include hiring a coordinator, applying both localized and range scale herd management, supporting fencing options, implementing a collaring program and carrying out a social survey.
- The Steering Committee will prioritize their review of an additional exclusion zone and provide recommendations in advance of the upcoming hunting season.

Additional response:

- For many Yukoners, it is equally important to sustain our wild elk populations and to provide agriculture producers with land to produce local foods and crops.
- We continue to review and implement actions to address damage caused to crops and farm infrastructure by the Takhini Elk Herd.
- Last year we introduced a new adaptive hunt permitting process and made eight additional permits available for hunting elk in the Takhini Valley, increasing the total to 12 permits.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Elk–Agriculture Conflicts**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

- The new permits will mean improved coordination, less congestion in the area, and fewer calls seeking permission to access the lands.
- Landowners and farmers can apply for a permit to shoot elk damaging their properties.
- These permits are only used in specific cases where there are ongoing issues and damage and where all other reasonable measures have been unsuccessful.

Third response:

- Since 2017, Conservation Officers and officials from Energy Mines and Resources assisted with funding elk exclusion fencing and electric fencing depending on the specific elk conflict the landowner was experiencing.
- Coupled with the elk conflict hunt, exclusion fencing and electric fencing have resulted in a reduction of elk conflict complaints. We will continue to collaborate with affected landowners, farmers, associations, interest groups and First Nations to find solutions and options to both manage elk and support agricultural land use.
- Since the pilot program began in 2020, the number of calls to the Conservation Officer Services Branch concerning elk-agriculture conflicts remains low, with only eight total complaints received to date.
- I encourage any Yukoner who is experiencing a conflict with elk on their property to call the TIPP line at 1-800-661-0525 to report the issue to our Conservation Officers.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Elk–Agriculture Conflicts**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- Takhini Valley farmers may seek an update on government actions to address the conflict between the wild elk population and agricultural properties in the Takhini Valley.
- There may be questions about how the Government of Yukon is working with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the Yukon Agricultural Association to address the conflict.

Background:

- The focus group was comprised of representatives from the Yukon Agriculture Association, Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, First Nations, Energy, Mines and Resources and Environment.
- The Steering Committee has been established. Their first meeting was April 18.
 - Invitations were sent to Yukon Agricultural Association, the Yukon Fish and Game Association, Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation and the departments of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources.
- The Department of Environment conducts an annual minimum count of the herd in late winter (February–March). In December 2022, we began deploying GPS radio collars on some elk to help us understand their range and where they travel throughout the year.
- Minimum annual counts of the Takhini elk herd conducted 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
 - December 2021 – 247 animals (additional count conducted)
 - 2022 - 152 animals

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Energy, Mines and Resources

- The significant variation between counts underscores a fundamental challenge with using a minimum count survey. This technique does not provide an accurate estimate of population size or discern population trends (i.e. growing, stable or declining).
- One of the goals of the initial two-year pilot project was to reduce the Takhini Valley elk population by 90 elk. To date, we can account for the mortality of 74 elk from the Takhini Valley.
- The departments of Environment, and Energy, Mines and Resources continue to evaluate the efficacy, cost and limitations of electrical fencing to exclude elk from an area. This type of exclusion fence might be a viable option for some food producers affected by elk.
- Since 2014, the Government of Yukon has provided \$380,000 in support for implementing preventative measures and compensation.
- In 2021, the Government of Yukon established an additional funding program of \$225,000 to construct exclusion fencing on agricultural properties in the Takhini Valley eastern buffer zone. To date, \$159,710 (almost 80 per cent of funding) has been allocated for four fencing projects.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-04-27

Date



Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

23/4/27

Date

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Canada-Yukon

Bilateral Nature Agreement

Environment

Quick Facts

- The Government of Canada has committed to conserve 25 per cent of lands and waters in Canada by 2025, and work toward conserving 30 per cent by 2030.
- As recorded in the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database, the Yukon has already conserved approximately 19.1 per cent of its area.
- The new agreement provides \$20.6 million over the next three years to the Government of Yukon. The Yukon was the first jurisdiction to sign a Nature Agreement with Canada.

Recommended response:

- The Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement will support Indigenous leadership in conservation, increased protection of sensitive habitats, and recovery actions for species at risk, as well as the protection and conservation of new lands in the Yukon.
- Under this new agreement, we will work towards meeting the 25 per cent target by 2025 and are determining how we can make meaningful contributions toward the 30 per cent by 2030 target.
- We are making these contributions by building on a number of existing commitments, including those established through Chapter 10 and Chapter 11 of the First Nations Final Agreements, which include parks and habitat protection areas.

Additional response:

- We fully recognize our responsibility to work together with Indigenous partners, including Yukon First Nations, transboundary Indigenous governments and groups, and the Inuvialuit, to protect our lands and waters, fish and wildlife for generations to come.

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Spring 2023**Canada-Yukon****Bilateral Nature Agreement**

Environment

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- New areas identified for protection and conservation under this Agreement will be jointly nominated with Indigenous partners.
 - A portion of the funds from this Agreement will be allocated to Indigenous partners to participate in its implementation. This will support knowledge gathering and data sharing, while advancing collaboration on conservation in the Yukon.

Third response:

- The funding from this agreement will support effective land use planning, which is our main mechanism to protect our wild spaces and biodiversity.
- By clearly identifying the areas we mean to protect and areas where there is an opportunity for resource development in the territory, we create certainty and clarity for First Nations, municipalities and industry about the use of our lands and resources.
- We are pleased to collaborate with the Government of Canada on planning for the future and ensuring the responsible management and sustainable use of our lands and resources for future generations.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement was signed on December 14, 2022 in Montreal at the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.
- There may be questions about what the implementation of this agreement will look like and how the Government of Yukon will meet the Agreement's commitments.

Background:

- To support Canada's protected area goals, and provinces and territories in collaborating with partners on conservation initiatives, the 2021 Federal Budget allocated \$200 million spread across five years (2021-22 to 2025-2026).

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Canada-Yukon

Bilateral Nature Agreement

Environment

- The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 was held from December 7-19, 2022. The conference focused on protecting nature and halting biodiversity loss around the world.
- Governments from around the world met at the conference, and agreed to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The framework includes four global goals and 23 global targets to be achieved by 2030, to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and put nature on a path to recovery by 2050.
- Objectives of this ambitious framework align with commitments made under the Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement, including the conservation of 30% of lands and oceans by 2030.

Approved by:


A/Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-04-11

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Dawson Regional Land
Use Planning**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

Recommended response:

- Engagement on the Dawson Regional Land Use Recommended Plan concluded on December 20, 2022. A What We Heard report is expected to be released this spring.
- Input gathered from the engagement will inform the Parties' decision whether to accept, reject or modify the Recommended Plan.
- If required, the Planning Commission will prepare a Final Recommended Plan. We anticipate they could provide a Final Recommended Plan in 2024.
- If a Final Recommended Plan is required, the Government of Yukon will provide detailed feedback to the Commission to support their work developing this plan.

Additional response:

- We appreciate the Commission's efforts to achieve a balance between the many competing interests in the Dawson region.
- Areas recommended for conservation and for interim withdrawals in the Recommended Plan are withdrawn from mineral staking until December 1, 2023.
- The Government of Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in ran scenario workshops with key stakeholders this past February to identify regulatory implementation issues for the Recommended Plan. The workshops were well-received and findings will help inform the Parties' decision on the Recommended Plan.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Dawson Regional Land
Use Planning**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

Context – this may be an issue because:

- The Dawson Regional Land Use Plan, the Government of Yukon's response to the Recommended Plan, and the future of the interim withdrawals are of high interest to Yukoners.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in formed the Dawson Regional Land Use Planning Commission in December 2018.
- The *Umbrella Final Agreement* Chapter 11 process provides the Commission with the autonomy to develop and recommend a plan to the Parties for their consideration.
- The Yukon Land Use Planning Council provides administrative and technical support for the Commission.
- The Commission conducted a public consultation on the Draft Plan from June 15 to November 1, 2021.
- The Government of Yukon's response to the Draft Plan in November 2021 focused on six key topics: Designations and Land Management Unit Boundaries, Cumulative Effects, Wetlands, Culture and Heritage, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirited People, and Implementation.
- Subsequent comments submitted to the Commission by Government of Yukon pertained to critical minerals, access, river and watercourses, cumulative effects, and working within the draft plan prohibition of entry order (interim and permanent) quantum.
- The Planning Commission delivered the Recommended Plan to the Parties (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Government of Yukon) on June 10, 2022.
- Interim withdrawal of land proposed by the Commission was approved by Order-In-Council on June 15, 2021. This Order was amended on September 7, 2022, to

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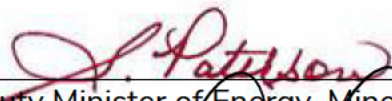
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Dawson Regional Land
Use Planning

Energy, Mines and Resources
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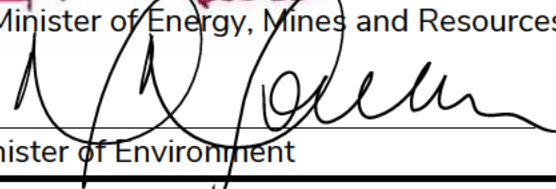
reflect the Recommended Plan. The interim withdrawal is in effect until December 1, 2023.

Approved by:


A/Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

2023-03-07

Date approved


Deputy Minister of Environment

2023 03 07
Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Flood Mapping 2023

ENV #6
Spring 2023
Environment

Quick Facts

- The Government of Yukon is planning to produce flood maps for 14 flood-prone communities across the Yukon; this includes five lake communities and nine river communities.
- Those communities are: Teslin, Carcross, Tagish, Marsh Lake, Lake Laberge, Upper Liard, Mayo, Pelly Crossing, Ross River, Whitehorse, Carmacks, Dawson, Klondike Valley and Old Crow.
- The first four draft flood maps for the Southern Lakes are expected in 2023; this will be for Carcross, Tagish, Marsh Lake and Lake Laberge.

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is developing flood maps across the Yukon to identify flood hazards and help mitigate flood impacts to property, infrastructure and public safety across the territory.
- Flood maps are critical tools for emergency response and coordination, understanding the impacts of climate change, as well as for infrastructure, community and land planning.
- Flood mapping for Yukon communities is a multi-year task.
- With input from key partners, we have prioritized communities into four phases based on risk and readiness. We have communicated with those municipal and First Nations governments regarding our anticipated timelines.
- We are focusing on the Southern Lakes area first because it has been the focus of the flood recovery program since the events of 2021.
- The Southern Lakes Flood Mapping Study is underway and will assess, identify and map flood hazards. Studies for Carmacks and Teslin are planned to begin this summer.

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Flood Mapping 2023

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Additional response:

- In addition to working with municipal and First Nations governments to develop these flood maps, public input will be sought from each community when draft flood maps are ready.
- On March 8th, Water Resources Branch hosted a forum, open to all Yukon First Nations, to communicate the flood mapping initiative and gain insight on how the Government of Yukon can collaborate with First Nations on the development of flood maps.
- Once created, flood maps will be publicly available and can be accessed by anyone, including governments, property owners and insurance companies.
- Producing public flood maps reduces the discrepancy between information held by insurance companies and the public.
- In other jurisdictions, government-produced flood maps have helped reduce flood insurance costs for some properties.
- Information from flood maps will help support the work lead by the Department of Community Services, which assesses ways to ensure Yukoners can access adequate insurance for fires, floods and permafrost thaw.
- Our flood mapping plans do not include Haines Junction at this time, as the community has historically low flood risk.
- Record water levels were observed on Dezadeash River in October 2022 and there are current issues with winter ice near the Haines Road bridge.
- Although this area is outside the scope of our current mapping program, we are still in the early stages of flood mapping in the Yukon and will consider additional communities where warranted.

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Flood Mapping 2023

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- We are discussing the situation with Department of Community Services.

Third response:

- Flood mapping is expensive, as it requires engineering studies and high-resolution spatial data. Each study is expected to cost between \$400,000 and \$500,000. However, costs from flood damage are expected to increase five-fold in Canada over the next few decades.
- In the long-term, investing in flood mapping now will save money by averting the costs that would otherwise be caused by future flood damages associated with building in flood-prone areas.
- The Government of Yukon has partnered with Natural Resources Canada and Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada to access additional funds and resources to support the development of these flood maps.

Context:

- Extreme events, such as flooding, are becoming more common as a result of climate change, and there may be questions about what the Government of Yukon is doing to address it.
- The public may be concerned about how flood maps may impact home insurance.
- On December 9, 2022, letters were sent to municipal and First Nations governments regarding the prioritization of flood map development and anticipated timelines.
- Questions have been raised by the opposition as to whether our plans include flood mapping in on the Dezadeash River.

Background:

- Flood mapping for all Yukon communities at risk of flooding is a commitment in Our Clean Future.

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Flood Mapping 2023

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- Flood hazard mapping is guided by an advisory committee including representatives from various Government of Yukon departments, the Council of Yukon First Nations, and the Association of Yukon Communities.
- Flood hazard maps illustrate the results of technical investigations, including areas of potential flooding in different scenarios. As engineering maps, they are often used as regulatory maps for land use planning related to flood mitigation.
- Some Yukon communities already have inundation maps which show the extent of historical flood events or potential flood water coverage for events of different magnitudes. Inundation maps are not engineer certified and cannot be used as a regulatory resource; instead, they are intended to aid in emergency preparedness plans for communities in flood plains and flood hazard zones.
- Flood mapping delineates flood extents and elevations on a base map. A flood map typically uses lines to show an area that will be covered by water or the elevation that water would reach during a specified flood event.
- The timeline for flood mapping will be dependent on available resources.
- In other jurisdictions, producing a single flood map has taken several years as it takes time to gather data, complete the engineering studies required, and to conduct engagement.
- The departments of Environment, Community Services, Energy, Mines and Resources, and Highways and Public Works are working together on the development of flood maps given their related but different needs.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-03-20

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Finlayson Caribou Herd**

Environment

Quick Facts:

- Since 1982, the Department of Environment has estimated the population size of the Finlayson Caribou Herd seven times.
- The population estimate peaked in 1996 with an estimated 4,537 animals and declined to a low of 2,712 animals in 2017.
- Through a 2022 survey, we estimate there are currently 3,359 animals in the herd.

Recommended response:

- The extensive work done on the Finlayson Caribou since the 1980s arose from community concerns for the herd, which is in the traditional territories of the Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation.
- In order to address our shared concerns for this herd, no resident hunting permits have been issued for the Finlayson caribou since the 2018-2019 hunting season. Outfitter quotas were also set at zero for the herd in 2019.
- The Government of Yukon is currently working on establishing a wildlife co-stewardship committee with the Ross River Dena Council.
- The development of a management plan for the Finlayson herd will be a priority task for this group (see BN #50).

Additional response:

- Although our latest population estimate and composition survey results suggest that the herd may no longer be declining in size, we need to continue our monitoring to ensure this is the trend over time prior to initiating hunting allocation discussions.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Finlayson Caribou Herd**

Environment

- We plan to continue building relationships with First Nations to incorporate all types of knowledge when monitoring and assessing the herd.

Third response:

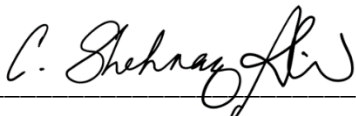
- Any future licensed harvest of this herd would require further discussion between the Government of Yukon, Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation.
- Outfitter quotas will not be available until licensed hunting reopens.
- When licensed hunting is available, new quotas will be discussed with outfitters, the Kaska and the Government of Yukon.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Official Opposition may be interested in the current status of the Finlayson caribou herd management plan, what actions have been taken to promote recovery and when hunters could expect harvest opportunities to open.
- Ross River Dena Council has strong concerns about caribou populations and potential overharvest within its asserted traditional territory.

Background:

- The department introduced a Permit Hunt Authorization for the Finlayson caribou herd in 1998, issuing 30 permits annually until 2018.

Approved by:

A/Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-02-03

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Sustainable Harvest in the Yukon

Environment

Quick Facts

- Annual big game licence sales for Resident hunters have increased by 27 percent over the past 15 years.
- During this same period, sales have remained relatively stable for Non-Resident hunters.
- The average annual big game licence sales for Resident hunters from 2006 to 2011 were 3,541 licenses per year; from 2011 to 2016 were 4,096; from 2016 to 2022 were 4,488.

Recommended response:

- We recognize the Yukon's unique and valuable opportunities for hunting big game species.
- We are committed to ensuring **licensed** harvest is done sustainably while respecting the primary importance of wildlife conservation and Indigenous subsistence harvest rights.
- Managing human activity, particularly hunting, is our primary tool to conserve big game and **support continued availability of licensed hunting opportunities into the future.**
- **The Department of Environment has indicated to stakeholders that we are considering the development of a harvest allocation framework to support increased transparency, fairness and public understanding of harvest allocation decisions.**
- **During these conversations, we identified the need for further engagement with our partners and we are committed to doing this.**

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Sustainable Harvest in the Yukon

Environment

- We work hard to ensure that the division of licensed hunting opportunities between resident and non-resident hunters aligns with Yukoners' values, reflects the best available data and respects First Nations' subsistence harvest rights.
- We recognize there are concerns with outfitter quotas when we need to apply harvest limits. With this in mind, we are also working diligently with our partners to have important conversations exploring a modernized process for establishing outfitter quotas.
- Providing sustainable wildlife harvest opportunities ensures hunting opportunities for future generations.

Additional response:

- We support the goals of a harvest allocation framework and see this as an important step to clarify and improve how hunting is managed in the Yukon.
- Understanding the unique contexts for each stakeholder group requires time and consideration of the issues at hand to enter this process in a fair and balanced way.
- We are continuing efforts to meet with stakeholders to listen and consider the needs and interests prior to initiating a harvest allocation framework process.
- We feel that by focusing on conversations up front, we will ultimately support a more thoughtful and effective process.

Third response:

- Conservation of wildlife in the territory is a joint effort.

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Sustainable Harvest in the Yukon

Environment

- We continue to engage with Yukon First Nations governments, the Inuvialuit, Renewable Resources Councils, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, and the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope).
- Yukon hunters, the Yukon public, Yukon Outfitters Association, the Yukon Fish and Game Association, the Yukon Conservation Society, and other interest groups are also key partners in the conversation.
- All types of knowledge, including Indigenous, local and scientific, are part of decision-making.
- A modern wildlife harvest allocation framework must reflect the evolution of hunting and conservation in the territory.

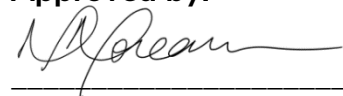
Context this may be an issue because:

- Questions around harvest limits and outfitter quotas were raised in both the Spring and Fall Sitzings of the Yukon Legislative Assembly in 2022, and Minister Clarke has communicated the department's plans to develop the harvest allocation framework.
- Minister's 2023 Mandate Letter includes working with Yukon First Nations, the Fish and Wildlife Management Board and stakeholders to continue to ensure all Yukoners are provided opportunities to sustainably harvest fish and game while looking for new opportunities for Yukon hunters to pursue activities across the Yukon.

Background:

- The Department of Environment is responsible for making decisions about wildlife management to conserve all wildlife, including their interrelationships with each other and their environment, while respecting Indigenous and treaty rights and the diverse needs of Yukoners.

Approved by:



2023-03-29

Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved

Prepared for Minister Clarke
Department of Environment

Date prepared: February 1, 2023
Last Updated: March 29, 2023

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Campground Expansion Planning**

Environment

Quick Facts:

- Yukon Parks operates 42 road-accessible campgrounds offering 1,150 campsites.
- This includes 53 campsites that we have added over the last five years.
- There are 109 remote hike-in and paddle-in sites, including those in Tombstone and the Thirty-mile section of the Yukon River.

Recommended response:

- We recognize that user demand for campsites has returned to pre-pandemic levels and is anticipated to increase steadily for years to come.
- To address this demand, we are actively working to increase the number of available campsites in the territory.
- In 2023, we will add approximately 20 campsites across three territorial campgrounds: Congdon Creek, Wolf Creek and Ethel Lake.
- Our intent is to offer a range of recreation opportunities that appeal to a diversity of park visitors.
- Seasonal work to improve Yukoner and visitor experience at some of these locations will begin in the spring.

Additional response:

- Yukon Parks continues to meet with First Nations governments to further the Yukon Parks Strategy and deliver on our commitments.
- Through these discussions, we hope to advance plans to significantly expand and improve some of our recreation parks.
- We are in the process of completing conceptual designs for potential expansions and recreational activities at several campgrounds, these

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Campground Expansion Planning**Environment

include, Conrad, Little Salmon, Pine Lake, Snafu, Tarfu, and Twin Lakes.

- We will continue to expand the recreational opportunities available to Yukoners and visitors, by working with our First Nations partners to develop sustainable solutions.

Third response:

- We will continue to add sites to existing campgrounds over the next few years, such as the additional walk-in sites.
- We know, because we have heard directly from Yukoners that they value and cherish their Yukon parks experiences.
- We continue to explore ways to enhance our parks system for years to come.

Fourth response:

- Financial investments are required to support the expansion of existing campgrounds.
- The Department of Environment has identified funding set aside for development of a Yukon campground in the five-year capital plan.
- We specifically dedicated \$52,000 in 2022/23 for infill sites and we allocated \$170,000 in 2023/24 for infill of additional sites and new campground development.
- We will continue to work respectfully with First Nations on the improvement of Yukon parks and campgrounds, prior to advancing any capital commitments or work.
- Advancing reconciliation through collaborative management of parks and campgrounds with First Nations is one of the four building blocks

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Campground Expansion Planning**

Environment

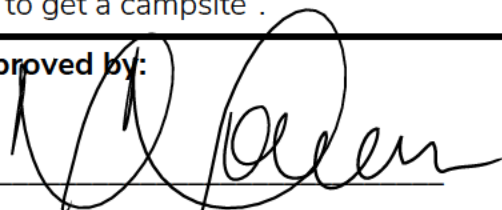
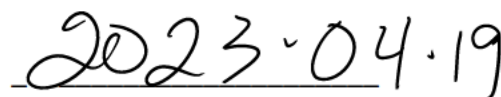
of the Yukon Parks Strategy and will be upheld throughout the new campground planning process.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon Parks Strategy includes commitments to build a bigger better campground near Whitehorse and to add campsites to some existing campgrounds.

Background:

- Use of Yukon campgrounds was growing at about 12% per year until tourism was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Use has since increased to approach pre-pandemic levels.
- In 2019 (pre-pandemic), it was estimated that an additional 800 campsites would be needed by 2030 to keep up with this growing demand on the Yukon parks system.
- Based on public input about the difficulty of finding a campsite on some summer weekends, one of the 10 priorities in the Yukon Parks Strategy is to “Make it easier to get a campsite”.

Approved by:
Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved



Statement on New Yukon Campground

We understand there has been some confusion regarding campground planning. We would like to ensure we are clear to Yukoners.

Statement:

“The Government of Yukon would like to clarify that a decision has not yet been made on the development of a new campground near Whitehorse. In partnership with Yukon First Nations, we are open to all options for a new campground while our practical first steps are to focus on improving existing campgrounds and camping experiences across the Yukon.

The Yukon government is committed to upholding our partnership with Yukon First Nations as we continue enhanced campground planning in the territory. As outlined in the 2022/23 and the 2023/24 Five Year Capital plans, there is funding allocated for the development of Yukon campgrounds including the potential for a new campground.

We look forward to continuing these discussions with Yukon First Nations and working to enhance our territory’s parks system through the celebration of cultural values, developing more campsites and improving recreational opportunities and user experiences.”

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Clean Energy Act
Implementation**Energy, Mines and Resources
and Environment

Recommended response:

- The Clean Energy Act legislates emissions reductions, renewable heating, zero-emission vehicle sales targets and public reporting to ensure long-term climate action accountability and transparency.
- The Act ensures the government's work continues across political lifecycles and stays focused on achieving essential climate actions to meet our greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.
- The Clean Energy Act is the Yukon's first energy and climate change legislation.

Additional response:

- Several initiatives are already underway to implement aspects of the Clean Energy Act, including the setting of sector-specific targets.
- Following our engagement with the mining industry, we are planning to establish an intensity-based target to reduce the industry's greenhouse gas emissions per unit of production.
- Other commitments under development include, establishing and legislating standards for renewable electricity generation and renewable fuel.
- As part of our commitment to transparency and accountability, we report on *Our Clean Future* progress annually.
- Moving forward, we will continue to report on progress, including commitments in the Clean Energy Act.


Spring 2023

Session Briefing Note**Clean Energy Act
Implementation**Energy, Mines and Resources
and Environment**Context:**

- There may be interest in the implementation of the *Clean Energy Act*, and the targets set within it.

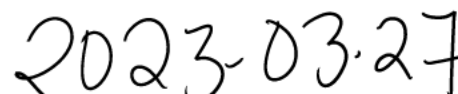
Background:

- The *Clean Energy Act* came into force in November 2022, and legislates the following targets:
 - greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 45 per cent by 2030 compared to 2010 levels (not including mining emissions);
 - greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of net-zero for all sectors by 2050;
 - Yukon-wide 30 per cent renewable heating target;
 - zero-emission vehicle sales target of 10 per cent by 2025 and 30 per cent by 2030;
 - the authority to develop sector-specific targets into regulation; and,
 - reporting requirements on the government's climate actions.
- The Government of Yukon is planning to establish an intensity-based Mining Intensity Target that sets a benchmark for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the mining sector. (See EMR# 6)

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Mining Intensity Target**Environment and
Energy, Mines and Resources**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon is engaging with the mining industry to establish an intensity-based target to reduce the industry's greenhouse gas emissions per unit of production.
- Mining emissions are included in the net-zero 2050 target for all sectors of the economy that are legislated in the Clean Energy Act.

Additional response:

- An intensity-based approach encourages mine operators to innovate and adopt low-carbon practices and accounts for progress made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions even when substantial year-to-year fluctuations occur in the Yukon's mining emissions.
- The mining intensity approach will recognize the differences between types of activities undertaken by quartz and placer operations throughout their mining lifecycle.
- We recognize that establishing such a target is ambitious and we will work with the mining industry to find solutions to enable them to reach this goal.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Some questions may be raised regarding Action 19 in *Our Clean Future* to establish an intensity-based greenhouse gas reduction target for the Yukon's mining industry. (See EMR BN #36)

Background:

- The percentage of emissions from mining is variable year-to-year. From 2009-2020 it contributed eight to 15 per cent of the Yukon's total greenhouse gas emissions.
- Energy, Mines and Resources conducted an engagement with the mineral and exploration industry in fall of 2022 on the mining intensity target. Work is underway

Session Briefing Note

Mining Intensity Target

Environment and
Energy, Mines and Resources

establishing baselines, scoping activities for placer and quartz operations, and reporting.

- As detailed in *Our Clean Future*, quartz mines are required to project their anticipated greenhouse gas emissions, identify measures to reduce emissions, and annually report greenhouse gas emissions through the quartz mine licensing process.
- [Using data provided through the quartz mine licensing process and through the fuel tax exemption process](#), the Government of Yukon will track the sector's progress toward achieving greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.
- [Energy, Mines and Resources is working to procure a consultant to work with the mining industry to establish mining intensity baselines.](#)
- The Output-Based Pricing System is part of Canada's approach to pricing carbon pollution for emission-intensive trade-exposed industries, such as mining. Quartz mines in the Yukon may be subject to this pricing system depending on their size. Discussions with the Government of Canada regarding the carbon levy and the impact of the output-based pricing system are ongoing.
- The Department of Finance presented the proposed pricing system to industry, environmental organizations and First Nations during the engagement on the mining emissions intensity targets between July and October 2022.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources



Deputy Minister of Environment

23/4/19

Date approved

2023-04-17

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Youth Panel on Climate Change**Environment & ECO

Recommended response:

- This year's Youth Panel on Climate Change, our second cohort, focused on activities that build youth capacity, leadership skills, education, and engagement on climate change issues in the Yukon.
- The Panel coordinated four youth climate workshops in Whitehorse and created a film that explores a vision for climate action in the Yukon.
- We thank the Panel for their efforts in engaging with other Yukon youth and for advancing climate leadership in the territory.

Additional response:

- The territory's youth are the next generation of environmental stewards and we recognize the important role they play in addressing the climate crisis.
- Based on the experiences of the Youth Panels, we look forward to working on meaningful ways to continue to build youth capacity and leadership on climate change.
- We appreciate the considerable time and effort that the 2021 and 2022 Youth Panel cohorts, as well as BYTE (for youth, by youth), put into advancing youth climate action in the territory.
- We will continue to explore further opportunities to support youth leadership on climate action.

Third response:

- Many of the recommendations from the first Youth Panel align well with our existing commitments under *Our Clean Future*.
- Approaching climate action with continued flexibility allows the Government of Yukon to incorporate expertise and diverse perspectives, such as those of the Youth Panel.
- In line with this, we appreciate and recognize the existing gaps and

Session Briefing Note

Youth Panel on Climate Change

Environment & ECO

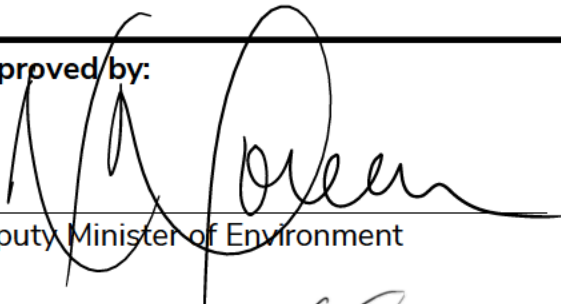
barriers the recommendations pointed out, and we will continue to analyze and assess these to see where the Government of Yukon can best take action.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Government received questions as to whether the youth panel will continue to be funded to support subsequent cohorts.

Background:

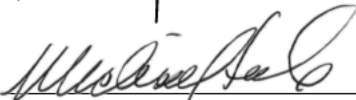
- Action L6 in Our Clean Future establishes a commitment to create a Youth Panel on Climate Change to provide advice and perspectives to the Government of Yukon on climate change, energy and green economy matters.
- In 2021, the first Youth Panel on Climate Change Cohort included 12 youth who delivered a set of recommendations - *Our Recommendations, Our Future: 27 Programs and Policies to Embolden the Yukon's Climate Action*, with the goal of emboldening the actions laid out in Our Clean Future.
- In 2022, the second Youth Panel on Climate Change cohort included 10 panellists that built on the first cohort's ambitions through capacity and leadership-building activities. They did not create recommendations.
- The Yukon government partnered with BYTE – Empowering Youth Society, for the second year in a row, to run the youth panel and report to the government on its activities.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2023.03.02

Date approved


Deputy Minister of Executive Council Office

2023 03 03

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

National Adaptation Strategy and Climate Risk Assessment

Environment

Quick Facts:

- The federal government released the first Canada-wide adaptation strategy, the *National Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan*, on November 24, 2022, following the 27th United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP27).

Recommended response:

- We are pleased to see the strong alignment between the recently released National Adaptation Strategy and the findings of Yukon's Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment report, as well as with *Our Clean Future*.
- This includes recognizing the unique circumstances that climate change poses to the North and the importance of prioritizing adaptation in northern and remote communities.
- We continue to engage with our federal counterparts on specific elements of the National Adaptation Strategy, and look forward to collaboratively advancing adaptation efforts in the Yukon.

Additional response:

- In September 2022, our government released the first Yukon-wide Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment report.
- This report evaluated the climate change impacts that pose the highest risk to Yukoners.
- The Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment report is a key resource for our government, as it identifies where government and community actions are contributing to resilience and where further action is needed.

Session Briefing Note

National Adaptation Strategy and Climate Risk Assessment

Environment

- We are continuing to build off the findings of the Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment report through the implementation of *Our Clean Future*, and advancing actions that will enhance climate resilience across the territory.

Third response:

- The Government of Yukon is currently working on implementing more than 50 adaptation actions as identified in *Our Clean Future*.
- These actions directly support the Yukon in adapting to some of the highest-risk areas identified in the Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment report, such as floods, fires and permafrost thaw.
- For example, to increase our preparedness and adaptability, this spring, we are working to develop flood maps for the Southern Lakes - including Carcross, Tagish, Marsh Lake and Lake Laberge. (Ref BN #6)
- We will continue to build on our adaptation commitments like this and others in *Our Clean Future*, while working with stakeholders, experts and knowledge holders, to advance climate resilience in the Yukon.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Climate change adaptation is a topic of high public interest. There may be questions about the release of the National Adaptation Strategy and how it relates to adaptation work taking place in the Yukon.

Background:

- The National Adaptation Strategy was released on November 10, 2022, and was open for comment by provinces, territories and Indigenous organizations until March 31, 2023.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****National Adaptation Strategy
and Climate Risk Assessment**

Environment

- The Yukon Climate Risk and Resilience report supports the fulfillment of a key action in Our Clean Future to assess climate hazards and vulnerabilities to those hazards every three to four years between now and 2030.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2023.04.18

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****YCLC and Reducing**

Environment

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon has undertaken a review and analysis of the 61 recommendations put forward by the Yukon Climate Leadership Council in their *Climate Shot 2030* report.
- Several of the recommendations have other benefits for the territory in addition to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions projections.
- Based on our analysis, it was found that the intent of the "enabling elements" and "emissions reductions" recommendations align with the vision and core values of *Our Clean Future*.
- Navius Research's analysis found that the recommendations from the Yukon Climate Leadership Council will reduce emissions by 83 kt and while this is good, it would still leave a gap of 76 kt in reductions to meet the 45% target by 2030.

Additional response:

- We recognize and appreciate the significant research and analysis the Yukon Climate Leadership Council undertook to complete their work.
- We met one-on-one with the Council's co-chairs and other members to discuss the recommendations over the past several months.
- We are looking at implementing 14 recommendations that align closely with *Our Clean Future*, including increasing our ambitions related to renewable fuels, our zero emissions vehicle target and awareness building. (see table in Background)
- We continue to work with the YCLC to complete additional research, clarification, and resourcing on the remaining 47 recommendations to understand how best they can be implemented.

Session Briefing Note

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YCLC and Reducing

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

- We will communicate new actions as part of our annual *Our Clean Future* reporting process in fall 2023.

Third response:

- I would like to acknowledge the importance of the Council's work in supporting the Government of Yukon to reach our greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.
- This includes developing a reconciliation framework to ensure that the recommendations support reconciliation and a better future for all Yukoners.
- The Council also applied co-benefit criteria to assess factors such as social equity, system resilience and diversity, self-sufficiency and community health and vitality.
- We are committed to reducing emissions while implementing collaborative, resilient and equitable solutions to address climate change.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Yukoners may want to know more about the Council's recommendations and what the Government of Yukon is doing to respond to them.

Background:

- On September 2, 2022, the Yukon Climate Leadership Council shared a total of 61 recommendations with the Government of Yukon in its final report, *CLIMATE SHOT 2030 - Recommendations on how to reduce Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions by 45 per cent by 2030*.
- This report was released publicly on September 28, 2022.
- As requested by the Yukon Climate Leadership Council, the Government of Yukon undertook third-party verification of the emissions reduction potential of the 61

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YCLC and Reducing

Environment

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Energy, Mines and Resources

recommendations were verified through Navius Research Inc. in the fall of 2022 after the Climate Shot 2030 report was released.

- Minister Clarke and Minister Streicker sent a joint response letter to the Council on Friday March 10, 2023. The letter thanks the Council for their work and outlines the government's next steps to address their recommendations.

#	14 YCLC recommendations that align closely with Our Clean Future
L7	Work with all levels of government to develop and support the use of standardized GHG emission accounting practices that support consistent, simple and transparent reporting of emission reductions.
EA1	Increase visibility and public familiarity with GHG reduction technologies (i.e., install solar panels or other renewable energy infrastructure at Yukon schools).
EA4	Support the development and delivery of climate change education that improves understanding of climate change and the Yukon's response to it.
H4	Prioritize fuel switching for building incentives regardless of other retrofit upgrades.
H6	Reduce life cycle carbon intensity of heating oil sold in Yukon by 20% by 2030, align with BC's Low Carbon Fuel Standard and implement as per B's Roadmap to 2030.
H8	Require all buildings constructed after 2025 and 2027 to meet Tier 3 and Tier 4, respectively of the National Building Code of Canada 2020.
H9	Develop and implement a labour force strategy for building retrofits and fuel switching (e.g., local training, reassign/train YG employees, Outside workers, etc.).
H13	Review successes and barriers to implementation of YG's 2016-2021 local food strategy and update as needed with an emphasis on GHG emission reduction.
M2	Reduce the lifecycle carbon intensity of transportation fuels by 30% for gasoline and diesel in alignment with BC's Low Carbon Fuel Standard and implement per BC's Roadmap to 2030.

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Spring 2023

YCLC and Reducing

Environment

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Energy, Mines and Resources

#	14 YCLC recommendations that align closely with Our Clean Future
M4	Establish a Zero Emissions Vehicle Act for the Yukon, modelling after BC, which requires vehicle sellers to achieve sales and lease targets for ZEVs.
M5	For OCF Action T1, increase the ZEV sales target for light duty vehicles from 30% to 45% by 2030, or align with federal mandate, whichever is higher.
M7	Work with school bus contractors to facilitate the replacement of retiring internal combustion engine buses with electric buses.
M8	Fund a green hydrogen fuel demonstration project in the transportation sector with a construction start of 2025 and operating timeframe of 2028.
E9	Establish a rate and policy to permit power reselling and allow third party EV charging stations and vehicle-to-grid (V2G) options for non-utility entities.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-04-27

Date approved



Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

23/4/27

Date approved

EMR #33/ENV #25**Session Briefing Note****Spring 2023****Our Clean Future – First Nations Engagement**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon developed *Our Clean Future* in partnership with Yukon First Nations, transboundary Indigenous governments and groups, and Yukon municipalities over the course of three years.
- We held multiple rounds of public engagement in 2018 and 2019 with partners to determine the areas we should prioritize over the 10 years of the strategy.
- This included hosting public meetings in 14 communities with 287 participants from Yukon municipalities and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups.
- We also held four partner meetings with Yukon First Nations, Transboundary Indigenous governments and groups, and municipalities to establish a vision and values for *Our Clean Future*.

Second response:

- There are 136 actions led by the Government of Yukon in *Our Clean Future* and many involve First Nations governments and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups.
- There are 37 actions led by partners. Of those, 23 are being led by First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups.
- As of September 2022, nine of these actions have been completed. For example:
 - The Inuvialuit Regional Corporation completed a climate change strategy and an energy action plan for the Inuvialuit Settlement Region;

EMR #33/ENV #25**Session Briefing Note****Spring 2023****Our Clean Future – First Nations Engagement**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

- Sree Vyah, the Old Crow Solar Project, began producing electricity in spring 2021; and,
 - Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in carried out energy audits for five buildings and conducted detailed planning for building energy upgrades in 2021.
- We applaud the work that has been done by the Yukon First Nations Climate Action Fellowship and their development of the Yukon First Nations Climate Reconnection Vision and Action Plan. We look forward to the public release of their report this spring.

Third response:

- Partnerships with First Nations governments and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups on Our Clean Future actions are essential to reaching our climate goals.
- We recognize the threat that climate change poses to Indigenous cultures, ways of life and well being. We will continue to support Indigenous-led climate action.
- We are committed to exploring further ways to support Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups, in addressing climate change through the implementation of Our Clean Future.

Context:


- Our Clean Future is a Government of Yukon strategy. Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups continue to lead their own actions to reduce emissions and enhance resilience.

EMR #33/ENV #25**Session Briefing Note****Spring 2023****Our Clean Future – First Nations Engagement**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment**Background:**

- In fall 2017, the Government of Yukon invited Yukon First Nations, transboundary Indigenous governments and groups, municipalities, the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Association of Yukon Communities to participate in developing Our Clean Future.
- During the development, drafting and release of the draft version of Our Clean Future, the Government of Yukon held various meetings with Yukon First Nations, Transboundary Indigenous governments and groups, and municipal partners and sought feedback on:
 - an engagement strategy;
 - a discussion document;
 - detailed engagement planning;
 - a survey; and
 - strategic direction.
- The types of meetings held were:
 - one round of one-on-one meetings;
 - four 'Partners Meetings'; and
 - a launch meeting and post-public engagement meeting.
- The public engagement period for feedback on a draft version of Our Clean Future ran from November 14, 2019, to January 17, 2020.
- In addition to group meetings held with staff or leadership from Indigenous and municipal partners, one-on-one meetings on the draft version of Our Clean Future were offered to partners and held with Acho Dene Koe First Nation, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Gwich'in Tribal Council, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Vuntut Gwitchin Government.
- The Council of Yukon First Nations and the Assembly of First Nations – Yukon Region provided joint input on the draft version of Our Clean Future. Their joint input was informed by the Yukon First Nations Climate Action Gathering they hosted in February 2020.

EMR #33/ENV #25**Session Briefing Note****Spring 2023****Our Clean Future – First Nations Engagement**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

- In addition to group meetings held with staff from municipalities, one-on-one meetings were held with the City of Dawson, the Village of Carmacks, the Village of Mayo, the Town of Faro and the Association of Yukon Communities.
- The Government of Yukon held one-on-one meetings with 30 environmental stakeholders and industry representatives.
- Our Clean Future Annual reports list actions and commitments from First Nations governments, organizations and municipalities regarding climate action underway in their communities.
- In the "2021 Our Clean Future Annual Report" (published in September 2022):
 - Three Yukon First Nations contributed actions: Vuntut Gwitchin Government, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and White River First Nation;
 - Council of Yukon First Nations and Assembly of First Nations Yukon Region contributed actions;
 - Two transboundary Indigenous groups contributed actions: Gwich'in Tribal Council and the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation; and,
 - Three municipalities contributed actions: City of Dawson; Village of Mayo; and the Village of Haines Junction.
- The first Yukon-wide Climate Risk Assessment report was released in September 2022. Participants included 16 Indigenous governments and organizations and three municipalities. (See EMR #31 and ENV #23)

Approved by:
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources
Date approved
Deputy Minister of Environment2023-04-27
Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Recycling in the Yukon and Extended Producer Responsibility

Environment

Quick Facts

- Public and industry engagement on Extended Producer Responsibility took place from November 1, 2022 to February 17, 2023.
- The engagement included:
 - 4 public meetings,
 - 14 stakeholder group meetings and more than 10 one-on-one stakeholder meetings,
 - Two meetings with First Nations,
 - 313 public survey responses, and
 - Approximately 25 written submissions.
- The department is continuing to evaluate the engagement results to ensure Yukoners' voices are reflected in an Extended Producer Responsibility System.

Recommended response:

- Our existing recycling system in the Yukon is in a vulnerable position as it currently lacks the infrastructure and funding to manage the increasing volume of recycling in a sustainable manner.
- The financial and operational vulnerability of the Yukon's recycling system was highlighted once again when Raven Recycling recently announced that they would be stopping their public drop-off of non-refundable recycling, in part due to the cost of operating such a system. (See [BN #36](#))
- This is why Yukon government is working to establish an Extended Producer Responsibility program in the Yukon by 2025.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Recycling in the Yukon and Extended Producer Responsibility

Environment

- Extended Producer Responsibility is proven to be a viable model to ensure the sustainability of recycling programs; and
- EPR will help address the financial vulnerability of Yukon's recycling system by shifting the costs of recycling products and packaging from governments and taxpayers to the private sector.

Additional response:

- We know Yukoners are dealing with the cost of living increases. We expect few costs to be passed on to Yukoners at places like the grocery store under an Extended Producer Responsibility approach.
- Most of Canada already has Extended Producer Responsibility in place, as a result, national companies already factor its cost into their prices.
- This means that the cost of many products arriving in the Yukon already includes the fees necessary to pay for an Extended Producer Responsibility system.
- A recent economic analysis of EPR estimated that Yukoners are already paying an estimated \$1.3M - \$2.9M annually for EPR services that the territory is not getting.
- If businesses decide to pass on the cost to Yukon consumers, we anticipate that the increase at the local grocery store would be measured in fractions of a cent per item.
- This new approach will consider exempting small Yukon businesses that sell only small quantities of materials like printed paper and packaging from being obligated in the program.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Recycling in the Yukon and Extended Producer Responsibility

Environment

Third response:

- In February 2023, I met with the British Columbia Minister of Environment where I raised the possibility of exploring options for Yukon – BC harmonization on EPR systems.
- Collaborating with BC is of particular interest to the Yukon as we are currently developing an EPR system that will partially align with British Columbia's approach.
- We are also working with provinces and territories through the Canadian Council of Ministers of Environment to discuss with business leaders how best to support the implementation of EPR in northern and remote communities.
- *Our Clean Future* includes a commitment to implement Extended Producer Responsibility in the Yukon by 2025.
- The primary goals for bringing this program to the Yukon are to:
 - reduce the costs of waste management for the territorial government, municipalities and taxpayers;
 - provide financial stability for recycling;
 - increase the amount of waste kept out of landfills; and
 - help us reach the *Our Clean Future* waste diversion target of 40 per cent by 2030.
- To ensure Yukon businesses and recycling stakeholders have the certainty they need to participate in an Extended Producer Responsibility system, we will continue the dialogue with them throughout the year while the new framework and regulations are being developed.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Recycling in the Yukon and Extended Producer Responsibility

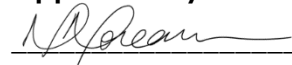
Environment

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon public may raise concerns regarding an increase in the cost of living because of the new proposed Extended Producer Responsibility framework.
- On April 11, Yukon government released a consultant's report that estimates the amount of packaging waste generated in the territory annually by the industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) sectors. The study was reported on by the CBC.

Background:

- In 2014, the *Environment Act* was amended to enable the creation of regulations for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) in the Yukon.
- From January to May 2022, the Department of Environment worked with the EPR Advisory Committee to collect preliminary input on EPR. The feedback shaped the regulatory proposal presented to the public. Public engagement on Extended Producer Responsibility was held from November 1, 2022, to February 17, 2023.
- In Fall 2022, the market price of corrugated cardboard fell to near zero from about \$130 per tonne, impacting the financial sustainability of recycling processors.
- In 2022, the Yukon government spent approximately one million dollars to support the recycling of non-refundable packaging through diversion credits. The cost is expected to increase in 2023.
- In February 2023, Raven Recycling announced that they would be closing their public non-refundable recycling drop-off at the end of 2023.
- In April 2023, Yukon government released a report which identified that nearly 75% of the nearly 8,000 tonnes of packaging waste produced by ICI users ends up in the territory's landfills. The Department of Environment commissioned this report to better understand how waste from non-residential sources is managed. This data will support decisions on the details of the EPR regulation.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-04-19

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Wellgreen**

Environment

Quick Facts

- The Wellgreen mine is an abandoned mine originally developed to take advantage of the copper-nickel-sulphide deposit in the early 1970s.
- Mining was carried out for a brief period of time, during which approximately 171,000 tonnes of ore was processed at the Wellgreen mill and tailings site, located approximately 14 km away from the mine.
- Costs for the closure and remediation of the Wellgreen mill and tailings site are estimated to be \$16 million, based on a July 2020 remediation design report.

Recommended response:

- Ensuring contaminated sites in the Yukon are cleaned up continues to be a priority for the Government of Yukon.
- The Wellgreen mill and tailings site is at a critical stage as groundwater analysis indicates that the tailings are now generating acid, which is moving away from the facility in the direction of Quill Creek.
- The site is located within the Denali fault zone and an earthquake could mobilize the tailings into the nearby environment if left in its current state.
- Timely closure and reclamation work is necessary to avert potentially significant environmental impacts. For this year, we have budgeted \$500,000 to complete the design for remediation and planning work and to prepare for the active remediation planned for 2024-25.

Additional response:

- We recognize the concerns raised by both the Kluane and White River First Nations about the risks posed by this site if it is not remediated.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Wellgreen

Environment

- These concerns and other considerations are addressed in the remediation plan that was submitted to the Yukon Environmental Socio-economic Assessment Board in 2020 and in subsequent discussions between the Government of Yukon and both First Nations.
- We anticipate that the active remediation can be completed in two to three years, followed by necessary post-remediation monitoring of the site for five to ten years.

Third response:

- The Wellgreen mill and tailings site operated in the 1970s and was originally permitted by the Government of Canada prior to devolution; the site is now under the care and control of the Government of Yukon.
- The Government of Yukon is in discussions with the Government of Canada regarding federal funding support to clean up the site.
- At a minimum, it is expected the site will be returned to an industrial standard, in compliance with the Yukon's Contaminated Sites Regulation, although efforts will be made to return the site closer to the natural boreal forest state where feasible.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The budget for remediation expenditures in 2023-2024 is approximately \$500,000 for the design and planning of the Wellgreen site.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon is pursuing a collaborative agreement with the Government of Canada, which could include funding for the current remediation approach.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-04-18

Date approved

Session Briefing Note Wolverine Mine

Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- In fall 2022, the Government of Yukon assumed responsibility for overseeing care and maintenance at the Wolverine mine site. Previously, a court-appointed Receiver handled that role.
- To ensure we continue to protect the environment, human health and safety, we awarded a multi-year care and maintenance contract to a Yukon business that has proven experience in this field of work.
- Our focus is to continue water treatment, maintain and upgrade critical site infrastructure, and address urgent site needs.

Additional response:

- Remediation and closure planning includes determining the costs and timeframes for work. We are assessing the current state of the site and ensuring our budgeting for liabilities is accurate.
- We continue to provide site access to Welichem as it moves forwards with selling its remaining assets present on site.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The public may be interested in the activities, expenditures and remediation approach at the Wolverine site.

Background:

- The Wolverine Mine went into temporary closure in January 2015. The owner, Yukon Zinc Corporation, went into bankruptcy proceedings shortly thereafter.
- On September 13, 2019, the Yukon Supreme Court appointed PricewaterhouseCoopers as the Receiver of the Wolverine Mine site.

Session Briefing Note Wolverine Mine

Energy, Mines and Resources

- Until November 1, 2022, the Receiver was responsible for care and maintenance of the site and for complying with regulatory authorizations and applicable statutes. This responsibility shifted to the Government of Yukon on November 1, 2022.
- Natural Resource Officers inspect the site regularly to ensure appropriate measures are in place to protect the environment and human health and safety.
- Our role in Welichem Equipment's sale of mine assets is limited to coordinating site visits to ensure the health and safety of visitors and making sure that care and maintenance activities are not disrupted.

Anticipated Expenditures and Security (See BN #102)

- Since 2018, the Government of Yukon has spent in excess of \$28 million on care and maintenance on the site. Approximately \$10.5 million of those expenditures were recovered from financial security posted by Yukon Zinc Corporation.

Approved by:

Amill ADM

Deputy Minister

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

Jan. 25/23

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Lodgepole Lane Property

Spring 2023
Environment

Recommended response:

- As I have mentioned previously, the Government of Yukon is aware of issues reported at 2 Lodgepole Lane regarding public health, safety and potential environmental concerns.
- While there is some evidence of hydrocarbon contamination on this private property, they do not appear to be significant, and the Government of Yukon will continue to rely on the City of Whitehorse, as the primary lead on any enforcement, should action be deemed necessary.
- Without strong evidence of a clear responsible party, or significant adverse effects, the department has no ability to order or direct the current property owners to remediate.
- Currently, as this situation stands, the state of the property rests with the City of Whitehorse.

Additional response:

- Spills on private properties are common and living near a site with contamination does not necessarily present an inherent risk to public health.
- The Government of Yukon maintains a database on contaminated sites in the territory.
- Number 2 Lodgepole Lane was added to the Contaminated Sites Information Map, which is a public inventory of Yukon properties for which the department holds evidence of contamination at one point in time.
- The inclusion of a property on this inventory is not a legal designation, and only a public information piece. There are hundreds of listed sites in

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Lodgepole Lane Property**Environment

the Yukon that do not present an inherent risk to public health and the environment.

- The public is encouraged to call the Turn in Poachers and Polluters (TIPP) line 24/7, toll-free 1-800-661-0525 with any information they have on contaminated sites in the Yukon.

Third response:

- The Lodgepole Lane property is an example of a complex site with a wide range of reported concerns involving multiple agencies. These include Health and Social Services, Fire and Protective Services, City of Whitehorse and RCMP.
- The Department of Environment will continue to be an active and collaborative partner.
- I would like to reiterate again that we have committed to supporting City of Whitehorse's officials with technical expertise and navigating applicable regulatory requirements.
- The Department of Environment will continue to operate within its legislative authority with respect to any contamination issues at number 2 Lodgepole Lane.
- We will continue our dialogue with the City of Whitehorse to support their enforcement efforts however possible.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Neighbours of number 2 Lodgepole Lane have been vocal about several issues with the property, including soil contamination. The City of Whitehorse is aware of this and has requested support from the Government of Yukon over the last few years.
- MLA Geraldine Van Bibber raised this issue in the Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 sittings on behalf of her constituent and Minister Clarke responded.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Lodgepole Lane Property

Environment

Background:

- Complaints regarding 2 Lodgepole Lane are numerous and cover a wide range of issues, many of which are the mandate of other agencies (e.g., management of human waste, dealing with a building that has been deemed hazardous by the City's Fire Chief, dealing with suspected criminal activity at the site, etc.).

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2023.04.06

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Minto Mine Status and Update

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon set the total financial security requirement for reclamation and closure of the Minto Mine at \$93.2 million. To date, Minto Mine has furnished \$74.8 million and continues to pay monthly installments.
- Until the remaining security is paid, the owners must follow restricted operating conditions to reduce environmental liability at the mine.

Additional response:

- The mine is under Restricted Operating Conditions that are designed to ensure the mine continues to maintain enough storage capacity for contaminated water.
- The company must also regularly report progress to the Government of Yukon and Selkirk First Nation, and we continue to monitor the situation on-site closely.
- As of late March, the company received an addition to the existing Restricted Operating Conditions, requiring them to install additional pumping infrastructure.
- This preventative action will allow for moving water from the existing tailings storage area to the previously mined Minto North pit, should freshet conditions require additional temporary storage of contaminated water.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The Government of Yukon and Selkirk First Nation want to ensure mine security is aligned with future reclamation needs.
- The Compliance, Monitoring and Inspection Branch may require the company to move water around the site in the event that storage limitations are reached.

Session Briefing Note

Minto Mine Status and Update

EMR #34
Spring 2023
Energy, Mines and
Resources

Background:

- The Minto Mine is an underground copper mine with gold and silver byproducts located on Selkirk First Nation's Category A Settlement Land.
- The First Nation holds surface and subsurface rights. The Government of Yukon collects royalty payments under the Quartz Mining Act and pays those royalties to Selkirk First Nation.
- Selkirk First Nation also receives additional financial benefits under its net smelter royalty arrangement with Minto Mine's owner, Minto Metals Corp.

Licence Amendments

- The Mineral Resources Branch amended the company's quartz licence on June 30, 2022. This licence authorizes mining and milling up to 2026 and includes all previously assessed phases of the project.
- Minto Metals Corp. has submitted a consolidated application to the Yukon Water Board that includes the new information from the amended Quartz Mine Licence. This application is under adequacy review by the Yukon Water Board.

Compliance and Enforcement Status

- Natural Resource Officers continue to inspect the site regularly for compliance with all authorizations. (See BN #45)

Employment Data

- Minto Metals has an average of 180 staff on site throughout the year, with a mix of direct employees and subcontractors.
- Exact numbers vary by season and by site activity, but typically 60-80 staff are flown in/out every week as part of shift rotation.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources



Date approved

Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project (BMC Minerals) - current status

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- The Yukon government is committed to continuing consultation with Kaska First Nations regarding the Kudz Ze Kayah project in a way that supports our commitment to build strong relationships with First Nations and meets our obligations.
- Our government supports responsible mineral resource development in the Yukon.
- The Yukon has a robust and effective assessment and regulatory regime that continues to uphold responsible development in the territory.

Additional response:

- The decision bodies for the project issued a decision document. The Yukon government is committed to meeting its obligations during the regulatory phase for this project.
- We look forward to the court providing clarity on the issues raised in the case. We will not comment further on this case while it is before the court.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- BMC Minerals started the application process for a quartz mining license, a Type-A water license, and land leases.
- Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) on its own behalf, and on behalf of all Kaska Nations, applied to the federal court for application for judicial review of the joint decision document.
- RRDC and Liard First Nation (LFN) identified concerns related to impacts of the project on the Finlayson caribou herd and to their Aboriginal rights and title, and how the Executive Committee addressed those impacts. The Kaska Nations requested the project be rejected.

Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project (BMC Minerals) - current status

Executive Council
Office

Background:

- On June 15, 2022, the Decision Bodies issued a decision document to vary the Executive Committee's recommendations that the Project to be allowed to proceed, subject to terms and conditions specified in the Screening Report. Decision Bodies on the project were YG, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Natural Resources Canada.
- The decision document was issued more than a year after the legislated deadline of May 5, 2021, to allow for coordination with Federal Decision Bodies and consultation with Kaska Nations.
- The varied decision document included additional measures to address including concerns raised around the Finlayson caribou herd and the need to ensure First Nation participation in the development of monitoring and mitigation efforts to inform the next stages of the project.
- On July 20, 2022, the Government of Yukon was notified that RRDC, on its own behalf and on behalf of the Kaska Nations, filed a petition for judicial review of the decision.
- A Yukon Supreme Court hearing was held from April 11 to April 18, 2023. A decision is expected before July, 2023.

Consultation with Kaska Nations

- After considering a letter received from LFN and RRDC on June 14, 2022, Decision Bodies revised the rationale for the decision document and issued the decision document on June 15, 2022. In the decision document, Decision Bodies committed to a follow-up letter to respond to the concerns raised in the June 14 letter.
- Following the issuance of the decision document, Yukon government has attempted to engage with LFN and RRDC to establish the Finlayson Caribou Herd Oversight Committee, implement terms and conditions of the decision document and to notify and inform LFN and RRDC on the status of the regulatory review.
- LFN and RRDC responded in December indicating they would prepare a draft Terms of Reference for the Finlayson Caribou Herd Oversight Committee (FCHOC) by mid-January and noted the need for capacity funding for ongoing development of the

Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project (BMC Minerals) - current status

Executive Council
Office

FCHOC and consultation with YG on the project without prejudice to the ongoing judicial review.

- On January 30, 2023 LFN and RRDC wrote to the Yukon Water Board and Yukon government requesting a meeting with YG regulators and the Yukon Water Board and requesting an extension to the Yukon Water Board public comment period.
- The Yukon Water Board subsequently extended the public comment period for the water licence application review to May 5, 2023.
- YG has been unsuccessful in scheduling a meeting with LFN and RRDC.

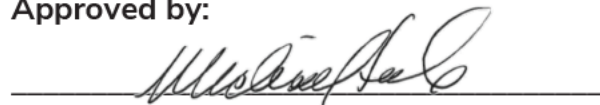
BMC Engagement

- On October 12, 2022, EMR's Mineral Resources Branch wrote to BMC to confirm receipt of the quartz mining licence application.
- Mineral Resources Branch met with BMC on December 15, 2022, to share initial findings of the consultant's review of the waste rock and tailings facility. The initial findings identified deficiencies in the application.
- Department of Environment provided detailed comments to BMC on November 18, 2022, regarding the 2-year baseline monitoring plan as required as a term and condition in the decision document.
- In follow up meetings with BMC in December, BMC confirmed that they would prefer that YG consult with LFN and RRDC using the existing plan. YG consulted with LFN and RRDC during December and January and provided feedback to BMC in early February.
- In February, BMC provided a revised version of the monitoring plan which YG approved.
- In April 2023 EMR's Mineral Resources Branch issued an information request to BMC for their quartz mining licence.
- On April 14, 2023, the Department of Environment issued BMC a wildlife research permit to conduct a wildlife survey following a three-week consultation period with LFN and RRDC. LFN had requested an extension to the consultation period.
- The survey will have a low level overall impact on the herd and will provide accurate information on the size and composition of the Finlayson population.

**Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project (BMC
Minerals) - current status**

Executive Council
Office

Approved by:



Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

2023 04 25

Date

CS #CO-05 / ENV #36

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Closure of Raven's Free Recycling Drop off

Community Services
Environment

Recommended response:

- The board of Raven Recycling has made the considered decision to close their free public drop-off at the end of this year.
- This is not just about funding. The board wants to shift the responsibility for collection services toward the municipality in anticipation of an Extended Producer Responsibility program and a growing population, which is outpacing the capacity of Raven Recycling.
- We are committed to helping find a sustainable recycling service for Whitehorse residents.
- A Recycling Committee was established in March 2023 with a mandate to identify options to maintain and improve landfill diversion levels through household recycling. The committee includes processors and representatives from the City of Whitehorse and the Government of Yukon.
- We have already identified a series of options and the conversations are collaborative and productive.
- I thank the Raven board for its deep and unwavering commitment to building a circular economy in Yukon for more than 30 years. We understand the board made a tough choice in support of an overall goal of increasing diversion from the landfill.

Additional response:

- Yukon government is working to establish an Extended Producer Responsibility program in the Yukon by 2025.

CS #CO-05 / ENV #36**Session Briefing Note****Spring 2023****Closure of Raven's Free Recycling Drop off**Community Services
Environment

- Extended Producer Responsibility will be part of a plan for long-term sustainability in waste diversion. The program will help address the financial vulnerability of Yukon's recycling system by shifting the costs of recycling some products and packaging from governments and taxpayers to product producers.
- In the interim, Yukon government continues to support recycling through Diversion Credits which help offset the costs of our recycling processors to divert non-refundables such as cardboard, mixed paper and mixed plastics from the landfill.
 - Diversion credits have doubled in recent months due to rising costs of processing and shipping, low or negative commodity pricing, in addition to a change to Raven's business model.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Raven Recycling will be closing their public non-refundable recycling drop-off area by the end of 2023.

Background:

- Recycling is hauled in from communities to Raven Recycling by Government of Yukon contractors.
- Once materials arrive at the Whitehorse processing facilities the Government of Yukon financially supports the processing and shipping of commercial, residential and community recycling through the Diversion Credit program.
- Raven Recycling's public drop off is primarily used by a variety of small businesses, country residential residents, and residents who are not currently using the fee-for-service Blue Bin collection. Although only 20-25% of non-refundable recycling comes from Raven Recycling's free public drop off, it is the most visible and most accessible avenue for recycling in Whitehorse.

CS #CO-05 / ENV #36**Session Briefing Note****Spring 2023****Closure of Raven's Free Recycling Drop off**Community Services
Environment

- Yukon government provides significant financial support to Raven Recycling and other recycling processors for their non-refundable recycling services.
- Diversion credits are paid by the Government of Yukon (about \$900,000/year in 2022) and the City of Whitehorse (\$150,000/year) to two processors to divert non-refundable recyclable materials from the landfill.
- Diversion credits paid by the Government of Yukon increased from approximately \$350 per tonne in 2022 to \$588 per tonne for 2023. The Department of Community Services has a six-month TPA with Raven and P&M for processing while it reviews budget and costs.
- The costs to recycle non-refundables has increased significantly in recent years due to increased labour and trucking costs, and lower prices for recycled commodity materials. Some commodity prices have become negative, requiring processors to pay \$125/tonne or more to ship materials out of territory for recycling.
- Community Services and the City of Whitehorse have formed a Recycling Committee to identify options to maintain or improve landfill diversion levels through household recycling. Members include Community Services, Environment as well as City of Whitehorse, Raven Recycling, P&M and Blue Bin as needed. The group had its first meeting mid-March and it will continue to meet bi-weekly.

Financial Implications:

- The closure of free public drop off will mean a small reduction in recycling volume, however the significant increase in diversion credits means there will not be cost savings for the Department of Community Services.

CS #CO-05 / ENV #36

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

**Closure of Raven's Free
Recycling Drop off**

Community Services
Environment

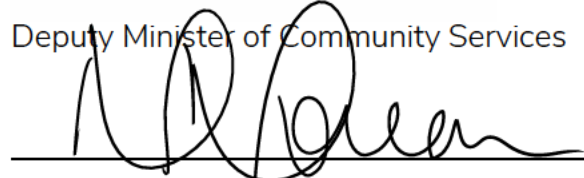
Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Community Services

April 24, 2023

Date approved



Deputy Minister of Environment

2023.04.24

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Regulations for the
Animal Protection and
Control Act**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources**Recommended response:**

- The new *Animal Protection and Control Act* provides a comprehensive, modern, and enforceable legal framework for managing all aspects of animal protection and control in the territory.
- The Act enables Yukon communities to take on an enforcement role to increase animal control and reduce public safety risks.
- The Act establishes standards for the care of animals and sets standards for acceptable means of killing animals humanely.
- The Act enables the use of new tools for managing escaped livestock, such as Eurasian boars, as well as feral populations, such as horses.
- In addition, it will authorize the regulation of pet stores, boarding kennels and animal rescues.

Additional response:

- We are developing regulations for the new *Animal Protection and Control Act*.
- The Act sets a broad framework and the regulations will provide the specific detail required to implement this new law.
- We will engage with affected stakeholders to clarify the regulations with respect to standards of care for domestic animals, prohibited cosmetic surgeries, exotic animals, control standards for livestock, and tools to control feral animals.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Regulations for the Animal Protection and Control Act

Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

- It is important that we ensure our regulations reflect Yukoners' values, our relationships with animals, and our way of life.

Third response:

- Engagement on the development of the Animal Protection and Control regulations is underway and will continue through the summer.
- We will speak with:
 - Local and First Nations governments,
 - Association of Yukon Communities,
 - Local area councils,
 - Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon,
 - Yukon Dog Mushing Association,
 - Yukon Outfitters Association,
 - Yukon Agriculture Association,
 - Yukon Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee,
 - Growers of Organic Food Yukon,
 - Klondike Farmers Forum,
 - Pet store owners, and
 - Animal rescues and humane societies.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Regulations for the
Animal Protection and
Control Act**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

- We recognize there may be additional resources required to implement the complete legislative framework for communities interested in taking on enforcement roles and we will consider how best to achieve this as we develop the regulations.

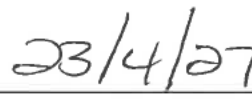
Context — this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions on how the Government of Yukon is engaging with stakeholders and the public on the development of the *Animal Protection and Control Act* regulations and when the Act and regulations will come into force.

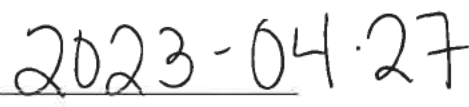
Background:

- Public engagement took place in 2018 and 2019 and a What We Heard document summarizing the feedback is available on yukon.ca/engagements.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Domestic Sheep and Goats Control Order

Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- In 2020, we issued a Control Order requiring sheep or goats owners to meet testing and fencing requirements to prevent disease spread to wild sheep and goats. This order is in effect until December 31, 2024.
- The order was issued because domestic sheep and goats can carry pathogens such as *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* [My-koh-plaz-ma oh-vee nu-moh-nee-ay] or, *M. ovi*, that can cause devastating respiratory disease if spread to wild animals.
- The Control Order is a precautionary measure to safeguard the health of the Yukon's iconic wild sheep and goats.
- In the coming year, the Animal Health Unit will work with third-party contractors to assess the impact of the Control Order on the spread of disease and on sheep and goat owners. The results will inform the next steps after December 2024.

Additional response:

- We continue to conduct animal testing for respiratory pathogens and assess fencing to ensure compliance with the order.
- There is no cost to farmers for testing sheep and goats in the Yukon and they can apply for compensation for eligible costs incurred to comply with the order.
- We remain up-to-date with new research and we have confidence in the testing capabilities we use to detect *M. ovi* in sheep and goats.
- While *M. ovi* was the initial bacteria of concern, the order provides for a response to any bacteria that might cause respiratory disease.
- Over \$225,000 has been paid to owners for fencing costs, and almost \$270,000 has been paid to compensate owners for loss and the destruction of animals that tested positive.

Session Briefing Note

Domestic Sheep and Goats Control Order

Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

Third Response:

- Annual testing of sheep and goats in the Yukon shows that importing live animals presents a high risk of bringing *M. ovi* to the Yukon.
- We have updated import policies to reduce this risk by offering funding to offset the cost of testing animals for *M. ovi* prior to import.
- We continue to monitor wildlife populations for pathogens. To date, *M. ovi* has not been detected in the Yukon's wild sheep or goats.
- *M. ovi* surveillance in caribou has detected two positive animals: one captured in the Yukon near the Alaska border and one captured in Alaska.
- Similar to findings in Alaska, the strain of *M. ovi* detected does not appear to cause disease in caribou. Wildlife surveillance in caribou and other species is ongoing.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Sheep and goat owners and wildlife stakeholders are questioning what will happen after the Control Order is no longer in effect.

Background:

- The Yukon has the largest population of wild thinhorn sheep in Canada. This iconic species is of great intrinsic and commercial value.
- The Government of Yukon has made commitments to support the agriculture industry and economy to promote self-sufficiency and sustainable growth.
- Farmers and owners of sheep and goats implement and maintain approved fencing requirements. The fencing requirements are an effective means to properly contain sheep and goats, which further reduces the risk of transmission from domestic to wild sheep.
- Sheep or goat owners who test their animals prior to importing into the Yukon are eligible for compensation. This is to provide further incentive to test prior to importing

Session Briefing Note

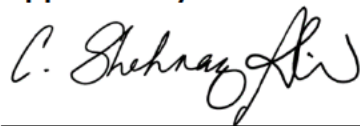
Domestic Sheep and Goats Control Order

Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

to reduce risk of introducing *M. ovi*. If testing does not occur prior to importing, owners are not eligible for compensation should the animal later test positive.

- 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 order. They were sentenced to surrender their goats. This is the only conviction to date related to the Control Order.
- The court's decision reinforces the importance and validity of the Control Order to protect the health of the Yukon's wildlife.
- Further reinforcement of the importance of the control order is through the endorsement of international conservation organizations.
 - The Wild Sheep Foundation presented the 2022 Federal Outstanding Statesman Award to Chief Veterinary Officer, Dr. Mary Vanderkop, for her outstanding contributions to the wild sheep of the Yukon.

Approved by:

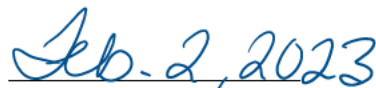


2023-02-02

C. Shehnaz Ali

Date approved

A/Deputy Minister of Environment



Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Funding Pressures on Humane Societies and Closure of Rescues

Environment

Quick Facts:

- In 2018 Humane Society Yukon received an increase in annual funding from \$79,500 to \$110,000 and Humane Society Dawson funding was increased from \$20,000 to \$25,000.
- Both humane societies receive a stipend under contracts with the Government of Yukon, to re-home surrendered animals from communities.
- In 2021, the Humane Society Yukon reported an intake of 236 animals.
- On average, the Society receives approximately 85% of its animals from within the City of Whitehorse and 15% from communities.
- Humane Society Dawson reported an intake of 66 animals in 2021.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Environment provides annual core funding to the territory's two registered humane societies proportional to the number of animals that they house annually.
- We recognize there can be a gap in support when established rescues close and have worked directly with Humane Society Yukon and the City of Whitehorse to address operational funding pressures.
- Considering this, we have provided additional one-time support of \$135,000 to the Humane Society Yukon and \$25,000 to Humane Society Dawson.

Additional response:

- Both the Government of Yukon and the City of Whitehorse have legislated responsibilities related to animal protection and control and we do our best to work collaboratively to meet those obligations.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Funding Pressures on Humane Societies and Closure of Rescues

Environment

- This latest funding issue has highlighted the need for a thorough review of best practices for the shared responsibility of animal protection and control with our partners at the City of Whitehorse and the two humane societies in the Yukon.
- Government of Yukon is looking for a long-term sustainable solution, but there are many models to choose from. Other jurisdictions rely on funding models that include various amounts of provincial and territorial funding, municipal funding, donations and fees.
- We are committed to working with our partners to examine and apply other funding models and operational practices that would best serve Yukoners and their companion animals.

Third response:

- We recognize that each community has unique needs and concerns when it comes to the care and control of companion animals.
- In the coming months we will reach out to municipal and First Nation governments, as well as humane societies, to better understand their needs and identify opportunities for partnerships.
- City of Whitehorse officials are open to meeting with the Department of Environment to explore alternative models to deliver essential animal protection and control services.
- Together we can clarify mandates, roles and responsibilities to develop a funding model that is sustainable over the long term.

Context—this may be an issue because:

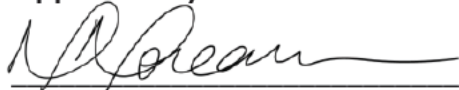
- There is a general interest in the Government of Yukon's funding support to animal rescues and has been questioned in the Legislative Assembly.

Session Briefing Note**Funding Pressures on Humane
Societies and Closure of Rescues**

Environment

Background:

- Humane Society Yukon and Humane Society Dawson are the two animal rescues in the Yukon which are recognized under the Yukon Societies Act and receive operational funding from the Department of Environment.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-03-29

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Caribou Herd Management

Spring 2023
Environment

Quick Facts

- There are 29 different caribou herds located throughout the Yukon.
- To monitor our caribou herds, we deploy satellite-collars to track their seasonal movements, conduct multiple composition surveys and typically undertake one to three population surveys each year.
- In 2022, the Department of Environment conducted 10 caribou composition surveys, completed population surveys on five caribou herds, and deployed satellite-collars in six caribou herds (see [BN 52](#)).
- Composition surveys provide estimates of adult sex ratios and calf survival and allow us to monitor long-term population trends.

Recommended response:

- The primary tools we use to manage caribou populations in the Yukon are population monitoring, harvest management, and habitat management.
- Population monitoring typically involves deploying satellite-collars to track distribution and movement and, in some cases, to track survival rates.
- We also conduct spring and fall composition surveys and complete population surveys. We use these metrics, collected over a number of years, to determine a population trend.
- Herd management plans, such as for the Porcupine, Chisana and Fortymile caribou herds, guide harvest management for some herds.
- Habitat management typically involves characterizing the quality of habitat for a particular herd, and ensuring existing processes, like environmental assessment and land use planning, incorporate caribou habitat values.

ENV #50**Session Briefing Note
Caribou Herd Management****Spring 2023**
Environment**Additional response:**

- From a regulatory perspective, the Yukon government actively uses permit hunt authorizations, outfitter quotas, threshold hunts and season closures to manage the harvest of caribou herds.
- These management tools are intended to ensure harvest stays within sustainable limits, or to allow a herd to recover from a previous population decline.
- All caribou herds now have quotas for all outfitters, fulfilling a commitment that the Yukon government and the outfitting industry agreed to in 1996.

Third response:

- Harvest management discussions across the territory can be challenging, but we make informed and collaborative decisions by generating and sharing knowledge.
- With this knowledge, the Department of Environment employs adaptive measures to manage caribou more responsively and as needed to adjust our actions and impacts.
- We co-manage a number of herds with other governments, including First Nations, the Inuvialuit, provincial and territorial agencies, Canadian federal agencies and Alaskan state and federal agencies.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The Official Opposition may have questions on the health of Yukon's caribou herds, how we collect data to know a herd requires harvest management tools to be applied, and what steps the government has taken to help herds recover.
- First Nations, the Inuvialuit and Indigenous groups may have concerns about caribou populations and potential overharvest in their traditional territories and settlement lands.

ENV #50

Session Briefing Note

Caribou Herd Management

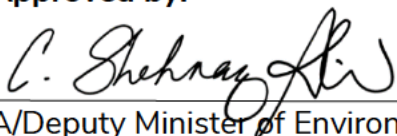
Spring 2023

Environment

Background:

- The Department of Environment is undertaking a review of the 2012 Chisana caribou management plan with First Nation governments (Kluane and White River) and federal and state agencies in Alaska. The plan contains recommendations to support a stable or increasing population.
- The Department currently has two range assessments completed for the Carcross and Klaza caribou herds, where land use pressures on caribou have been of concern over the past few decades. Both are publicly available online.
- Range assessments combine caribou population and habitat information into an integrated assessment of caribou distribution, land use pressures, and recommendations on how to mitigate the effects of land use on caribou.

Approved by:



A/Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-02-03

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Salmon and Fish Hatchery Development**

Environment

Quick Facts

- In 2022, only 44,581 Chinook salmon passed by the pilot station located near the mouth of the Yukon River in Alaska. For the same period in 2021, 124,874 were counted at this location.
- This count includes Canadian-born and United States-born fish. The ten-year historical Chinook salmon count average is 168,358 fish per year.
- As of August 21, 2022, the total number of Chinook salmon that had passed into Canada was just 12,290, and only 165 had passed through the Whitehorse fish ladder by September 2, 2022. This represents the complete 2022 Chinook salmon run.

Recommended response:

- Salmon are culturally important to Yukoners, and are a subsistence resource.
- While the Government of Yukon does not play a formal role in salmon management, we are committed to working with our partners to conserve and protect wild Pacific salmon, including their freshwater habitats and ecosystems.
- The Department of Environment supports establishing new agreements with our counterparts in British Columbia, the Government of Canada, and Alaska, as well as agreements with First Nations.

Additional response:

- We share Yukoner's serious concerns about the continued low escapements of Chinook and Chum salmon and the overall decline in salmon returns to the Yukon.
- We want to see more salmon passing into the upper Yukon River.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Salmon and Fish Hatchery Development**

Environment

- However, the numbers for Chinook and Chum salmon returns are projected to be very low this year, and we do not expect to meet escapement targets.
- We support the Canadian delegates of the Yukon River Panel. In recent Panel meetings, the escapement goals of the Yukon River Salmon Agreement were reviewed, and we are happy with the progress made.
- The revised escapement goals will be finalized in the coming weeks by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and the Government of Alaska.

Third response:

- The Department of Fisheries and Oceans has announced they are implementing the Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative, a long-term strategy to reverse the decline of Pacific salmon stocks in the Yukon and British Columbia.
- The strategy will include the restoration and protection of critical salmon habitat, the modernization of Pacific salmon fisheries, and the use of conservation hatcheries to rebuild vulnerable salmon stocks.
- The Department of Environment supports the idea of a conservation hatchery but will continue discussions with First Nations on whether and how to pursue the use of conservation hatcheries in Yukon.
- In January, the Council of Yukon First Nations hosted a two-day workshop to share perspectives among Yukon First Nations on the use of hatcheries as a restoration tool for declining salmon stocks.
- We understand that the Council will soon report on this two-day meeting and, in the coming months, will undertake further engagement with Yukon First Nations.
- We will continue to work with DFO and the First Nations governments toward the recovery and rebuilding of Yukon River Chinook salmon stocks.

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Spring 2023

Salmon and Fish Hatchery Development

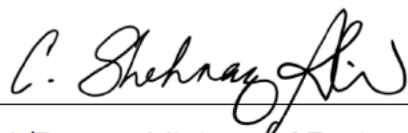
Environment

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is concern about the overharvesting of Canadian-born salmon populations in Alaskan waters and the DFO has announced they are implementing the Pacific Strategy Initiative, which will include the use of conservation hatcheries.
- The new 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement and Minister Clarke's 2023 Mandate letter include a commitment to take immediate action to protect salmon and restore population levels.

Background:

- The federal government has jurisdiction over migratory salmon and fish habitats.
- Pacific salmon are in a long-term decline, with many runs verging on collapse as they struggle to survive climate change, habitat destruction and overfishing.
- Due to low numbers, recreational fishing for Chinook was not permitted in the Yukon River or Porcupine River from July 1 to November 30, 2022.
- Currently, only Yukon First Nations' subsistence harvest is allowed on the Yukon River for Chinook salmon. Yukon First Nations have voluntarily restricted harvest for many years to increase salmon numbers.
- The Chinook salmon spawning escapement goal of 42,500 to 55,000 has not been met since 2018. In 2021, only about 31,000 Chinook were recorded. This was lower than in 2020, where 33,000 were recorded.
- The Yukon First Nation Salmon Stewardship Alliance held a two-day workshop in Whitehorse on January 24-25, 2023, for First Nations to: (i) share insights, research and perspectives on stock restoration options including instream incubation and hatcheries, and (ii) identify priorities, necessary conditions, and next steps for a restoration hatchery, if supported by Yukon First Nations. The release of a final report from this workshop is pending.

Approved by:

A/Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-04-11

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Wildlife Survey and Data Use

Environment

Quick Facts

- In 2022, the Department of Environment allocated approximately \$448,000 for 3 moose-related projects and \$865,000 for monitoring projects related to 12 caribou herds.
- The Department of Environment dedicated \$74,000 to conduct the 2022 Aishihik Bison population survey.
- Last year, our fisheries group sampled fish in 4 lakes and stocked another 11 lakes with fish.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Environment is committed to collecting robust wildlife population data to provide high-quality and up-to-date information that contributes to evaluations of harvest sustainability.
- To evaluate harvest sustainability, we combine information from licensed harvesters, First Nations, Inuvialuit and community partners with results from our wildlife population research and monitoring to inform management decisions.
- These data also support decision-making, such as establishing threshold levels, permit numbers and non-resident quota allocations.
- The Department of Environment cannot survey all wildlife populations yearly and relies on reports from licensed harvesters, First Nations, Inuvialuit and community partners to guide decision-making in the interim between scheduled surveys.
- This process is iterative. In the absence of recent survey results, we use our annual licensed harvest data, combined with reliable observations provided by co-management and community partners, to fine-tune our

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Spring 2023

Wildlife Survey and Data Use

Environment

evaluations of harvest sustainability on a year-by-year basis until the next population survey is undertaken.

- In addition, we work closely with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board. The Board is a vital co-management partner with who we share survey results and proposed actions to ensure harvest sustainability.
 - For example, we recently shared our intent to cancel the Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary sheep permit with the Board, an action that was also supported by the Board. (BN #60)

Additional response:

- The Department of Environment dedicates significant resources to collecting and analyzing data to support evidence-based wildlife management decisions.
- We carry out targeted population inventories, collect harvest data, and perform ecological assessments annually to gather up-to-date information.
- We recently analyzed the data from several moose surveys conducted in November 2021.
 - Results from the Sifton-Miners Range Moose Management Unit survey indicate that the number of moose in this area is higher than previous estimates.
 - Based on these results and moose harvest data, we have increased the number of permits to be issued this year from 12 to 24.
 - While the higher-than-expected number of moose is encouraging, we still have conservation concerns for this population because of

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Wildlife Survey and Data Use**Environment

the high harvest level in previous years and the ease of access into this area.

- In addition, results from the Fish Lake, Wheaton River and Mount Lorne moose surveys will be available this spring.
- Data from 2022 moose surveys completed in the Nisutlin River, Quiet Lake, Nordenskiöld River and South Canol areas are also currently being compiled.
- In 2022, we deployed **satellite**-collars in the Porcupine, Fortymile, Aishihik, Hart River, Coal River and Wolf Lake caribou herds.
- We also carried out population, composition **and/or distribution** surveys on the Aishihik, Chisana, Wolf Lake, Finlayson, Little Rancheria, Coal River, Hart River, Ethel Lake, Tatchun, Tay River, **Boreal**, Fortymile and Porcupine caribou herds. Many of our surveys for transboundary populations were done in collaboration with other jurisdictions.
- In addition, we conducted surveys for wolves, deer, elk, bison, sheep, muskox, fish, pikas, bats and ground squirrels.
- We plan to carry out approximately 40 wildlife surveys across a diverse range of species this year, roughly equivalent to the number of surveys carried out in 2022.

Third response:

- We prioritize which areas to survey based on a combination of factors, including harvest levels, access, community concerns, land-use planning data needs, the date of the last survey and human activity.
- To understand the large variation between years in our minimum elk counts in the Takhini Valley, we captured and fitted 20 elk with GPS **satellite**-collars during winter 2022-23. This information will help us determine the elk's distribution and movements throughout the year.

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Spring 2023

Wildlife Survey and Data Use

Environment

- To understand deer abundance, distribution and movements, we are also deploying camera traps in the Takhini Valley and at the south end of Lake Laberge; this spring, we will be capturing and fitting 20 deer with radio-collars. This information will enable us to effectively manage deer in the area.
- Results from the 2022 Aishihik Bison population survey indicated a 47 percent increase in herd size over the past six years. Given the herd's recent growth, a sustainable harvest for this bison population will continue.
- This summer, we will conduct further aerial surveys of Kluane sheep populations to continue our long term population monitoring which allows us to determine the need for further management actions. (BN #60)
- We continue to share our work, research and monitoring activities with the public through information we post on Yukon.ca.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Yukoners want to know that wildlife conservation decisions are being made with the best available data. In the past, the Official Opposition raised concerns about the quality of data collection.

Background:

- Yukon's growing human population, advances in fishing and hunting technologies and climate-change influences have placed significant pressures on our fish and wildlife resources. As a result, the need for monitoring has increased.
- Increased pressures on wildlife populations have been raised by numerous First Nations, highlighting the need for Yukon government to ensure equitable allocation of the sustainable harvest amongst user groups.

Session Briefing Note


Spring 2023

Wildlife Survey and Data Use

Environment

- See the Appendix below, listing the completed 2022-23 wildlife surveys by region.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2023.04.13
Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Wildlife Survey and Data Use

Environment

Appendix: 2022-23 Completed Surveys

Region	Location	Species	Management tool	Survey completed	Analysis Completed
Southern Lakes	Nisutlin/ Quiet Lake	Moose	Open	Early-winter abundance and composition	No
	Wolf Lake	Northern Mountain Caribou	Open	Mark-resight population survey; Sept/Oct 2022	Yes
	Lewes Lake	Lake Trout	Catch/Possession Limits, Harvest slot size, gear restrictions	Population Assessment	No
	Little Fox Lake	Lake Trout	Catch/Possession Limits, Harvest slot size, gear restrictions	Population Assessment	No

Region	Location	Species	Management tool	Survey completed	Analysis Completed
Liard	South Canol	Moose	PHA	Early-winter abundance and composition	No
	Coal River	Northern Mountain Caribou	Open	Mark-resight population survey; Sept/Oct 2022	Yes
	Finlayson	Northern Mountain Caribou	Closed	Stratified random block population survey; Feb/Mar 2022	Yes
	Finlayson	Northern Mountain Caribou	Closed	Fall rut composition survey; Oct 2022	Yes
	Little Rancheria	Northern Mountain Caribou	Open	Mark-resight population survey; Sept/Oct 2022 (led by BC gov't)	No
	Liard River	Bison	NA	Mark-Resight September-October 2022	Yes

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Wildlife Survey and Data Use

Environment

	Hyland River	Bull Trout	Catch/Possession Limits, Harvest slot size, gear restrictions	Fall occupancy surveys	No
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Region	Location	Species	Management tool	Survey completed	Analysis Completed
Northern Tutchone	Nordenskiold River	Moose	Open	Early-winter abundance and composition	No
	Ethel Lake	Northern Mountain Caribou	Voluntary closure	Fall rut composition survey; Oct 2022	Yes
	Tatchun	Northern Mountain Caribou	Open	Fall rut composition survey; Oct 2022	Yes
	Boreal	NT1 population of Boreal caribou	Open	Two-phase abundance estimate survey; Feb/Mar 2022	Yes
	Ddhaw Ghro HPA	Sheep	HPA, closed	Fall recruitment survey; Sept 2022	Yes
	Granite Creek	Arctic Grayling	Catch/ Possession Limits, Harvest slot size, gear restrictions	PIT Tag / Movement study	No

Region	Location	Species	Management tool	Survey completed	Analysis Completed
Kluane	Aishihik	Northern Mountain Caribou	PHA	Fall rut composition survey; Oct 2022	Yes
	Chisana	Northern Mountain Caribou	Closed	Mark-resight population survey; Oct 2022	Yes

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Wildlife Survey and Data Use

Environment

	Aishihik Lake	Sheep	Open permit	Fall recruitment survey; Oct 2022	Yes
	Aishihik Lake	Bison	Open permit	Mark-Resight; June 2022	Yes
	Kluane Lake	Sheep	Open	Summer population survey; July 2022	Yes
	Kluane Lake area	Lynx, wolverine, marten, moose, fox and assorted small mammals	NA	Camera trapping (7 years of data)	Yes

Region	Location	Species	Management tool	Survey completed	Analysis Completed
North Yukon	Hart River	Northern Mountain Caribou	Open permit	Fall rut composition survey; Sept 2022	Yes
	Fortymile	Migratory Caribou	Summer registration hunt and winter threshold hunt	Calving, calf mortality, fall rut composition, survival monitoring, photo census population estimate	Yes
	Tombstone Park	Sheep	Open	Summer recruitment survey; July 2022	Yes

Region	Location	Species	Management tool	Survey completed	Analysis Completed
North Slope	Richardson Mountains and Yukon North Slope	Moose	Open	Productivity and survival monitoring	Yes

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Wildlife Survey and Data Use

Environment

	Porcupine	Barren-ground Caribou	Open	Calving and post-calving, survival monitoring, community based condition monitoring	Yes
	North Richardson	Sheep	Open permit	Summer population survey; June 2022	Yes
	Ivvavik	Sheep	N/A	Summer population survey; July 2022	Yes
	North Slope & Richardson Mountains	Muskox	Closed	Summer composition July 2022; late winter population estimate March 2022	Yes
	South and North Beaufort Sea	Polar Bear	NA	Multi-year mark-recapture (year 3 of 4); March-April 2022	No (require all 4 years of data)

Region	Location	Species	Management tool	Survey completed	Analysis Completed
Northern Tutchone/Liard	Tay River	Northern Mountain Caribou	Open	Fall WKA distribution survey; Sept 2022	Yes
North Yukon and Northern Tutchone	Klondike Plateau	Grizzly Bear	Open	Mark-recapture (hair snag) June-Aug 2022	No
Southern Lakes, Northern Tutchone, Liard	Multiple	Bats	NA	Minimum Number Known Alive; Capture-Mark-Recapture (CMR)	Partial (Long-term CMR dataset)
Southern Lakes, North Yukon	Tombstone and Kusawa parks and surrounding areas	Pika	NA	Occupancy surveys	Partial (Long-term dataset)
Kluane, Northern	Multiple	Snowshoe Hare	NA	Capture-Mark-Recapture; Turd	Partial (Long-term)

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Wildlife Survey and Data Use**

Environment

Tutchone, Liard, Southern Lakes				Transects; August- September 2022, and February- March 2023	CMR dataset)
Kluane, Northern Tutchone, Liard, Southern Lakes	Multiple	Small Mammals (i.e., Voles)	NA	Capture-Mark- Recapture; Turd Transects; May and September 2022	Yes (Long- term CMR dataset)
All of Yukon	Registered Trapping Concessions	Wolverine and Lynx	NA	Trapper-submitted carcasses	Yes for wolverine, No for lynx (long-term datasets)

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Yukon Species at Risk

Environment

Quick Facts

- The Yukon has 43 species listed as being at risk under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.
- Ten additional species in the Yukon have been recommended by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) to the federal government for listing.
- The Government of Yukon is currently coordinating a review of one proposed recovery strategy for the Gypsy Cuckoo Bumblebee, which has implications for the Yukon.
- The status of species at risk in the Yukon is publically available on Yukon.ca.

Recommended response:

- Other jurisdictions in Canada have specific legislative tools to list and conserve species at risk. Such legislative tools are also a priority for the Government of Yukon.
- Species assessed and listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* or SARA are afforded legal protection only on federal lands in the Yukon.
- Protection on federal lands only accounts for 8 per cent of Yukon's land base. Nationally, listed species at risk are not automatically afforded protection under the federal SARA while on lands managed by the Yukon.
- While the Yukon *Wildlife Act* only affords protection to approximately 5 per cent of the territory's native species, which leaves legislative gaps for species of fish, insects and plants.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Yukon Species at Risk

Environment

- The Government of Yukon actively works with Environment and Climate Change Canada on technical reviews, recovery strategies and management plans implicating Yukon species at risk.
- With foresight and planning, the Yukon has an opportunity to benefit from the hard lessons learned in other parts of Canada and the world to prevent the endangerment of species.

Additional response:

- A timeline to complete a new legislative framework for species at risk depends on several factors, including determining how the new legislation would interact with existing federal and territorial laws and requirements.
- Completion will also require significant time and effort from our many partners.
- We continue to work collaboratively with our partners in the territory, including First Nations, the Inuvialuit, Indigenous groups, wildlife management boards and councils, interest groups and other government organizations on species at risk conservation.
- The recently signed Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement significantly increases Yukon's capacity and resources to work collaboratively with other parties on a variety of species at risk matters over the next three years, including species at risk legislation.

Third response:

- 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

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Yukon Species at Risk

Environment

Government of Yukon developed with First Nations, Inuvialuit, the Wildlife Management

Advisory Council – North Slope, and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board.

- Under the Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement, funding will support further surveying and monitoring of species at risk in the Yukon (see BN #4).
- In addition, our Yukon Conservation Data Centre continues to track the locations and status of lesser-known and globally-rare Beringian species that are unique to northwestern North America.
- This information is used in global reporting of biodiversity status, environmental assessments, and land use planning.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions about what the government is doing about species at risk, including the implementation of the commitments outlined in the Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement and Minister Clarke's 2023 Mandate letter.

Background:

- 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, such as caribou, grizzly bears and wolverine.
- The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) is an independent body of scientists (from different areas in Canada) that makes recommendations to Canada based on the available data regarding the listing of species at risk.
- Several management plans for Yukon species nationally listed as Special Concern are in development, including for Collared Pika (draft for public input), Wolverine (actively being developed), Dolly Varden, and Grizzly Bear.

ENV #53

Spring 2023

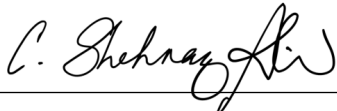
Environment

Session Briefing Note

Yukon Species at Risk

- The Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement was signed in December 2022, which commits the Government of Yukon to increase surveying and monitoring of species at risk and engage with First Nations and other Indigenous groups on approaches to managing species at risk.

Approved by:



A/Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-04-11

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

EMR #100 / ENV #54**Spring 2023**

Placer Mining in Wetlands Energy, Mines and Resources Environment

Recommended response:

- We have released *A Policy for the Stewardship of Yukon's Wetlands* to guide how we make decisions on wetland use and conservation (Ref ENV BN #2).
- The policy provides a framework to guide Government of Yukon land and water regulators, help the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board develop consistent recommendations, and support industry in the planning and permitting of development and reclamation projects.
- An interim approach for placer mining in the Indian River area is currently in place. This approach protects the most sensitive areas and requires a wetland reclamation plan for Class 4 placer mines overlapping wetlands.
- With the release of the new wetland stewardship policy and the Dawson Regional Land Use Plan on the horizon, we will be evaluating the need for an interim approach to the Indian River area.
- We are now planning next steps in relation to implementation actions of the Policy, many of which involve working with partners including First Nations, industry and environmental non-governmental organizations.

Additional response:

- In conjunction with other planning tools like the Dawson Regional Land Use Plan, we aim to provide certainty to the industry as they design their operating and reclamation plans in wetland areas.

Session Briefing Note

EMR #100 / ENV #54**Spring 2023**

Placer Mining in Wetlands Energy, Mines and Resources Environment

- Our regulators work with the industry to clarify reclamation requirements, design effective wetland reclamation plans, and review submissions as part of mining authorization processes.
- In addition, the Yukon Water Board has drafted wetland information guidelines for placer mining applications based on the feedback from the board's public interest hearing on placer mining in wetlands held in 2020.

Third response:

- We recognize the topic of carbon storage and release in the Yukon's wetlands is of high public interest.
- Peat-forming wetlands, such as bogs and fens, store large quantities of soil carbon. This carbon can be vulnerable to release when these types of wetlands are disturbed by human activities or climate change.
- Research on the role of carbon sinks in northern wetlands is an emerging field of study both in Canada and around the world.
- To help fill these knowledge gaps in the Yukon, and continue to improve our reclamation practices, we have initiated a multi-party study designed to explore the extent of carbon release and potential for carbon sink restoration following placer mining.
- We look forward to working with our partners, including First Nations, industry and environmental organizations to come together to coordinate additional research on this topic.

Context—this may be an issue because:

Session Briefing Note**EMR #100 / ENV #54****Spring 2023****Placer Mining in Wetlands** Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

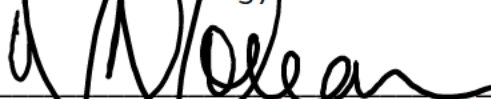
- Wetlands are at the forefront of public discussion due to increasing development pressure from placer mining, calls for wetlands protection and the recent announcement of A Policy for the Stewardship of Yukon's Wetlands.

Background:

- Development of the wetlands stewardship policy began in late 2017 using a collaborative roundtable partnership approach. The Policy for the Stewardship of Yukon's Wetlands was formally launched on January 10, 2023.
- In response to land use planning and development assessment needs around wetlands, the Yukon government previously completed regional scale wetland mapping for the Peel Watershed planning region and broad scale mapping in the Beaver River, Mayo/McQuesten and Indian River watersheds.
- We are developing a revised wetland classification system, new wetland mapping standards, Yukon-specific methods for evaluating wetland benefits and functions, and improving our understanding of open-water wetland reclamation effectiveness.
- In October 2020, Yukon government participated in a Yukon Water Board-led public interest hearing on placer mining in wetlands.
- Following the hearing, the Yukon Water Board recommended the Yukon government work with First Nations governments, industry and other key stakeholders to establish a Technical Advisory Committee for the Protection, Use and Reclamation of Yukon Wetlands.

Approved by:


Deputy Minister of Energy Mines and Resources



Manon Moreau, Deputy Minister of Environment

23/3/23

Date approved

2023/03/23

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Predator Control & Principles of
Wildlife Population Management**

Environment

Quick Facts:

- The Department of Environment uses current and evidence-based information to inform wildlife management decisions. (see BN #52)
- We manage human activities, including harvest and land use, as the primary tools for moose management in the Yukon.

Recommended response:

- Moose is the most harvested species by Yukon hunters and they are an important species culturally. The Government of Yukon is committed to protecting moose and their habitat to ensure populations remain healthy and harvest opportunities remain sustainable for Yukoners.
- Our primary approach to conserving moose in the Yukon is through the management of human activity, including hunting and land use.
- Although wolf harvest may be used as a community-based management tool, the Department of Environment does not use large-scale wolf control programs as a moose management tool.
- In addition to there being strong public opposition by Yukoners to large-scale wolf control, these types of programs are costly and demonstrated to have only short-term impacts unless they are intensive and maintained indefinitely.
- Licensed hunters can harvest seven wolves annually, and wolves are trapped without limit on registered traplines.

Secondary Response

- When determining a sustainable harvest for a particular moose management unit, we use the Science-based Guidelines for the

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Predator Control & Principles of Wildlife Population Management

Environment

Management of Moose in the Yukon and other available moose population information.

- We combine information gathered from hunters, First Nations and community partners with results from our targeted scientific surveys so that management decisions are informed by the best and most currently available data.
- In addition to managing harvest, we are committed to supporting moose management planning at the regional and/or traditional territory scale.
- These plans consider habitat availability, subsistence needs and establishing management objectives for moose populations.

Third Response

- The 2012 Yukon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan helps guide wolf management throughout the Yukon. It contains flexible and responsive tools to conserve wolf populations and identifies a strong role for local involvement.
- In 2022, the Department completed a review of the Plan; the implementation review report is available on Yukon.ca.
- We found the 2012 Plan remains relevant, during meetings, we heard that respect for wolves continues to be a strong theme in the Plan.
- The preferred approach, supported by Renewable Resources Councils, is to support regional solutions to predator challenges, including incentivizing wolf harvest and trapping.
- We continue to work with our partners to implement the Plan. The next review is scheduled for 2032 or earlier, if required.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Predator Control & Principles of Wildlife Population Management

Environment

Context — this may be an issue because:

- On October 18, 2022, the Opposition asked about predator control to increase moose populations in the territory.

Background:

- In addition to the harvest data collected each year, which offers the Department of Environment an excellent view into whether a moose population is being harvested sustainably, targeted moose surveys are also conducted to estimate population sizes.
- The 2012 Yukon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan directs the Department of Environment to conserve wolf populations in recognition of the role of wolves in ecosystems and the maintenance of biodiversity.
- In 2019-20, the plan review team held 27 meetings with Indigenous governments and groups, boards, councils and other stakeholders. We heard that respect for wolves and appreciation for their role in the ecosystem, as expressed in the 2012 plan, still holds for many Yukoners today.

Approved by:

A/Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-04-11

Date approved

Session Briefing Note***Wildlife Act Conformity with First Nations Final Agreements***

Environment

Recommended response:

- Amending the *Wildlife Act* was the focus of recent strategic discussions between the Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations at the Yukon Forums held last October and November.
- These changes would ensure consistency with the Yukon First Nation Final Agreements and the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement.
- Completion of this initiative would provide clarity and certainty around the interpretation and implementation of land claim agreements in the Yukon.
- The Government of Yukon, Yukon First Nations and affected Transboundary Indigenous governments and groups have expressed shared interest in addressing amendments to the *Wildlife Act*.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon and First Nations governments agree on the importance of amending the *Wildlife Act* to ensure it conforms with land claim agreements in the Yukon.
- We are committed to working with Yukon First Nations, Transboundary Indigenous governments and groups, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and Renewable Resources Councils on this initiative.

Third response:

- Discussions about amending the *Wildlife Act* are ongoing at the Yukon Forum table.
- Should amendments to the Act proceed, the Yukon Forum has provided direction to work in close partnership with Yukon Forum members and First Nation and Indigenous governments and groups to develop them.

Session Briefing Note***Wildlife Act* Conformity with First Nations Final Agreements**

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Amending the *Wildlife Act* was raised as a topic of discussion at the November 2022 Yukon Forum where leaders discussed its importance.
 - In December 2022, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board sent a letter to Minister Clarke urging the Government of Yukon to pursue amendments to the Act, Minister Clarke responded January 2023, confirming similar interest.
-

Background:

- Undertaking revisions to the *Wildlife Act* is a process that can take several years to complete and requires prioritization and explicit support from all levels of government, including First Nations and other partners.

Approved by:

A/Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-02-03

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

New Hunting Opportunities and the Yukon Fish and Game Association

Environment

In Quick Facts

- Annual big game licence sales for Resident hunters have increased by 27 percent over the past 15 years.
- The average annual big game licence sales for Resident hunters from 2006 to 2011 were 3,541 licenses per year; 4,096 from 2011 to 2016; and 4,488 from 2016 to 2022.

Recommended response:

- We recognize and appreciate the desire Yukon hunters to have for more hunting opportunities in the Yukon.
- Managing wildlife harvest, including creating new hunting opportunities is a collaborative process that is informed by wildlife surveys, scientific, traditional and local knowledge sources.
- The Yukon government works with First Nation governments, Inuvialuit, boards and councils, the Yukon public and stakeholder groups when making harvest decisions.
- In recent years the Department of Environment has increased the pace of wildlife surveys to ensure decision-making related to harvest opportunities are grounded in high-quality, up-to-date information. (see [BN #52](#))
- Using this approach, the Yukon government will consider potential new hunting opportunities, where it can be done sustainably.

Additional response:

- The Yukon government has provided a number of new hunting opportunities over the past several years where wildlife populations allowed.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

New Hunting Opportunities and the Yukon Fish and Game Association

Environment

- Often, these new hunting opportunities are made possible as a result of recovery efforts.
- In 2020, as a result of 25 years of collaborative recovery efforts and the signing of the Fortymile caribou harvest management plan, we were able to offer a winter threshold hunt of 140 caribou and a summer registration hunt.
- In 2022, working with the Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation we opened a new threshold hunt of 25 caribou for the Nelchina herd.
- Last year we also introduced a new adaptive hunt permitting process and made eight additional permits available for hunting elk in the Takhini Valley, increasing the total to 12 permits.
- Recent survey results in the Sifton-Miners Range Moose Management Unit indicated a higher-than-expected moose population. As a result, we are increasing the number of permits available this season from 12 to 24.

Third response:

- The Yukon Fish and Game Association plays an important role in the Yukon's fish and wildlife management, conservation, habitat protection, and hunter education.
- We recognize the concerns that were raised by the Yukon Fish and Game Association when we reduced their core funding by \$10,000.
- In response to these concerns, we provided an additional \$10,000 of funding in 2022, based on a work plan to bring the overall funding level back to \$70,000.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

New Hunting Opportunities and the Yukon Fish and Game Association

Environment

- In 2023, we will continue to collaborate with the Yukon Fish and Game Association on valued programming, including the Yukon Outdoor Woman series, Turn in Poachers, youth programming and social media education and awareness campaigns.

Context this may be an issue because:

- On March 9, 2023, the Official Opposition asked the Minister if he would fully restore funding to the Yukon Fish and Game Association and wanted to know what new hunting opportunities will be available for Yukon hunters.

Background:

- The Yukon Fish and Game Association is a not-for-profit advocacy group formed in 1945 with the stated objective of improving wildlife management, improving wildlife habitat and promoting hunting and fishing sportsmanship.
- The 2023 Mandate Letter directed the Minister of Environment to: "Work with Yukon First Nations, the Fish and Wildlife Management Board and stakeholders to continue to ensure all Yukoners are provided opportunities to sustainably harvest fish and game while looking for new opportunities for Yukon hunters to pursue activities across the Yukon."

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-03-29

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Tagish River Habitat Protection Area

Environment

Quick Facts

- The Tagish River is located near the downstream end of the Southern Lakes system, between Tagish Lake and Marsh Lake, the final waterbody forming the headwaters of the Yukon River.
- The Habitat Protection Area covers a total area of five square kilometres and is surrounded by the small, rural community of Tagish.

Recommended response

- In November 2022, the Government of Yukon, the Carcross/Tagish First Nation and the Government of Canada signed the final management plan for the Tagish River Habitat Protection Area.
- The management plan will help conserve fish and wildlife populations and their habitats, including migratory waterfowl, while recognizing the relationship and connection to this important area by Carcross/Tagish First Nation and community members.
- The completion of the plan also marks a milestone in implementation of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final Agreement.
- A community ceremony to celebrate this achievement took place this spring, on April 1st, in Tagish.

Additional response:

- The Steering Committee engaged extensively with stakeholders and the public to develop the recommended plan.
- The main issues raised by community members during the engagement were related to a recommendation to reduce shoreline development and use, specifically docks.
- An Implementation Committee has recently been formed consisting of members of the three Parties, and representatives from the

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Tagish River Habitat Protection Area

Environment

Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council and the Tagish Local Advisory Council.

- The Implementation Committee will develop a specific shoreline implementation plan with input from local residents to identify timely, creative, and workable ways to address concerns with shoreline development as these residents look to rebuild and repair following recent flooding events.
- Until the Implementation Plan is developed, the Government of Yukon will not be reviewing applications for leases or other authorizations within the Habitat Protection Area, this includes authorizations to build or repair shoreline structures such as docks.
- Applications for authorizations outside of the Habitat Protection Area will be reviewed and are subject to consultation with the affected First Nations.
- You can find more information at Yukon.ca and tagishriverhpa.com.

Third response:

- The Tagish River is one of the most important and well-known areas for waterfowl staging and migration in the Yukon.
- It is one of three outlets of the large Southern Lakes system that are heavily used by swans, geese, ducks and many other waterfowl in the spring.
- The Tagish River Habitat Protection Area is also home to moose, caribou, bear, beaver, muskrat, otter, mink, fox, wolf and many fish species.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- During public engagement on the draft plan, some members of the public expressed strong opposition to potential dock removal on their property.

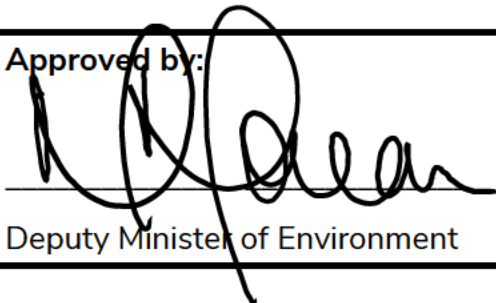
Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Tagish River Habitat Protection Area**

Environment

Background:

- The Tagish River Habitat Protection Area is within the Traditional Territory of 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.
- In 2016, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources implemented an Administrative Reserve in the area and stopped accepting applications for docks and shoreline infrastructure within the Habitat Protection Area. The Reserve will remain in place until a plan for managing shoreline infrastructure is approved.
- In developing the **management** 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, and property owners. 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.
- The Government of Yukon has kept the Taku River Tlingit First Nation informed about the planning process.
- Government of Yukon staff from 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

2023.04.18

[Date approved]

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Licence Sales

Environment

Quick Facts:

- A total of 10,470 **fishing** licenses were sold in the 2022-23 season, including: 7,029 Yukon resident licences and 3,441 non-resident licenses.
- A total of 5,659 **hunting** licenses were sold in the 2022-23 season, including: 4,546 Yukon resident licences and 1,113 non-resident licenses.
- A total of 2,432 **annual camping** permits were sold in the 2022-23 season, including 546 sold to Yukon residents over the age of 65.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Environment is committed to improving service delivery for Yukon residents and visitors to the territory.
- Permit and licence services are available online, as well as in-person, providing quick access to outdoor opportunities.
- Through the Department of Environment eLicensing portal, clients can manage their hunting, trapping, and fishing licences, and apply for their annual hunting lotteries.
- Daily and annual camping permits can also be managed through a client's online account.
- Our online services offer increased access and convenience, while reducing paper waste.

Additional response:

- As of March 27, fishing licences for the 2023 season are available for purchase online or in-person at authorized vendors.
- Yukon annual fishing licences are valid from April 1 to March 31 of the following year.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Licence Sales

Environment

-
- Given they make up the majority of the sport-fishing licences we issue, this year we are also offering sport-fishing licences online for burbot set-line fishing.
 - Sport-fishing licences are also required for:
 - fishing using a dip net for whitefish and suckers;
 - fishing at Tetl'ámān [Tat-la-main Lake] or Wellesley Lake;
 - snagging cisco for bait off the Tagish Bridge or Carcross Foot Bridge on Nares River; and
 - fishing derbies.
 - For the 2024-25 season, the department is looking at making fishing licences available for purchase early next March.

Third Response:

- Through our online services, Yukon residents can renew their hunting licence and non-residents may purchase a licence.
- As a friendly reminder for first-time hunters and Yukoners who did not hold a resident hunting licence in the previous year, you must attend a Department of Environment office to submit a residency declaration form before you can be issued a Yukon hunting licence for the 2023-24 season.
- Those hunters who have their hunting licence for the 2023 season, can apply for the special guide licence and permit hunt authorization lotteries online.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- MLA Wade Istchenko asked about this subject during the budget debate on March 20, 2023.

Session Briefing Note

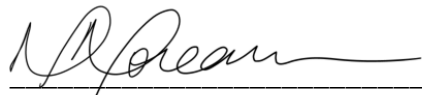
Spring 2023**Licence Sales**

Environment

- Concern was raised at the possibility of delays in purchasing licenses, particularly in years when April 1 falls on a weekend.

Background:

- Yukon government angling, hunting, camping permits and licences are available for purchase online via the Department of Environment's eLicensing portal or in-person at any of the 38 vendor locations in the Yukon.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

April 3, 2023

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

2023 Hunting Changes

Spring 2023
Environment

Quick Facts:

- Annual big game licence sales for Resident hunters have increased by 27 percent over the past 15 years.
- The average annual big game licence sales for Resident hunters were 3,541 licenses per year from 2006 to 2011; 4,096 from 2011 to 2016; and 4,488 from 2016 to 2022.
- We have planned to conduct approximately 40 population surveys in 2023 to continue our long-term monitoring of wildlife in the territory.

Recommended Response:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to sustainable management of the Yukon's wildlife to ensure populations remain healthy and resilient, now and for future generations.
- We are also committed to expanding hunting opportunities for Yukoners in areas, and for species, where conservation concerns do not exist.

New Moose Permits in Sifton-Miners Range

- Recent survey results in the Sifton-Miners Range Moose Management Unit have shown the number of moose in this area to be greater than expected.
- As a result, we increased the number of permits available in this area from 12 to 24.
- While the greater number of moose was encouraging, we still have conservation concerns for this population because of its high harvest level combined with the ease of access into this area.

Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary Sheep Permit

- The Kluane First Nation Final Agreement allows two sheep permits to be offered annually in the Wildlife Sanctuary at the discretion of the

Session Briefing Note

2023 Hunting Changes

Spring 2023
Environment

Minister of Environment and the First Nation. One permit goes to a Yukon resident hunter through the permit hunt process, and another can be auctioned to a non-resident by the First Nation.

- This year, the Kluane First Nation (KFN) has cancelled their permit auction due to conservation concerns with the local sheep population.
- Kluane First Nation Chief Bob Dixon wrote to me in March, sharing KFN's concerns and requesting that the Department of Environment take management action under the *Wildlife Act* to help protect sheep populations in KFN's Traditional Territory.
- We recognize the vital interest that sheep represent to Kluane First Nation's culture and the sacrifices they are prepared to make to ensure that sheep populations remain viable.
- Our government shares Kluane First Nation's concerns based on our survey data and decided to take similar action, through our adaptive wildlife management process under the *Wildlife Act*, by cancelling this year's permit lottery.
- The Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary sheep permit will not be offered this hunting season.
- The Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board indicated their support for this cancellation in a letter sent to the Director of Fish and Wildlife on April 6, 2023.
- When the Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary was surveyed for sheep in 2014 and 2018, our survey results in adjacent areas of Kluane Park and Brooks Arm showed very low sheep estimates.
- We surveyed these areas again in July 2022 and found similar results to our previous surveys. In fact, we have observed the lowest numbers of sheep in Brooks Arm since we started monitoring in 1974.

Session Briefing Note

2023 Hunting Changes

Spring 2023
Environment

- Similarly, Parks Canada recently recorded the lowest adult sheep population in the Thechàl Dhàl' survey area since their monitoring program began in 1977.
- Our Alaskan counterparts note similar patterns on the Alaska side of Kluane National Park, particularly in recent years.
- This summer, we will conduct further aerial surveys of the Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary and the Brooks Arm, Ruby Range, Donjek, Nutzotin and Flat Top Sheep Management Units.
- We will continue our long-term monitoring of population estimates and recruitment rates across these areas and determine the need for further management actions.
- We will work with Kluane First Nation staff in the coming months before summer to develop and coordinate our communications regarding sheep concerns and management actions in KFN's Traditional Territory to other First Nations governments, mandated boards and councils, and the public.
- In conjunction with our partners, we will explore options for an additional permit within another Sheep Management Unit to replace the Kluane permit.

Elk Permits

- The elk steering committee is determining the number of Wildlife Act adaptive elk permits for hunters in the Takhini Valley.
 - There are currently six Permit Hunt Authorization permits; two for Braeburn and four for Takhini, as per a Ministerial Order.
- Once the steering committee determines the number of additional permits, they will be available for hunters in the Takhini Valley.
- These adaptive Wildlife Act elk permits are restricted to the harvest of a bull elk with five-point antlers or less.

Session Briefing Note

2023 Hunting Changes

Spring 2023
Environment

- These additional permits are part of a two-year pilot project to reduce interactions between elk and agricultural landowners in the Takhini Valley.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On April 1st, the Department of Environment announced changes to Yukon's hunting opportunities for this licensing year.

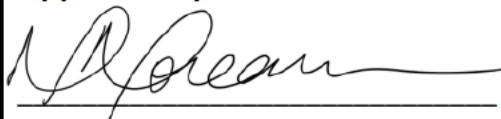
Background:

- Under Section 193 of the Wildlife Act, the Minister has the authority to adjust hunting season dates, determine permit numbers, and **determine which** game management zones wildlife may be hunted.
- **Year-to-year** changes to permit hunt opportunities are done through amendments to the General Ministerial Order.

Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary Sheep

- From the January 2023 Parks Canada report:
 - The 2022 Thechàl Dhâl' Range adult sheep count (208) was the lowest since standardized surveys began for this population in 1977.
 - The trend in adult counts over the last 6 surveys has significantly declined, from a record high in 2017 (531) to a record low in 2022 (208).
 - The majority of this decline in adults is attributed to fewer rams counted; 2022 had the fewest rams counted on record (53).
 - This amounts to a decline of 61% between 2017 and 2022.
- Likely factors driving the recent numbers may be increased duration and depth of spring snow, coupled with timing related to the low snowshoe hare phase.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-04-13

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Park Fees 2023

Environment

Quick Facts:

Park fees for 2023:

- Camping permits are \$20 per night per campsite, or \$18 if paid in advance through our new online service.
- Annual camping permits are \$200, and are available exclusively to Yukon residents.
- Yukoners aged 65 and older will receive a 50 per cent discount on all camping fees.
- A \$10 reservation fee applies to reservations for backcountry campsites in Tombstone Territorial Park.
- For activities requiring a park permit, such as commercial filming, a \$40 permit application fee will apply.

Recommended response:

- Last year in 2022, we raised the price of our camping fees for the first time in twenty years, since 2002.
- The 2023 camping fees will remain the same as last year, with the exception of the annual camping permit.
- In response to public feedback, we phased-in the new cost of the annual camping permit over two years; as many noted, increasing the annual permit from \$50 to \$200 in a single year was too much, too fast.
- This meant the cost of an annual camping permit increased to \$100 in 2022 and will now be \$200 for the 2023 camping season going forward.
- Our annual camping permit will continue to offer great value on camping fees, and is available exclusively to Yukon residents.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023**Park Fees 2023**Environment

Additional response:

- Updating park fees is one of the ten strategic actions committed to in the Yukon Parks Strategy to improve our parks system's financial sustainability.
- In 2021, camping fees generated \$339,610 in revenue to help offset the cost of providing camping facilities and services.
- In 2022-23, camping fees have generated \$951,845 in revenue.
- We are committed to ensuring quality experiences for Yukoners and visitors by financially sustaining our parks and campgrounds over the years ahead.
- Other amenities, such as park entry, day use, parking, boat launch use, firewood, and interpretive programs, where offered, will continue to be provided at no additional cost.

Third response: Camping fees in the Yukon, even with the recent fee increases, remain some of the lowest in the country.

- These increases are necessary to support the growth of our parks system, while ensuring high-quality visitor experiences at all our campgrounds.
- This is particularly important as we anticipate more park users and greater tourism recovery this coming season and in the years ahead.
- We look forward to sustainably growing our system of world-class parks and campgrounds treasured by Yukoners and visitors alike.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The public will want to know about the fee increases that are in effect for the 2023 camping season.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Park Fees 2023

Environment

Background:

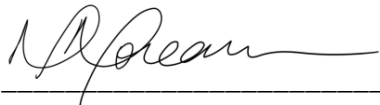
- The public was engaged on park fees as part of a rigorous public engagement process led by the Department of Environment in 2018 and 2019 as part of finalizing the Yukon Parks Strategy.
- Specific responses from this engagement regarding the proposed fee increases included:
 - 41% of respondents agreed with fee increases as proposed, 46% disagreed and the remaining 13% were not sure
 - Of those who disagreed, 51% expressed that the proposed increase to the annual fee from \$50 to \$200 was too much of an increase at once
 - 14% of respondents said they support more modest fee increases than those proposed
 - 61% of the respondents agreed public services need to be funded by the government with a reasonable amount of cost recovery from park users

Park fees for 2022

- Camping permits were \$20 per night per campsite, or \$18 if paid in advance through our online service.
- Annual camping permits were available to Yukon residents only, at a cost of \$100 in 2022.
- Yukoners aged 65 and over received a 50 per cent discount on all camping fees.
- A \$10 reservation fee applied to reservations for backcountry campsites in Tombstone Territorial Park.
- For activities requiring a park permit, such as commercial filming, a \$40 permit application fee was applied.
- The previous camping fees, which were in place from 2002 until 2021, covered only 10 per cent of the costs of services provided. The 2022 fees covered approximately 22 per cent.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Park Fees 2023**Environment

- Last year, Parks saw an estimated 13% recovery rate in O&M based on the revenue received, in 2023 we are aiming for 25% O&M recovery amount.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-04-19

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

2023 Camping Season Preparation

Environment

Quick Facts:

- Yukon Parks operates 42 road-accessible campgrounds that provide over 1,150 campsites.
- The serviced camping season for 2023 will run from May 4 to October 2, 2023.
- During the 2022 camping season, we hosted 79,620 visitors for 57,886 campsite-nights at our road-accessible campgrounds. This is a 55% increase from 2021 and is only 8% below the 2019 season (before the COVID pandemic reduced visitation from outside the territory).

Recommended response:

- Yukon Parks is anticipating a busy season in 2023 and is preparing to deliver another great camping experience for Yukoners and visitors.
- Campgrounds will be opening on May 4, 2023, ready for Yukoners to enjoy spring camping. This represents the third year in a row in which we have offered an extended campground season.
- The Tombstone Interpretive Centre will open on May 13, with the Tombstone Territorial Park backcountry campgrounds opening on June 29.
- Our online reservation system for the Tombstone backcountry sites are already open for the 2023 season.

Additional response:

- Parks is investing approximately \$2.3 million in infrastructure upgrades this year to complete improvements such as new playgrounds at Marsh Lake and Congdon Creek, as well as, boat launches, docks, parking upgrades and boardwalks at a variety of locations.
- In 2023, we will add approximately 20 campsites in three territorial campgrounds: Congdon Creek, Wolf Creek and Ethel Lake.
- Recent improvements to the parking area, playground, beach and facility at the Pine Lake day-use area have been well received by the public.
- In 2022, we supported the completion of the Trans Canada Trail that provides low-impact access to these new developments at Pine Lake from the community of Haines Junction and supports active transportation.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

2023 Camping Season Preparation

Environment

- We are currently incorporating the valuable feedback that Yukoners provided to us on proposed regulations last summer. Modernizing our regulations will help better manage issues that are important to park users.

Third response:

- We are continuing to improve our park infrastructure, including adding to and upgrading existing docks and boat launches at a variety of locations.
- In 2023 we will be piloting a new dock system at Pine Lake, Twin Lakes and Squanga Lake.
- We are also anticipating the construction of a replacement boat launch at Teslin Lake and repairs to the boat launch at Tatchun Lake.
- Boat launches at Otter Falls, Aishihik Lake, Twin Lakes, Ethel Lake, Frenchman Lake and Nunatuk Lake were all scheduled to be replaced in 2022, but construction could not be completed due to historic high water levels and road access issues. A contract to complete this work is ongoing.
- Yukon Parks remains committed to completing the boat launch program while working in partnership with Community Services to deliver on these improvements.

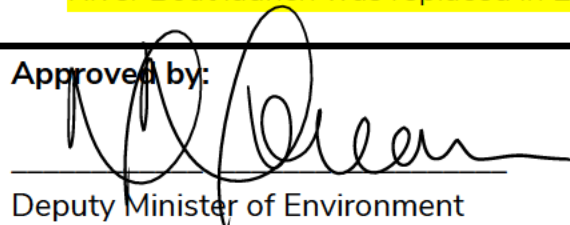
Context—this may be an issue because:

- Yukoners may be interested to know about any upcoming changes for the 2023 camping season.

Background:

- The Yukon Parks Strategy identified 24 actions to address 10 priorities from 2020 to 2030. Several of these actions relate to camping and recreation in territorial parks.
- Dezadeash Lake and Pine Lake boat launches were replaced in 2021, and the Tagish River Boat launch was replaced in 2022.

Approved by:


Deputy Minister of Environment2023.03.07
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Campground Reservation System Pilot**

Environment

Quick Facts:

- All of Yukon's 42 road-accessible campgrounds are available on a first-come-first-serve basis.
- During engagement on the Yukon Parks Strategy, Yukoners said they wanted some of these campsites to be available by online reservation.
- Currently, a reservation system is in place at Tombstone's three back-country campgrounds.

Recommended response:

- In December 2022, Yukon Parks posted a tender for an online reservation system to service some Yukon campgrounds.
- The procurement process is now complete, and a contract is expected to be in place April 2023.
- The plan is to pilot a new online reservation system starting for the 2024 camping season.

Additional response:

- Under our 2020 Yukon Parks Strategy, we committed to pilot an online reservation system to improve fair access to campsites.
- Although we already have an online reservation system in place for back-country campgrounds in Tombstone Territorial Park, we are now looking to expand our network of reserved sites to include other front-country and back-country campgrounds throughout the territory.
- We are striving to meet the needs and expectations of our valued visitors as our parks system and user volume increases in the Yukon.
- We will use the pilot project approach to learn how to make reservations work efficiently as our parks system evolves.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Campground Reservation System Pilot

Environment

Third response:

- Our plan is to pilot online registration at an estimated four locations. The selected locations will be based on a variety of factors including, but not limited to:
 - access to a mix of front-country or back-country camping destinations,
 - campground demand and user visitation,
 - number of campsites per campground, and
 - other operational requirements.
- If this pilot proves to be successful, we hope to expand the service to other campgrounds.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon Parks Strategy commits to testing online reservations to improve fair access to some of the busier campgrounds and the public may want to know about the status and when they can use the new system.
- The tendering process for the online reservation software system is in its final stage with award anticipated for April 2023.

Background:

- The request for proposals opened on October 14, 2022, and closed on November 21, 2022.
- The anticipated award date is in April 2023.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

April 11, 2023

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Campground Firewood

Spring 2023

Environment

Quick Facts:

- In 2022, Yukon Parks purchased 1,421 cords of firewood, totalling \$605,400.00.
- Yukon Parks saw a 26 per cent increase in firewood usage in territorial campgrounds during the 2022 operating season.
- The Yukon is the only jurisdiction in Canada to include firewood with camping permits.

Recommended response:

- We know that Yukoners value the services offered in our territorial parks and campgrounds, and the amenities provided, such as firewood.
- We also recognize that there has been a shortage of firewood in the last year, with demand often outpacing supply.
- To avoid competing with peak home-heating season, we are working closely with wood suppliers to stockpile campgrounds in the spring.

Additional response:

- In addition, we are planning to implement an active education and outreach campaign this camping season on firewood etiquette and consumption.
- We strongly encourage visitors to burn only what they need, and to never leave campfires unattended.
- By working together, firewood can continue to be available to all campground users.

Third response:

- The Yukon Parks Strategy commits to supplying firewood in Yukon's campgrounds as a public benefit.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Campground Firewood

Environment

- This means, campers in the Yukon are not currently charged additional fees for firewood.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon experienced a territory-wide firewood shortage in 2022. Members of the public and the Official Opposition may ask whether this will have an impact on firewood availability in Yukon campgrounds for the 2023 camping season.
- Yukoners may be concerned about the impact of free campground firewood on home heating firewood availability.

Background:

- The Yukon Parks Strategy action, 4.10.1 Update Park fees, states that there will continue to be no separate fees for firewood.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2023.01.31

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Campground Regulations

Environment

Quick Facts:

- Over 1,400 people responded to the public survey on the proposed park regulations, posted online from April 29 to July 4, 2022.
- Public support for each of the 10 thematic areas ranged from 63 per cent to 79 per cent.

Recommended response:

- As committed in the Yukon Parks Strategy, we are working to modernize our park and campground regulations.
- The proposed regulations aim to protect natural, historical, and cultural values in parks, and provide safe and enjoyable experiences for Yukon residents and visitors.
- Last year, we engaged with Yukoners, First Nations, Inuvialuit, transboundary Indigenous governments and groups, Renewable Resources Councils, non-governmental organizations, industry associations and tourism operators on the proposed regulations.

Additional response:

- The proposed regulations cover 10 thematic areas, including:
 - noise;
 - domestic animals;
 - liquor;
 - smoking (including cannabis);
 - on- and off-road vehicles;
 - aircraft use (including drones);
 - park zoning;
 - permitting; and
 - general park, campground and recreation site regulations.

Session Briefing Note

Campground Regulations

Spring 2023
Environment

Third response:

- The regulations under the *Parks and Land Certainty Act* have not been significantly updated since 2000, making it difficult to effectively manage the range of parks that now exist in the Yukon.
- Regulations made with public input will help us develop fair, transparent and appropriate rules to govern activities in territorial parks and campgrounds.
- By updating our regulations, we will be better aligned with user expectations, have better tools for more efficient enforcement, and be able to better support the implementation of park management plans.
- We anticipate the new parks and campground regulations to be in place for the 2024 operating season.

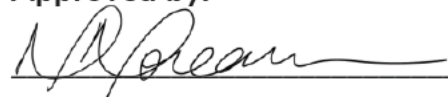
Context—this may be an issue because:

- Yukoners will be interested to know the results of public engagement and how proposed changes to park and campground regulations will affect their camping experience.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon released the Yukon Parks Strategy (2020-2030) in September 2020. The Strategy sets the direction for the Yukon's system of territorial parks.
- Modernizing regulations under the *Parks and Land Certainty Act* is identified as one of the Strategy priorities to effectively manage the Yukon's system of territorial parks.
- The What We Heard Report on Modernizing Yukon Park Regulations was released on March 6, 2023.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-04-19

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Indigenous Park Guardians

Environment

Recommended response:

- As committed to in the Yukon Parks Strategy, we are exploring opportunities to involve Indigenous guardians in park management and operations.
- This includes establishing contracts with First Nations guardian programs.
- For example, through the Government of Canada Challenge Fund, we dedicated funding for a three-year pilot liaison position.
- In anticipation of the end of Challenge Funding in 2023, through implementation of the Yukon Parks Strategy, we have allocated \$130,000 per year, for the 2023/24 to 2025/26 fiscal years.
- Through contracts or agreements with First Nations, this funding will help continue the work of Indigenous guardians.

Additional response:

- We are committed to building partnerships with Indigenous guardians to meet our shared conservation goals.
- Collaboration and partnership allow us to strengthen relationships in the spirit and practice of reconciliation with Yukon First Nations and the Inuvialuit.
- We look forward to continuing to support and grow Indigenous land guardian programs throughout the Yukon.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Opposition may be interested in knowing what funds have been allocated to continue supporting Indigenous guardian programs starting in 2023/24.

Session Briefing Note

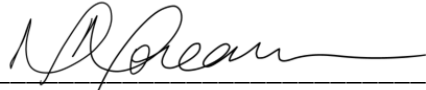
Spring 2023

Indigenous Park Guardians

Environment

Background:

- The Yukon Parks Strategy was released in 2020. The Yukon Parks Strategy provides strategic guidance on how to sustainably deliver the benefits of parks: healthy land, people and economy.
- Section 4.8.2 of the Yukon Parks Strategy commits to “Partner with Indigenous guardians.”

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-04-19

Date approved.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Flood Outlook 2023

Environment

Quick Facts:

- In 2021 and 2022, the Yukon had record snowpack resulting in high-water in many lakes and rivers, and flooding in several communities.
- The Department of Environment conducts three Yukon-wide snow surveys each year. These surveys include 57 snow survey sites across 11 different basins.
- The results of the April 1st, 2023, snow survey showed close to average snowpack levels across the most of the Southern and Eastern Yukon; and above average snowpack in the Central-west and Northern Yukon.

Recommended response:

- While the snowpack is above average in some parts of the territory this season in contrast to the previous two years, the snowpack is much closer to normal and lower than the previous three years.
- The snow survey indicates that there will be average to slightly above average flood potential for spring breakup and spring freshet in most of the territory, with above average flood potential areas likely to include the Central and Lower Yukon Basin and to a lesser extent the Peel and Porcupine River basins.
- Snowpack is one risk factor for high water flows, water levels and flooding during the spring breakup and snowmelt period.
- Spring weather, the timing and progression of snowmelt, as well as precipitation events, are also important drivers of flooding regardless of snowpack levels.
- Groundwater tables across much of the territory are currently high and are likely to remain high in the spring, which increases flood risk, particularly in areas with localized drainage issues, as well as the risk of slope failures.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Flood Outlook 2023**

Environment

Additional response:

- We are taking proactive measures to prepare for potential flooding by improving our ability to forecast flooding ahead of time.
- We are enhancing the availability and quality of observational data, developing better models and software tools, as well as leveraging data and model results from our partners in neighbouring jurisdictions and the federal government.
- Proactive measures include:
 - increased monitoring at several key hydrometric stations along the Yukon River;
 - the installation of a new automated snow weather station in the Klondike Valley to monitor snowpack in this watershed;
 - the installation of new observation wells near surface water bodies in the Southern Lakes region, Carmacks, and Teslin to improve our understanding of groundwater flooding and potential impacts to subsurface infrastructures, like municipal wastewater systems, private septic systems, basements, and crawl spaces; and
 - Deploying six new remote river observation cameras with our partners at the Water Survey of Canada to better monitor river ice.

Third response:

- Flood forecasting is part of the actions in *Our Clean Future* and is highlighted as a priority in the climate risk and resiliency assessment report released in September 2022.
- Current climate change projections indicate that the volume of water moving through the Yukon on an annual basis will increase in the future, which could result in an increased frequency and severity of flooding events.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Flood Outlook 2023**

Environment

- We know Yukoners are keenly aware of flooding risks and we are committed to sharing information as it is available.
- Past and current Snow Survey Bulletins, information on water levels for some Yukon lakes and rivers, including current advisories and flood warnings, are available on Yukon.ca.
- Groundwater level data can be viewed or downloaded from the Yukon Water Data Catalogue.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Due to the last two flood seasons, Yukoners, the opposition, and the media will likely have high interest in the flood potential for 2023 and what the Government of Yukon is doing about it.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon, in partnership with the Water Survey of Canada, conducts long-term monitoring of large rivers and lakes in the Yukon.
- Annually, every March, April and May, the Government of Yukon conducts Yukon-wide snow surveys to help forecast water levels and flow conditions.
- Peak snowpack in the territory is typically communicated in the April bulletin and we consider the March bulletin to be the early indicator for snowpack conditions to inform our forecasting work.
- Historically, ice jamming has been the main mechanism for the most severe flooding in the Yukon. The severity of ice jamming is unpredictable and Yukon government staff monitor river break up through satellite imagery acquisition and processing as well as flying aerial surveys during break up.
- Staff from the Water Resources Branch met with Local Advisory Councils and municipalities on March 10, 2023, to discuss groundwater around the territory.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2023.04.13

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

2023 Flood Readiness

Community Services

Recommended response:

- While the potential for flooding is always top of mind as we head into Spring, it is very difficult to predict what the season will bring.
- That is why we are coordinating with local and federal partners to prepare and be ready. Flood forecasts for the coming summer will become clearer with the snow bulletins released by the Water Resources Branch in March to May.
- As of now, it is too early to determine the flood risk for the territory. Spring weather and the timing and progression of snowmelt, as well the amount of rain we receive are important drivers of flooding regardless of snowpack levels.
- However the impact from high levels of groundwater remains uncertain and could range from standing water in localized areas to possibly a heightened risk of landslides.
- In the meantime, the Emergency Measures Organization is planning and coordinating with local governments and agencies, ensuring an inventory of sandbags and necessary response tools and materials, and is focused on training to bolster capacity and ensure readiness.
- Seasonal readiness briefings are being planned with various groups in April, with a briefing and roundtable scheduled for communities, First Nations and emergency response partners, plus a media briefing following release of the April 1 snow survey bulletin. We will also be communicating directly with the public to share information about how to prepare for emergencies and flooding. This will begin in March and

Session Briefing Note

2023 Flood Readiness

Spring 2023Community Services

carry through to Emergency Preparedness week, a national event taking place May 7 to 13.

- The Emergency Measures Organization continues to refine and improve its operations through action reviews of past year's responses and ongoing engagement with communities, municipalities and First Nation governments.

Context:

- This may become an issue because the flooding in summer 2021 and 2022 raised public interest in Yukon government's flood response role.

Background:

- The Emergency Measures Organization works with communities, municipalities, and First Nation governments across the Yukon on emergency preparedness. EMO has reached out to all Yukon communities to begin preparations for this response season. EMO will pre-position flood response materials in Yukon communities as needed.
- We are prepared for the flood season throughout the Yukon. We have adequate supplies to ensure communities are prepared for the onset of flood response season.
- We are entering the 2023 response season with more inventory than we had in previous years. We have a full warehouse of supplies in Whitehorse, including roughly 800 feet of Tiger Dams, 20,000 Superbags, and 500,000-700,000 sandbags (poly and burlap).
- A new common operating picture system has been created by Geomatics Yukon for use by EMO. This system includes a territorial wide critical infrastructure database. This system will be released to EMO in the end of January.
- Work 2021 flood response 2021 After Action Review (AAR) is ongoing, and AAR are underway for the 2022 flooding response along with the December 2022 power outages. EMO and Wildland Fire Management are revisiting and reviewing the Yukon Government Flood Response Coordination Plan to incorporate lessons learned from 2021 and 2022.

Session Briefing Note
2023 Flood Readiness

Spring 2023

Community Services

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Community Services

January 26, 2023

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****South McQuesten Water Quality**

Environment

Quick Facts

- The Government of Yukon monitors water quality in collaboration with Environment and Climate Change Canada, Indigenous governments and groups, and contractors, at 13 stations throughout the Yukon.
- In 2021, the Government of Yukon published the *Yukon Guide for Developing Water Quality Objectives and Effluent Quality Standards for Quartz Mining Projects*. We applied this guidance to develop Water Quality Objectives for the South McQuesten River watershed.
- On February 3rd, 2023, the Government of Yukon published two reports on the South McQuesten River, *Et'o Nyäk Tagé*.

Recommended response:

- Using data collected through water sampling, the Government of Yukon recently published three reports about the South McQuesten River. The reports present the observed changes over time and the proposed water quality objectives for this river.
- Through this process, we identified water quality concerns for the South McQuesten River due to increased development.
- This will inform and support future assessment and licencing when or if water quality is at risk. Changes to how hard rock and placer mining operates will be dependent on assessment and licencing activities.
- The Government of Yukon may use the water quality objectives developed for the South McQuesten River as a point of reference in future interventions to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board and the Yukon Water Board.
- We will continue monitoring water quality through our long-term monitoring network to prevent and address water quality issues that can affect the health of ecosystems and communities.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****South McQuesten Water Quality**Environment

Additional response:

- Naturally elevated metal concentrations and mining activities in the watershed may have caused water quality measurements to exceed water quality guidelines.
- Otherwise, aquatic insect data suggests the South McQuesten River is considered healthy.
- The current data helped us establish an understanding of water quality conditions for the South McQuesten River that we can compare to in the future.

Third response:

- Water quality objectives define the acceptable water quality conditions in waters that may be affected by a project or activity, based on the sensitivity of aquatic ecosystems to contaminants of potential concern.
- Multiple activities occur in Yukon waters that can impact water quality, including fishing, hunting, trapping, recreation, quartz mining and placer mining.
- The water quality objectives developed for a water body intend to help protect and maintain its water quality for future generations.
- We collect water samples in the South McQuesten River and in other rivers on a monthly basis to check for potential changes to water quality over time.

Context—this may be an issue because:

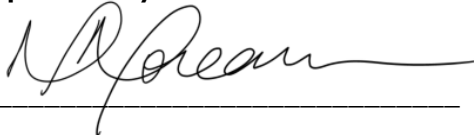
- Industry and conservation groups may have questions on how the water quality objectives will impact future development or activities in the South McQuesten River.

Background:

- Industry participated in the engagement and data-gathering meetings to develop the water quality objectives held in November 2020 and August 2022.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****South McQuesten Water Quality**Environment

- The water quality objectives developed may provide information and tools valuable for land use planning.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

February 20, 2023

Date approved

EMR #83 / ENV #90**Session Briefing Note****Spring 2023****Beaver River Land Use Plan Update** Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon and First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun remain committed to the 2018 Agreement that supports a proposed tote road and the completion of a land use plan for the Beaver River Watershed.
- We have completed three stages of public and stakeholder consultation on the Beaver River Land Use Plan.
- We are working towards the completion of this land use plan in 2023.
- An updated work plan is available on Yukon.ca.

Additional response:

- The Beaver River Land Use Planning Committee met with ATAC Resources Ltd. throughout 2022, to work toward the completion of a Road Access Management Plan. A draft of this plan is being finalized.
- The 2018 Agreement specifies that a land use plan be completed before road construction occurs.
- The March 2023 declaration of a State of Emergency by the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun may impact this planning process.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The Beaver River Land Use Plan work is advancing and there may be questions regarding its status and when it will be complete.

Background:

- The Beaver River land use planning process is not an Umbrella Final Agreement Chapter 11 sub-regional planning process; rather, it comes out of the 2018 Intergovernmental Agreement between the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and the Government of Yukon, which supports the proposed ATAC Tote Road.

EMR #83 / ENV #90**Session Briefing Note****Spring 2023****Beaver River Land Use Plan Update** Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

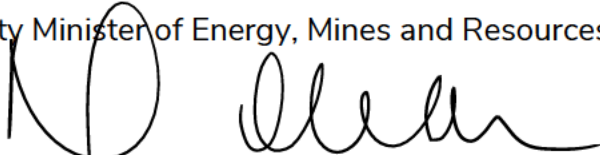
- The Agreement states that a land use plan must be finalized before any road construction occurs.
- On March 15, 2021, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun petitioned the Yukon Supreme Court to set aside Government of Yukon's issuance of a Decision Document for a proposed exploration project in the Beaver River Watershed in part due to the ongoing Beaver River Land Use Planning process. On January 31, 2023, the court referred the matter back to the Government of Yukon for consideration. The Government of Yukon has appealed the Supreme Court decision in the Metallic Minerals case. (EMR BN #13)

Approved by:

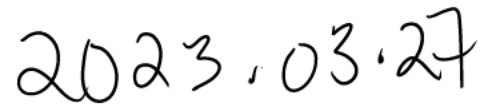
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources



Date approved



Deputy Minister of Environment



Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023Energy, Mines and
Resources

Metallic Minerals

Recommended response:

- In January 2023, the Supreme Court of Yukon quashed the Government of Yukon's 2021 decision document on the Metallic Minerals project.
- The Government of Yukon is considering its next steps, as this case raises significant legal issues far beyond this specific exploration project.
- As this case is before the courts, we will not be commenting on it any further at this time.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon remains committed to implementing the Final and Self-government Agreements and conducting meaningful consultation with Indigenous governments and groups.
- We continue to consult with First Nations on every project application that may impact rights and apply mitigations both in the decision documents and in any future mining land use approval.

Context – this may be an issue because:

- There may be interest in the Metallic Minerals court case and implications for First Nations and project proponents.
-

Background:

- In 2020, Metallic Minerals applied for a Class 3 exploration permit for the LOTR project, in the Beaver River area north of Keno City. The project proposal received a “proceed with terms and conditions” recommendation from the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board.
-

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023Energy, Mines and
Resources

Metallic Minerals

- The Government of Yukon consulted the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun (FNNND) on the potential impacts of the project. The FNNND expressed their opposition to the project until the Beaver River Land Use Plan is complete.
- The Government of Yukon added several terms and conditions to its draft decision document in response to FNNND's concerns and issued a decision document in February 2021 to allow the project to proceed. The Government of Yukon did not issue a permit for the project.
- On March 15, 2022, the FNNND filed a petition against the Government of Yukon in the Yukon Supreme Court in response to the Government of Yukon issuing the decision document for the project.
- The petition references a 2018 intergovernmental agreement between the Government of Yukon and the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun that contains a commitment to complete a sub-regional land use plan for the Beaver River watershed. (EMR BN #36 / ENV BN # 9)
- The judicial review was heard on June 28 and 29, 2022 and the decision of the Supreme Court of Yukon was released on January 31, 2023. The Court overturned the Government of Yukon's issuance of the decision document for the Metallic Minerals project and referred the matter back to the Government of Yukon for consideration.

Implications:

- The decision may set precedents for interactions with Yukon First Nations as it:
 - suggests that decisions impacting treaty rights may require deep consultation, even if the impacts on those rights are relatively insignificant;
 - recognizes a general treaty right to "participate meaningfully in the land and resource management"; and
 - gives the 2018 Intergovernmental Agreement treaty-like status because it concerned matters that were crucial to the purpose and objectives of the treaty.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023Energy, Mines and
Resources

Metallic Minerals

- In 2022, there were 473 placer and quartz mining activities that required consultation, 400 of which were Class 1 Notifications that previously attracted only a lower level of consultation. In 2021, there were 601 placer and quartz mining activities that required consultation, 561 of which were Class 1 Notifications.
- Similarly, consultation for land use authorizations, subdivision and rezoning applications, development permits, and some timber clearing activities are conducted at the lower level of the consultation spectrum.
- This decision has the potential to increase the depth of consultation required for most, if not all, of these authorizations and add significant resource and time burdens on governments and proponents.

Metallic Minerals projects:

Keno Silver

- Metallic Minerals' wholly owned Keno Silver project is located in the Keno Hill mining district in the Yukon.
- Metallic Minerals currently holds a Class 4 Mining Land Use Approval (expiring July 18, 2023). The scope of the approval includes building new roads and upgrading existing access, construction of lines, site preparation, camp construction, bulk sampling (1000 tonnes/year), trenching and drilling.
- The Government of Yukon currently holds \$23,535.44 in security for this site.

Placer activities

- Metallic Minerals has placer operations at Australia and Dominion Creeks with three operators with exploration infrastructure development and bulk sample testing being completed in preparation for commercial gold production.

LOTR

- The LOTR project consists of 52 claims, approximately 64 km from Keno City and 103 km from Mayo within the Traditional Territory of the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun.

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Energy, Mines and
Resources

Metallic Minerals

Approved by:



Deputy Minister

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

2023-03-01

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Yukon Forum –
Regional Planning**Energy, Mines, and Resources,
and Environment

Recommended response:

- The Yukon Forum Regional Land Use Planning Working Group continues to work with First Nations and the Yukon Land Use Planning Council to improve regional land use planning in the territory.
- We are committed to advancing regional planning with First Nations and will continue to advocate for federal funding to implement Chapter 11 of the Final Agreements.
- We support the Yukon Forum's priorities and the efforts to build strong government-to-government relations and collaboration between parties.

Additional response:

- The working group continues to ensure the success of planning commissions and encourages new planning processes to begin.
- The Government of Canada has recently committed to undertake the 2024 Umbrella Final Agreement funding review.
- We are committed to working with our First Nations partners and the Government of Canada to ensure there is adequate funding to support implementing Chapter 11 of the Final Agreements.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Regional Planning continues to be raised as a priority for First Nations.
- Stable funding for Chapter 11 processes continues to be a concern for First Nations.

Background:

- In accordance with the Yukon Forum's Joint Priority Action Plan, which identifies Chapter 11 land use planning as a priority, Yukon Forum leaders developed a strategic approach to restart and improve regional land use planning in the Yukon.
- The approach entails working together to implement four priority objectives:

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Yukon Forum –
Regional Planning**Energy, Mines, and Resources,
and Environment

1. Set up commissions for success by; examining the roles of the Yukon Land Use Planning Council, Planning Commissions and the Parties; review and agree on a broadly applicable process for regional land use planning and review 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 Government of Yukon laws.
4. Lead the 2019-2020 review of funding adequacy for regional land use planning under Chapter 11.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

23/4/27

Date approved



Deputy Minister of Environment

2023.04.27

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

McIntyre Creek Park Planning

ENV #92
Spring 2023
Environment

Quick Facts

- McIntyre Creek is a known and valued recreational and wilderness area, which provides many benefits for Yukoners, wildlife, and the environment.
- The proposed McIntyre Creek Park covers approximately 4600 hectares and contains both public and private lands.
- The area is within the City of Whitehorse and the Traditional Territories of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.

Recommended response:

- We continue to discuss the creation of McIntyre Creek Park with the City of Whitehorse as a regional municipal park.
- We acknowledge and respect that this, and the surrounding area, has several concurrent planning processes already underway or in development.
- These include: City of Whitehorse's **recently adopted** 2040 Official Community Plan, the Yukon University Campus Master Plan, and the Lu Zil Mabn [Sloo-Zill-Mun] Fish Lake Local Area Plan.
- Due to the number of parties involved, a collaborative planning approach is key.

Additional response:

- The McIntyre Creek area supports a diversity of habitats important to wildlife, including wetlands.
- It is known to be an important cultural area for both the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.
- The Yukon University recognizes the importance of the area to support field-based learning and research.

Session Briefing Note

McIntyre Creek Park Planning

ENV #92
Spring 2023
Environment

Third response:

- To support the creation of the proposed McIntyre Creek Park, we have taken measures that provide interim protection to the area by:
 - Expanding the boundary of an existing Order in Council under the Quartz Act to prevent new mineral staking in the proposed Park area; and
 - Establishing an internal administrative reserve to ensure public land use applications are reviewed by the Government of Yukon and align with the purpose of a park and the city's Official Community Plan.
- In addition, we have initiated a memorandum of understanding with the City of Whitehorse to support McIntyre Creek Park management planning.
- We look forward to continuing discussions and working with all of the parties involved on this ecologically important area to ensure the environmental protection of McIntyre Creek moves forward.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions about the government's progress on the commitment to complete the establishment of McIntyre Creek Park.
- 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.

Background:

- The proposed area includes public land held by Government of Yukon and Government of Canada, as well as privately held land. There is no Settlement Land within the proposed area.

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McIntyre Creek Park Planning

ENV #92
Spring 2023
Environment

- Additional interests in this area include mineral holders, gravel extraction and other commercial and institutional land tenures like Icy Waters and the Yukon University.
- The establishment of McIntyre Creek Park is included in the Minister of Environment's 2021 and 2023 mandate letters, working with the City of Whitehorse, affected First Nations, Yukon University and local stakeholders.
- In 2022, the City of Whitehorse removed the proposed Porter Creek D residential development and Mountainview Drive transportation corridor study from its proposed 2040 Official Community Plan.
- The City of Whitehorse staff were not available to undertake planning for the proposed Park while their Official Community Plan was being finalized.
- The City of Whitehorse, Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council are in support of the area protections being put into place (i.e., prohibition of mineral staking and land application reviews).

Approved by:


Deputy Minister of Environment

2023.04.18
Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Dispatch Services Contract

Environment

Recommended response:

- Dispatch services are integral for departments whose personnel conduct fieldwork or must be deployed to calls for assistance throughout the Yukon, including:
 - Scientists, technicians, officers, rangers, and inspectors from the Department of Environment;
 - The territory's Volunteer Fire Departments and Fire Marshal's Office personnel; or
 - The Special Heavy Operations Team and Special Operations Medical Extrication Team.
- Dispatchers ensure the safety of our personnel in the field and allow our critical and essential services to respond quickly to emergencies and time-sensitive issues.
- Our dispatch services contract provides the following services to the departments of Environment and Community Services:
 - dispatch of and real-time location tracking of personnel;
 - two-way communication link and record for field personnel;
 - emergency procedures and contact information;
 - monitoring the Turn in Poachers and Polluters (TIPP) reporting line and Yukon Spill Line;
 - monitoring activation, check-ins, monitoring termination; and
 - emergency notification or missed check-in response.

Additional response:

- Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, a critical need for dispatch services was identified to monitor Yukon government personnel's safety.

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Spring 2023

Dispatch Services Contract

Environment

- As such, the current dispatch service provider was issued the contract through a direct award process using an exception clause in the Yukon Procurement Policy, which allows direct award contracts in an emergency.
- In March 2023, in accordance with the Yukon Procurement Policy, the Department of Environment issued a *Request For Expression of Interest* to gauge interest from the business community for the scope of work.
- This process is used to provide formal market research in the procurement process.
- During this *Request For Expression of Interest* process, we received interest from various suppliers inside and outside of the Yukon.
- A change order has been issued to extend the current contract to April 30, 2024, while a public procurement process is underway.
- This will allow the successful vendor time to install their infrastructure throughout the Yukon, if required.
- The new contract for dispatch services will go to open tender before the end of the Spring 2023, to begin services in May 2024.

Third response:

- While the Yukon government makes it a priority to ensure Yukon businesses can benefit from government procurement, we are also committed to following the processes set out in the Yukon Procurement Policy.
- We are required to conduct open bid processes as they are fairer for businesses and ensure Yukon taxpayers get the maximum return on their tax dollars.

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Dispatch Services Contract**

Environment

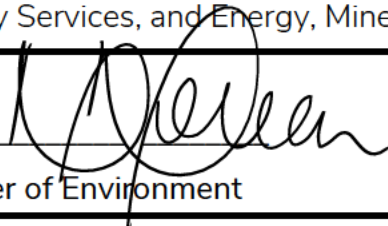
- We will be taking steps to ensure that this open tender process does not create any disruption in dispatch services.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In 2023, the Yukon government will conduct an open tender for the departments of Environment and Community Services dispatch service contract. A Yukon business currently holds the contract.
- On September 25, 2020, MLA Scott Kent sent a letter to Ministers Frost and Streicker questioning the decision to direct award the dispatch services contract rather than pursuing an open tender process.

Background:

- During a 2019 Request For Expression of Interest, the Department of Environment received one response from a local company and two responses from respondents from outside the territory. The local company was the only respondent with experience working in the Yukon and remote communities.
- During a 2023 Request For Expression of Interest, the Department of Environment received one response from a local company, the current vendor, and four responses from businesses outside of the territory. The local company is the only respondent with experience working in the Yukon and remote communities. This formal market research obligates the Yukon government to go to an open tender to provide fairness and transparency.
- It is anticipated that the current contract will be extended by one year for this scope of work to be openly tendered and ensure no impact on departmental operations, including emergency services.
- The future contract covers the dispatch services for the departments of Environment, Community Services, and Energy, Mines and Resources.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2023.04.24

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2023

Human-Wildlife Conflict

Environment

Quick Facts

- The Conservation Officer Services Branch responded to 150 black bear calls and 18 grizzly bear calls in 2022; with four grizzly bears and five black bears being translocated.
- In 2022, human-wildlife conflicts in the Yukon resulted in the fatalities of 38 black bears and 3 grizzly bears either by the public or by conservation officers.
- In 2022, road collisions resulted in the deaths of 19 caribou and seven moose.

Recommended response:

- Conservation officers respond to numerous wildlife conflict calls each season. We must all do our part every day to prevent conflicts with bears, wolves, coyotes, foxes, lynx and other wildlife.
- Restricting year-round access to potential food sources like garbage, birdseed, poultry and livestock is the most effective way Yukoners can avoid property damage and keep themselves and wildlife safe.
- We encourage Yukoners dealing with aggressive wildlife or who witness someone feeding wildlife to call the TIPP line at 1-800-661-0525.

Additional response:

- It is not uncommon for wildlife to visit residential properties at certain times of the year, especially where natural food sources are available for foraging.
- Ensuring public safety is a priority for our conservation officers. They have a range of knowledge and tools to help residents discourage wildlife from coming onto the property and to reduce human-wildlife conflict in general.

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Human-Wildlife Conflict

Environment

- Conservation officers and biologists respond to all sorts of human-wildlife conflict calls, but many involve bears. Once captured, they put a Global Positioning System radio collar on the bear and translocate it to a remote area away from people.
- Dispatching wildlife, including bears, is always the last resort and is only done after all other measures have failed or if the bear's behaviour poses an immediate risk to public safety. Conservation officers euthanized 31 black bears and 1 grizzly bear in 2022.

Third response:

- Wildlife-vehicle collisions are another form of human-wildlife conflict.
- The wildlife-vehicle collision working group includes representatives from the departments of Environment and Highways and Public Works to develop and implement adaptive strategies to decrease the rate of wildlife-vehicle collisions on our Yukon roads.

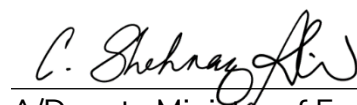
Context — this may be an issue because:

- Yukoners often have concerns about human-wildlife conflict; the issue is frequently raised in the media or the Legislature.

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.
- In 2022 there were 80 collision incidents leading to wildlife mortality. The attached map shows the distribution of these collisions across the territory.

Approved by:



A/Deputy Minister of Environment

February 3, 2023

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2023****Housing Issues**Yukon Housing Corporation

Recommended response:

- As we are aware, homelessness has far-reaching consequences that impact Yukoners. The substance use health emergency and the COVID-19 pandemic have only intensified these issues.
- Meanwhile, rental options are too few and often too expensive. Vacancy rates in the rental market have dropped to 0.8% - the lowest in years –a reality that influences the Yukon Housing waitlist.
- Down payment costs remain out of reach for many Yukoners, and homeownership may be less affordable as interest rates rise.
- Across government, we are working with stakeholders to develop new land parcels, increase housing stock, and rapidly increase housing supply while also responding to the findings of the 2022 Office of the Auditor General Report on Housing.

Additional response:

- We continue to enhance our Community Housing stock to support a full housing continuum - 47 new affordable units at 401 Jeckell, 10 units of affordable and supportive housing for seniors through Normandy Living and three new triplexes in Watson Lake, Mayo and Whitehorse demonstrate how we are responding to the 2022 Office of the Auditor General of Canada recommendations on housing.
- Partnership with Da Daghay Development Corporation for the construction of 98 new units is one of numerous housing examples that further support vulnerable Yukoners.
- Through our new approach to housing YG employees in communities, we aim to decrease the housing cost disparities in communities, further incentivize private sector investment in housing, and prioritize

Session Briefing Note**Housing Issues****Yukon Housing Corporation**

allocations of the government's existing staff housing units to meet critical needs for community well-being.

- Finally, as part of the response to the 2022 Office of the Auditor General of Canada recommendations on housing, we have expanded capital incentive programs to include land development for residential housing, while also enhancing our Community Housing stock.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Since COVID-19, Yukoners have faced additional housing challenges including increased housing prices and low vacancy rates.
 - The recently declared substance use health emergency in the Yukon and closure of Chilkoot Trail Inn have added strain on the housing crisis.
-

Background:**Recent interest rate hikes**

- The Bank of Canada raised interest rates for an eighth time in January, bringing the Bank rate to 4.50%. At the start of 2022, that rate was 0.25 %. Rising debt costs will make it more challenging for homeowners to qualify for a mortgage and will increase monthly debt costs for existing homeowners and developers.

Housing Action Plan and Safe at Home Plan

- The 10-year Housing Action Plan (HAP) for Yukon was launched in 2015 and provides guidance on housing priorities for the territory.
 - A Housing Action Plan Implementation Committee (HAP – IC) made up of key housing stakeholders and partners from across the territory oversees its implementation.
 - The Safe at Home community-based Action Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness (Safe at Home) was launched in November 2017.
 - The Safe at Home plan was developed by the Government of Yukon, the City of Whitehorse, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, and a number of local NGOs.
-

Session Briefing Note

Housing Issues

Yukon Housing Corporation

- The Safe at Home Society was awarded \$10 million under the Northern Carve-Out of the National Housing Co-Investment Fund, \$5 million in funding under the federal Rapid Housing Initiative 2.0, and \$1.02 million in funding from YHC's Housing Initiatives Fund - for a supportive housing project.

Land Development

- The Government of Yukon continues to support new land development to increase the supply of land available for housing development. This includes:
 - Government-led land initiatives in Whistle bend, as well initiatives to sell the 5th and Rogers site (See TAB #34) and old Macaulay Lodge site (See TAB #37);
 - First Nations land development projects – KDFN's Copper Ridge West (See TAB #35) and Range Point projects;
 - Private Sector land development project initiatives – the Tank Farm (See TAB #40).
- Community Services estimates an additional 1,476 new housing lots will come online by 2026, enough to accommodate 2,713 additional housing units.

New Housing Construction and partnerships with the Private Sector

- Yukon Housing Corporation offers several loans and grants programs (See TAB #4) to incentivize new housing construction – namely, the *Housing Initiative Fund* (See TAB #63), the *Developer Build Loan* (See TAB #59), and the *Municipal Matching Rental Construction Program* (MMRCP).
- These territorial-based programs complement new housing construction incentive programs under the National Housing Strategy, including the *National Housing Co-investment Fund* and the *Rapid Housing Initiative*.
- Finally, we provide subsidies to households living in private market housing through the *Canada Yukon Housing Benefit* (See TAB #57) and the *Rent Supplement* program.

Community Housing and the Most Vulnerable

- Yukon Housing Corporation and its partners continue to implement the new Community Housing Program, which aims to improve better client outcomes and fiscal resiliency (See TAB #58)
- Currently, YHC offers over 700 units through the Community Housing program in which eligible Yukoners pay 25% of their income for rent (rent-geared-to-income), we provide

Session Briefing Note**Housing Issues****Yukon Housing Corporation**

support to more than 80 households through our rent supplement program and more than 130 Yukoners through the Canada Yukon Housing Benefit.

- Starting in early 2023, YHC is introducing a mixed-income and mixed-use tenant's allocation policy to its Whitehorse buildings while providing tenants with appropriate partner supports to help them maintain housing.
- Work continues with the Safe at Home Society with the intent of allocating a percentage of units to individuals on the By-Name List.
- YHC is working to implement the Aging in Place Action Plan, which includes broadening programming to include Senior Supportive Housing Program as an option for seniors who require additional supports.
- YHC will be operating and maintaining a new 10-plex in Old Crow (See TAB #23);
- Finally, YHC and housing providers have recently completed or are currently making significant capital investments to expand the community housing stock, including:
 - The 401 Jeckell – 47-unit building (See TAB #19);
 - Three new triplexes in Mayo, Watson and Whitehorse (See TAB #21);
 - A new Housing First building in Watson Lake (See TAB #25); and
 - Duplexes in Carmacks, Dawson, Mayo, and Faro (See TAB #20).

Major investments in housing include:

- The Canada Yukon Housing Benefit, an eight-year rent subsidy program to support low to moderate income Yukoners renting private market rental housing (See TAB #57).
- Normandy Living was supported with approximately \$34.5 million from the Government of Canada through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, \$4.5 million from the Government of Yukon through the Yukon Housing Corporation, private investments of more than \$1.8 million, and \$500,000 in development incentives from the City of Whitehorse. (See TAB #38)
- \$21M for the design and construction of the 4th and Jeckell, a 47-unit mixed-income housing development in Whitehorse (See TAB #19).
- \$5.4M for the construction of three triplexes in Mayo, Watson Lake, and Whitehorse including \$3M of federal funding under the Rapid Housing Initiative - contributing nine units of housing options. (See TAB #21)
- \$400K in 2021-2022 for the design of the Watson Lake Housing First project which will be tendered in February 2023 (See TAB #25).

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Housing Issues

Yukon Housing Corporation

- Design work to support the housing needs in the communities of Teslin, Carcross and Dawson in 2022-2023.
- \$5.7M annually under the Housing Initiatives Fund (See TAB #63).
- \$6.9M for First Nation Energy Efficiency Program and \$8.4M for Community Housing retrofits under the Low Carbon Economy Fund (LCEF) provided on a 75% (Canada) - 25% (First Nations) cost-matching ratio between 2019 and 2024. (See TAB #60 & #61)
- \$4.1M for the construction of a Housing First residence for vulnerable individuals (5th and Wood St.) in Whitehorse.
- Continued commitment by Government of Yukon toward the Municipal Matching Rental Construction program for new rental units.

Affordable rental housing incentives (in partnership with the private market):

- Since its inception in 2019, the Housing Initiatives Fund (HIF) intakes have brought on line 361 units and 159 are under construction. (See Tab #63).
 - The sixth intake of the Housing Initiative Fund was launched in November 2022. The deadline to submit the application was February 3, 2023.
- The Municipal Matching Rental Construction Grant has supported the construction of over 126 new rental homes throughout the Yukon, ten of which are in progress.
- Since 2020, our homeownership loan program that focuses on providing financial support for the purchase and construction of building projects in rural Yukon, has helped 21 Yukoners to buy or build their first homes. 14 of these projects are completed.

Approved by:



Justin Ferbey
President, Yukon Housing Corporation

January 31, 2023

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Our Clean Future Annual Report**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- We continue to make significant progress in the implementation of *Our Clean Future*.
- In September 2022, we released our second annual report. It outlines the progress we made in taking action on climate change in 2021.
 - Notably, in 2021, the Yukon Climate Risk Assessment was released and we saw a 12% decrease in our emissions when compared to 2020.
- Through this report we introduced five new actions and revised 13 existing actions to better meet our goals.
- *Our Clean Future* is an adaptive strategy, which means that we assess and adjust the actions we are taking year-over-year to stay on track to meet our long-term goals.
- We will continue to track and report our progress annually.

Additional response:

- Over the past year, we have advanced several key actions, such as:
 - Legislated greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets and associated reporting through the *Clean Energy Act*;
 - Received and analyzed the recommendations from the Yukon Climate Leadership Council ([Ref ENV #24 / EMR #34](#));
 - Established a standard method for determining the health of wetland ecosystems, and tracking baseline conditions to understand future changes;
 - Established a geohazard mapping program to understand risks to the Yukon's transportation corridors; and,
 - Enacted the single-use paper bag ban on January 1, 2023.

Session Briefing Note

Our Clean Future Annual Report

Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

Third response:

- Although we have made progress on many of our commitments, there is still significant work required to meet our 45 per cent greenhouse gas emissions target reduction by 2030.
- We will continue to build on *Our Clean Future* as we learn more about climate change and introduce more actions. This will be reflected in future annual reports.
- We will also continue to work with experts, stakeholders and partner governments across the territory and beyond, to identify opportunities for new actions and to accelerate and intensify existing actions to reach our ambitious target.

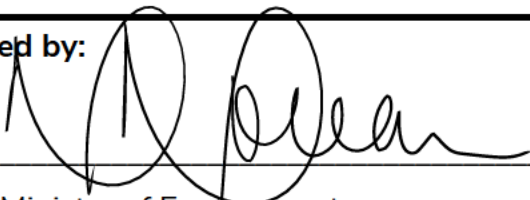
Context — this may be an issue because:

- Climate change is of high interest to Yukoners; they will want to know the government's progress in delivering on *Our Clean Future* commitments.

Background:

- *Our Clean Future* was released in September 2020 and is a 10-year strategy.
- *Our Clean Future* contains 136 actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and supports the Yukon to be highly resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Approved by:


Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-02-01

Date approved


Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

Feb. 1, 2023

Date approved

Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Update on Calls to Action

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- Reconciliation is an ongoing process, and the Government of Yukon is continuing our work to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.
- We are working collaboratively with First Nations to advance progress in key areas including health and social services, education, justice and heritage, through the Yukon Forum Joint Priority Action Plan.
- We are also working with Yukon First Nations to implement Yukon's *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit+ People Strategy*, which will further advance reconciliation and address the Calls to Action.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations governments are leaders in demonstrating a collaborative approach to reconciliation.
- At the Yukon Forum in November 2022, we discussed the approach to implementing and reporting on the Calls to Action with Yukon First Nations.
- We will continue our collaborative work to implement and report on the Calls to Action, including implementing the *Putting People First* recommendations for health and social services.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon government (YG) previously made public its intention to fulfill its commitments to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action.
- The Calls to Action were a topic at the November 29, 2022 Yukon Forum.

Background:

- The TRC report, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future*, was released in June 2015. It contains 94 Calls to Action focused on redressing the harms resulting

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Joint Corporate Note Inflation and affordability

Finance
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Recommended:

- All Yukon households are seeing their budgets stretched by elevated levels of inflation, with lower-income households often feeling the effects more than others.
- The government continues to assess how inflation is impacting Yukoners and several measures included in the 2023-24 Budget will help make life more affordable for Yukoners.
- In 2023–24, the government is extending the Inflation Relief Rebate Program, which provides a \$50 per month rebate on ATCO Electric and Yukon Energy utility bills for the April and May billing periods, along with an additional three months later in the year.
- Other measures in the 2023-24 Budget to help make life more affordable to Yukoners include funding for food in Yukon schools, the timber harvesting incentive to boost fuelwood supply, a quarterly top-up of \$150 to eligible recipients of the Yukon Senior Income Supplement, and a \$100 monthly increase to eligible Social Assistance recipients.

Additional response:

- This government already established a strong record of making life more affordable for Yukoners with almost \$10 million-worth of inflation relief made available in last year's budget.

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Joint Corporate Note Inflation and affordability

Finance
Executive Council Office

- This included more funding for Food Network Yukon, a 10 per cent top up to the Pioneer Utility Grant and rebates on the purchase of firewood.
- Yukoners are also receiving inflation relief from the federal government. This includes the accelerated Canada Workers' Benefit, the elimination of interest on student loans, a doubling of the GST tax credit, dental care and the Canada Housing Benefit for renters.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Inflation has increased to decade highs in many countries, including Canada, which is experiencing the highest inflation in almost 40 years.
- Energy prices have been a significant driver and these prices are more obvious to consumers.
- Housing affordability has been a concern in the Yukon for several years.
- [March's rate of inflation in Yukon was the highest in Canada at 5.5 per cent vs 4.3 per cent nationally according to the Whitehorse Consumer Price Index.](#)

Background:

Key government initiatives addressing affordability in Yukon

Highlight of affordability spending in Budget 2023-24

- \$5.3 million to extend the Inflation Relief Rebate. Yukoners will receive a \$50 credit on their power bill in April and May and for an additional three months later in the year.

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- \$300,000 for the Timber Harvesting Incentive program.
- \$1.5 million to increase monthly social assistance payments by \$100.
- Over \$800,000 to recipients of the Yukon Seniors Income Supplement.
- \$500,000 for food in schools.

This builds on previous programs to protect the affordability of Yukoners including

- Last year, the Government of Yukon announced almost \$10 million in new inflation relief measures targeted at vulnerable groups.
- The inflation relief rebate covered seven months at a total cost to Government of \$7.6 million. The inflation relief rebate automatically applied a \$50 credit to all residential and commercial ATCO Electric Yukon and Yukon Energy electricity bills.
- Yukoners on social assistance received a one-time payment of \$150.
- Seniors were supported by a 10 per cent top up in the Pioneer Utility grant and a one-time payment of \$150 to recipients of the Yukon Seniors Income Supplement.
- Yukoners who heat their homes with wood are eligible for a \$50 rebate per cord of fuel wood, this program is retroactive to April 1, 2022. Yukon also introduced the Timber Harvesting Incentive that gives commercial timber harvesters \$10 per cubic metre.
- The pilot program giving an extra \$500 per month to Extended Family Caregiver agreement caregivers and foster caregivers was extended to the end of the fiscal year.
- In June 2022, the Yukon government extended the Tourism Accommodation Sector Supplement and Tourism Non-Accommodation Sector Supplement programs, administered through Economic Development.

Yukoners are also supported by Federal Government affordability programs

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Joint Corporate Note Inflation and affordability

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- Accelerated Canada Workers Benefit payments and new minimum entitlement starting in July 2023 (\$4 billion over six years, starting in 2022-23).
- Making all Canada Student Loans and Canada Apprentice Loans permanently interest-free, starting in April 2023 (\$2.7 billion over five years and \$556.3 million ongoing).
- **GST Tax Credit:** The GST tax credit will be doubled for six months in current benefit year. Additional payment will be provided in one lump-sum, before the end of the benefit year. Targeted to individuals and families with low incomes (below \$39,826, and gradually phased out above that level). Single Canadians without children would receive up to an extra \$234 and couples with two children would receive up to an extra \$467 this year. Seniors would receive an extra \$225 on average.

Inflation outlook

- The inflation rate in Whitehorse was 5.5 per cent in March, down from 7.0 in February, but 1.2 percentage points higher than the national inflation rate of 4.3 per cent. Whitehorse's inflation rate was the highest in Canada for fourth consecutive month.
- This ranking is a reversal from earlier in 2022 when Whitehorse had the lowest inflation in Canada. For 2022 as a whole, the relatively lower inflation at the beginning of the year and higher inflation at the end of the year cancelled out, and so, the annual inflation rate in Whitehorse was the same as the national rate: 6.8 per cent.
- It is natural that relatively lower inflation in Whitehorse is eventually followed by relatively higher inflation as prices in Whitehorse follow the national trend over the long term.

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- The Bank of Canada has started to take a more aggressive approach to battling inflation by raising interest rates 4.25 percentage points since March 2022. The Bank's increase of 0.25 percentage point on January 25 brought the overnight rate to 4.5 per cent, the highest rate since early 2008. [This rate was maintained at the April rate announcement.](#)
- The housing market in the Yukon has stayed resilient the face of higher interest rates that have cooled markets in most other parts of Canada. Yukon was the only Canadian jurisdiction that saw residential sales in 2022 increase over 2021
- It wasn't until the fourth quarter until signs of cooling showed in the Yukon data, with average sales prices falling across all housing type. Compared with the end of 2021, prices were down by 1.2 per cent for single-detached, 3.9 per cent for duplexes, 11.4 per cent for condos, and 1.6 per cent for mobile homes.
- Most forecasters expect inflation in Canada will move towards historic norms over the next couple of years as supply chain problems subside and the effect of higher interest rates move through the economy. Canadian inflation is expected to decline from near 7 per cent in 2022, to between 3.5-4.0 per cent in 2023. Inflation in 2024 is expected to return to the midpoint of the Bank of Canada's target range of 1-3 per cent.
- Inflation in Whitehorse follows the national trend and therefore expected to fall to 3.8 per cent in 2023 and to 2.5 per cent in 2024.

INFLATION RELIEF ACROSS GOVERNMENT

Tourism and Culture:

COVID-19 Business Relief Programs

- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Yukon acted quickly and decisively by implementing one of the most robust business relief programs in the country, beginning with the Yukon Business Relief Program (YBRP) in

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2020, which was open to any business from any sector that experienced at least a 30% revenue loss due to the pandemic.

- In that same year, Tourism and Culture (T&C) also launched the Tourism Relief and Recovery Plan (TRRP), which was reviewed and endorsed by the Yukon Tourism Advisory Board (YTAB) and industry.
- The TRRP committed \$15 million over three years to support the tourism sector and was focused on four key themes:
 - Providing tourism sector leadership;
 - Rebuilding confidence and capabilities for tourism;
 - Supporting the recovery of tourism industry operators; and
 - Refining the brand and inspiring travelers to visit.
- Through the TRRP, various financial support programs were rolled out during the course of the pandemic to sustain the tourism industry and prepare it for the eventual reopening of borders, including:
 - Tourism Accommodation Sector Supplement (TASS);
 - Tourism Non-Accommodation Sector Supplement (TNASS);
 - Culture and Tourism Non-profit Sector Supplement;
 - Great Yukon Summer (GYS) program;
 - Great Yukon Summer Freeze program;
 - ELEVATE program; and
 - A top-up to the Tourism Cooperative Marketing Fund (TCMF).

Community Tourism Destination Development Fund

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- In October 2022, the Department of Tourism and Culture announced the creation of the new Community Tourism Destination Development Fund, which is slated to run for an initial three-year term.
- The new annual funding program is available to local businesses, First Nations governments, First Nation Development entities, municipalities and not-for-profit organizations for projects that will improve tourism-related services and infrastructure.
- Projects can focus on infrastructure like accommodations, attractions, activities and amenities, and special consideration will be given to umbrella projects, where multiple organizations are working together.

Creative and Cultural Industries

- In November 2021, the Department of Tourism and Culture released *Creative Potential; Advancing the Yukon's Creative and Cultural Industries*, a 10-year strategy to support the growth and development of the creative and cultural industries in the Yukon.
- The CCIS identifies 4 strategic objectives and 22 key actions, which reflect input gathered through extensive public and sector engagement.
- We have identified 10 actions in support of pandemic recovery to be completed over three years as Phase 1 implementation, which includes:
 - Modernizing existing funding;
 - Offering new funding streams;
 - Industry branding and promotion;
 - Marketing and export strategies;
 - Workshops; and

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- Labour market supports.

In 2023-24, three new funding programs will provide \$450,000 annually to the creative and cultural sectors, including:

- Express Micro-grant;
- Indigenous Artists and Cultural Carriers Micro-grant; and
- Creative and Cultural Career Advancement Fund.

Additional Funding Programs

- Tourism and Culture also provides annual supports to the tourism and culture sectors through Transfer Payment Agreements (TPAs) with many NGOs across the Yukon and through a number of regular funding programs, including:
 - Advanced Artist Award;
 - Arts Fund;
 - Arts Operating Funds;
 - Cultural Industries Training Funds;
 - Culture Quest;
 - New Canadian Events Fund;
 - Touring Artist Fund;
 - Historic Properties Assistance Program;
 - Historic Resources Fund;
 - Museums Contribution Program;
 - Special Projects Capital Assistance Program (SPCAP); and

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- Tourism Cooperative Marketing Fund;

Yukon Development Corporation:

Inflation Relief Rebate

- The Inflation Relief Rebate provides \$50 per month to all non-government residential and commercial electricity customers to help ease the impacts of rising inflation.
- The IRR initially covered June, July, and August 2022, and was extended to cover October, November, and December 2022. The budgets for these were included in 2022-23 Supplementary Estimates.
- The IRR was subsequently extended for March, April, and May 2023. The budget in 2023-24 is comprised of:
 - \$2,056,000 for program costs in April and May 2023 (costs for March 2023 are included in the 2022-23 Supplementary Estimates #2).
 - \$3,246,000 for a further three additional months. We will continue to monitor inflation and costs of living, and we anticipate this will show on electricity bills next winter when electricity bills are typically higher.

Economic Development:

- Economic Development is in the process of developing a temporary paid sick leave program. Program criteria, including eligibility and duration, are currently being developed.

Energy, Mines and Resources:

Energy retrofits and funding to improve efficiency and offset costs

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- Our energy programs are successfully encouraging Yukon residents and local businesses to reduce their energy use, save money and choose low carbon options to live and move.
- Energy efficiency programs are available for the transportation sector, renewable heating sector, and the construction sector focusing on high efficiency buildings.
- For existing homes, the Energy Branch offers the Good Energy rebate program for high performance heating systems and upgrades to thermal enclosures including insulation and windows and high performance new homes. Taking these measures will save homeowners money on their energy costs.
- For commercial and institutional buildings, the Energy Branch offers rebates for greenhouse gas-reducing retrofits and renewable heating.
- For First Nation and municipal buildings, the Energy Branch offers retrofit and funding support through its Community Institutional Energy Efficiency Program.
- There are two current incentives for wood, one for harvesters and one to offset fuelwood costs:
 - In October 2022 we launched the timber harvesting incentive to provide registered Yukon timber harvesting businesses an incentive of \$10 per cubic metre of timber harvested or sold between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023. We have paid out \$163,000 to industry so far.
 - In September 2022, we launched a new firewood rebate to offset the increased costs of firewood for home heating. The rebate provides \$50 for each cord of firewood purchased, up to a maximum of 10 cords. As of February 14, 2023 we processed 586 applications, and paid out approximately \$69,850 in rebates for 1,389 cords of firewood.

Yukon Housing Corporation:

Projects under the Five-Year Capital Plan which support housing affordability and those in need include:

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- The 47-unit housing complex at 401 Jeckell Street in Whitehorse opened in January 2023. The building provides new homes to Yukoners, including 5 three-bedroom, 12 two-bedroom, 16 one-bedroom and 14 bachelor units;
- The Opportunities Yukon 45-unit Cornerstone Development in Whitehorse opened in summer 2022 and is providing supportive living and accessible housing;
- Triplex housing units in Watson Lake, Mayo and Whitehorse were completed in spring 2022 and are providing affordable homes to families in each of these communities;
- In Old Crow, the 10-Plex Mixed-Use Housing complex is under construction with expected completion in summer 2023; and
- The 10-Plex Housing First Project in Watson Lake is included in the Northern Carve-Out. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2023-24.

Other highlights from the plan

- More homes will be created for Yukon families in rural communities through the construction of three duplexes in Dawson City, Mayo, and Carmacks. These homes are on track for completion in summer 2023.
- The demolition of Macaulay Lodge in Whitehorse was completed in October 2022. Planning for the redevelopment of the site to support mixed commercial and residential use is underway.

Health and Social Services:

For 2022-23:

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- a one-time \$150 payment to social assistance recipients;
- a one-time payment of \$150 to Yukon Seniors Income Supplement recipients;
- a one-time 10 per cent additional payment to Pioneer Utility Grant recipients;
- a six-month extension of \$500 per month to caregivers of children in out of home care; and
- Committed \$100,000 to Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition to continue to support food security across the territory.

For 2023-24:

- a quarterly top-up of \$150 to eligible Yukon Senior Income Supplement recipients; and
- a \$100 monthly increase to eligible Social Assistance recipients.

Public Service Commission: (no change from Fall BN)

Remote work policy in support of employees working in communities

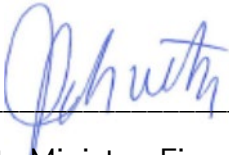
- In fall 2021, the Yukon government introduced a new remote work policy to support employees to continue working remotely in the long term.
- Implementing the new remote work policy is an action in the Our Clean Future strategy, as people are supported to work from home and reduce their emissions by commuting less.
- The new remote work policy also enables employees to work remotely from Yukon communities outside of Whitehorse, in some circumstances.
- The Public Service Commission will strive to support more long-term remote work arrangements throughout the Yukon government where it makes sense, and will track data on long-term arrangements going forward.

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Executive Council Office

Approved by:



April 24, 2023

a/Deputy Minister, Finance

Approved

2023 04 21



Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Approved

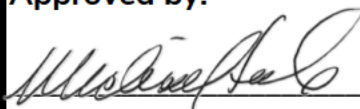
Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Update on Calls to Action

Executive Council
Office

from Residential Schools and creating better relations between the federal, provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous Peoples. Thirty-two of the Calls to Action relate directly to YG.

- YG and Yukon First Nations (YFNs) collaborate on addressing the Calls to Action through the Yukon Forum Joint Priority Action Plan.
- YG has taken steps to address the Calls to Action, including:
 - establishing the position of Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations Initiatives at the Department of Education, signing an agreement to establish a YFN School Board, and entering into education agreements with all YFNs (speaks to Calls 7 and 10 directed to the Federal government);
 - supporting Indigenous athletes and the North American Indigenous Games (Call 88);
 - implementing the YFN Procurement Policy (relates to Call 92) and the Representative Public Service Plan: *Breaking Trail Together* (relates to Call 7);
 - working with YFNs and Yukon Indigenous women's groups to implement Yukon's *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit+ People Strategy* (MMIWG2S+ Strategy) (relates to Call 41);
 - participating at the Trilateral Table on the Wellbeing of YFN Children and Families to address gaps for culturally appropriate parenting programs (Call 5); and
 - receiving input from YFNs on Health and Social Services programming through the Mental Health Advisory Committee (relates to Call 19).

Approved by:



Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

February 6, 2023

Date

Session Briefing Note**Corporate Note – Budget Highlights****Embargoed until day of budget tabling**

Recommended response:

- In 2023-24, the Yukon continues to demonstrate its robust position nationally with population and economic growth among the strongest in the country.
- Budget 2023-24 delivers spending initiatives aimed at making life more affordable for Yukoners while also including several inflation relief measures to help combat the rising cost of goods.
- This budget continues to invest in the Yukon's health and social system and includes investments in new and expanded health services through the implementation of *Putting People First*. This includes addressing the substance-use health emergency and supporting the mental health of Yukoners.
- It delivers on our commitment to support a green economy with investments outlined in *Our Clean Future*.
- There are also strategic investments in infrastructure, particularly in housing for the most vulnerable. Other investments in housing include funds for land development, investments in housing projects in Dawson City, Watson Lake and Teslin, subsidies and supports for renters and funding for various affordable and community housing projects.
- Like in previous budgets, Budget 2023-24 continues to build relationships and further reconciliation with Yukon First Nations.

Session Briefing Note

Corporate Note – Budget Highlights

Embargoed until day of budget tabling

Additional response:

- The Yukon government is delivering on its commitment to grow a strong and resilient economy while ensuring robust, sustainable fiscal management.
- A surplus of 2.49 per cent of expenditures serves as a prudent fiscal management tool and demonstrates the ability of the government to address unforeseen events without going into a deficit.
- The fiscal summary includes a \$50 million contingency for presently undefined expected expenditures in 2023-24. This will not affect the Yukon's forecast fiscal position and allows the government to remain transparent about potential pressures.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2023-24 Main Estimates will be debated during the March 2023 legislative session.
-

Background:

- The 2023-24 Main Estimates include a surplus of \$48.2 million and year-end debt of \$374.8 million.
- Total revenue is expected to be \$1.58 billion in 2023-24. This is an increase of \$115.2 million or 7.3 per cent from the 2022-23 Main Estimates.
- Forecast O&M expenditures total \$1.45 billion, with O&M recoveries offsetting this amount by \$130.9 million. This is an increase of 2.6 per cent in net O&M expenditures from the 2022-23 Main Estimates.

Session Briefing Note**Corporate Note – Budget Highlights****Embargoed until day of budget tabling**

- Forecast capital expenditures total \$483.8 million with recoveries of \$164.5 million. This is a 9.9 per cent decrease in net capital expenditures from the 2022-23 Main Estimates. This represents a reduction of \$63 million from last year's capital budget. This reduction reflects a sustainable approach to budgeting in the territory following elevated capital spending over the last two years, which helped stimulate Yukon's economy during the pandemic.
- There are 5,332.0 FTEs in the 2023-24 budget, which is a decrease of 89.1 FTEs from 2022-23.

Approved by:

a/Deputy Minister, Department

February 23, 2023

Approved

Session Briefing Note

Corporate Note – Fin/HPW 2022-23

Supplementary Overview

Embargoed until day of budget tabling

Corporate #115

Spring 2023

Recommended response:

- Overall, the changes outlined in the Supplementary Estimates #2 show a government that continues to make sure Yukoners and our economy remain healthy as we emerge from the pandemic while also responding to new and emerging challenges.
- Inflation continues to have an impact on Yukoners, as well as an impact on government projects. Several changes included as part of this Supplementary Estimates are in response to higher costs or work progressing faster than planned.
- The capital budget has no overall gross change in this Supplementary Estimates, but this is not because no adjustments were made. Major projects are still getting the resources they need to reach completion, but other projects were decreased to reflect timelines and funds were reallocated accordingly.
- The increase of \$37.5 million for the Department of Highways and Public Works is being offset by deferrals and offsets in other projects.

Session Briefing Note

Corporate Note – Fin/HPW 2022-23

Supplementary Overview

Embargoed until day of budget tabling

Corporate #115

Spring 2023

Additional response:

- The largest expenditures are on three important capital projects, accounting for \$53.8 million altogether.
- The first is the replacement of the Nisutlin Bay Bridge. This increase covers higher costs and an accelerated schedule. The additional work on this project results in an increase of \$35.8 million as part of this Supplementary Estimate.
- We also provided additional funding for building the Carmacks Bypass, which is part of the Yukon Resource Gateway Program. Work in this area makes up \$11.8 million of the Capital increase.
- The third project is the construction of the Dempster Fibre Line, which will open a second fibre optic link instead of relying just on one, and so give Yukoners more reliable access to the internet as well as necessary redundancy. This project includes a proposed increase of \$5.7 million.

Session Briefing Note

Corporate Note – Fin/HPW 2022-23

Supplementary Overview

Embargoed until day of budget tabling

Corporate #115

Spring 2023

- These increases are offset by decreases in capital. The most significant reductions can be seen in the Yukon Housing Corporation. This is largely the result of revised timelines for various projects and initiatives as well as lower uptake in application-based programs, but also accounts for the housing and building cycle as Normandy Living, Cornerstone and the 47-unit 4th and Jeckell facility are all ready and taking in clients and we are now shifting towards building new relationships for potential future projects.

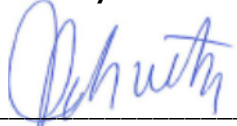
Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2022-23 Supplementary Estimates #2 is tabled in the spring session and will be the subject of debate.

Background:

- Opposition may request an explanation for the changes included as part of the Supplementary Estimates #2.


Approved by:



a/Deputy Minister, Finance

March 02, 2023

Approved



Deputy Minister, HPW

March 02, 2023

Approved