

Department of Environment
Briefing Binder for Fall Legislative Sitting 2022
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Session Briefing Note

Outfitter Quota Appeals

Fall 2022
Environment

Quick Facts

- There are 20 active outfitting concessions in the Yukon, all of which now have moose, caribou and grizzly bear quotas. Four outfitters never assigned moose and caribou quotas for their concession until this year.
- Between 2015 and 2019, the average annual harvest levels for Non-Resident hunters were 241 moose, 114 caribou, 147 sheep, 5 goats, 44 grizzly bears, 8 black bears and 2 bison.
- During this same period, the licensed Resident hunters' average annual harvest levels were 448 moose, 196 caribou, 92 sheep, 8 goats, 28 grizzly bears, 88 black bears and 192 bison.

Recommended response:

- Outfitting is a valued industry in the Yukon that benefits communities by creating jobs, purchasing goods, and, in many cases, donating fresh meat.
- The 1996 *Guidelines to Establish Outfitter Quotas in Yukon* set out the process to establish moose, caribou and sheep harvest quotas for outfitters.
- These guidelines are outdated, having been written prior to the ratification of numerous First Nations Final Agreements and do not reflect the varied realities of Yukon's land claim status or recent case law.
- Legal analysis of these guidelines indicate they contain numerous recommendations that do not conform to the *Wildlife Act*, including:

73(a)

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Outfitter Quota Appeals

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73(a)

- Our current use of over-quotas and multi-year quota terms. Although these were brought forward to provide flexibility for outfitter operations, it is contrary to the required annual expiry of quotas, as required in the *Wildlife Act*.

Additional response:

- As part of a review of the quota allocation process, the Department of Environment worked with outfitters to place all outfitters on quotas this year.
- Quotas are set to ensure that wildlife harvest remains at sustainable levels, considering wildlife conservation, Indigenous subsistence harvest rights, and resident and non-resident hunter interests.
- Establishing outfitter quotas is a complex process that requires balancing the rights and interests of outfitters, Yukon First Nations and Renewable Resources Councils.
- Given the changes made to the quota process and the fact that some outfitters were assigned quotas for the first time, we received an unprecedented number of appeals, which created delays in the appeal process.
- This spring, nine outfitters submitted appeals to the Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee; one has since withdrawn, and two have submitted appeals to the Concession and Compensation Review Board.
- The Concession and Compensation Review Board is now scheduling its appeal hearings, which are expected to occur in late November.

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Fall 2022

Outfitter Quota Appeals

Environment

- We anticipate that the Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee will schedule its appeal hearings to start in late November or December, but we have not heard from the Committee since August.
- Once the appeals are referred to either the Concession and Compensation Review Board or the Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee, the timing of hearings is up to them.

Third Response

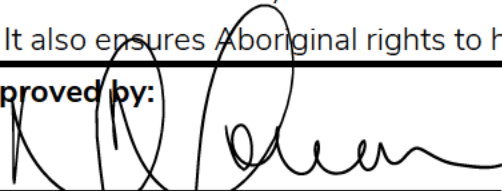
- We recognize the importance of the certainty that multi-year quota allocations provided to Yukon outfitters.
- Although multi-year and over-harvest quotas do not comply with the *Wildlife Act*, the Department of Environment has worked with outfitters to establish an alternative approach.
- This approach is based on multi-year sustainability and recent harvest levels to provide certainty and predictability to outfitters, similar to what they had in the past.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Question raised in the Legislative Assembly on November 16, 2022, by the Member from Kluane asked how the guidelines are out of conformity with the *Wildlife Act*.
- New outfitter operating certificates, including harvest quotas, were issued on April 1, 2022. Outfitters and the Opposition may raise questions about the appeal process and quotas.

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.
- It also ensures Aboriginal rights to harvest for subsistence are protected.

Approved by:
Deputy Minister of Environment2022-11-17
Date approved

CONFIDENTIAL**#2****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Hunting Allocation Framework****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 2021 were 4,488.

Recommended response:

- We recognize Yukon's unique and valuable opportunities for hunting big game species.
- We are committed to ensuring it is done sustainably while respecting the importance of wildlife conservation and Indigenous subsistence harvest rights.
- As the Yukon population continues to grow, we are seeing an increased demand for licensed big game hunting opportunities.
- Managing human activity, particularly hunting, is our primary tool to conserve big game.

Additional response:

- Our guidelines for determining quotas should reflect the evolution of hunting and conservation in the territory.
- Our goal is to develop a clear hunting allocation framework, including a modernized process for establishing outfitter quotas to ensure the division of hunting opportunities between resident and non-resident hunters is in alignment with Yukoners' values, reflecting the best

CONFIDENTIAL**#2****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Hunting Allocation Framework****Environment**

available data and respects First Nations' subsistence harvest rights.
(see BN #1)

- Hunting and conservation of wildlife in the territory is a joint effort. To create a hunting allocation framework, we will be engaging with Yukon First Nations governments, the Inuvialuit, Renewable Resources Councils, and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board.
- In addition, we will engage with special interest groups, like the Yukon Outfitter Association and the Yukon Fish and Game Association.

Third response:

- All types of knowledge, including Indigenous, local and scientific, should be a part of decision-making.
- We also acknowledge the importance of this issue to the Yukon public. We want to learn more from all Yukoners about their values and perspectives regarding big game hunting opportunities and conservation in the Yukon.
- This winter, the Department plans to initiate engagement on the development of a hunting allocation framework

Context this may be an issue because:

- Developing a hunting allocation framework and modernizing the process to establish outfitter quotas has the potential to affect the outfitting industry.
- In the Fall 2021 Sitting, the Official Opposition asked the Minister of Environment how new harvest allocation guidance might impact resident hunters.

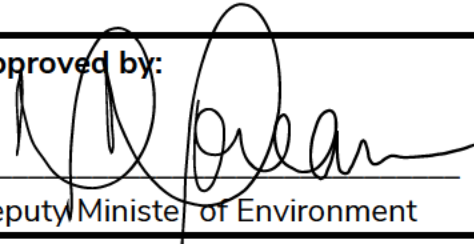
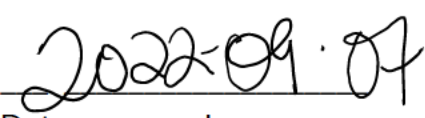
Background:

- The Department is responsible for making decisions about wildlife management to conserve all wildlife, including their interrelationships with each other and their

CONFIDENTIAL**#2****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Hunting Allocation Framework****Environment**

environment, while respecting Indigenous and treaty rights and the diverse needs of Yukoners.

- The management of human activity, particularly licensed hunting, is the primary tool available to us under the *Wildlife Act*.
- We know, through court decisions^{73(a)}, that the Department of Environment's decisions about licensed hunting have the potential to impact Indigenous and treaty rights.
- There have been increasing social conflicts in the Yukon over hunting opportunities. A framework is needed to help improve our transparency and fairness and, thus, the public's understanding and acceptance of the process, roles and responsibilities.
- In December 2021, the Deputy Minister of Environment sent letters to Indigenous governments, Renewable Resources Councils, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope), and all outfitters relaying the intent to review wildlife harvest allocation, including modernizing the quota guidelines.

Approved by:
Deputy Minister of Environment
Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Yukon Wetlands Policy

Spring 2022
Environment

Quick Facts:

- Public review of the draft policy occurred in four different ways – (1) a virtual roundtable discussion with policy partners, (2) a public survey, (3) via submissions written directly to the Government of Yukon, and (4) additional review and government-to-government engagement.
- The Government of Yukon hosted a virtual roundtable for the wetland stewardship policy on November 16-17, 2021. A total of 72 individuals participated in the roundtable, representing Indigenous governments; municipal, territorial, and federal governments; industry organizations; environmental organizations; and boards and councils.
- Out of the 115 online public survey respondents, 52 per cent agreed or strongly agreed with the overarching draft policy goal: to “ensure the benefits of Yukon wetlands are sustained for all.”
- Of the written responses, 88 written submissions were received – 61 from members of the public and 27 from participant organizations.

Recommended response:

- I am pleased to share that we are nearing the completion of a policy for the stewardship of Yukon's wetlands.
- The policy is designed to provide much-needed direction to achieve sustainable and responsible development in and around wetlands while ensuring adequate environmental protections.
- We have worked diligently to prepare a policy that balances these interests to support the long-term stewardship of wetlands in our territory.

Session Briefing Note

Yukon Wetlands Policy

Spring 2022
Environment

- The draft policy introduced important features such as a mitigation hierarchy, which outlines systematic guidance for proponents operating in wetlands, as well as the recognition of Wetlands of Special Importance that are of ecological, social or cultural significance.

Additional response:

- Collaboration and engagement have been essential to the development of this policy.
- Since 2017, we have been working with Indigenous partners, industry, non-profits, and the public to develop a policy that reflects Yukoners' diverse needs.
- The Department of Environment has held four in-person roundtable meetings and one virtual meeting with over 60 participant groups representing Yukon First Nations and Indigenous governments; municipal, territorial, and federal governments; industry organizations; environmental organizations; and boards and councils.
- We also conducted public engagement and received extensive feedback from Yukoners on the policy.
- Lastly, we conducted government-to-government consultations with 23 Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments on the policy this past fall.
- Our government is committed to releasing a policy for the stewardship of Yukon's wetlands that reflects Yukoners' diverse needs and interests by the end of 2022.

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Yukon Wetlands Policy

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Third response:

- The policy is intended to provide high-level guidance for managing human impacts on wetlands along with establishing a consistent approach to wetland use and management.
- Additionally, we recognize that we must be responsive to new information as we build our knowledge and improve our understanding of Yukon's wetlands.
- To that end, we will continue to support local, national and international partnerships to increase our knowledge of northern wetlands.
- This includes wetland mapping and inventory, studying carbon storage and release, as well as researching the effects of a changing climate on northern wetlands.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions about progress towards the commitment to complete a Yukon wetland stewardship policy, as the Minister's mandate letter states the policy will be completed by May 2022.
- Management of wetlands, and acceptable levels of development versus protection, is of high interest and often a polarizing issue to Indigenous governments, industry, non-governmental organizations and members of the public.
- Most Indigenous government responses during the 2021 public review period raised concerns about the policy. They requested the policy provide greater protection of wetlands and better alignment with their knowledge, rights and title. Similar themes were reflected in comments received from First Nations during consultation.
- On November 15, 2022, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society Yukon Chapter released a report on mining in Yukon's peatlands. The report included a number of recommendations to the Government of Yukon on safeguarding carbon stored in

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Spring 2022

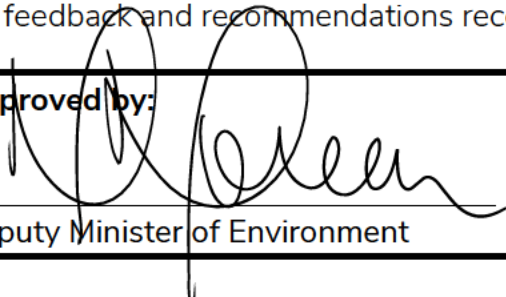
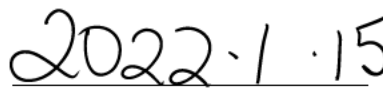
Yukon Wetlands Policy

Environment

Yukon's peatlands in relation to the upcoming Dawson Regional Land Use Plan (see BN #6), and the wetland stewardship policy, as well as commitments within Our Clean Future.

Background:

- Developing a wetlands policy is a commitment under the 2014 Yukon Water Strategy and Action Plan, including support for wetland inventory and monitoring, in partnership with other governments, stakeholders and the public.
- 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, transboundary Indigenous 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. During this engagement period, the Government of Yukon received 207 responses from Yukoners in the form of emails, detailed responses on the policy and survey responses.
- A What We Heard report summarizing feedback received was publicly released on March 1, 2022.
- First Nations consultation was initiated on August 3, 2022, and extended to end of October 2022, at the request of First Nations. The department is now considering the feedback and recommendations received through consultation.

Approved by:
Deputy Minister of Environment
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Elk–Agriculture Conflicts**Environment and
Energy, Mines and Resources**Recommended response:**

- For many Yukoners, sustaining our wild elk populations and providing agriculture producers with land to produce local foods and crops is equally important.
- We continue to implement actions to address the Takhini elk herd's interactions with crops and farm infrastructure.
- Based on feedback, we introduced a new adaptive hunt permitting process with eight new permits for hunting elk in the Takhini Valley this year. These are in addition to the four existing elk Permit Hunt Authorizations, for a total of 12 permits for the 2022–23 hunting season.
- The new permits will mean improved coordination, less congestion in the area and fewer calls seeking permission to access the lands.
- We also continue to offer funding to protect crops and livestock from wildlife and compensation for damage to crops or fences caused by wildlife.
- During the two-year pilot program that was initiated in 2020, the number of calls the Conservation Officer Services Branch received concerning elk-agriculture conflicts remained low. There have only been eight complaints since the program began.
- We are not considering expanding the exclusion zone to include the agricultural areas of the Takhini Valley because this high-quality habitat is essential to support this vulnerable elk herd. We are focusing instead on the coexistence of the elk herd and farming community by encouraging and assisting farmers in implementing appropriate mitigations to deter elk from their properties.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Elk–Agriculture Conflicts**Environment and
Energy, Mines and Resources**Additional response:**

- Landowners and farmers can apply for a permit to shoot conflict elk.
- These permits are only used in specific cases of ongoing conflict where all other reasonable measures have been unsuccessful.
- We completed a two-year pilot project on managing elk interactions that included:
 - increased funding for fencing,
 - allowing more hunters in key areas, and
 - reducing the herd size through harvesting.
- We have evaluated this pilot project and discussed the outcomes with affected landowners, farmers, associations, interest groups and First Nations to address the remaining issues.
- The Department of Environment conducts an annual minimum count survey of the herd in late winter. Although applicable as a snapshot, the survey technique does not provide accurate population estimates or trends.
- Radio collars will be placed on some of the elk later this year to help us understand their range and where they travel throughout the year.

Third response:

- In 2022, a discussion group was formed to identify options for the Takhini Herd and to develop a two-year action plan to reduce elk-agricultural interactions.
- This new plan will look at the effectiveness of replacing the elk-agriculture conflict hunt with an elk hunt adaptive management approach.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Elk–Agriculture Conflicts**Environment and
Energy, Mines and Resources

-
- The Department of Environment put forward this approach to the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board. The changes to increase the permit hunt were made this year while the discussion group developed the broader two-year action plan.
 - Next year, a new hunt code unique to this opportunity will be offered during the 2023–24 Permit Hunt Authorization application period.
-

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Takhini Valley farmers sent a letter in February 2022. They may seek an update on government actions to address the conflict between the wild elk population and agricultural properties in the Takhini Valley.
 - The Yukon Agricultural Association may criticize the recent changes to the permit elk hunt in the Takhini Valley area as inadequate, and the Yukon Fish and Game Association may criticize the recent changes to the permit elk hunt as a reduction in hunting opportunities.
 - In June 2021, a Yukon Supreme Court ruling on a case involving damage caused by wild elk drew media and public attention to the issue. This ruling was overturned in September 2022, moving the case to trial (date pending).
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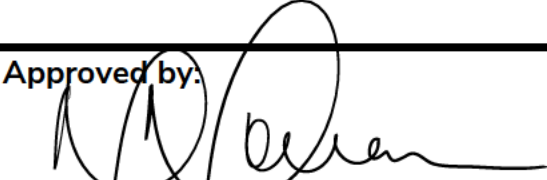
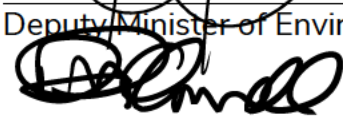
Background:

- Minimum annual counts of the Takhini elk herd in late winter (Feb-Mar) 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
 - 2021 December – 247 animals (additional count conducted)
 - 2022 - 152 animals the significant variation between counts underscores a fundamental challenge with using a minimum count survey. This technique neither provides an accurate estimate of population size nor does it discern population trends (i.e. growing, stable or declining).
-

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Elk–Agriculture Conflicts**Environment and
Energy, Mines and Resources

- One of the goals of the initial two-year pilot project was to reduce the Takhini Valley elk population by 90 elk. As of March 31, 2022, we can account for the mortality of 71 elk from the Takhini Valley.
- The Department of Environment staff counted 29 elk in the Braeburn herd during their last count in February 2022. However, it is important to note that this is **not** the size of the Braeburn herd. It is simply the number of elk observed from a helicopter flying linear transects through the area.
- 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 \$350,000 in support for implementing preventative measures and compensation.
- In 2021, the government 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.
- The number of complaints the Conservation Officer Services Branch received about elk encroachments in 2021 was approximately 35 per cent fewer than in previous years. Numbers for 2022 will be known in spring 2023. **As of September 26, 2022, no complaints have been received.**
- In instances where the farmer has established the proper mitigations yet still has an elk concern, a Conservation Officer will visit the property, assess the situation and work with the landowner to devise an appropriate solution. In some cases this may be the issuance of a Wildlife Act permit to shoot the nuisance animal.

CONFIDENTIAL**ENV #4 & EMR #5****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Elk-Agriculture Conflicts**Environment and
Energy, Mines and Resources

Approved by:	
	
Deputy Minister of Environment	2022-10-17
	Date
	
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources	22/10/19
	Date

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Reducing Greenhouse
Gas Emissions**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- I am pleased to share that the Yukon Climate Leadership Council has provided its final recommendations to the Yukon government.
- We recognize and appreciate the significant background research and analysis the Council has undertaken over the past nine months.
- This included looking at new pathways to reduce the territory's greenhouse gas emissions by 45 per cent by 2030, as compared to 2010 levels.
- The Council also looked at broad enabling elements related to education and awareness, leadership, and capacity building to support emissions reductions.

Additional response:

- In addition to providing 61 recommendations, the Council's recommendations were accompanied by an estimate of the emissions reduction opportunity they present.
- The Council estimates that the recommendations would lead to a total reduction opportunity of 184 kilotonnes of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.
- As recommended by the Council, the departments are reviewing and analyzing the recommendations and are working with a third-party consultant to verify projections provided by the Council.

Third response:

- We know that climate change cannot be tackled alone.
- We look forward to working together to build off the Council's recommendations and make further progress in meeting the territory's 45 per cent emissions reduction target.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Reducing Greenhouse
Gas Emissions**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

- Over the coming months, we will be prioritizing recommendations that can be adopted over the short, medium and long-term.

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*.
- The Climate Shot 2030 report was released publicly on September 28, 2022.
- The Council recommended the Government of Yukon obtain a third-party review to analyze the projections under *CLIMATE SHOT 2030*.
- The recommendations were set to be completed by July 2022. In order to receive consensus from all members, the timeline was extended to September 2022.

Approved by



Deputy Minister of Environment

2022-10-06

Date approved



Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

22/10/11

Date approved

**EMR #1 / ENV #6****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Dawson Regional Land
Use Planning**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment**Recommended response:**

- 74(1)(a)

- Input gathered during the public consultation will inform the Parties' decision whether to accept, reject or modify the Recommended Plan.
- If required, a Final Recommended Plan will be prepared by the Commission based on the outcome of the consultation process and input provided by the Parties on the Recommended Plan.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Dawson Regional Land
Use Planning**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

Additional response:

- The Dawson Regional Land Use Planning Commission delivered the Recommended Plan to the Parties (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Government of Yukon) on June 10, 2022.
- 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 staking until December 1, 2023.
- This interim withdrawal will remain in place until the plan is finalized; we anticipate the final Dawson Regional Land Use Plan in 2023.

Context – this may be an issue because:

- Questions may be raised regarding the Dawson Regional Land Use Plan status, the Government of Yukon's response to the Recommended Plan, and the future of the interim withdrawals.

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

EMR #1 / ENV #6**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Dawson Regional Land
Use Planning**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

Effects, Wetlands, Culture and Heritage, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirited People, and Implementation.

- 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 reflect the Recommended Plan. The interim withdrawal is in effect until December 1, 2023.
- White River First Nation is not a party to the plan. However, the Government of Yukon has an obligation to consult with the First Nation through the planning process, especially at this current Recommended Plan stage (as per the Umbrella Final Agreement Section 11.6.2.).
- 74(1)(a)

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources



Date approved



Deputy Minister of Environment

2022-11-10

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Our Clean Future Annual Report**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources**Recommended response:**

- On September, we released our second annual report on *Our Clean Future*. It outlines the progress we've made in taking action on climate change in 2021.
- Of the 19 actions with a 2021 timeline, we completed 13, made progress on three and revised three.
- *Our Clean Future* is an adaptive strategy, meaning we assess and adjust the actions we are taking year-over-year to stay on track to meet our long-term goals.
- This year, we introduced five new actions and revised 13 existing actions to better meet our goals.

Additional response:

- In 2021, we advanced several key actions and objectives, such as:
 - passing legislation to remove plastic bags from circulation;
 - developing requirements and guidance to support the use of zero-emissions vehicles, which more than doubled in 2021 compared to the previous year from 57 to 129;
 - developing a process to incorporate climate change considerations into the decision-making for the Government of Yukon's major policies, programs, and projects;
 - completing a framework to measure the sustainability of the tourism industry;

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Our Clean Future Annual Report**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

- and, working together with other governments and organizations across the territory to assess climate risks and resilience through the risk and resilience assessment (see [ENV BN #23](#)).

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 continue to work with experts and stakeholders, across the territory and beyond, to identify opportunities for new actions and to accelerate and intensify existing actions to reach this ambitious target.
- This includes reviewing and actioning the recommendations from the Yukon Climate Leadership Council (see [ENV BN #5](#)).
- We are also working to legislate our climate targets for 2030 and 2050 under the Clean Energy Act, the Yukon's first climate change legislation (see [EMR BN #31](#) or [ENV BN #21](#)).

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Climate change is of high interest to Yukoners; they will want to know the progress on delivering on *Our Clean Future* commitments, such as achieving greenhouse gas reductions.

Background:

- The *Our Clean Future* 2021 Annual Report and the Yukon Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment were both publicly released on [September 12, 2022](#).
- *Our Clean Future* sets several targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and supports the Yukon to be highly resilient to the impacts of climate change.

CONFIDENTIAL**EMR #31 ENV #20****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Our Clean Future Annual Report**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

- The *Our Clean Future* 2021 Annual Report is the second annual report prepared by the Government of Yukon.
- Five new actions and 13 revised actions were announced in the latest *Annual Report*. This is the first time new actions have been added to *Our Clean Future* since it was implemented in 2020.
- The five new actions, led by the Department of Highways and Public Works, either build off of existing actions or support objectives outlined in *Our Clean Future*.
- The 13 revised actions that were recommended add specificity or further direction to existing actions or represent a change in course after further analysis and research.
- We will continue to build on *Our Clean Future* as we learn more about climate change and introduce more actions, which will be reflected in future annual reports.
- Future reporting on *Our Clean Future* will be delivered through an interactive website.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2022.09.01

Date approved



Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

Sept. 1, 2022

Date approved

CONFIDENTIAL
Session Briefing Note**EMR #10 / ENV #21**
Fall 2022**Clean Energy Act**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment**Recommended response:**

- We are tabling a bill to create a Clean Energy Act during the 2022 Fall Sitting.
- This bill will propose to legislate greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and public reporting mechanisms to ensure long-term climate action accountability and transparency.
- The Clean Energy Act will ensure a continuance of work across political lifecycles focusing on achieving essential climate actions to meet our greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.
- The proposed Act is another tool in the Government of Yukon's efforts to reduce the Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions and build a green economy.

Additional response:

- We continue to work on *Our Clean Future* commitments to establish renewable electricity generation requirements, renewable fuel content standards, and setting energy efficiency criteria for homes and buildings in the Yukon.
- We are taking measures to ensure that these new standards will work in our northern context and for the benefit of Yukoners.


Context — this may be an issue because:

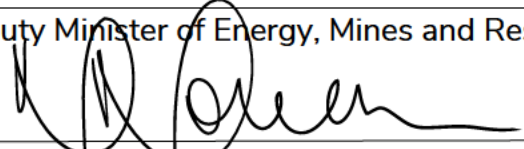
- The public and Opposition may be interested in progress made on the Clean Energy Act, and what provisions it entails.
- 74(1)(a), 67(1)(h)

CONFIDENTIAL
Session Briefing Note**EMR #10 / ENV #21**
Fall 2022**Clean Energy Act**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment**Background:**

- Under *Our Clean Future*, the Government of Yukon is committed to creating a Clean Energy Act to legislate greenhouse gas reduction and energy efficiency targets. (See [EMR #35 / ENV #20](#))
- Public engagement on proposed provisions to include and legislate under the Clean Energy Act was conducted from October 25, 2021, to January 7, 2022, with Indigenous engagement extended to February 7, 2022.
- The proposed Clean Energy Act framework includes an enabling authority for developing sector-specific targets into regulation.
- The following provisions are included in the Clean Energy Act bill:
 - statement of clean energy objectives;
 - reporting requirements; and
 - greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, including net-zero targets, interim targets, and targets for renewable heating and zero emissions vehicles.
- In a related but separate initiative, the Department of Energy, Mines is advancing work to set an intensity target for mining emissions. (See [EMR #100 / ENV #22](#))
- The 2021 Confidence and Supply Agreement increased the Government of Yukon's 2030 greenhouse gas reduction target from 30 per cent to 45 per cent by 2030. The 45 per cent target will be legislated under the Clean Energy Act.
- In September, 2022, the Yukon Climate Leadership Council delivered its recommendations for reaching the 45 per cent reduction target by 2030. (See [ENV #5 / EMR #36](#)) These recommendations are not part of the proposed Clean Energy Act.

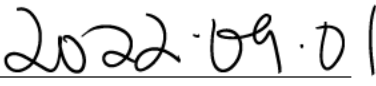
Approved by:


A/DM
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources


Deputy Minister of Environment

September 6, 2022

Date approved


Date approved

CONFIDENTIAL**ENV #22 / EMR #100****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Emissions Intensity Target** Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon continues to explore the best approach for reducing carbon emissions in the mining industry.
- Mining emissions are included in the Yukon's goal of becoming net-zero by 2050.
- Intensity-based approaches encourage mine operators to innovate and adopt low-carbon practices regardless of how many mines are in operation.
- In August and September 2022, we presented a discussion document outlining different approaches for setting the target during our engagement with industry, environmental organizations and First Nations.
- We are reviewing the feedback and aim to complete and release the targets with supporting policies and programs by the end of 2022.

Additional response:

- Any approach chosen will recognize the potential for substantial year-to-year fluctuations in the territory's mining emissions.
- More than one target or approach may be needed due to differences in activities between types of mining operations and lifecycle phases.


Context — this may be an issue because:

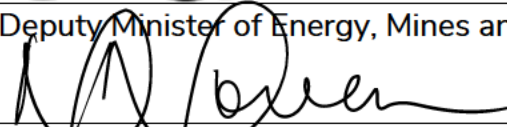
- One of the actions in *Our Clean Future* is to establish an intensity-based greenhouse gas target. Environmental groups are concerned that an intensity-based approach to mining emissions could mean the Yukon's total emissions may increase or that industry is getting a "free ride".

CONFIDENTIAL**ENV #22 / EMR #100****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Emissions Intensity Target** Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources**Background:**

- Action I9 in *Our Clean Future* is to establish an intensity-based greenhouse gas reduction target for the Yukon's mining industry. (See EMR BN #36)
- The percentage of emissions from mining is variable year-to-year, contributing eight to 15 per cent of the Yukon's total greenhouse gas emissions from 2009-2019.
- Greenhouse gas emissions from mine remediation projects, including the Faro Mine Remediation project,^{74(1)(a)}
- 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 beginning in 2022. Mining companies are aware of this requirement and are expected to include their emissions data in their Annual Reports due on March 31, 2023.
- With these new requirements, the Government of Yukon will be able to track the sector's progress toward achieving the targets.
- The Output-Based Pricing System is part of Canada's approach to pricing carbon pollution for emission-intensive trade-exposed industries, such as mining. 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.

Approved by:

 A/DM
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources


Deputy Minister of Environment

September 6, 2022

Date approved

2022.09.02
Date approved

Quick Facts:

- This is the first climate risk assessment done in the Yukon.
- This Assessment identified seven priority areas where more action is needed to build climate change resilience.
- Participants from nine Government of Yukon departments, 16 Indigenous governments and organizations, and three municipalities participated in the risk assessment.

Recommended response:

- Our government released the first Yukon-wide Climate Risk Assessment report this past summer.
- The Assessment reviewed the impacts of climate change that pose the highest risk to Yukoners, where our actions are contributing to resilience, and recommendations to take further action.
- The results of the Yukon-wide Assessment will be an essential part of our work to respond to climate change and to become more resilient to the impacts of climate change moving forward.

Additional response:

- We already see first-hand the impact climate change has on Yukoners – from higher snowpack and flood risks to wildfires and permafrost thaw in our communities.
- Understanding climate impacts and their potential risks is the first step in adapting and becoming resilient to climate change over the long term.

Third response:

- We intend to use the information contained in the risk assessment to inform government-decision making on how to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

CONFIDENTIAL**EMR #32 / ENV #23****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Climate Risk Assessment** Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

- Further, we will use it to accelerate or develop new climate actions under *Our Clean Future* to ensure the Yukon is resilient to climate change impacts.
- The results from the Climate Risk Assessment may also help First Nations governments and Yukon communities to plan their climate adaptation actions and address local climate risks.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The public and media will want to know what the government is doing to address the Yukon-wide climate risk assessment findings.

Background:

- Similar to all provinces and territories in Canada, in 2017, the Office of the Auditor General's climate change audit recommended the Government of Yukon complete a comprehensive, territory-wide risk assessment to prioritize adaptation actions.
- Yukon's report was prepared by the Department of Environment, Yukon University, Resilience North Consulting, and the Climate Risk Institute. The Yukon-wide risk assessment was funded through Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada's Climate Change Preparedness in the North program.
- Across the Government of Yukon, departments are also developing structured approaches to ensure climate change considerations are built into government decision-making.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved



Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Youth Panel on Climate Change**Environment
Energy Mines and Resources
Executive Council Office**Recommended response:**

- We are excited to host a second Youth Panel on Climate Change cohort.
- The Panel was established in April 2022 and is expected to conclude its activities by the end of fall 2022.
- This year's cohort focuses on activities that build capacity, leadership skills, education on climate change issues in the Yukon, and engagement with other Yukon youth.
- The Panel is creating a film on youth perspectives on climate change impacts and climate change visions for the Yukon.
- The Panel also coordinated four youth workshops in Whitehorse at the end of August.

Additional response:

- Youth in the territory have been leaders in organizing action on climate change for some time.
- The Youth Panel is one way our government continues to engage with youth and make their voices heard.
- Our youth are the next generation of environmental stewards and are vital to addressing the climate crisis.
- We look forward to seeing the progress of the second cohort's work and the impact they will make in their communities.

Youth Panel on Climate Change

Environment
Energy Mines and Resources
Executive Council Office

Third response:

- We appreciate the considerable effort the first Yukon Youth Panel on Climate Change put into developing its recommendations.
- In many instances, the Panel's recommendations align with existing efforts led by the Government of Yukon.
- Where some of the recommendations pointed out existing gaps and barriers, we continue to monitor our progress and adapt our approach.
- Approaching climate action with continued flexibility allows the Government of Yukon to incorporate expertise and diverse perspectives shared through advisory bodies such as the Youth Panel.
- We will continue researching and analyzing these recommendations to assess where the Government of Yukon can best take action.
- I would like to once again thank the Youth Panel for its perspectives and contributions and for bringing forward youth climate change priorities in the Yukon.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Questions may be raised about the establishment of the second Youth Panel on Climate Change, its focus, mandate and whether or not the second Panel will make recommendations.
- Questions may be raised on the Government of Yukon's response to the 2021 Youth Panel on Climate Change recommendations, including if and when the recommendations will be implemented.

Youth Panel on Climate Change

Environment
Energy Mines and Resources
Executive Council Office

Background:

- Our Clean Future includes a commitment to creating a Youth Panel on Climate Change to provide advice and perspectives to the Government of Yukon on climate change, energy and green economy matters. The mandate of the second cohort was revised from the previous mandate to increase youth capacity rather than to bring additional recommendations to the government.
- The first Youth Panel on Climate Change (2020-21) presented its recommendations on October 15, 2021. The Yukon Youth Panel on Climate Change 2021 — Our Recommendations, Our Future — 27 Programs and Policies to Embolden the Yukon's Climate Action report was tabled in the Yukon Legislative Assembly on October 18, 2021.
- The recommendations span a wide range of issues, including education, capacity building, land use planning, Indigenous sovereignty, local transportation, food production and mining.
- The report, and the government's response on March 8, 2022, are available on the Government of Yukon's youth panel webpage.
- Emily Tredger, Member of the Legislative Assembly of the Whitehorse Centre, submitted a petition in the house on March 22, 2022. It contained points urging the government to do more to counter climate change.

CONFIDENTIAL**EMR #38 ENV #24 ECO #26****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Youth Panel on Climate Change**Environment
Energy Mines and Resources
Executive Council Office

Approved by:


Deputy Minister of Executive Council Office


September 20, 2022

Date approved


Deputy Minister of Environment

September 8, 2022

Date approved

 A/DM
Deputy Minister of Energy Mines and Resources

September 9, 2022

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

COP 27

Environment

Quick Facts

- COP27 took place from November 6 to November 18, 2022, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.
- COP27 concluded with a breakthrough cover decision, known as the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan.
- This cover decision highlights a new collective quantified goal on climate finance, creating a specific fund for loss and damage, transformation to a low-carbon economy, and a reaffirmation of the commitment to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

Recommended response:

- I am pleased to share that the Government of Yukon sent a small delegation to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, known as Conference of the Parties (COP27), this fall.
- Attending COP27 was an opportunity to raise climate issues affecting the Yukon on the global stage and a chance to build on international commitments.
- With adaptation and resilience as key issues at COP27, it was critical that Yukon's voice be heard as we experience the impacts of climate change disproportionately compared to the rest of Canada.

Additional response:

- The Yukon is a national leader in climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Our delegation to COP27 included two representatives from the Department of Environment.
- Our delegation presented on two panels while at COP27:

Session Briefing Note

COP 27

Fall 2022
Environment

1. We **partnered** with the Northwest Territories and Yukon University to speak to the climate impacts on the North, and the importance of partnerships and collaboration in building resilience; and
2. We **partnered** with the Governments of British Columbia and PEI to speak to our efforts to achieve net-zero from coast to coast to coast.

Third response:

- Attending COP27 **was** our opportunity to not only demonstrate our successes, but also to learn from, and collaborate with other jurisdictions in tackling the climate crisis.
- As part of our joint panel with the Government of Northwest Territories, we also **emphasized** the importance of partnerships and collaboration on climate change adaptation.
- Representing the unique circumstances of Canada's north at this international conference **was** especially pertinent in light of numerous declarations of a climate emergency in the Yukon and climate change-related events, including flooding and wildfires, happening across the territory.
- The Government of Yukon plans to support a youth delegate to attend COP28 in the United Arab Emirates in 2023.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions on what messaging the Government of Yukon delegation **brought** to COP27.
- There may be questions about the size of the delegation, who **attended**, and the importance of attending in person. The Yukon Party may also ask about bringing a youth delegate to COP27, a program established under the previous government.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****COP 27****Environment****Background:**

- The United Nations Climate Change Conference brings together leaders from across the globe for deliberation on issues around climate change and has helped foster dialogue and debate on areas of priority for climate adaptation and mitigation.
- COP27 prioritized finance and greenhouse gas mitigation discussions to encourage countries to set more ambitious emissions reduction targets for 2030.
- Since 2005, the Government of Yukon has sent delegations to a number of United Nations Climate Change Conference meetings. Most recently, the Yukon government attended COP22 in Marrakesh (2016), as well as the historic COP21 in Paris (2015).
- The Government of Canada sent one Yukon youth representative to COP27 from the Environment and Climate Change Youth Council. Other youth representatives from the Yukon attended COP27 through the Students on Ice Arctic Policy Cohort.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2022.11.21

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Climate Resilience in Infrastructure**Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The impacts of climate change on the Yukon are being felt everywhere.
- Whether it be wildfires, flooding, increased precipitation, permafrost thaw or more avalanches – our territory is changing quickly, and we need to be prepared for more changes to come.
- That is why it is so important that the infrastructure we are building today will withstand the climate impacts of tomorrow.
- To support our understanding of how climate change is impacting our infrastructure, the Yukon government recently released the first Yukon Climate Risk Assessment.
 - This report is essential to become more resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- Furthermore, our government is conducting climate risk assessments of all major transportation infrastructure and major building projects above \$10 million.
- A framework for climate hazard assessments is being developed for capital projects under the threshold.

Additional response:

- Climate risk assessments evaluate the infrastructure's vulnerability to climate change and use that information to incorporate adaptation measures into the design to mitigate climate change impacts.
- The assessment considers the potential damage, how likely it is to occur, and what options exist to mitigate that threat.

CONFIDENTIAL**Tab 26****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Climate Resilience in Infrastructure**Highways and
Public Works

-
- For example, we are using a climate risk assessment on the second phase of the North Klondike Highway Upgrade.
 - This assessment will be finished by the end of this year and we will use the information from it to help us build a more resilient, safe highway for years to come.

Third response:

- We are also partnering with Yukon University on a project to improve the Yukon's capacity for assessing and managing the impacts of climate change in buildings.
- This project will develop tools to help us protect our buildings from climate change hazards such as floods, wildfires, and thawing permafrost.
- Incorporating climate resiliency right from the conceptual design stage for all infrastructure projects is important in ensuring that we build infrastructure that accounts for future climate events.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Climate change impacts continue to be felt throughout the territory.

Background:

- Climate risk assessments may focus on determining risk for permafrost, fire, flood and other environmental factors.
- We continue to build on the findings of the Climate Risk Assessment report. The report was published in 2022 and is a summary of the input received from First Nations, municipalities, various Yukon government departments and subject matter experts.

CONFIDENTIAL**Session Briefing Note****Climate Resilience in Infrastructure****Tab 26****Fall 2022**Highways and
Public Works

-
- We are also working with other northern jurisdictions including the Government of Northwest Territories and the Government of Nunavut to inform best practices and lessons learned from each other's projects.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

September 7, 2022

Date Approved

CONFIDENTIAL**ENV #27 EMR #34****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Our Clean Future – First Nations Engagement**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon developed *Our Clean Future: a Yukon strategy for climate change, energy and a green economy* in partnership with Yukon First Nations, transboundary Indigenous groups, and municipalities.
- Our engagement for the development of *Our Clean Future* encouraged partners to provide feedback on strategic direction and specific actions through one-on-one meetings, surveys, public meetings and youth-specific events.
- Of the Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous groups invited to partner, the majority provided feedback through many different avenues.
- In addition to one-on-one meetings with partners, the Government of Yukon held four partner meetings with Yukon First Nations, Transboundary Indigenous groups and municipalities during the development and drafting of *Our Clean Future*.
- In collaboration with our Indigenous and municipal partners, we held multiple rounds of public engagement in 2018 and 2019. Notably, we hosted public meetings in 14 communities with 287 participants from Yukon and transboundary Indigenous groups.

Second response:

- *Our Clean Future's* Vision and Principles were developed collaboratively between the Government of Yukon and our partners.
- *Our Clean Future* includes actions our partners can do which complement and build on Government of Yukon commitments.

CONFIDENTIAL**ENV #27 EMR #34****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Our Clean Future – First Nations Engagement**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

- Several Indigenous and municipal partners put forward ambitious actions they will undertake to work toward our collective objectives.
- In addition to *Our Clean Future* actions being taken by First Nation governments, we applaud the Yukon First Nations Climate Action Fellowship and the work they are putting into the Yukon First Nations Climate Reconnection Vision and Action Plan.

Third response

- Since the release of *Our Clean Future* in 2020, we have seen progress in reaching our goals, including reducing our greenhouse gas emissions, ensuring reliable, affordable and renewable energy, adapting to climate change impacts and building a green economy.
- There are 173 actions in *Our Clean Future* that support these goals, with 23 of these actions being led by First Nations and transboundary Indigenous groups, and 14 being led by municipalities. Of the 136 actions led by the Government of Yukon, over 30 involve First Nations governments.
- Partnerships with First Nations governments and transboundary Indigenous groups on *Our Clean Future* actions is essential to reaching our climate goals.
- Initiatives such as the Independent Power Production policy supports First Nations led renewable energy projects, while processes such as the collaborative development of the Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment build a common understanding of resilience and prioritization of adaptation actions.

CONFIDENTIAL**ENV #27 EMR #34****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Our Clean Future – First Nations Engagement**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

- *Our Clean Future* is an adaptive strategy. We are continually adding to and amending actions in *Our Clean Future* to address identified gaps, and to reach our goals.
- Initiatives such as the publishing of the Yukon Climate Risk Assessment, the Yukon Climate Leadership Council and the recommendations developed by the Yukon Youth Panel on Climate Change will help to inform revisions to *Our Clean Future*.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The release of the Yukon Climate Leadership Council's recommendations and the release of the 2021 *Our Clean Future* Annual Report may raise questions on the inclusion of First Nations. (See [EMR #34 & 39](#); [ENV #5 & 20](#))
- The Yukon Climate Leadership Council noted that “some Yukon First Nations do not see themselves reflected in *Our Clean Future*. If they cannot see themselves, they will not participate” and applied a reconciliation framework to evaluate climate action recommendations. The Government of Yukon is analyzing how a similar framework could be applied to *Our Clean Future*.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon began connecting with Yukon First Nations, transboundary Indigenous groups, municipalities, the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Association of Yukon Communities in the fall of 2017 to participate in the development of *Our Clean Future*.
- Throughout the three-year development period of the strategy, there were varying levels of participation due to differing priorities and capacity of First Nations governments and municipalities.
- During the development, drafting and release of the draft version of *Our Clean Future*, the following meetings took place with Yukon First Nations, Transboundary Indigenous groups and municipal partners:

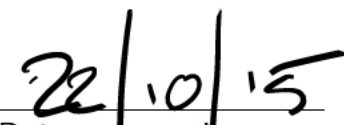
CONFIDENTIAL**ENV #27 EMR #34****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Our Clean Future – First Nations Engagement**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

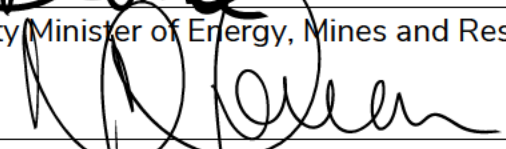
- One round of one-on-one meetings;
 - Four 'Partners Meetings'; and
 - A launch meeting and post-public engagement meeting.
- During the development, draft and release of the draft version of *Our Clean Future*, the Government of Yukon sought feedback from Yukon First Nations, Transboundary Indigenous groups and municipal partners on:
 - an engagement strategy;
 - a discussion document;
 - detailed engagement planning;
 - a survey; and
 - strategic direction.
- 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 strategy were offered to partners to review the draft version of *Our Clean Future*. Meetings to review the draft *Our Clean Future* strategy were held with ⁷⁶⁽¹⁾
- 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*. The joint input was informed by discussions at the Yukon First Nations Climate Action Gathering that the organizations hosted in February 2020. 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.
- Government of Yukon officials held one-on-one meetings with 30 environmental stakeholders and industry representatives.

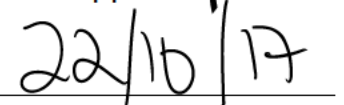
CONFIDENTIAL**ENV #27 EMR #34****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Our Clean Future – First Nations Engagement**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

- The “Working Together” section of Our Clean Future lists actions and commitments from First Nation governments, organizations and municipalities regarding climate action underway in their communities.
 - Two Yukon First Nations contributed actions: Vuntut Gwitchin Government, and White River First Nation;
 - Council of Yukon First Nations contributed an action;
 - 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.
- Addressing climate change is a collaborative effort and *Our Clean Future* is one of the many initiatives in the Yukon that contributes to our collective response to the climate emergency. (See **EMR #36**)

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Bill 21, Carbon Price Rebate
Amendments Act**

Finance

Recommended response:

- After conducting a review of provincial and territorial carbon pricing systems and rebate programs in 2021, the federal government has imposed new stringency requirements that will apply as of 2023.
- Bill 21, or the Carbon Price Rebate Amendments Act, would amend the Yukon's carbon price rebate for mining businesses to meet these new federal requirements. Specifically, Bill 21 proposes to create a specific mining business rebate within the general business rebate regime beginning in 2023. Mining businesses will continue to operate under the current framework for fuel purchased before 2023.
- Bill 21 would ensure that Yukoners, including First Nations, municipalities and businesses, continue to receive their territorially-designed carbon price rebates. If the Yukon does not meet the new requirements by 2023, then the federal government would take over control of carbon rebates in the territory, which would end support to businesses, municipalities and First Nations governments.

Additional response:

- The new mining rebate would be administered through the income tax system. Eligible mining businesses would be able to claim their new rebate at the same time that they file their annual income tax return, reducing the administrative barriers for these businesses.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Bill 21, Carbon Price Rebate
Amendments Act**Finance

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Bill 21, Carbon Price Rebate Amendments Act, was tabled on October 12, 2022.
- The federal government is reviewing provincial and territorial carbon pricing plans for the period from 2023 to 2030.
- Canada is expected to announce which provinces and territories comply with the new stringency criteria in the near future.

Background:

- Since July 2019, the Yukon has been a “voluntary backstop jurisdiction” in the federal carbon pollution pricing system. This means that the federal pollution pricing system applies in the Yukon, including the federal carbon levy. As a voluntary jurisdiction, the Government of Yukon receives the proceeds of the pollution pricing system through a transfer from the federal government.
- The Government of Yukon uses these proceeds to fund its territorially designed carbon rebate programs for households, businesses, placer and quartz mines, municipalities, and First Nations governments. These rebates are administered under the Yukon Government Carbon Price Rebate Act. In non-voluntary jurisdictions, the federal government transfers nearly all pollution pricing proceeds directly to households through the federal Climate Action Incentive payments, which are quarterly benefit payments.
- The federal government has imposed new stringency requirements for pollution pricing systems and rebate programs that will apply from 2023 to 2030. The Federal government has determined that the Yukon’s rebates for miners do not comply with these new requirements since they are directly tied to fuel consumption, which could weaken the “price signal” incentive to reduce emissions.

CONFIDENTIAL**TAB #28 A****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Bill 21, Carbon Price Rebate
Amendments Act**

Finance

- Bill 21 would sunset the current mining rebate for fuel purchased after 2022 and would introduce a new mining business rebate modelled around the current rebate for general businesses. All carbon levies paid by mining businesses would be returned to the mining sector through a refundable income tax credit calculated based on the value of capital investments in the Yukon.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Finance

October 12, 2022

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Carbon Rebate**

Finance

Recommended response:

- The Yukon's carbon rebate is revenue neutral. We are returning 100% of the federal carbon levy to four rebate groups.
- We remain committed to ensuring that the four rebate groups continue to receive more, on average, than they pay in carbon pricing levies. We are distributing 45% to individuals, 49.5% to businesses, 2.5% to First Nations governments and 3% to municipal governments.
- The business rebate account has a significant surplus balance in 2020-21 due to lower uptake, despite several outreach efforts to raise awareness such as advertisements and direct contact with organizations.
- As a result, the amount businesses receive in 2022-23 was significantly increased. The business rebate for 2022-23 is \$39.62 per \$1,000 of eligible Yukon assets, which is 244% higher than was estimated for this year at the time the rebate was developed.
- On December 11, 2020, the federal government announced proposed enhancements to its climate plan, which includes increases to the carbon levy of \$15 per tonne, per year starting in 2023, rising to \$170/tonne in 2030.

Bill 21 Carbon Price Rebate Amendments Act (SEE ALSO TAB #25)

- Bill 21, or the Carbon Price Rebate Amendments Act, proposes to create a new mining business rebate account within the general business rebate system and will reduce administrative burdens for placer and quartz miners applying for their rebates.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Carbon Rebate**Finance

- Currently, mine operators must file an annual application to determine their carbon rebate amount. Under the proposed changes, operators would be able to claim their rebate at the same time that they file their annual tax return.
- The Yukon's proposed carbon price rebate for mining businesses also meets new federal requirements.
- The proposed rebate would take effect in 2023. Mining businesses will continue to operate under the current framework for fuel purchased before 2023.

Rebate for individuals

- Individuals began receiving the 2022-23 Yukon carbon price rebate in July 2022.
- The annual individual rebate amount is \$320 (\$80 per quarter). Yukoners living outside of Whitehorse receive an additional supplement of 10%, or \$32.00 over the year.
- Payments to more than one individual in a household are made under the same rules as the federal government's payments for the Goods and Services Tax (GST) credit; one person per household will receive the rebate for all individuals.

Rebate for general businesses (other than mining)

- Yukon businesses, other than placer and quartz mining operations, receive their carbon rebate as a refundable tax credit. As with some other tax credits, businesses can apply retroactively for past tax years.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Carbon Rebate**Finance

- The uptake of the general business rebate has been low. This is partly due to tax software providers' delay in rolling out products with the appropriate carbon rebate schedules and forms.
- This lower uptake has resulted in a significant surplus balance in the business rebate account. This balance was carried forward to increase the business rebate in 2022-23. The business rebate factor for 2022-23 is \$39.62 per \$1,000 of eligible Yukon assets.
- The tax credit is calculated based on the value of a business's assets and includes incentives to invest in clean technology.
- For 2022-23, the Super Green Credit provides a rebate of about \$198 per \$1000 of clean technology assets, which include eligible solar energy systems, electric vehicles, and charging systems.
- In 2020, and again in 2022, we expanded the list of assets eligible for the Super Green Credit, for example, by including off-road electric vehicles. We update this list periodically so that it aligns with the clean technology classes provided in the federal Income Tax Regulations.
- Businesses that use exempt fuel, or those subject to the Output-Based Pricing System (OBPS) for large emitters, may be eligible for the business rebate for their other business-related activities not covered by the exemption or through the OBPS.

Rebate for mining businesses

- Mining participation in the business carbon rebate program is starting to increase. Several quartz mining companies and nearly 70 producing placer miners have applied for a rebate.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Carbon Rebate**Finance

- We are committed to supporting the Yukon's mining industry. The Yukon rebate for placer mining business provides a 100% rebate for federal fuel charges paid.
- For quartz mining businesses, the program provides 100% rebate for fuel charges paid on the first 6 kilotonnes of emissions and a 50% rebate for the next 4 kilotonnes of emissions. Large mines producing more than 10 kilotonnes of emissions annually are eligible for treatment under the federal Output-Based Pricing System.
- Miners have until September 30 to apply for a rebate for fuel charges paid in the previous calendar year. Miners that miss this deadline can still apply for the general business rebate on their tax returns.
- Emissions-intensive, trade-exposed sectors, like mining, compete with prices that are set internationally. The Yukon mining rebate recognizes that the federal carbon levy cannot be passed on to metal consumers.

Agriculture

- The federal government determines who is exempt from paying the carbon levy.
- Farmers are exempt from paying the federal carbon levy on gasoline and light fuel oil used in farming operations, using a federal definition of farming activities. (The exemption is determined following the submission of Federal Tax Form K402 – Carbon levy Exemption Certificate for Farmers).
- Propane fuel for farming is included in the list of exemptions. The federal government made the decision to exempt this group to avoid increasing the cost of food for all Canadians.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Carbon Rebate**Finance

- Farmers who buy non-exempt fuel for ancillary purposes can claim the Yukon business carbon rebate on their tax return.

First Nations governments

- Each year, the Yukon government estimates the share of carbon levies paid by each eligible rebate group to assess if they are still expected to receive more in rebates than they are expected to pay in levies.
- The 2022-23 estimates indicated that the share of carbon levies paid by Yukon First Nations governments exceeded their rebate share.
- The increase in the estimated share of carbon levies paid by First Nations governments is related to changes in their fuel use reporting to Statistics Canada, rather than a change in their fuel consumption.
- As a result, effective April 1, 2022, we increased the First Nations governments' share of the carbon rebates from 1% to 2.5%.
- We are committed to working with all First Nations governments to ensure that carbon-pricing revenues are distributed equitably. We are always interested in hearing from Yukon First Nations about different options for allocating revenues within the territory.
- First Nations governments have received their rebate on March 31 each year. The allocation that each First Nations government received was guided by the allocation formula in Chapter 19 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. The regulation governing this allocation has expired as of March 31, 2022 and will need to be replaced. Discussions concerning a replacement methodology are ongoing at the Yukon Forum fiscal working group.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Carbon Rebate**

Finance

Municipal governments

- Municipal governments receive their carbon rebate on April 1 each year. The amount that each municipal government receives is based on fixed percentages prescribed in regulation.
- The Government of Yukon remains open to exploring new formulas for distributing revenues to municipal governments.

Output-Based Pricing System (OBPS)

- We continue to work with the federal government during the implementation of the OBPS. The Government of Yukon will develop regulations to rebate any proceeds generated by the application of the federal OBPS in the territory.
- From September 6 through October 3, 2022 we engaged with the mining industry on the development of a carbon rebate for mine operators that may be subject to the OBPS. The goal is to understand the mining industry's priorities in returning carbon pricing revenues to help lower greenhouse gas emissions. The engagement occurred alongside Energy Mines and Resources' consultation on the development of intensity-based emissions targets for the mining sector. We are currently reviewing the feedback and will compile a What We Heard report in the coming months.
- In the Yukon, the only facilities that may meet the OBPS thresholds for voluntary participation (10 kilotonnes) or mandatory participation (50 kilotonnes) are quartz mines and the Yukon Energy Corporation.
- Yukon Energy emissions are typically in the voluntary range for OBPS participation. Yukon Energy is exempt from the federal levy and would

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Carbon Rebate**

Finance

not volunteer for OBPS. If Yukon Energy were to meet the mandatory threshold of 50 kilotonnes, it would be required to enroll in the OBPS.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Bill 21, Carbon Price Rebate Amendments Act, was tabled on October 12, 2022.
- The federal government is reviewing provincial and territorial carbon pricing plans for the period from 2023 to 2030.
- From September 6 through October 3, 2022, the Yukon Department of Finance engaged with the mining industry on the development of a carbon rebate for mine operators that may be subject to the OBPS.
- Carbon pricing is a common issue in the media and in past legislative sessions.
- A consultation on the review of federal OBPS regulations occurred at the beginning of 2022. Yukon sought several clarifications from the federal government through this consultation.
- Areas of concern included the lack of detail regarding how Canada will transfer funds to the Yukon government for OBPS-covered facilities operating in the territory. Yukon has received clarification regarding this process. Yukon also sought details on the OBPS treatment of electricity generation by mines and public utilities.
- On November 14, 2019, the Government of Yukon released a new draft strategy entitled, *Our Clean Future*. The draft strategy sets a target to reduce Yukon's emissions by 30% by 2030. This target was later increased to 45%.

Background:

- The federal *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* received royal assent on June 21, 2018. The federal carbon pollution pricing system has two parts:
 - a regulatory charge on fossil fuels (i.e., the carbon levy or fuel charge), and
 - a regulatory trading system for large facilities (i.e., the federal OBPS).

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Carbon Rebate**

Finance

- Pricing carbon pollution is a central pillar of Canada's efforts to address climate change through the *Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change* (PCF). All jurisdictions except Manitoba and Saskatchewan signed the PCF in December 2016.
- The first phase of the federal government's climate plan set the Canada-wide carbon price at \$20 per tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions beginning in 2019, rising by \$10 per tonne per year on April 1, up to \$50 per tonne in 2022.
- On December 11, 2020, Canada announced proposed enhancements to their climate plan, which included increases to the federal carbon levy of \$15 a year starting in 2023, rising to \$170 per tonne in 2030.
- In designing rebate programs, the Government of Yukon considered how to address the principles established in the *Pan-Canadian Framework*, namely:
 - "Carbon pricing policies should include revenue recycling to avoid a disproportionate burden on vulnerable groups and Indigenous peoples", and
 - "Carbon pricing policies should minimize competitiveness impacts and carbon leakage, particularly for emissions-intensive, trade-exposed sectors."
- Yukon officials held targeted discussions with The Low Carbon Yukon Stakeholder Committee on the design of the business rebate.
- The Low Carbon Yukon Stakeholder Committee included representation from the following organizations: Association of Yukon Communities, Cold Climate Innovation Research Centre, Klondike Placer Miners' Association, Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon, Yukon Agricultural Association, Yukon Chamber of Commerce, Yukon Conservation Society, Yukon Contractors Association, Yukon First Nations Chamber of Commerce, and the Yukon Wood Products Association.
- Officials met with the Association of Yukon Communities (AYC) to discuss the Municipal rebate. AYC presented an option for distributing their rebates across municipalities.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Carbon Rebate**Finance

- First Nations were engaged in discussions at the Yukon Forum fiscal working group meetings. First Nations did not advance any proposal for distributing their carbon rebates across First Nations governments. The Government of Yukon set the percentages based on the allocations under Chapter 19 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* in Regulations with the option to revise this when Yukon First Nations come to a consensus and propose different allocation percentages.
- The tables in the next pages provide up-to-date summary information on the carbon levies received and rebates paid.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Carbon Rebate**

Finance

Federal Fuel Charge Rates Applicable in Yukon (cents per litre unless specified)

Date of increase*	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
\$ per tonne	20	30	40	50	65	80	95	110	125	140	155	170
Gasoline	4.4	6.6	8.8	11.1	14.4	17.7	21.0	24.3	27.6	30.9	34.3	37.6
Light fuel oil	5.4	8.1	10.7	13.4	17.4	21.5	25.5	29.5	33.5	37.5	41.6	45.6
Propane	3.1	4.6	6.2	7.7	10.1	12.4	14.7	17.0	19.4	21.7	24.0	26.3
Natural gas**	3.9	5.9	7.8	9.8	12.7	15.7	18.6	21.5	24.5	27.4	30.3	33.3
Aviation turbo fuel and gasoline	Exempt				There is currently no intention to eliminate the exemption for aviation fuels used in the territories.							

*July 1 for 2019, April 1 for 2020, 2021, and 2022, TBD for future years ** Per cubic meter

Estimated Fuel use in Yukon versus rebate

	Rebate (% of total)	Estimated shares of carbon levies paid by each eligible rebate group, by year of estimation			
		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Yukon businesses	49.50%	48.82%	48.38%	48.26%	49.29%
Yukon individuals	45.00%	28.21%	28.13%	27.67%	26.56%
Municipal governments	3.00%	2.43%	2.41%	2.47%	2.27%
First Nations governments	2.50%	0.49%	0.36%	0.36%	2.09%
Visitors (tourists)	0.00%	9.99%	8.42%	8.90%	7.66%
Government of Yukon	0.00%	9.09%	11.24%	11.21%	11.03%
Government of Canada	0.00%	0.46%	0.54%	0.56%	0.57%
Other	0.00%	0.51%	0.53%	0.57%	0.54%

These estimates rely on data from Statistics Canada that is subject to a significant lag. Changes should generally be interpreted as adjustments based on more recent data, rather than changes in actual consumption.

Estimated levies and rebates to individuals

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Levy paid by individual	\$33.05	\$87.48	\$131.43	\$157.59
Rebate to individuals	\$86.00	\$192.00	\$176.00	\$320.00
Remote supplement	n/a	\$19.20	\$17.60	\$32.00

Yukon businesses rebate amounts by on asset class

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Building rebate (per \$1,000 in assets)	\$1.72	\$3.45	\$4.41	\$19.81
Equipment rebate (per \$1,000 in assets)	\$8.62	\$17.24	\$22.03	\$99.05
Green rebate (per \$1,000 in assets)	\$17.24	\$34.48	\$44.05	\$198.10

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Carbon Rebate**

Finance

Carbon Price Rebate Revolving Funds – presented in Main Estimates 2022-23 (\$'000)

	2022-23 ESTIMATE	2021-22 FORECAST	2021-22 ESTIMATE	2020-21 ACTUAL
Amounts Received				
Business	12,773	11,816	8,116	6,210
Personal	11,612	10,426	9,198	5,479
Municipal	774	695	541	365
Yukon First Nations	645	232	180	122
Emissions-Intensive Facilities	0	0	0	0
Total	25,804	23,168	18,035	12,176
Amounts Disbursed				
Business	24,588	7,332	9,671	980
Personal	14,211	7,712	7,925	6,807
Municipal	695	365	392	131
Yukon First Nations	645	232	180	122
Emissions-Intensive Facilities	0	0	0	0
Undistributed Balance	-14,335	7,527	-133	4,136
Total	25,804	23,168	18,035	12,176
Net Change in Revolving Fund				
Business	-11,815	4,484	-1,555	5,230
Personal	-2,599	2,714	1,273	-1,328
Municipal	79	330	149	234
Yukon First Nations	0	0	0	0
Emissions-Intensive Facilities	0	0	0	0
Total	-14,335	7,527	-133	4,136
Balance at Beginning of Year	14,447	6,920	-954	2,783
Balance at End of Year	112	14,447	-1,087	6,919
Increase/(Decrease) in Restricted Funds	-14,335	7,527	-133	4,136

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Finance_____
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Output-Based Pricing System (OBPS)
Engagement**

Finance

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon held discussions with large mining operators in August and September to identify options for a new carbon rebate for that industry. This new program would provide rebates for proceeds from the federal Output-Based Pricing System (OBPS).
- The new OBPS rebate program would be designed to help large mining operators and other large industrial facilities reduce their greenhouse gas emissions in the Yukon.
- Discussions were held at the same time as government's engagement on developing intensity-based emissions targets for the mining sector.
- Coordinating these two engagements provided an opportunity for mining operators to identify solutions that could support the industry to achieve these targets while also reducing the administrative effort on industry participants.
- We are currently preparing a "What We Heard" report to summarize the results of our OBPS rebate engagement. We plan to introduce a regulation to implement this new rebate program in 2023.

Additional response:

- There are currently no facilities registered in the OBPS in the Yukon. However, some facilities could voluntarily register, and some may be required to register if their emissions exceed a certain threshold.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Output-Based Pricing System (OBPS)
Engagement**

Finance

- The Government of Yukon is developing an OBPS rebate program so we can provide greater certainty for stakeholders as they approach that threshold. This will allow stakeholders to incorporate potential new clean-energy funding opportunities in their future business planning decisions.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Carbon pricing is a common issue in the media and in past legislative sessions.
 - The Government of Yukon recently engaged with large industrial facilities subject to the federal OBPS on the development of carbon rebate options.
-

Background:

- The Yukon Government Carbon Price Rebate Act allows the government to create a new program, via regulation, that would use proceeds from the federal OBPS to help large industrial facilities in the Yukon reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.
 - The OBPS is a federal program for certain large industrial facilities that provides an alternative to the regular carbon levy. The program is designed to incentivize lower emissions while maintaining competitiveness for energy intensive and trade exposed industries. Facilities operating under the OBPS generally pay less for their emissions compared to facilities that are subject to the regular carbon levy.
 - Facilities emitting 10 to 50 kilotonnes of CO₂e per year can voluntarily register in the OBPS. Registration is mandatory for facilities emitting over 50 kilotonnes of CO₂e emissions per year. In the Yukon, the only facilities that could register for the OBPS are quartz mines and the Yukon Energy Corporation (YEC). There are currently no facilities in the Yukon registered in the OBPS, however one mining facility is expected register in 2022.
-

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Output-Based Pricing System (OBPS)
Engagement**

Finance

- YEC is exempt from the federal levy and would not voluntarily register in the OBPS. If YEC's emissions exceed the mandatory threshold of 50 kilotonnes in any year, it would be required to permanently enroll in the OBPS. In 2020 YEC's emissions peaked at approximately 37 kilotonnes due to low spring water levels.
- Because the Government of Yukon voluntarily accepted the federal carbon pricing system, it can choose to receive OBPS proceeds directly as a transfer from the federal government to fund territorial programs.
- The federal government returns OBPS proceeds directly to facilities in provinces and territories that do not voluntarily adopt the federal carbon pricing system or develop their own systems that meet minimum national stringency requirements. The main program for returning OBPS proceeds in these jurisdictions is the federal Decarbonization Incentive Program, administered by the Department of Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Approved by:_____
Deputy Minister, Finance_____
[Date approved]

Session Briefing Note

Recycling in the Yukon

Fall 2022
Environment

Quick Facts

- Our Clean Future includes commitments to implement Extended Producer Responsibility in the Yukon by 2025 as part of an effort to increase waste diversion to 40% by 2030.
- Yukoners diverted 25% of waste in 2020 and 26% in 2021.
- The Yukon currently spends close to one million dollars annually to support recycling non-refundable packaging through diversion credits.

Recommended response:

- The existing recycling system in the Yukon is in a vulnerable position as it currently lacks the financial stability and certainty necessary to ensure its sustainability.
- The financial vulnerability of the Yukon's recycling system was recently highlighted by Raven Recycling, which is experiencing revenue shortfalls because of the collapse in certain commodity prices.
- Raven Recycling has pointed to the need for an Extended Producer Responsibility system to provide stability to the recycling sector.
- To ensure the sustainability of recycling programs that Yukoners have come to expect, the Government of Yukon has committed to adopting an Extended Producer Responsibility framework.

Additional response:

- From now until January 2023, we are seeking feedback from Yukoners to ensure we are building an Extended Producer Responsibility system that works for Yukon.
- From November 1 to 3, 2022, we co-hosted the Yukon Recycling Summit with the City of Whitehorse.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Recycling in the Yukon

Environment

- At the summit, experts in the recycling and waste management industry from the Yukon and across Canada discussed the challenges facing the Yukon's recycling system and how tools, like an Extended Producer Responsibility System, could be used to address them.
- I want to encourage Yukoners to take the Extended Producer Responsibility survey and read the discussion paper, which are available now on Yukon.ca until January 27, 2023.
- We will also be holding additional meetings with stakeholders over the coming months.

Third response:

- Extended Producer Responsibility is a waste management approach that shifts the responsibility for end-of-life management of product and packaging waste from municipalities, government, and taxpayers to producers.
- We know Yukoners are dealing with the cost of living increases, but expect few to no cost increases to be passed on to Yukoners at places like the grocery store under the new Extended Producer Responsibility approach.
- The new approach will also recognize and exempt small Yukon businesses that do not sell large quantities of certain materials, like printed-paper and packaging, from the obligations to manage these materials.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Public engagement on Extended Producer Responsibility was launched on November 1, 2022, during the Recycling Summit, which may lead to questions from the Yukon public and opposition on the status of the government's Extended Producer Responsibility commitment under Our Clean Future.

Session Briefing Note

Recycling in the Yukon

Fall 2022
Environment

- Questions may be raised ^{74(1)(a)}

Background:

- In 2014, the *Environment Act* was amended to enable the creation of regulations for Extended Producer Responsibility in the Yukon.
- The Yukon government currently provides approximately \$1 million in diversion credits to recycling processors annually, which is the current mechanism for encouraging the recycling of non-refundable materials. They are a non-competitive, non-binding form of procurement for services that are expensive and non-responsive to fluctuating commodity prices of recycled materials.
- Raven Recycling recently noted that the price of corrugated cardboard has fallen to near zero from about \$130 per tonne. This removes a major source of revenue for the processor.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2022-11-14

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Wellgreen Site**

Environment

Quick Facts

- The Wellgreen site 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 were milled.
- Costs for the closure and remediation of the Wellgreen 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 abandoned Wellgreen mine site is at a critical stage as groundwater analysis indicates that the tailings are now generating acid and acidity levels have been detected outside of the facility and are moving toward Quill Creek.
- The site is also in the Denali fault zone and an earthquake could mobilize the tailings into the nearby environment if left in the current state.
- Timely closure and reclamation work is necessary to avert potentially significant environmental impacts; this is why this year, we have budgeted \$3 million to complete the design for remediation and planning work.

Additional response:

- We recognize the concerns raised by both Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation about the risks posed by this site if it is not remediated.
- These concerns and other considerations are addressed in the remediation plan that was submitted to the Yukon Environmental Socio-

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Wellgreen Site**Environment

economic Assessment Board in 2020 and in subsequent discussions between the Department of Environment and the First Nations.

- We anticipate active remediation can be completed in one to two years and will conduct monitoring of the site over the next five to ten years.

Third response:

- Even though the Wellgreen mill operated in the 1970s and was permitted by the Government of Canada prior to devolution, the site is currently under the

is in discussions with the Government of Canada about a cost-sharing agreement to clean up the site.

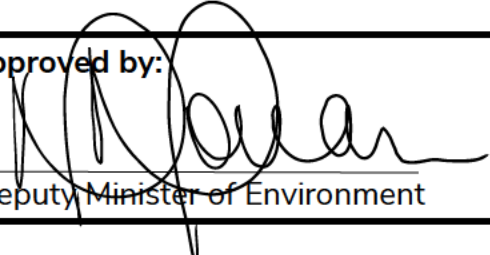
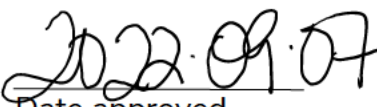
- At a minimum, it is expected the site will be returned to an industrial standard, in compliance with the Yukon's Contaminated Sites Regulation, although efforts will be made to return the site to a boreal forest state if feasible.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The budget for remediation expenditures in 2022-2023 is approximately \$3 million for the design and planning of the Wellgreen site. This may result in questions from the Opposition.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon is pursuing a collaborative agreement with the Government of Canada which ⁷⁶⁽¹⁾

Approved by:
Deputy Minister of Environment
Date approved

CONFIDENTIAL

Session Briefing Note

Wolverine Mine

#32
Fall 2022
Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- The Receiver - PricewaterhouseCoopers – conducted a thorough and fair sales process that unfortunately did not result in the transition of the Wolverine site to a new owner.
- The Government of Yukon and PricewaterhouseCoopers are ensuring protection of the environment by continuing water treatment, maintaining and upgrading critical site infrastructure and addressing urgent site needs.
- Remediation of Wolverine is a priority and we anticipate the closure and design processes will commence once the Government of Yukon has taken over responsibility of the site from the Receiver later this fall.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon will undertake remediation; we are in the process of determining the costs and timeframe for this work. This work requires an assessment of the current state of the site and a revision of the current liability booking.

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.

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Session Briefing Note

Wolverine Mine

#32
Fall 2022
Energy, Mines and Resources

- The Receiver is now overseeing care and maintenance of the site and is responsible for complying with regulatory authorizations and applicable statutes.
- Natural Resource Officers inspect the site regularly to ensure appropriate measures are in place to protect the environment and human health and safety.

Anticipated Expenditures and Security (See BN #103)

- Since 2018, the Government of Yukon has spent \$24 million associated with care and maintenance on site. Approximately \$10.5 million of those expenditures were recovered from financial security posted by Yukon Zinc Corporation.

Sale Process

- The sale process led by the Receiver concluded in fall 2021 following evaluation of multiple bids. No bid met all of the criteria set out in the court-approved Sale and Investment Solicitation Plan.
- On January 21, 2022, the court approved the termination of the sale, the sale of the adjacent Logan claims, and the sealing of commercially sensitive bid information for a period of three years.

Legal

- The court's decision regarding ownership of assets by a third party, Welichem General Research Partnership, required the Receiver to replace essential assets on site with funding provided by the Government of Yukon.
- The Receiver and Welichem have reached an agreement in principle requiring Welichem to remove its assets from the site and providing that all assets used for water treatment remain part of the mine property. The final terms of the arrangement will be captured in a settlement agreement filed in court.

Approved by:

Heather Mills A/DM

Deputy Minister

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

Aug 29, 2022

Date approved

Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project (BMC Minerals) - current statusExecutive 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 will not comment further on this case while it is before the court. However, we look forward to the court providing clarity on the issues raised in the case.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- BMC Minerals started the application process for both the Quartz Mining License and Water License.
- 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 statusExecutive 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 concerns raised around the Finlayson caribou herd and ensure First Nation participation in the development of monitoring and mitigation efforts to inform the next stages of the project.

Consultation with Kaska Nations

- In April 2021 the Kaska First Nations submitted a letter stating their view that "there is no viable option other than to reject the KZK Screening Report and Recommendations". The letter was signed by the Chiefs of the RRDC, LFN, Dease River First Nation and Kwadacha Nation and is the first correspondence received indicating a collective Kaska position.
- From July 2021 to June 2022, Decision Bodies consulted with Kaska First Nations to discuss the Project and modifications to the terms and conditions in an effort to address Kaska concerns. The Decision Bodies sent proposed modified terms and conditions and supporting documents for review to LFN and RRDC on September 21 and October 5, 2021, respectively.
- In response to a May 20, 2022 letter from LFN and RRDC, Decision Bodies sent a letter to LFN and RRDC on May 25, 2022 confirming that Decision Bodies were of the view that they had sufficient information to move forward on a decision. The letter further indicated the Decision Bodies' intention to issue a decision document by June 15.
- 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

Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project (BMC Minerals) - current statusExecutive Council
Office

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.

- On June 24, 2022, Decision Bodies sent a letter to RRDC and LFN organizing next steps following the release of the decision document and implementation of modified terms and conditions specific to the Finlayson Caribou Herd.
- On July 18, 2022, YG followed up by letter seeking to initiate work to establish a Finlayson Caribou Herd Oversight Committee and start implementing specific terms in the document.
- 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.
- On October 11, 2022, the Government of Yukon sent a letter to RRDC and LFN that updated them on activities related to the Project including the implementation of the terms and conditions of the decision document and the regulatory process for BMC's application for a quartz mine license.
- On October 20, 2022 RRDC provided a letter of response proposing a RRDC-YG Fish and Wildlife Management Authority be established on a without prejudice to the litigation before the courts.
- YG responded by letter to RRDC on November 10, 2022, confirming YG's commitment to develop a RRDC-YG Joint Management Authority and that concurrently we discuss the establishment of a Finlayson Caribou Herd Oversight Committee.

BMC Engagement

- In August 2022, BMC submitted applications for a quartz mining licence and water licence.
- The Department of Environment met and continues to engage with BMC and their consultant to discuss a path forward on BMC's work plan towards additional monitoring of baseline information.
- Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) prepared a Risk Characterization of the Finlayson caribou herd to meet their requirements under the federal Species at

Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project (BMC Minerals) - current statusExecutive Council
Office

Risk Act (SARA). BMC critiqued the Finlayson caribou herd draft risk characterization. In an August 26, 2022 response, ECCC acknowledged BMC's technical comments provided on the draft risk characterization and explained the conclusions were consistent with the YESAA conclusions, that ECCC's recommended offsetting measures provide mitigation approaches to help balance the effects of the project, and also meet SARA requirements.

- In a meeting with ECCC and YG on October 21, ECCC confirmed that the draft risk characterization is now moot as the report was to inform the decision. ECCC is confident that the decision document addresses offsetting as was raised in the report.

Approved by:_____
Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office_____
Date

Information Note**November 2022****Kudz Ze Kayah Project****Executive Council
Office**

Issue

- On June 15, 2022, the Government of Canada (Natural Resources Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada) and the Yukon Government issued a joint Decision Document as decision bodies under the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* (YESAA), which allows the Kudz Ze Kayah mine project to proceed to the regulatory phase, subject to specific terms and conditions.
- On July 15, 2022, the Ross River Dena Council (RRDC), on its own behalf and on behalf of all members of the Kaska Nation filed an Application in the court seeking judicial review of the decision bodies' June 15 Decision in respect of the Kudz Ze Kayah Project. The named respondents are the Government of Yukon, and the Attorney General of Canada for the federal decision bodies, Natural Resources Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.
- In August 2022, BMC submitted applications for a quartz mining licence and water licence. BMC also submitted land applications in October 2022 related to widening the access road, use of quarries and areas for waste rock storage for the Project.
- Department of Environment met and continues to engage with BMC and their consultant to discuss a path forward on BMC's work plan towards additional monitoring of baseline information.

Background**Consultation with Kaska following the Decision**

- On June 24, 2022, Decision Bodies sent a letter to RRDC and LFN organizing next steps following the release of the decision document and implementation of modified terms and conditions specific to the Finlayson Caribou Herd.
- On July 18, 2022, YG followed up by letter seeking to initiate work to establish a Finlayson Caribou Herd Oversight Committee to start implementing specific terms in the document.
- On October 11, 2022, the Government of Yukon sent a letter to RRDC and LFN that updated them on activities related to the Project including the implementation of the terms and conditions of the decision document and the regulatory process for BMC's application for a quartz mine license. The letter was jointly signed by directors from Executive Council Office (ECO) Major Projects Yukon (MPY), Energy Mines and Resources (EMR) Mineral Resources Branch (MRB) and Department of Environment (ENV) Environmental Protection and Assessment Branch (EPA).
- On October 20, 2022 RRDC provided a response to YG's October 11, 2022 letter. RRDC requested that YG work with RRDC to form a YG-RRDC fish and wildlife joint management authority (RRDC-YG joint management Authority) to manage potential impacts to the Finlayson Caribou Herd. The establishment of the YG-RRDC Joint Management Authority would be without

Information Note**November 2022****Kudz Ze Kayah Project****Executive Council
Office**

prejudice to the petition before the courts. YG had committed to RRDC to develop a RRDC-YG Joint Management Authority in 2018.

- YG responded by letter to RRDC on November 10, 2022 (attached), confirming YG's commitment to develop a RRDC-YG Joint Management Authority and that concurrently we discuss the establishment of a Finlayson Caribou Hear Oversight Committee. The response also informed RRDC and LFN that we would be sharing BMC's proposed Finlayson Caribou Herd Management Plan.
- On November 14, 2022, EMR-Land Management Branch notified Kaska First Nations by letter that BMC had submitted land applications and would be initiating consultation on the applications soon.

67(3)(a), 76(1)

Engagement with BMC following the Decision

- The Department of Environment has met with BMC and their consultant to discuss a path forward on BMC's work plan towards additional monitoring related to the term requiring an 2-years of baseline studies
- Environment has committed to reviewing monitoring and study proposals submitted by BMC and sharing the BMC monitoring plan with Kaska First Nations.
- Senior officials from ENV are scheduled to meet with BMC officials on October 31 to discuss ongoing monitoring plans.
- On October 12, 2022, MRB wrote to BMC to confirm receipt of the quartz mining licence applications.
- MRB met with BMC on October 24, 2022 to discuss the regulatory review further and confirmed that MRB is hiring a consultant that will support part of the regulatory review. MRB indicated that the review will initially focus on waste rock, tailings and water management.
- BMC met with ENV on October 31, 2022 to discuss the proposed monitoring plan to meet the 2-year baseline study for the Finlayson Caribou Herd. ENV confirmed they would provide comments to BMC before November 18, 2022.
- Since the meeting BMC informed YG that they have shared the current version of the monitoring plan with Kaska First Nations and sought their feedback.
- YG will share an updated plan, should BMC choose to update the plan following the comments on November 18 with Kaska First Nations and seek their input.

Engagement with Canada following the Decision

Information Note**November 2022****Kudz Ze Kayah Project****Executive Council
Office**

- Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) prepared a Risk Characterization of the Finlayson caribou herd to meet their requirements under the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA). BMC critiqued the Finlayson caribou herd draft risk characterization. In an August 26, 2022, response, ECCC acknowledged BMC's technical comments provided on the draft risk characterization and explained the conclusions were consistent with the YESAA conclusions, that ECCC's recommended offsetting measures provide mitigation approaches to help balance the effects of the project, and also meet SARA requirements.
- In a meeting between ENV, BMC and ECCC on October 28, 2022, ECCC confirmed that the draft risk characterization is now moot as the report was to inform the decision.
- ECCC informed BMC that the draft risk characterization report has concluded and that ECCC believes the terms in the decision document appropriately include the consideration of offsets to impacts to the FCH.

Executive Committee Screening

- The Executive Committee screening for the Project began in March 2017. YG initiated consultation with RRDC and LFN in December 2016 before the Project was submitted to the Executive Committee.
- During the assessment,^{76(1), 67(3)(a)}

Rules based timelines for the Executive Committees' process were extended in an effort to accommodate these capacity issues.

- In October 2020 the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board's Executive Committee (EC) released the final screening report for the project recommending it proceed subject to specific terms and conditions.
- In January 2021, the federal decision bodies referred the recommendation back to the EC for reconsideration on the basis that the analysis in the screening report was insufficient to support the recommendation.
- YG issued a statement on January 22, 2021, indicating it was satisfied with and supported the final screening report issued by the EC and was prepared to accept the recommendations.
- In March 2021 the EC issued the Referral Conclusion stating that its four members were "deadlocked" in its reconsideration of the screening report. As a result of the "deadlock", the Executive Committee was deemed to have reissued the October 2020 screening report.
- Kaska First Nation, in particular Liard First Nation (LFN) and Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) continued to have concerns regarding the potential for additional impacts to, among other

Information Note**November 2022****Kudz Ze Kayah Project****Executive Council
Office**

concerns, the Finlayson Caribou herd and subsequently to the exercise of their subsistence harvest rights.

- In April 2021 the Kaska First Nations submitted a letter to YESAB stating their view that “there is no viable option other than to reject the KZK Screening Report and Recommendations”. The letter was signed by the Chiefs of the RRDC, LFN, Dease River First Nation and Kwadacha Nation and is the first correspondence received indicating a collective Kaska position.
- From July 2021 to June 2022, Decision Bodies consulted with Kaska First Nation to discuss the Project and modifications to the terms and conditions in an effort to address Kaska concerns. The decision bodies sent proposed modified terms and conditions and supporting documents for review to LFN and RRDC on September 21 and October 5, 2021, respectively.
- In response to a May 20, 2022 letter from LFN and RRDC, decision bodies sent a letter to LFN and RRDC on May 25, 2022, confirming that decision bodies were of the view that they had sufficient information to move forward on a decision. The letter further indicated the decision bodies’ intention to issue a decision document by June 15, 2022.
- 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.
- Kaska First Nations communicated that they believe YG and Canada had not met their obligations for deep consultation with Kaska.
- The Decision document was issued more than a year after the regulatory deadline of May 5, 2021, to allow for coordination with Federal Decision Bodies and consultation with Kaska Nations.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Paper Bag Ban

Environment

Quick Facts:

- In 2021, the Yukon government held a two-month public engagement on banning single-use bags.
- Four hundred and seventy-eight people responded to the public survey and the Yukon government held seven stakeholder meetings.
- The ban on single-use **plastic** bags has been successful, with no recorded incidents of businesses giving out these bags since the ban came into force.

Recommended response:

- On January 1, 2023, the ban on single-use **paper** bags will come into effect in the Yukon.
- This upcoming ban is the second phase of the Yukon government's ban on single-use bags, which started with a ban on single-use plastic bags on January 1, 2022.
- Banning single-use bags, both plastic and paper, supports the broader shift away from single-use products to reusable alternatives.
- During our public engagement on the ban, a clear majority of those surveyed indicated they preferred a "plastic first, paper later" phased approach to allow Yukoners and Yukon businesses to adapt to the ban.

Additional response:

- During the recent Yukon Recycling Summit, we heard from Yukon residents and recycling stakeholders who highlighted the need to reduce the amount of waste in our recycling system.
- Single-use products like paper bags are resource-intensive and create emissions when being produced, transported and recycled.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Paper Bag Ban

Environment

- The ban on single-use paper bags is another step toward reducing waste and protecting the Yukon's environment.
- Yukon's ban also complements the federal government's upcoming ban on single-use plastics, which will include single-use cutlery, food service ware, ring carriers, stir sticks, and straws.

Third response:

- To accommodate situations where there is no readily available alternative, single-use bags can still be offered for use in the Yukon.
- This includes food takeout bags, pharmacy bags and bags for carrying bulk grocery store items like vegetables and fruits, as well as hardware bags for items like bolts, screws and nails.
- To support waste reduction, I continue to encourage all Yukoners to bring reusable bags along on their errands.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Members of the media, public or Opposition may have questions about the upcoming ban on single-use paper bags.

Background:

- In 2019, the Government of Yukon engaged the public in a proposal to place a surcharge on single-use bags. Feedback received during the 2019 engagement showed support for a ban on single-use bags instead of a surcharge.
- In response to this feedback, the Government of Yukon tabled Bill 14 in the Fall 2020 Sitting to amend the *Environment Act* to enable regulations to ban single-use items.
- With the passing of Bill 14, the government conducted a public engagement from January to March 2021. The ban took effect when the *Reduction on Single Use Bags Regulation* came into effect on October 1, 2021.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved

Prepared for Minister Clarke
Department of Environment

Date prepared: November 7, 2022
Last Updated: N/A

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Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Avian Influenza

Environment

Quick Facts

- Avian influenza, also known as avian or bird flu, is caused by infection with an avian influenza virus (AIV).
- There are several different strains of AIV, and some are commonly found in wild birds.
- Currently, an avian influenza outbreak is occurring in North America and elsewhere, causing significant mortality in domestic and wild birds.

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is collaborating with Environment and Climate Change Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service to monitor wild birds for highly pathogenic avian influenza.
- Avian influenza viruses can cause illness in wild birds, domestic birds such as poultry, and rarely in humans.
- Avian influenza has been confirmed in five wild birds in the Yukon and preliminarily detected in two other wild birds and one red fox. No domestic birds in the Yukon have tested positive for the virus.

Additional response:

- We will continue monitoring wild and domestic birds in the Yukon for avian influenza.
- The Agriculture Branch and the Animal Health Unit are providing guidance to poultry owners on how to protect their birds from disease.

Third Response:

- Yukoners can help monitor wildlife diseases by reporting sick, injured or dead birds, particularly waterfowl and scavenger species such as ravens and eagles.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Avian Influenza

Environment


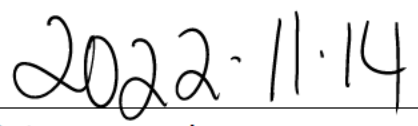
- Yukoners can also help prevent avian influenza in domestic and wild birds by using good biosecurity practices for poultry and not feeding wild birds, which encourages them to congregate.
- More information on how to keep birds healthy is available at Yukon.ca.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Fall migration has resulted in increased detection of avian influenza viruses in other provinces and states.
- Avian influenza has been identified in wild birds and domestic poultry in several provinces across Canada this year, including in wild birds in the Yukon.

Background:

- Avian influenza virus (AIVs) exist in wild bird populations worldwide and have for a long time.
- These viruses are classified as 'highly pathogenic' when a strain causes mass disease and death in domestic birds (poultry).
- Avian influenza is a reportable disease under the federal *Health of Animals Act* and *Regulations* and is a reportable hazard under the *Yukon Animal Health Act*.
- The Government of Canada takes the lead on avian influenza monitoring and response activities, with coordination and assistance from the provinces and territories.
- The Animal Health Unit is prepared to respond to suspected cases of avian influenza by facilitating testing and taking steps to reduce disease spread. Partners in the federal government (Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency) lay out these procedures.

Approved by:
Deputy Minister of Environment
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Animal Protection and
Control Act**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon knows that animals are important to Yukoners. We support responsible stewardship of animals - both livestock and pets – that are under Yukoners' care.
- In response to ongoing concerns regarding public safety, the risk of feral animal populations becoming established, and being able to enforce standards of care for animals, we completed a comprehensive review of animal protection and control legislation in the Yukon.
- We are developing this new legislation to provide broader protection of animal welfare. It will support enforcement when uncontrolled animals threaten people, property or the environment.

Additional response:

- This new act will reflect the values of Yukoners and meet our duty to provide humane care and responsible control of companion animals and livestock.
- It will also address concerns identified by the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and Renewable Resources Councils by providing tools to prevent feral animals from damaging the environment.
- Implementation of the new act and regulations is anticipated for 2023 and will be done jointly by the departments of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Animal Protection and
Control Act**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources**Third response:**

- The Government of Yukon has been working toward revising this legislation for several years. In 2018, we engaged Yukoners through a public survey, received over 900 responses, and held 10 community meetings.
- In fall 2019, we re-engaged with First Nations, communities, the agriculture industry, veterinarians, animal rescue operators, mushers, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other stakeholders who work with animals.
- The valuable input received from Yukoners was carefully considered and informed the drafting of this new legislation.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions on how the new legislation brings standards of care into effect and when it is expected to be in place (2023).
- This legislative review was prioritized following an inquest into dogs that killed a Ross River resident in September 2016. The Chief Coroner recommended the Dog Act be reviewed to improve the government's ability to address public safety concerns regarding dogs at large.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon's animal protection and control legislation is outdated, resulting in low legal animal welfare standards and limits to the Government of Yukon's ability to manage animals in the territory.
- The Animal Protection Officer receives, on average, 115 complaints per year. The complaints include dogs running at large, escaped or feral animals interfering with

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Animal Protection and
Control Act**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

highway traffic, dogs fighting or attacking other animals, and dogs threatening or biting people.

- The Pounds Act was amended in the fall of 2017 to align with the *Highways Act* and improve the Government of Yukon's ability to respond to stray livestock across the territory. It will be merged with the proposed new animal protection and control legislation.
- Public engagement took place in 2018 and 2019, and a What We Heard document summarizing the feedback is available on yukon.ca/engagements.
- Under the new legislation, the Ministers of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources will play complementary roles in implementation and enforcement.
- The new legislation will allow our government to respond to issues regarding livestock control (e.g. escaped livestock) that may directly impact public and environmental health.
- The new legislation will set a standard of care in the Yukon for all animals, including livestock. This legislation will be consistent with animal welfare standards in other jurisdictions.

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

September 9, 2022

Date approved

CONFIDENTIAL

Session Briefing Note

ENV #42 / EMR #20
Fall 2022

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* (*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.
- We continue to monitor wildlife populations for *M. ovi* and other pathogens. To date, *M. ovi* has not been detected in the Yukon's wild sheep or goats.

Additional response:

- We have been working with farmers since 2019 to conduct animal testing for respiratory pathogens and upgrade fencing to ensure compliance with the order.
- There is no cost to farmers for testing and they can apply for compensation for eligible costs incurred to comply with the order.
- Over \$225,000 has been paid to owners for fencing costs and almost \$270,000 has been paid to compensate owners for losses and the destruction of animals that tested positive.
- In the coming year, the Animal Health Unit will 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.

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Session Briefing Note

ENV #42 / EMR #20
Fall 2022

Domestic Sheep and Goats Control Order

Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

Third Response:

- Since the Control Order came into effect, one farmer in the Yukon was convicted of an offence under the Animal Health Act for failing to comply with the order. They were sentenced to surrender their goats.
- This conviction and sentence was upheld on appeal by the Yukon Supreme Court and the individual no longer owns goats.
- The court's decision reinforces the importance and validity of the Control Order to protect the health of the Yukon's wildlife.
- And I am happy to share that in January 2022, Dr. Mary VanderKop was awarded the Federal Outstanding Statesman Award by the Wild Sheep Foundation to recognize her contribution to wild sheep preservation by implementing the Control Order.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions on the recent court case regarding non-compliance with the Control Order.
- The Control Order Appeal Board has closed its first appeal in March 2022 under the Control Order, granting the farmer a slight increase in compensation.
- Sheep and goat owners and wildlife stakeholders are questioning what will happen after the Control Order is no longer in effect.


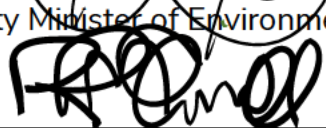
Background:

- The Yukon has the largest population of wild thimhorn 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.

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Session Briefing Note**ENV #42 / EMR #20**
Fall 2022**Domestic Sheep and
Goats Control Order**Environment
Energy, Mines and Resources

- Annual testing of sheep and goats in the Yukon has shown that importing live animals presents a high risk of bringing *M. ovi* to the Yukon.
- Farmers and owners of sheep and goats implement and maintain approved fencing requirements. The fencing requirements is an effective means to properly contain sheep and goats, which further reduces the risk of transmission from domestic to wild sheep.
- We are responding to this risk by updating import policies to reduce the chance of domestic sheep and goats bringing *M. ovi* to the Yukon and to provide a means for farmers to help manage risk of transmission and long-term health of domestic sheep and goats.
- The Agriculture Branch currently provides funding to help farmers pay for *M. ovi* testing on domestic sheep and goats to provide an incentive before they are imported to the Yukon. This further reduces the risk of introducing *M. ovi* to both domestic and wild sheep and goats in the Yukon and helps ensure long-term health of Yukon's domestic sheep and goats.

Approved by:


Deputy Minister of Environment
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources2022.09.15
Date approved22/9/25
Date approved

CONFIDENTIAL**#50****Session Briefing Note
Caribou Herd Management****Fall 2022**
Environment**Quick Facts**

- There are 29 different caribou herds located throughout the Yukon.
- To monitor our caribou herds, we deploy collars to track their seasonal movements, conduct multiple composition surveys each year and typically one to three population censuses.
- We co-manage a number of herds with other governments, including First Nations, provincial/territorial agencies (BC/NT), and Alaskan state and federal agencies.

Recommended response:

- The primary tools we use to manage caribou populations in the Yukon are population monitoring and harvest management.
- Population monitoring involves deploying collars to track distribution and movement. We also conduct fall composition surveys and population censuses.
- Harvest management for some herds are guided by herd management plans, such as the Porcupine, Southern Lakes and Fortymile caribou herds.
- We also use the following regulatory tools to manage the harvest of caribou herds: Permit Hunt Authorizations, quotas through establishing hunting closures, and non-issuances of licences. The use of these tools is intended to allow a herd to recover.

Additional response:

- One such herd we have limited licensed harvest on is the Finlayson caribou herd, which is in the traditional territories of the Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation.

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- In order to address our shared concerns for this herd, no resident hunting permits have been issued for Finlayson caribou since the 2018-2019 hunting season. Outfitter quotas are also set at zero for this herd.
- Although our latest census estimate and composition survey of the Finlayson caribou suggests that the herd may be stabilizing, we need to continue to monitor it to ensure this is the trend over time prior to having further harvest allocation discussions.
- Any future licensed harvest of this herd would require further discussion between Government of Yukon, Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation.

Third response:

- Harvest management discussions across the territory can be challenging, but we can 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.

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 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.

Background:

- In 2021, the Department of Environment conducted 12 caribou composition surveys, completed census work on five caribou herds, and deployed collars in 10 caribou herds (see BN 52).

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Caribou Herd Management****Fall 2022
Environment**

- Composition surveys provide estimates of adult sex ratios and calf recruitment and allow us to monitor long-term population trends.
- Department of Environment is also undertaking a review of the 2012 Chisana caribou plan, with First Nation governments (Kluane and White River), federal and state agencies in Alaska. The plan contains recommendations to support a stable or increasing population.
- Department of Environment currently has two range assessments completed for the Southern Lakes 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 effects of land use on caribou.

Finlayson caribou herd

- The department introduced a Permit Hunt Authorization for the Finlayson caribou herd in 1998, issuing 30 permits annually until 2018. No licensed hunting opportunities have been made available for the Finlayson caribou herd since 2018.
- We have continued to monitor the herd. The population estimate in 1996 was 4,537 animals, which had declined to 2,712 animals in 2017.
- In March 2022, census results indicated 3,359 animals, which may indicate the herd is stabilizing, but we will continue to monitor population demographics to evaluate trends over time.

Approved by:
Deputy Minister of Environment2022-09-13
Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Salmon and Fish Hatchery Development** Environment**Quick Facts**

- As of August 17, 2022, only 44,581 Chinook salmon had passed by the pilot station located near the mouth of the Yukon River in Alaska. For the same period last year 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.
- As of August 21, 2022, the total number of Chinook salmon that had passed into Canada was just 12,025 and only 165 had passed through the Whitehorse fish ladder by September 02, 2022. This represents the complete 2022 Chinook salmon run.
- The 10-year historical average count entering Canada is 52,549 with 945 Chinook reaching the Whitehorse fish ladder.

Recommended response:

- Salmon are culturally and spiritually important and are a subsistence resource.
- While the Government of Yukon does not play a formal role in salmon management, we commit 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 Federal Government, and Alaska, as well as agreements with First Nations.

Additional response:

- We share Yukoners' serious concerns about the continued low escapements of Chinook and Chum salmon and the overall decline in salmon returns to the Yukon.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Salmon and Fish Hatchery Development** Environment

- Given these low returns, we have lobbied the Federal Minister to speak with their Alaskan counterparts at the Federal and State level to reopen the Yukon River Salmon Agreement with an aim to modify aspects of the agreement.
- Specifically, we believe escapement goals should be reviewed and revised to reflect the current situation. We want to see more salmon passing into the upper Yukon River.
- We support the Canadian delegates of the Yukon River Panel. They have urged restraint in harvesting Pacific salmon, and we look forward to continued discussions and opportunities to secure the future of this important species.

Third response:

- No option is off the table. We would be interested in exploring the effectiveness of hatcheries as an option with the Federal Government, the lead agency responsible for managing salmon.
- Given the extremely low number of returns, we have also reached out to the affected First Nations to see if they have an interest in pursuing a feasibility study of hatcheries as a possible solution.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is concern about the overharvesting of Canadian-born salmon populations in Alaskan waters. To date, conservation measures implemented by Canada have been ineffective.
- There have been discussions with Whitehorse's Fisheries and Oceans office about building a new hatchery to replace the McIntyre Creek hatchery (which has been inoperable since 2018 due to a catastrophic fire).
- In recognition of the Yukon First Nation Salmon Stewardship Alliance, Minister Clarke sent letters to Yukon First Nations Chiefs on July 6, 2022, asking if they would be

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Salmon and Fish Hatchery Development Environment**

interested in a feasibility study to determine the establishment of a Yukon-based salmon fish hatchery.

- 76(1)

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 is not permitted in the Yukon River or Porcupine River from July 1 to November 30, 2022.
- The international Yukon River Salmon Agreement is part of the Pacific Salmon Treaty and has formally been in place since 2002. This agreement aims to help rebuild and conserve Canadian-origin salmon stocks of the Yukon River and to define harvest allocations to Canadian and United States fisheries.
- In 2021, Fisheries and Oceans Canada launched the Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative. This \$647 million conservation program aims to stem historic declines in key Pacific salmon stocks and rebuild these species to a sustainable level.
- During the 2022 Yukon River Panel meetings,⁷⁶⁽¹⁾
- 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.
- Currently, only Yukon First Nations' subsistence harvest is allowed on the Yukon River for Chinook salmon due to the steadily-declining run sizes.
- Yukon First Nations have voluntarily restricted harvest for many years to increase salmon numbers.

Approved by:

C. Shehnaz Ali
a/Deputy Minister of Environment

2022-09-29

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Wildlife survey and management

Environment

Quick Facts

- In 2021, the Department of Environment conducted **six** moose surveys and two elk surveys.
- In addition, we completed census work on five caribou herds, conducted 12 caribou composition surveys, and deployed collars in 10 caribou herds.
- In 2021, the Department of Environment spent approximately \$680,000 **for 6 moose surveys** and \$535,000 for 15 caribou surveys and related data collection.
- In 2022, the Department has allocated approximately \$448,000 for 3 moose-related projects and \$865,000 for monitoring projects related to 12 caribou herds.
- We also conducted assessments on black bears, grizzly bears, bison, bats, pika and ground squirrels.
- Our fisheries group sampled fish in nine lakes and stocked another five lakes with fish.

Recommended response:

- The Department of Environment is committed to collecting robust data to provide high-quality, up-to-date information for decision-making.
- To do this, we combine information from harvesters, First Nations and community partners with results from our scientific research and monitoring so that management decisions are well-informed.
 - For example, we integrate traditional knowledge to guide how we sample the landscape during our moose surveys.
- We do targeted population inventories, collect harvest data, and perform ecological assessments annually to collect up-to-date information.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Wildlife survey and management

Environment

Additional response:

- In 2021, the Department of Environment conducted six moose surveys; in the Lower Stewart, Sifton/Miners Range, Fish Lake, Wheaton River, Mount Lorne, and Teslin River Moose Management Units.
- We are currently analyzing the data from these surveys.
 - Preliminary results from the Sifton-Miners Range Moose Management Unit survey support our belief that the total (licensed and subsistence) harvest rate for this population was above sustainable levels over the past 5 years.
 - The analysis of data from the five other surveys will not be completed until the summer of 2023.
- In 2022, we are slated to do moose surveys in the Nisutlin River/Quiet Lake, the Nordenskiöld River and the South Canol.
- In 2021, we also collected data on several caribou herds, which included deploying radio collars on caribou from the Porcupine, Fortymile, Hart River, Coal River, and Wolf Lake herds.
- In 2022, we conducted a survey of the Finlayson Caribou herd.
 - Preliminary results suggest the population has not decreased since the last survey conducted in 2017.
 - If these results hold true, this will be our first evidence that the population size is no longer declining.
- In 2022, we will also be collecting data on the following caribou herds; Aishihik, Clear Creek, Chisana, Wolf Lake, Little Rancheria, Coal River, Hart River, Ethel Lake, Tatchun, Tay River, and Porcupine.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Wildlife survey and management

Environment

- In addition, we have, or will be conducting surveys for other harvested species, including wolves, deer, bison, sheep and fish, and non-harvested species, including pikas, bats and ground squirrels.

Third response:

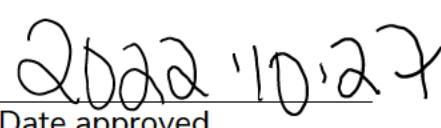
- We prioritize which areas to survey based on a combination of factors, including harvest levels, access, community concerns, land-use planning data needs, how long it has been since an area was last surveyed, and human activities taking place nearby.
- We share our work, research and monitoring activities with the public through our regular communications 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 such, the need for monitoring has increased.
- 74(1)(a)

Approved by:
Deputy Minister of Environment
Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Yukon Species at Risk

Environment

Quick Facts

- The Yukon has 35 species listed as being at risk under the federal *Species at Risk Act*.
- 10 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.
- 11 species that live in the Yukon are due for assessment by COSEWIC by the end of 2023, and several others will be re-assessed in the next 3-5 years.
- The Government of Yukon works with the Government of Canada on national recovery strategies and management plans that involve species listed as at risk nationally and occur in the Yukon.
- Environment and Climate Change Canada is currently engaging relevant Yukon communities on the proposed recovery strategy for the Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee.

Recommended response:

- Other jurisdictions 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* are afforded some legal protection in the Yukon and undergo mandatory recovery planning.
- We actively participate in national status assessments done by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada and national species recovery strategies and management plans.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Yukon Species at Risk

Environment

- The Government of Yukon is participating in the development of 14 national recovery strategies or management plans, as a legal requirement under the federal Species at Risk Act.

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. Respecting the current need to focus on more immediate priorities (e.g. successor resource mining legislation), we will continue to enhance our knowledge and research so we are ready to develop this new legislation when the opportunity presents.
- We continue to work collaboratively with our partners in the territory, including the Government of Canada, First Nations, the Inuvialuit, Indigenous groups, mandated boards and councils, and interest groups on species at risk conservation.
- This includes the Boreal Caribou Section 11 Conservation Agreement that we signed with Canada in 2019 to work with the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and the Gwich'in Tribal Council to protect the species and its critical habitat.

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

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Yukon Species at Risk

Environment

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

- 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:

- Opposition members and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (Yukon) regularly criticize Yukon's lack of species at risk legislation; the Yukon is one of the few remaining jurisdictions in Canada without discrete legislation.
- There may be questions about what the government is doing about species at risk.
- Environment and Climate Change Canada is holding public consultation on the proposed recovery strategy for the Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee until November 20, 2022.

Background:


- The Yukon 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.
- Species assessed and listed under the federal Species at Risk Act as Threatened or Endangered have legal protection and undergo mandatory recovery planning at a national level under the federal Species at Risk Act.
- Our biologists contribute to federal species risk assessment and recovery planning as part of Yukon's commitment under the National Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk.
- The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) is an independent body of scientists (from across Canada) that makes recommendations to the Government of Canada based on the available data regarding the listing of species at risk.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Yukon Species at Risk**

Environment

- The Department of Environment has undertaken research and policy work, including a jurisdictional scan to review existing legislation, enforcement mechanisms and management tools to address species at risk.

- 74(1)(a)

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2022/10.31

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****ATIPP and IPC Investigations**

Environment

Quick Facts

- The Department of Environment gathers or receives data on at least 29 caribou herds.
- Approximately 15 of those herds are transboundary and overlap with Alaska, Northwest Territories and/or British Columbia.
- Collar location data for Yukon caribou herds are not solely owned and managed by the Government of Yukon.

Recommended response:

- In November 2019, the Department of Environment received an access-to-information request to release all available raw location data for Yukon and transboundary radio-collared caribou herds.
- Due to several conservation concerns, including releasing location data for sensitive times of the year, the department refused the access request in full.
- The release of this raw data could be harmful to the species. It would jeopardize our relationship with our wildlife co-management partners, who often paid for the data collection.
- The Applicant subsequently requested the Information and Privacy Commissioner conduct a review of the department's decision, the Commissioner also conducted a further inquiry in March 2021. Neither process resulted in the department agreeing to provide the requested data.

Additional response:

- On two occasions, the Departments of Environment and Justice offered the Applicant an opportunity to enter into a "Data Sharing

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****ATIPP and IPC Investigations**

Environment

Agreement” to obtain the requested data. The Applicant declined these offers.

- Such an agreement would safeguard the raw data from being shared further or misinterpreted and respect our data partners’ concerns.
- Data sharing agreements are commonly used by the department and reflect responsible data stewardship.

Third response:

- Together with our management partners, we are committed to ensuring wildlife population data is made available to the public whenever possible.
- This information is available through:
 - our self-serve online data - for example, the Yukon Conservation Data Centre and Wildlife Key Area Geographic Information Systems datasets;
 - our study or survey summary sheets; our technical reports and scientific publications;
 - in-person and social media presentations we provide to a wide range of audiences; and
 - data-sharing agreements.

Context—this may be an issue because:


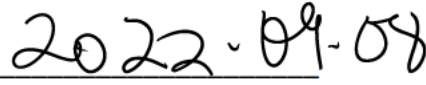
- The Applicant’s appeal is headed to the Yukon Supreme Court on March 15, 2023.
- The Official Opposition has expressed interest in wildlife data collection and use in the past and may ask why the department has decided not to release this information.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****ATIPP and IPC Investigations**

Environment

Background:

- The management of caribou herds in the Yukon involves partnerships with territorial, provincial, federal, and state governments, First Nations governments, co-management Boards, and Councils like the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope), Inuvialuit Game Council, Porcupine Caribou Management Board and many others.
- External partners, including federal agencies, other provinces, Alaskan management agencies, and First Nations, contribute funds to support the Department of Environment's ongoing collaring program to gather and receive caribou data.
- The pending Yukon Supreme Court decision ^{74(1)(a)}
- Other management agencies ⁷⁶⁽¹⁾

Approved by:  Deputy Minister of Environment	 Date approved
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CONFIDENTIAL**EMR #102 / ENV #55****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Placer Mining in
Wetlands**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

Recommended response:

- We support an approach to wetlands management that enables environmentally responsible development and limits the impacts of activities like placer mining on wetlands.
- We are creating a wetlands stewardship policy to guide how we make decisions on wetland use and conservation.
- We continue to work with our First Nation partners and stakeholders, and will consider the recommendations in the Dawson Regional Land Use Plan while developing the policy.
- We are currently following an interim approach for placer mining in the Indian River area. This approach protects the most sensitive areas and requires a wetland reclamation plan for Class 4 placer mines overlapping wetlands.

Additional response:

- Our regulators work with industry to clarify reclamation planning requirements, design effective wetland reclamation plans and review submissions.
- We continue to improve our knowledge and understanding of wetlands, their location, function and the effectiveness of restoration activities.
- We are working with the Yukon Water Board as it drafts its wetland information guidelines for placer mining applications. These guidelines are based on feedback from the board's public interest hearing on placer mining in wetlands undertaken in 2020.

CONFIDENTIAL**EMR #102 / ENV #55****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Placer Mining in
Wetlands**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment**Context — this may be an issue because:**

- Wetlands are at the forefront of public discussion due to increasing development pressure from placer mining and calls for wetland protection.
- The draft Dawson Regional Land Use Plan, currently under review, recommends protecting wetlands in some areas and limiting the development of wetlands in other areas, including the upper Indian River watershed.

Background:

- With the onset of rising gold prices 15 years ago, the pace and scope of placer mining activities in wetlands accelerated along the Indian River.⁷⁶⁽¹⁾
- The 2014 Yukon Water Strategy and Action Plan committed the Government of Yukon to collaboratively develop a Yukon wetlands policy. Formal policy development got underway in late 2017 using 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, transboundary Indigenous 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 summarizing feedback received during the public engagement process was publicly released on March 1, 2022. The Department of Environment is currently conducting consultation with First Nation governments and transboundary Indigenous groups.
- The Government of Yukon brought the Indian River interim approach into effect on January 15, 2020. This measure protects 40 per cent of existing fens and 100 per cent of existing bogs found within placer authorizations.

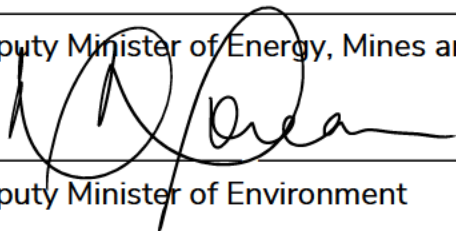
CONFIDENTIAL**EMR #102 / ENV #55****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Placer Mining in Wetlands****Energy, Mines and Resources Environment**

- In October 2020, the Yukon Water Board held a public hearing on placer mining in wetlands and subsequently released a What We Heard report in August 2021.
- The Yukon Water Board recommended the Government of Yukon 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.
- The Government of Yukon^{74(1)(a)}. The Yukon Water Board is currently circulating a draft guidance document that will outline requirements to submit wetland information for project proponents.
- Released in September 2022, the Recommended Dawson Regional Land Use Plan recommends elements of protection for the region's wetlands. It also recommends new special protection in some areas, like the upper Indian River watershed. (see [EMR BN#113 / ENV BN#3](#))
- To support various wetland management needs, the Government of Yukon has completed:
 - regional scale wetland mapping for the Peel Watershed planning region;
 - local scale mapping in the Beaver River, Mayo/McQuesten and Indian River watersheds; and
 - is working to develop a revised wetland classification system, new wetland mapping standards, Yukon-specific methods for evaluating wetland benefits and functions, and improve understanding of open water wetland reclamation effectiveness.

Approved by:


A/DM

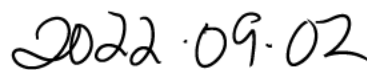
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources



Deputy Minister of Environment

September 6, 2022

Date approved



Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Bilateral Nature Agreement**

Environment

Quick Facts

- Currently accounted under the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database, there are 92,227 km² of protected areas in the Yukon.
- This makes up approximately 19.1% of the land and water which is protected in the territory.

Recommended response:

- The Government of Canada has committed to protecting 25% of the country's terrestrial land mass and inland waters by 2025, and 30% by 2030.
- While the Yukon has not formally adopted its own percentage-based targets for 2025 and 2030, we are making meaningful contributions to establishing protected areas.
- We are doing this by building on a number of existing commitments, including those established through Chapter 10 and Chapter 11 of the First Nations Final Agreements such as Parks and Habitat Protection Areas.
- We are happy to report that 19.1% of the Yukon's land and water is currently protected, including territorial protected areas, federal protected areas, and First Nations protected areas on Settlement Land.
- The Government of Yukon will continue to collaboratively support Canada in meeting its targets for protected areas in the Yukon.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon is currently in discussions with Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Parks Canada

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Bilateral Nature Agreement**

Environment

Agency regarding establishing a Nature Agreement that would provide funding to the Government of Yukon to help better our collective, collaborative work on conservation.

- The purpose of the Nature Agreement is to build on, and where possible, accelerate progress in the Yukon toward conserving jointly nominated areas to be reported publically as contributions to Canada's protected area goal.
- In addition, the Nature Agreement discussions include collaborating on species at risk surveys and monitoring and enhancing data sharing.

Third response:

- Once in place, the Nature Agreement will ensure continued and improved engagement and collaboration with First Nations governments and Indigenous groups on our shared conservation priorities.
- While there are various Yukon and federal government arrangements with First Nations and Indigenous governments on conservation-related topics, many of these programs do not provide funding for the Government of Yukon to collaborate with Indigenous governments and organizations on conservation work.
- The Nature Agreement discussions will help support the Government of Yukon, First Nations governments and Indigenous groups to work more effectively together and achieve conservation outcomes in a more timely way than our current capacity allows.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- 76(1)

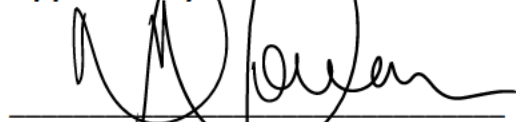
Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Bilateral Nature Agreement**

Environment

- 76(1)

Background:

- To support its protected area goals and provinces and territories in collaborating with all partners on conservation initiatives, the 2021 Federal Budget allocated \$200 million spread across five years (2021-22 to 2025-2026).
- A negotiated "Nature Agreement" provides federal funding which is matched by the province/territory to achieve negotiated conservation outcomes.
- Other current arrangements with Yukon First Nations governments and Indigenous groups regarding conservation include:
 - the Indigenous Guardians Program;
 - the Yukon South Beringia Priority Place;
 - Community Nominated Priority Places;
 - the Aboriginal Fund for Species At Risk, and
 - Target 1 Challenge and/or Capacity funding (including for Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas or similar).

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2022.10.13

Date approved

CONFIDENTIAL**#57****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****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 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.
- Although wolf harvest may be used as a community-based management tool, the department does not use large-scale wolf control programs as a moose management tool.
- Aside from strong public opposition by Yukoners to large-scale wolf control, these types of programs are costly and have only short-term impacts unless they are intensive and maintained indefinitely.
- The Yukon provides a high bag-limit on hunting wolf, seven for resident hunters and two for non-resident hunters annually, in addition, wolves are trapped without limit on registered traplines.
- We have a strong knowledge of moose population estimates in the Yukon and when locally appropriate, use tools like allowing burns and selective timber cutting to enhance moose habitat.

Secondary Response

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

CONFIDENTIAL**#57****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****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 traditional territory scales.
- These plans consider things like 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.
- The Department reviewed the Plan, released in 2012. You can find the 2022 implementation review report on Yukon.ca.
- We found the 2012 Plan remains relevant, as Yukoners' views on wolf management have not substantially changed. Respect for wolves is a strong theme in the plan and in what we heard during the meetings.
- The preferred approach, supported by Renewable Resources Councils, is to support regional solutions to predator challenges, including incentivizing wolf harvest and trapping.

CONFIDENTIAL**#57****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Wildlife Population Management****Environment**

- We will continue to work with our partners to implement the plan. The next review is scheduled for 2032, or earlier if required.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- On October 18, 2022, MLA Wade Istchenko once again asked about predator control to increase moose populations in the territory.
- There are concerns in some communities about the impacts of wolves on ungulate populations, which prompts polarizing discussions about predator control (i.e. culling wolves and grizzly bears).

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.
- The review included input gathered during 27 meetings with Indigenous governments, boards, councils and other stakeholders.
- Although in use in some neighbouring jurisdictions, predator control (culling) programs for wolves have ^{74(1)(a)}
- In 2019-20, the plan review team held 27 meetings in various communities across the Yukon. 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:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2022.10.19

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****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

- Establishing the Tagish River Habitat Protection Area and completing a management plan is a commitment under the Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final Agreement and an important step in reconciliation.
- The establishment of the Tagish River Habitat Protection Area, as with other Habitat Protection Areas, is intended to preserve habitat, conserve natural resources, and safeguard traditional First Nations practices.
- In September 2021, the Steering Committee provided a final recommended management plan to the governments of Canada, Carcross/Tagish First Nation and the Yukon for review.
- This was consistent with the requirements of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final Agreement.
- The Parties have completed their respective reviews and I am excited to announce the Recommended Management Plan has been signed.
- We look forward to a community ceremony to celebrate this achievement in spring 2023.

Additional response:

- We engaged extensively with stakeholders and the public to develop the recommended plan.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Tagish River Habitat Protection Area**

Environment

-
- The main issues raised by community members during the engagement were related to a recommendation to reduce shoreline development and use, specifically docks.
 - Members from each of the three Parties have been named to the implementation committee, and their work will begin right away.
 - It will be important for the plan implementation committee to come up with timely, creative and workable ways to address concerns with shoreline development, as local residents look to rebuild and repair following recent flooding events.
 - 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. This opposition was also expressed through a petition signed by 42 waterfront property owners.

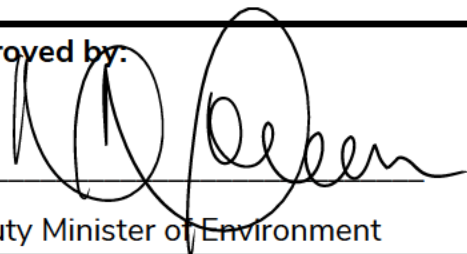
- 76(1)

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****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 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 developing the plan, the Steering Committee held extensive community meetings and events. They met with Carcross/Tagish First Nation Elders, the Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council and the Tagish Local Advisory Council. They also engaged with subject area experts (e.g., water quality, fisheries, land management, etc.), sent a questionnaire to residents, and conducted interviews with citizens.
- The committee heard concerns regarding the shoreline, water use, swan (and wildlife in general) disturbance, and access to the Tagish River.
- The Government of Yukon has kept the Taku River Tlingit First Nation informed about the planning process.
- Government of Yukon staff from the departments of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources are working together to ensure consistency in process and approach between the Tagish River Habitat Protection Area and the Tagish Local Area Plan.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment



[Date approved]

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Campgrounds

Environment

Quick Facts

- Campers report an 84 percent satisfaction rate with their Yukon camping experiences.
- Yukon's first campgrounds were simple camps for highway work crews built in the 1940s. Since then, our network has grown to include 42 campgrounds.
- The easy access to nature at Yukon campgrounds offers more than great memories. Research has shown that playing in natural environments is essential to our children's development of core skills, including observation, problem-solving and reasoning, categorization, creativity, imagination, risk-identification, along with emotional and intellectual development.

Recommended response:

- The 2022 camping season was another busy year for our territorial parks. This was the second year of the new longer camping season.
- The Government of Yukon campgrounds provide access to outdoor recreation opportunities such as fishing, hiking, boating and wildlife viewing.
- People are increasingly using our parks for winter recreation as well.
- Last winter we offered enhanced recreation opportunities at popular destinations, including Wolf Creek, Laberge, Pine Lake, Yukon River, Klondike River, and Tombstone parks.
- Park visitors at these locations were greeted with cleared parking areas, groomed trails, serviced day-use areas, and at Tombstone, a winterized shelter.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Campgrounds

Environment

- After two years of COVID-19 restrictions, Yukoners and visitors alike were once again able to take full advantage of our world-class parks and campgrounds in 2022.

Additional response:

- In 2018 and 2019, during a public engagement, we heard from Yukoners that they view parks as an important public service that needs government funding with a reasonable amount of cost recovery from campground users.
- The decision to raise camping fees to recover service costs is a strategic action in our Yukon Parks Strategy and supports the 2017 Yukon Financial Advisory Panel report.
- We are committed to ensuring quality experiences for Yukoners and visitors by financially sustaining our parks and campgrounds over the years ahead.
- We continue to provide campground firewood; we are re-evaluating this practice due to the high amount of firewood consumption. The overall annual cost is significantly higher this year than it has been in previous years.

Third response:

- We are leaders in how Canada establishes and manages parks, and we continue to be proud of the work that we do day in and day out.
- In addition to managing over 42 road-accessible campgrounds that provide over 1150 camping sites, Yukon Parks is continuing to make service improvements at a number of locations.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Campgrounds

Environment

- Campground expansion and site re-design are being explored at many campgrounds, including Conrad, Wolf Creek, Pine Lake, Twin Lakes, Ethel Lake and Little Salmon Lake.
- Additionally, seven walk-in campsites were opened at Marsh Lake campground in 2020
 - They, unfortunately, had to be closed due to flood operations for parts of the 2021 and 2022 seasons.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The public will want to know about improvements to campgrounds and may still have questions about the fee increases that were put into effect for the 2022 camping season.
- Social media comments highlight the lack of firewood availability in Yukon, and 74(1)(a)

Background:

- Over 1,500 Yukoners, 200 non-residents, 10 Yukon First Nations governments and 28 Yukon organizations provided input on the draft Yukon Parks Strategy in 2018 and 2019.
- The 2022 camping season data from collected registration envelopes are currently being compiled. Results will be available early in 2023.
- The Government of Yukon has always provided firewood free of charge. The firewood supply has been an issue for the past two seasons; usage has increased significantly, along with the cost. 74(1)(a)

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2022-10-27

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Campground Planning

Fall 2022
Environment

Quick Facts

- The department's Parks branch manages 57 parks. These includes 48 recreation parks that include most of our 42 campgrounds and 11 day-use recreation sites.
- We also manage:
 - o three natural environment parks: Tombstone, Herschel Island – Qikiqtaruk (Kee-keek tar-rook), and Kusawa;
 - o three natural environment parks in the process of being designated: Asi Keyi, Agay Mene, and Dàadzàii Vàn;
 - o one wilderness preserve: Ni'iinlìi Njik (Fishing Branch); and
 - o two ecological reserves: Coal River Springs and a portion of Ni'iinlìi Njik (Fishing Branch).

Recommended response:

- We are excited about the potential of an improved campground that will provide additional sites and recreation options for Yukoners and visitors alike.
- Our intent is to establish a recreation destination, offering a range of recreation opportunities that appeal to a diversity of park visitors.
- The location and the precise number of campsites remain to be determined, but we know that this campground will offer the amenities that Yukoners told us they are looking for, such as quiet areas and trails.
- At the same time, we are advancing on two other initiatives to meet our commitment to make it easier to get a campsite.

Session Briefing Note

Campground Planning

Fall 2022
Environment

- Firstly, we are planning to expand some existing campgrounds to add more campsites, and secondly, we are developing a pilot project to test a campsite reservation system.
- These actions will work together to help us meet our goals under the Parks Strategy.

Additional response:

- We are committed to developing a new or improved campground in close partnership with First Nations.
- Reconciliation and partnerships are two of the commitments outlined in the Yukon Parks Strategy and are pillars for this government.
- We will continue to advance reconciliation through collaboration with First Nations and prioritize building meaningful relationships.

Third response:

- In addition to being located within a reasonable driving distance from Whitehorse, the campground improvements may:
 - have a rustic atmosphere with well-spaced campsites;
 - have a quiet zone available; and
 - provide active recreation opportunities, like hiking trails.
- We will also continue to add sites to existing campgrounds over the next few years, such as the additional walk-in sites which opened at Marsh Lake in 2020 and Little Salmon Lake campgrounds in 2019.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- 74(1)(a)

Session Briefing Note

Campground Planning

Fall 2022
Environment

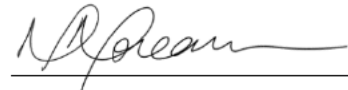
74(1)(a)

- In response to questions on October 24, 2022, Minister Clarke confirmed it's unlikely that the new campground project would be a single campground with 150 sites.

Background:

- Establishing at least one recreation park (campground) within two hours of Whitehorse is a commitment under the ten-year (2020-2030) Yukon Parks Strategy - Strategic Action 4.5.1.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2022-10-27

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

New Park Regulations

Fall 2022
Environment

Quick Facts

- Public engagement on the proposed park regulations was held from April 29 to July 4, 2022.
- We will post a summary of what we heard on Yukon.ca later this winter.
- 1,443 people responded to the public survey. The feedback revealed the majority of respondents support the proposals. Support ranged from 63 percent to 79 percent for each of the ten areas of proposed regulations.

Recommended response:

- We know that Yukoners feel strongly about campgrounds. We also know that there are expectations and challenges with managing issues that affect our parks.
- This past summer, we engaged the public, First Nations governments, Inuvialuit organizations, Indigenous groups, environmental non-government organizations and stakeholder organizations to help develop a modern park and campground regulations.
- Regulations made with input from all of these groups help us develop fair, transparent and appropriate rules governing activities in territorial parks and campgrounds.
- Over the next year, we will be working on drafting the regulations.

Additional response:

- The proposed parks regulations are intended to achieve three major outcomes:
 1. To ensure public safety and quality visitor experiences;
 2. To protect natural and heritage values; and
 3. To provide efficient operation and administration.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

New Park Regulations

Environment

- The proposed regulations will cover a wide range of issues affecting park management and use, including noise, domestic animals, liquor and smoking, on and off-road vehicles, drones, and other various activities, some of which will require a permit.

Third response:

- There are no regulations that govern territorial parks as a whole; only regulations for campgrounds and Herschel Island - Qikiqtaruk Territorial Park.
- As our park system continues to grow and evolve, we, too, must adapt by modernizing our legislative tools to align them with user expectations and allow for proper management and enforcement.
- Establishing broad general park regulations will align the Yukon with most other park agencies, such as British Columbia, Alberta and Alaska.
- Clear regulations and their consistent application and enforcement will help people better understand what is expected of them while visiting parks and what to expect when visiting our parks.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The public was engaged on the new and modernized park and campground regulations from April 29 to July 4, 2022; engagement and consultation with First Nations and Inuvialuit is ongoing.
- There may be questions about specific regulations and when the department is aiming to have them in place.

Background:

- During the Yukon Parks Strategy engagement process, respondents told us they want better management of issues that affect park ecosystems and their enjoyment of parks.

Session Briefing Note

New Park Regulations

Fall 2022
Environment

- Modernizing regulations to effectively manage Yukon's system of territorial parks was identified as one of the ten priorities in the Yukon Parks Strategy.
- Engagement and consultation with First Nations and Inuvialuit on the proposed regulations are anticipated to conclude this winter. To date,⁷⁶⁽¹⁾
- We continue to work with our Indigenous partners to ensure that Indigenous rights are recognized and protected.
- The department is preparing the 'What We Heard' report and expects it will be ready for public release this winter.

Approved by:


Deputy Minister of Environment

2022.11.08

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Flood Recovery**Community Services

Recommended response:

- A flood recovery plan is in place and contracts have been issued to clean up and remove sand bags from this year's flood locations, as well as last areas remaining from the 2021 flood event in Southern Lakes.
- Recovery includes individual funding programs through Yukon Housing Corporation, inspections and information sharing, community infrastructure repair and upgrades, removal of sandbags and pits, and general clean up.
- Yukon government is actively working with residents, local governments and contractors to dismantle the seasonal flood protections in Carmacks, Upper Liard, Teslin, Ross River, Carcross, Tagish and Marsh Lake.

Additional response:

- We are grateful for the support provided by residents, the outpouring of volunteers, municipal and First Nation partners, contractors, our staff, and federal partners in this response and as we continue down the path of recovery.

Context:

- This may become an issue because residents may be concerned about flood mitigation structures being left on the land, their removal and replacement.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Flood Recovery**Community Services

Background:

- With impacts outstanding to communities from 2021/22 flooding and an increased likelihood of flooding incidents in the future due to climate change, recovery efforts continue to be a year-round priority.
- Flood recovery efforts include a flood relief funding program (Yukon Housing Corporation), initiating the Yukon flood mapping project (Department of Environment), structural mitigation and sensitivity studies in flood prone areas, and the distribution of flood recovery and preparedness materials and resources to residents and communities.
- The ongoing projects from 2021 recovery (such as flood mapping and further engineering studies) are mirrored into the 2022 flood recovery activities. In general this plan includes financial support, clean-up, and educational components to aid communities and residents in their recovery.
- Berms were constructed to combat flooding in several communities by response teams this year, and a number of berms remained from the 2021 flood response.
- Berms and sandbags have been removed from Teslin and Ross River, in other communities, a number of different contractors have been engaged:

Marsh Lake

- Coates Contracting is working to empty and remove the sandbags at the day-use site and the Taylor Way staging areas. This work is expected to be completed by the end of October. Sand left at the sites will be available to residents once the work is completed (as per the request of the Local Area Council).
- Other Marsh contractors have been engaged by local residents to remove berms on private property and Protective Services is exploring options to support resident's efforts.

Lake Labarge

- Arctic Backhoe, in conjunction with Highways and Public Works, have removed bags and material at Shallow Bay, Jack Fish Bay and Depp Creek.

CONFIDENTIAL**TAB 80****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Flood Recovery**Community Services

Carcross

- 60 Below Services has been contracted to remove the berm. At the request of the community, sand will be used for local projects.

Carmacks

- Berdoe Contracting and Kando Enterprises have been contacted to remove superbags in the town centre and lower bench areas.

Financial Implications:

- Federal recoveries are being requested under the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangement. Amount of potential recoveries are based on a formula.
- A supplementary budget has also been requested for \$3.8 million to cover expenses.

Approved by:

_____
Deputy Minister, Community ServicesOctober 3, 2022

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Flood Mapping

Fall 2022
Environment

Quick Facts

- We aim to produce flood maps for 14 flood-prone communities across the Yukon; this includes five lake communities and nine river communities.
- 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 across the territory.
- Flooding poses a threat to property, infrastructure and human life. Flood maps are critical tools for emergency response and coordination, and development planning that includes infrastructure, community and land planning.
- Flood mapping for Yukon communities is a multi-year task.
- **With inputs from key partners, we have prioritized communities based on risk and community readiness into four phases of work and will be communicating with those communities and First Nations governments regarding 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 to assess, identify and map flood hazards **is underway.**

Additional response:

- Once created, flood maps will be publicly available and can be accessed by anyone; this includes governments, property owners and insurance companies.

Session Briefing Note

Flood Mapping

Fall 2022
Environment

- In other jurisdictions, government-produced flood maps have helped reduce flood insurance costs for medium and low-risk properties.
- The Department of Community Services is leading the climate change action, H9 under Our Clean Future, to assess ways to ensure Yukoners can access adequate insurance for fires, floods and permafrost.

Third response:

- Flood mapping is expensive, as it requires engineering studies and high-resolution spatial data. However, costs from flood damage are expected to increase fivefold in Canada over the next few decades.
- In the long-term, investing in flood mapping 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's Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program to access additional funds and resources to support the development of our flood maps.
- The departments of Environment, Community Services, Energy Mines and Resources, and Highways and Public Works are working together on the development of flood maps since these departments have related but different needs.

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 these events.
- The public may be concerned about ^{74(1)(a)}

Background:

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

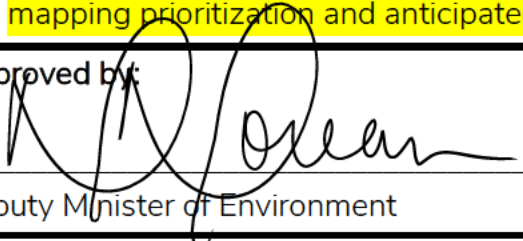
Session Briefing Note

Flood Mapping

Fall 2022
Environment

- Flood maps support emergency response, community planning, infrastructure and development activities, and understanding the impacts of climate change such as vulnerabilities for Yukon communities and residents.
- 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.
- Flood-prone communities for flood mapping include Teslin, Carcross, Tagish, Marsh Lake, Lake Laberge, Upper Liard, Mayo, Pelly Crossing, Ross River, Whitehorse, Carmacks, Dawson, Klondike Valley and Old Crow.
- We continue to work with our federal, provincial and territorial partners on lessons learned regarding how they have managed flood mapping prioritization in other areas across Canada.
- The Government of Yukon Flood Mapping Advisory Committee has established a Yukon Flood Mapping Plan, which outlines the approach and potential resources to fund flood mapping. The timeline for flood mapping will be dependent on available resources.
- We have budgeted \$500,000 for this work over the next two years and are currently accessing an additional \$500,000 from the federal Flood Hazard Identification Mapping Program. We have hired a Flood Mapping Project Manager to support the prioritization of this initiative.
- 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 conduct engagement on the flood maps.
- Planning of engagement sessions is underway, including a presentation to the Association of Yukon Communities in December 2022, and to the Council of Yukon First Nations' Lands and Resources Committee in January 2023. A First Nation engagement workshop is also being planned for March 2023.
- Letters will be sent out to notify communities and First Nations governments of flood mapping prioritization and anticipated timelines before the end of November 2022.

Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2022-11-21

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Water Quality

Environment

Quick Facts

- The Government of Yukon monitors water quality in collaboration with Environment and Climate Change Canada, Indigenous governments and organizations, and contractors.
- We collect samples monthly at 13 stations throughout the Yukon.
- The Government of Yukon published the *Yukon Guide for Developing Water Quality Objectives and Effluent Quality Standards for Quartz Mining Projects* in 2021. For the first time, we applied this guidance to develop Water Quality Objectives for the South McQuesten River watershed.

Recommended response:

- Water quality objectives define the acceptable water quality conditions in waters that may be affected by a project.
- We **collect** water samples on a monthly basis to ascertain water quality.
- Watersheds can host a broad array of activities, such as fishing, hunting, trapping, forestry and mining operations.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon identified water quality concerns for the South McQuesten River due to increased development and undertook a study to help us understand **cumulative impacts to** the river's water quality.
- Water quality objectives for the river were identified to help protect and maintain its water quality for future generations.
- **Aquatic insect data suggests** the South McQuesten River is considered healthy. **However, likely due to naturally elevated metal**

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Water Quality

Environment

concentrations and mining activities in the watershed, water quality measurements often exceed water quality guidelines.

- Multiple activities occur in the South McQuesten River watershed, including recreational and subsistence fishing, hunting, trapping, recreation, quartz mining, and placer mining.
- In addition to climate change, some of these activities can impact water quality.

Third response:

- The current data helped us establish a baseline for the South McQuesten River that we can compare to in the future.
- This information will not change how hard rock and placer mining operates in the area, but will inform and support future assessments when or if water quality is at risk.
- The Government of Yukon 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.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Industry participated in the engagement and data-gathering meetings to develop the water quality objectives held in November 2020 and August 2022.
- In the past, inspection reports for Keno mines and Eagle Gold Mine have been discussed on social media and brought forward in the Legislative Assembly.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon operates the Long Term Water Quality Monitoring Network in collaboration with the Government of Canada. This network currently has 13 stations, including the station on the South McQuesten River.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

Water Quality

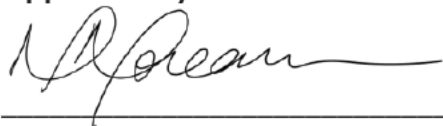
Environment

- In November 2020, a virtual engagement meeting gathered input and data from all interested stakeholders in the South McQuesten River.
- The Government of Yukon may use the water quality objectives developed for the South McQuesten River as a point of reference/precedent in future interventions to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board and/or the Yukon Water Board.
- In the past, Victoria Gold Corp. and Alexco Resource Corp. have had exceedances in their effluent quality standards and water quality objectives in Haggart Creek and have reported spills in the watershed.
- The First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun is ⁷⁶⁽¹⁾

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

- In August 2022, the Department of Environment released three draft reports for stakeholder review of the South McQuesten River (Et'o Nyäk Tagé) Water Quality Objectives and Assessment Study and conducted public re-engagement meetings.

The reports were edited based on feedback received and will be published before the end of the year.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2022-11-15

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****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 calls for the completion of a land use plan for the Beaver River Watershed.
- We recognize the need for a road access management plan before road construction occurs.
- We have completed three stages of public and stakeholder consultation for the Beaver River Land Use Plan and are working towards completing the Plan in 2023.
- A work plan for the Beaver River Land Use Plan is available on Yukon.ca.

Additional response:

- Through this planning process, we are working to address concerns about the potential impacts of the proposed tote road on moose and other wildlife species, including harvest considerations for those species.
- The Beaver River Land Use Planning Committee met with ATAC Resources Ltd. in the spring of 2022 to work toward the completion of a Road Access Management Plan and is currently waiting for a final version of the draft Plan from the company.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Mandate letter commitment: Complete the Dawson Land Use Plan and advance the planning process for other regions to ensure proactive engagement (2021).

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Beaver River Land Use
Plan Update**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

Background:

- The Beaver River land use planning process is not an Umbrella Final Agreement Chapter 11 sub-regional planning process. 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.

ATAC Mining Land Use Application

- ATAC Resources' proposed 65-kilometre, all-season road project crosses First Nations Traditional Territory and includes upgrading existing trails, construction of a new road, three access-control gates and numerous river crossings.
- In February 2018, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun signed the ATAC Road Agreement. According to the agreement, a land use plan and a road access management plan must be finalized before any road construction occurs.
- On November 27, 2020, the Chief of Mining Land Use concluded that authorization to construct the road would not be issued on the basis that ATAC's application did not reflect the Road Access Management Plan and Wildlife Adaptive Monitoring Plan.
- ATAC Resources Ltd. can submit another road access management plan that better addresses the issues identified in the Record of Decision.
- This decision does not affect the Government of Yukon's ability to consider a future application for an all-season road. The nature of any future submission will determine what assessment and regulatory review processes may be required.

The Beaver River Land Use Planning Committee

- In 2018, the Government of Yukon and the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun established the Beaver River Land Use Planning Committee to develop a recommended land use plan; road access management plan; and a fish and wildlife harvest, monitoring and management plan.
- The Beaver River Land Use Planning Committee is engaging with ATAC on the Road Access Management Plan and Fish and Wildlife Adaptive Management plan, in hopes of reaching an agreement.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Beaver River Land Use
Plan Update**Energy, Mines and Resources
Environment

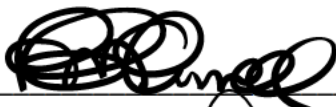
- In December 2021, senior officials of the parties were assigned to oversee the work of the planning committee and the completion of deliverables identified in the agreement.

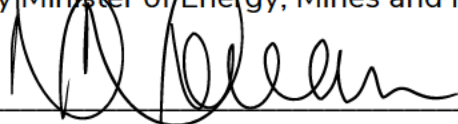
Prohibition Orders

- An Order-in-Council under the *Quartz Mining Act* and *Placer Mining Act* prohibiting entry for mineral staking is in effect until January 1, 2023, for a one-kilometer-wide area along the length of the proposed road. Existing claims in good standing are not affected.

Moose Management

- Harvest pressure on moose in the Mayo area is a crucial concern.
- Moose population estimates indicate a declining population in the Moose Management Unit that surrounds Mayo and covers a portion of the Beaver River area.
- As a result, the Department of Environment implemented a threshold hunt of 11 moose in the Mayo Moose Management Unit beginning this season (2022). The threshold of 11 moose was not met and the hunt closed when the season ended on October 31, 2022.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Yukon Forum –
Regional Planning**Environment
Energy, Mines, and Resources**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon Forum Regional Land Use Planning Working Group is continuing to work with First Nations and the Yukon Land Use Planning Council to implement the priority action items identified to improve regional land use planning in the Yukon.
- These include the completion of a legislative review and a funding review under Chapter 11 with the Government of Canada.
- These priorities will guide future regional land use planning and can help ensure success for planning commissions.

Additional response:

- The Yukon's Premier, Ministers, and Chiefs met in Ottawa with the federal Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations in December 2018 to discuss the funding needed to complete the remaining regional land use plans.
- The 2019-2020 funding adequacy review found that there was over \$4.3 million remaining in the federal funding allocation, which will provide adequate funding for Regional Land Use Planning in the Yukon through to 2024.
- We are committed to advancing regional planning and continuing to meet with First Nations to further Chapter 11 planning processes.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Mandate letter commitment: Complete the Dawson Regional Land Use Plan and advance the planning process for other regions to ensure proactive engagement (2021).

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Yukon Forum –
Regional Planning**Environment
Energy, Mines, and Resources**Background:**

- In accordance with the Yukon Forum's Joint Priority Action Plan, which identifies Chapter 11 land use planning as a priority, leaders of the Government of Yukon, First Nations and the Council of Yukon First Nations developed a strategic approach to restarting and improving regional land use planning in the Yukon.
- The approach entails working together to implement a number of strategic recommendations to fulfill four Priority Objectives:
 1. Set up commissions for success by:
 - examining the roles of the Yukon Land Use Planning Council, Planning Commissions and the Parties;
 - reviewing and agreeing on a broadly applicable process for regional land use planning; and
 - reviewing the information requirements of regional land use planning.
 2. Support several land use planning processes concurrently inside and outside of Chapter 11.
 3. Conduct a legislative review of First Nations and Government of Yukon laws.
 4. Lead the 2019-2020 review of funding adequacy for regional land use planning under Chapter 11.
- The Yukon Forum Working Group has been meeting with the Yukon Land Use Planning Council regularly to continue to move forward with the implementation of Priority Objectives 1 and 2 (see above).
- Implementation of Priority Objective 3 will happen through multiple initiatives, including the Successor Resource Legislation Working Group, which is advancing work to develop new land legislation for the territory.
- Executive Council Office leads the Yukon Forum coordination, corporate communications and funding adequacy negotiations on behalf of the Government of Yukon in order to address Priority Objective 4.
- The Premier, Cabinet Ministers, the Grand Chief of the Council of Yukon First Nations, and Chiefs of Yukon First Nations sit at the main table and speak to agenda items.

CONFIDENTIAL**EMR #89 / ENV #91****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Yukon Forum –
Regional Planning**Environment
Energy, Mines, and Resources

76(1)

Approved by:*Heather Mills A/DM*

Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

Deputy Minister of Environment

Aug. 31, 2022

Date approved

2022-09-01

Date approved

CONFIDENTIAL**#92****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Regional Land Use
Planning**

Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- We are advancing regional land use planning in collaboration with Yukon First Nations, communities and stakeholders.
- The Dawson Regional Land Use Plan is underway. The Commission forwarded the recommended plan to the parties on June 10, 2022. The Government of Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in began public consultation on the recommended plan in September 2022.
- We are meeting with other affected First Nations so that we can begin work on the four remaining regional land use plans.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon is ready to support any of the remaining regional land use planning processes, as soon as the affected First Nations are ready.
- The Yukon Forum's 2019 regional land use planning review has been helpful in re-initiating and supporting these efforts.
- We are working with the Government of Canada, and in consultation with Yukon First Nations, to ensure there will be adequate resources to support all of the planning obligations under Chapter 11. This includes regional, sub-regional and district planning processes.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Questions have been raised on regional land use planning progress and funding.

CONFIDENTIAL**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Regional Land Use
Planning**

Energy, Mines and Resources

Background:

- The process to complete regional land use planning in the traditional territories of Yukon First Nations is outlined in Chapter 11 of the Final Agreements. These processes can involve the participation of multiple First Nations governments.
- There are no Chapter 11 sub-regional planning processes underway in the Yukon.

Confidence and Supply Agreement – Funding Impact

- Plan implementation, plan review and more detailed sub-regional plans, while foreseen by Chapter 11, are currently not funded under the *Umbrella Final Agreement Implementation Plan*.
- \$5.3 million has been spent on regional planning to date, including expected amounts for 2022.
- A funding adequacy review underway with Canada and the Council of Yukon First Nations has determined there is adequate funds for land use planning until 2024.
- There is currently \$4.3 million available for the Dawson Regional Land Use Plan and all other remaining plans unless more funding becomes available as a result of the 2024 funding review.
- If agreed to by the parties, a larger funding review will take place in 2024 between the governments of Yukon and Canada and the Council of Yukon First Nations for regional land use planning under Chapter 11.

Current Regional Land Use Planning in Preliminary Stages

- Initial terms of reference discussions are underway for the Teslin planning region with Teslin Tlingit Council.
- Initial terms of reference discussions are underway with the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun for a regional plan that would be solely in their Traditional Territory.
- Initial discussions are underway for the Southern Lakes planning area with Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Carcross/Tagish First Nation.
- Discussions have been initiated for the Kluane planning region with Kluane First

CONFIDENTIAL**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Regional Land Use
Planning**

Energy, Mines and Resources

Nation, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and White River First Nation.

North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan

- Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and Government of Yukon officials met in September 2022 for the annual implementation review and to discuss priority projects for the 2023/24 fiscal year.
- Access management and linear disturbance documents are drafted and are being reviewed by the parties.

Dawson Regional Land Use Plan

- See BN #1 ENV #6

Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan Implementation

- See BN #86

Yukon Forum – Regional Planning

- See BN #89 ENV #91

Approved by:

A/ADM

Deputy Minister

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

September 6, 2022

Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****McIntyre Creek**

Environment

Quick Facts:

- McIntyre Creek begins from slow-flowing groundwater, moving down the slopes of Mount McIntyre, which flows through the City of Whitehorse to the Yukon River.
- The area of interest covers approximately 4600 hectares, divided into three zones: upper, middle and lower McIntyre Creek.

Recommended response:

- We continue to discuss the creation of McIntyre Creek Park with the City of Whitehorse.
- We acknowledge and respect that this area has several concurrent planning processes already underway.
- This includes the development of the City of Whitehorse's new Official Community Plan: Whitehorse 2040, the development of the Yukon University Campus Master Plan, and the Lu Zil Mabn [Sloo Zill Mun] Fish Lake Local Area Plan.
- We look forward to continuing work on this project with the City of Whitehorse over the coming months and we note that on October 11, 2022, City Council removed the corridor policy that previously envisioned a road connection through the McIntyre Creek area.
- We have initiated a memorandum of understanding with the City of Whitehorse as a next step.

Additional response:

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

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****McIntyre Creek**

Environment

recognizes the importance of the area to support field-based learning and research.

Third response:

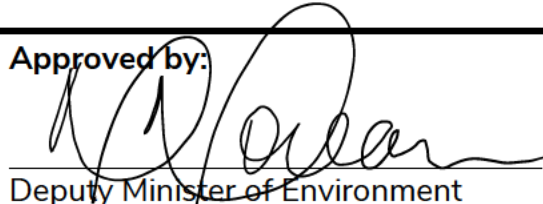

- A collaborative planning approach is key due to the number of parties involved.
- We will continue to work with affected parties to discuss ways to ensure the environmental protection of McIntyre Creek moving forward.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions about the government's progress towards the commitment to begin the process of creating 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 majority of the area is the City of Whitehorse land. The Government of Yukon, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation have land within the proposed area.
- The Official Community Plan is at the stage of public hearings and may be approved at the earliest in **February 2023**.
- Additional interests in this area include mineral holders, gravel extraction and other commercial and institutional land tenures like Icy Waters and the Yukon University.

Approved by:
Deputy Minister of Environment
Date approved

Prepared for Minister Clarke
Department of Environment

Date prepared: September 6, 2022
Last Updated: October 12, 2022

Page 2 of 2

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****First Nations Hunting Ban and Permits**

Environment

Quick Facts

- No matter where you hunt in Yukon, you are in First Nations traditional territory or the Inuvialuit and Indigenous Groups Settlement Areas.
- All hunters should be respectful of the land and incorporate responsible hunting practices during their hunt.

Recommended response:

- We acknowledge Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation's requests related to hunting in their traditional territories this year.
- We understand the First Nations' harvest pressure concerns and their commitment to caring for wildlife in their traditional territories.
- We share their priority of conserving wildlife species and take our responsibility to ensure sustainable harvest practices seriously.
- In the Yukon, the public has a right to access public land for recreational purposes, including hunting.

Additional response:

- All licensed hunters in the Yukon should be aware that all areas where we hunt are in First Nations traditional territory or the Inuvialuit and Indigenous Groups Settlement Areas.
- Licensed hunters require written permission from First Nations before hunting any species on all Category A Settlement Lands and before hunting wood bison or elk on Category A and B Settlement Lands.
- These matters are complex, and we remain committed to ongoing conversations with First Nations and Inuvialuit governments on wildlife conservation and hunting issues in their traditional territories or settlement areas.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****First Nations Hunting Ban and Permits****Environment****Third Response:**

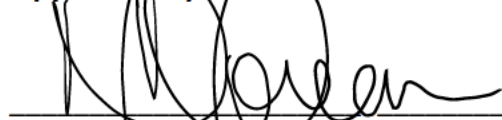
- Conservation officers are coordinating and collaborating with Liard First Nation's Lands and Resources department to ensure a respectful approach to hunting, fishing and trapping in the area.
- Conservation Officers have contacted Ross River Dena Council to engage with their Lands Department to discuss a similar respectful approach to harvesting in their traditional territory.
- As in past seasons, conservation officers continue to monitor these areas as part of their regular operations.
- We continue to encourage all licensed hunters to be respectful and follow responsible hunting practices during their hunts.

Context—this may be an issue because:

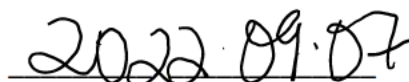
- On July 29, 2022, the Ross River Dena Council posted an advertisement in the Yukon News requesting that all non-Kaska hunters obtain a hunting permit from them to hunt in their traditional territory.
- On August 26, 2022, the Liard First Nation posted an advertisement in the Whitehorse Star requesting that only Kaska and those living in Kaska territory hunt moose and caribou in their traditional territory.
- In August 2022, the Porcupine Caribou Management Board requested that the Department of Environment help inform Yukoners not to hunt the caribou until they reached their winter range (across the Dempster).

Background:

- Similar to this year, in August 2021, both the Ross River Dena Council and the Liard First Nation announced hunting bans in their asserted traditional territories.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, of Environment



Date approved

Prepared for Minister Clarke
Department of Environment

Date prepared: September 6, 2022
Last Updated: N/A

Page 2 of 2

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Human-Wildlife Conflict**

Environment

Quick Facts

- The Conservation Officer Services Branch has responded to 128 black bear calls, and 14 grizzly bear calls so far in 2022.
- Four grizzly bears and five black bears were translocated.
- In 2022, human-wildlife conflicts in the Yukon have resulted in 38 black bears and two grizzly bears being killed either by the public or by conservation officers.

Recommended response:

- Conservation officers respond to numerous wildlife conflict calls each season. We all must do our part every day to prevent conflicts with bears, foxes, lynx and other wildlife.
- Restricting year-round access to potential food sources like garbage, birdseed, poultry and livestock is the most effective thing Yukoners can do to avoid property damage and keep ourselves and wildlife safe.
- We encourage Yukoners dealing with aggressive wildlife or who witness someone feeding wildlife, such as foxes, to contact conservation officers by calling the Turn in Poachers and Polluters (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 plants are available for feeding.
- Ensuring public safety is a priority for our conservation officers. They have a range of tools to help residents discourage wildlife from coming onto the property and reduce human-wildlife conflict generally.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Human-Wildlife Conflict**

Environment

- Conservation officers and biologists have been busy capturing bears in response to human-wildlife conflict calls, putting Global Positioning System radio collars on them and then translocating the collared bears to remote areas away from people.
- Destroying wildlife, including bears, is the last resort and is done only after all other measures have failed or if the bear's behaviour poses an immediate public safety risk.

Third response:

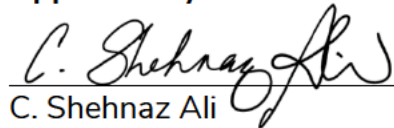
- Wildlife-vehicle collisions is another form of human-wildlife conflict.
- The wildlife-vehicle collision working group includes representatives from the departments of Environment and Highways and Public Works. This group develops and implements adaptive strategies to decrease the rate of wildlife-vehicle collisions on Yukon roads.
- One example is an app developed to collect data on road collision mortalities of caribou and moose.

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.

Approved by:

C. Shehnaz Ali

a/Deputy Minister of Environment

Sept. 27, 2022

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

COVID-19 (Government Wide)

Health and Social
Services

Recommended response:

- We are all learning how to live with this virus and minimize its impacts on our daily lives.
- As we move from an acute emergency response into the transition phase of the pandemic, we must continue protecting our health care system and our vulnerable populations.
- Throughout the pandemic, our government has been guided by the advice and recommendations of the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and we will continue to do so.
- While the State of Emergency has been lifted, should the need arise, we will respond quickly and effectively, as we have throughout the pandemic as informed by evidence and the needs of Yukoners.

Additional response:

- COVID-19 continues to have a disproportionate impact on our most vulnerable populations, including seniors, Elders, those with precarious or insecure housing, individuals living with chronic conditions and unvaccinated individuals.
- Our one government approach and close collaboration with communities, First Nations, local and federal partners and non-government organizations allows us to deliver the appropriate level of health and social care required to meet our community's needs and remain responsive to their concerns.
- Effective July 14, 2022, there are no longer any territorial public health measures in place.
- As we continue to take steps to respond to COVID-19 like other respiratory illnesses, we are following the guidance of the Chief Medical Officer of Health who has recommended reducing certain services, such

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2022

COVID-19 (Government Wide)

Health and Social
Services

as the COVID-19 Testing and Assessment Centre, which is operating with new reduced hours.

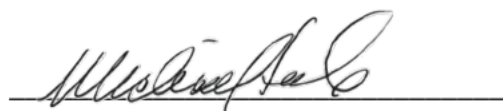
- Moving forward, we remain focused on reducing the number of people susceptible to COVID-19 and its variants through partnerships with First Nations governments and First Nations, increased vaccination, maintaining our testing capabilities and the capacity of our health and social care system, providing supports to our most vulnerable, and implementing targeted measures to the areas of highest risk.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There is significant and ongoing interest in the Yukon's plans for ensuring the safety of Yukoners, and that our COVID-19 response aligns with the current situation in the territory.

Background:

- Under the *Public Health and Safety Act*, the Chief Medical Officer of Health is responsible for monitoring, investigating, and responding to a communicable disease. The Act and the *Communicable Disease Regulations* provide the Chief Medical Officer of Health with a number of authorities to ensure the health and safety of Yukoners.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Health and Social Services

August 16, 2022

[Date approved]

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2022****Housing Issues**Yukon Housing Corporation

Recommended Response:

- As we know, homelessness has far-reaching consequences that impact everyone in the Yukon. The substance use health emergency, alongside the COVID-19 pandemic, has only intensified issues.
- Meanwhile, rental options are too few and often too expensive. Vacancy rates have dropped to 0.8% - the lowest in years –a reality that influences the Yukon Housing growing 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 the Community Housing stock to support a full housing continuum - 10 units of affordable and supportive housing for seniors through Normandy Living and three new triplexes in Watson Lake, Mayo and Whitehorse are a demonstration of how we are responding to the 2022 Office of the Auditor General of Canada recommendations on housing.
- Partnership with Da Daghay Development Corporation for 98 new units is one of numerous housing examples that further support vulnerable Yukoners.
- Our new approach to house employees aims to decrease the housing cost disparities in communities, further incentive private sector

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2022****Housing Issues**Yukon Housing Corporation

investment in housing, and prioritize the government's existing staff housing units to the critical needs for community well-being.

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

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 a fifth time in September, bringing rates to 3.25%. At the start of 2022, interest rates were 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 committee 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**Spring 2022****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 million in funding for YHC's Housing Initiatives Fund - for a 55-unit supportive housing project proposal.

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 BN# 30) and old Macaulay Lodge site (See BN # 33);
 - First Nations land development projects – KDFN's Copper Ridge West (See BN #31) and Range Point projects;
 - Private Sector land development project initiatives – the Tank Farm (See BN # 36)
- Community Services estimates an additional 1476 new housing lots will come online by 2026, enough to accommodate 2713 additional housing units.

New Housing Construction and partnerships with the Private Sector

- The Yukon Housing Corporation offers several loans and grants programs (See BN #63) to incentivize new housing construction – namely, the *Housing Initiative Fund* (See BN # 60), the *Developer Build Loan* (See BN # 55), 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 BN # 53) and the *Rent Supplement program*.

Community Housing and the Most Vulnerable

- The Yukon Housing Corporation and its partners continue to implement the new *Community Housing Plan*, which aims to improve better client outcomes and fiscal resiliency (See BN# 54)
- 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**Spring 2022****Housing Issues****Yukon Housing Corporation**

support to more than 90 households through our rent supplement program and approximately 200 Yukoners through the Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit.

- In late 2022, YHC will introduce a mixed-income and mixed-use tenant's allocation policy to diverse buildings while providing tenants with appropriate partner supports to help them maintain housing.
- Work continues with the Safe at Home Society to determine how to allocate 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.
- Finally, the Yukon Housing Corporation and housing providers have recently completed or currently are making significant capital investments to expand the community housing stock, including:
 - The 47-unit 4th and Jeckell building (See BN #15);
 - The 46-Unit Cornerstone building (See BN #69);
 - Three new triplexes in Mayo, Watson, and Whitehorse (See BN # 17);
 - A new Housing First building in Watson Lake (See BN# 21);
 - A new 10-plex in Old Crow (See BN # 19);
 - A new 30-unit multi-family Community Housing building at the Korbo site in Dawson (See BN # 18);
 - Duplexes in Carmacks, Dawson, and Mayo (See BN #16); and
 - New emergency shelters in Dawson and Whitehorse (See BN # 38).

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 BN#53).
- \$4.5M for Normandy Living, a private senior's residence with supports (See BN#34)
- \$21.7M for the design and construction of the 4th and Jeckell, a 47-unit mixed-income housing development in Whitehorse (See BN#15).
- \$5.77M funding support to the Challenge Cornerstone project from 2020-2022, in addition to approximately \$1.9M in funding provided for purchase of the land and project development.
- \$2.4M over 2021-2022 for the construction of three triplexes in Mayo, Watson Lake, and Whitehorse in addition to \$3M in federal funding under the Rapid Housing Initiative - contributing nine units of housing options. (See BN#17)

Session Briefing Note**Spring 2022****Housing Issues****Yukon Housing Corporation**

- \$400K in 2021-2022 for the design of the Watson Lake Housing First project which will be tendered in the Fall 2022 (See BN#61).
- 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 BN#60).
- \$2.4M to Yukon through a Northern Housing Fund under the National Housing Strategy.
- \$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% (territory) cost-matching ratio between 2019 and 2024. (See BN#56 and #57)
- \$4.1M for the construction of a Housing First residence for vulnerable individuals (5th and Wood St.) in Whitehorse (See BN#61)
- 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):

- Five Housing Initiatives Fund intakes have brought on line 121 units and 388 are under construction. (See BN #60).
- The sixth intake of the Housing Initiative Fund will be launched in November 2022.
- The Municipal Matching Rental Construction Grant has supported the construction of over 422 new rental homes throughout the Yukon, of which 242 are completed.
- Since 2020, our homeownership loan program, that focus on buying and building projects in rural Yukon, has helped 22 Yukoners to buy or build their first homes. 11 of these projects are completed.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

President, Yukon Housing Corporation

September 9, 2022

[Date approved]

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Inflation (Corporate Note with ECO)**

Finance

Recommended:

- While Whitehorse's inflation rate for September remains above the national figure, inflation slowed in August and September, potentially signaling that inflation is moderating in line with what was outlined in the Interim Fiscal and Economic Update.
- All Yukon households are seeing their budgets stretched by elevated levels of inflation, but the burden is heavier on lower-income households where much of their expenses go to necessities such as food, energy, and housing, all of which have seen some of the largest price increases at different points during 2022.
- This government is conscious of the effects that rising inflation has on families and has taken action to protect their finances. Last month, we announced almost \$5 million-worth of inflation relief measures. This includes funding targeted to support vulnerable groups such as one time payments of \$150 for Yukoners on social assistance, a one-time payment of \$150 to Yukon Seniors Income Supplement recipients, an additional \$100,000 in funding for Food Network Yukon and payments to seniors through a 10 per cent top-up in the Pioneer Utility Grant.
- Yukoners who heat their home with wood will receive a \$50 rebate on fuelwood purchased from Yukon commercial firewood suppliers.
- There is a six-month extension of \$500 per month to caregivers of children in out of home care.
- We are also extending the Inflation Relief Rebate for another three months, which gave Yukoners a \$50 monthly credit on their power bill.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Inflation (Corporate Note with ECO)**Finance

Additional response:

- This government had already established a strong record of making life more affordable for Yukoners before this latest round of inflation.
- These new affordability measures will complement those included in Budget 2022-23, which invested in housing supply, universal childcare, paid sick leave and a territory-wide dental plan with no new taxes or fees.
- Inflation has increased globally due in part to supply-chain disruptions and the war in Ukraine. Nationally, there is excess demand causing labour market and other shortages.
- Inflationary pressure was broad-based with food and shelter costs elevated. Surging fuel prices were a key driver, with significant increases in the price of both gasoline and home heating oil.
- Whitehorse, along with five other provinces, reported inflation in September slowing from August, with September's inflation rate in the remaining seven jurisdictions up from the month prior.

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.

Background:

Inflation outlook

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Inflation (Corporate Note with ECO)**

Finance

- The inflation rate in Whitehorse was 7.5 per cent in September. While remaining elevated, inflation in September fell for a second consecutive month, down from 7.6 per cent in August and down from the 30-year high of 7.7 per cent reported in July.
- The price of fuel made a large contribution. Fuel oil and other fuels were up nearly 45 per cent from September of last year and gasoline was up 19.5 per cent.
- Higher energy prices were due to changes in global oil markets caused by sanctions against Russia. Prices have moderated since June. The benchmark North American oil price (WTI) has fallen from US\$120 per barrel to about US\$83 at time of writing.
- Food prices have risen significantly since 2021, as stronger demand coincided with supply side constraints. Food prices in Whitehorse were up 8.8 per cent from last September.
- Prices in Canada are expected to remain elevated throughout 2022. The Bank of Canada does not expect inflation to return to the target range of 1 to 3 per cent until 2024.
- The Bank of Canada has started to take a more aggressive approach to battling inflation by raising interest rates three percentage points since March, including a 0.75 percentage point increase on September 7. Another increase is expected to come on October 26th, with many analysts suggesting another 0.75 hike.
- The housing market in the Yukon has stayed hot in the face of higher interest rates that have cooled markets in most other parts of Canada. Residential sales have declined significantly in most other jurisdictions but were up almost 30 per cent year-to-date in the Yukon.
- Prices have also continued to rise. The average price of a single-detached home hit an all-time high of over \$695,000 in the second quarter. Between October 2019 and October 2021, both median and average rents are up by about 10 per cent.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Inflation (Corporate Note with ECO)**Finance

- There are, however, some signs that the Yukon's housing market has started to cool. The sales-to-new listings ratio has declined and inventories of unsold homes have started creeping up as houses stay on the market longer. Further cooling is expected over the remainder of the year.

Key government initiatives addressing affordability in Yukon**New temporary Inflation Relief Rebate**

- Recently, the Government of Yukon announced almost \$5 million in new inflation relief measures targeted at vulnerable groups.
- The inflation relief rebate was extended for another three months at a total cost to Government of \$3.2 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 will receive a one-time payment of \$150. This payment will help recipients offset inflation impacts until social assistance payments are adjusted for inflation in November.
- These new measures also include support for seniors through 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 will be eligible for a \$50 rebate per cord of fuel wood, this program is retroactive to April 1, 2022.
- The pilot program giving an extra \$500 per month to Extended Family Caregiver agreement caregivers and foster caregivers will be extended to the end of the fiscal year.
- In June, the Yukon government extended the Tourism Accommodation Sector Supplement and Tourism Non-Accommodation Sector Supplement programs, administered through Economic Development.

This builds on efforts from Budget 2022-23 aimed at making things affordable

- In 2021-22, the Youth Directorate provided over \$1.1 million to support operational funding to five organizations.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2022****Inflation (Corporate Note with ECO)**Finance

- The Government of Yukon has made significant and ongoing financial investments in Early Learning and Child Care and we signed two agreements with the Government of Canada to access an additional \$54.3 million over the next five years. The new Universal Child Care Program has reduced fees to less than \$10 per day on average.
- 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.
- A significant portion of the Government of Yukon's five-year capital plan is allocated to housing and land development in order to continue to help address the supply side of the housing equation.
- Yukon Housing Corporation is investing across all parts of the housing continuum including increases to supportive housing, subsidized Community Housing, and rental subsidy programs.

Survey of government initiatives that are indexed to inflation

- Higher inflation impacts various government of Yukon programs through indexation, (indexation is updated each April unless otherwise noted), including:
 - Tobacco Tax is updated each January.
 - Comprehensive Municipal Grant Regulation (with a one year lag).
 - The minimum wage
 - Subsidies for medical travel
 - Pioneer Utility grant
 - Residential rent caps
 - Seniors benefits (updated each October)
 - Social Assistance Payments (updated each November)
 - Student Financial Assistance (updated each school year)

Impact of inflation on revenue

- Most of the major sources of revenue will increase in line with inflation; however, some growth will have a lag between inflation and revenue increases.

CONFIDENTIAL**TAB 113****Session Briefing Note****Fall 2022****Inflation (Corporate Note with ECO)**

Finance

- Territorial Formula Financing is adjusted annually to account for increases in provincial, territorial, and municipal government expenditures.
- Canada Health Transfer & Canada Social Transfer grow with nominal GDP.
- Income Tax: brackets are adjusted annually with inflation
- Insurance Premium Tax grows with nominal increase in premiums.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister, Department of Finance

October 19, 2022

Date approved



Deputy Minister, ECO

October 19, 2022

Date approved

Department of Environment
Narrative Binder for Fall Legislative Sitting 2022
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CONFIDENTIAL**#1****Narrative****Fall 2022****Climate Change****Environment**

Introduction

- Yukon's climate is changing, impacting the water, land and the places we call home.
- We know that Elders lived through winter temperatures that our children may never experience. Wildlife and plant species are claiming habitat in places they have not before.
- Every stage of the water cycle is being affected including precipitation, surface water flows, and groundwater recharge. In some locations water systems are taking new paths as glacial sources retreat; flooding may be more severe and frequent in other areas.
- Species like the pine beetle, which can kill pine trees, are making their way to Yukon's forests, while outbreaks of spruce bark beetles already kill spruce trees in the territory. More dead, flammable trees in our forests could contribute to wildfires becoming more frequent and intense.
- We know that as our population continues to grow, we will require more energy. At the same time, we need to reduce our carbon footprint and ensure economic stability and energy security.
- We take the threat of climate change seriously. We have joined First Nations and municipalities in the Yukon to declare a climate emergency in the territory.
- Our Clean Future is the Government of Yukon's answer to the climate emergency. We are working in partnership with Yukon First Nations, transboundary Indigenous groups, and Yukon communities to implement the strategy (See [BN #20](#)), which has four key goals:
 - reducing the Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions;

CONFIDENTIAL**#1****Narrative****Fall 2022****Climate Change****Environment**

- ensuring Yukoners have access to reliable, affordable and renewable energy;
- adapting to the impacts of climate change; and
- building a greener economy.

Greenhouse gas emissions

- We know the Yukon is warming at twice the rate of the rest of the world. We need to mitigate and reduce the impact of climate change by reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.
- We have committed to an ambitious target of reducing our emissions by 45 per cent below 2010 levels.
- As part of our commitment, we are tracking and reporting the territory's greenhouse gas emissions.
- In the Yukon, transportation and heating buildings are the biggest sources of emissions.
- While the Yukon's emissions are a small per cent of Canada's total emissions, our per capita emissions are the sixth highest in Canada.
- We will reach our reduction targets by tracking and monitoring our emissions, implementing the actions in Our Clean Future, working collaboratively with partners to update our actions as needed, and adopting new emission reduction technologies as they become available (See [BN #20](#)).

Adapting to the impacts of climate change

- Climate action also means adapting to climate change impacts that are already affecting our territory - Yukoners need to be aware of

CONFIDENTIAL**#1****Narrative****Fall 2022****Climate Change****Environment**

climate risks and the role they play as we build a clean future together.

- We recently released the first climate risk and resilience assessment for the Yukon (See [BN #23](#)). The assessment helps us better understand:
 - where climate impacts pose the greatest risks; and
 - the actions we need to take to protect the values Yukoners hold close.
- To build our climate resilience, we must protect our transportation infrastructure, prepare for fires and floods and respond to permafrost thaw.
- Building resilience supports our territory's food and energy security, our health and wellbeing, and supports reconciliation with Yukon First Nations by protecting a culture and heritage that is inextricably linked to accessing the land and a healthy environment.

Collaboration with Yukoners

- As a government, we have a responsibility to lead climate action in our territory. We are an active participant in climate actions for our region, our nation and the world.
 - We support Canada's commitment to the United Nation's 2015 Paris Agreement;
 - We've put forward Yukon's perspective to shape the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change; and

CONFIDENTIAL**#1****Narrative****Fall 2022****Climate Change****Environment**

- We work regularly with Canada, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut on projects specific to climate change in the North; and
- This fall, the Government of Yukon will be sending a small delegation to the United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties, known as COP27 (BN #25).
- To achieve our climate goals, all Yukoners need to play a part.
- Families, businesses, organizations and individuals can all be part of the solution.
- I am encouraged by the actions I've already seen in our communities. Yukoners are modifying the way we build, finding new ways to travel, and exploring more sustainable energy sources.

Yukoners are resilient

- The challenge of climate change can feel daunting, and overwhelming. Anxiety related to climate change is real and it affects all of us.
- One key finding of our climate risk and resilience assessment stands out to me: Yukoners are resilient.
- It is our northern way of life that will continue to support us in our fight against climate change.
- We will continue to do our part to address climate change by following through on our commitments in Our Clean Future.
- I ask each and every Yukoner to consider how you can play a part in addressing climate change and building your resilience.

CONFIDENTIAL**#1****Narrative****Fall 2022****Climate Change****Environment**

- Thank you to the Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups, municipalities, climate advocates in the territory and every Yukoner who is making a real effort to make change and support climate action in their everyday lives.
- Together, we are adapting to the impacts of climate change, reducing our emissions, and establishing the future of a changing Yukon.

Approved by:

C. Shehnaz Ali

a/Deputy Minister of Environment

2022-09-27

Date approved

Narrative

Fall 2022

Yukon Government Contaminated Sites Environment

Introduction

- Cleaning up contaminated sites helps protect our health, land, water, and air, and makes valuable land available for new development projects.
- For example, the Department of Environment recently cleaned up the Marwell Tar Pit, a long-standing Government of Yukon-owned contaminated site. We are now exploring ways to make the site available for limited industrial or commercial use.
- In addition, a significant fuel spill at FH Collins Secondary School in Whitehorse was cleaned up and is now the site of the new Francophone school.
- The lots at 5th and Rogers in downtown Whitehorse, a former railyard, have been assessed and remediated and will soon be available for mixed-use development.
- Clean land can be bought and sold, while contaminated lands are an environmental liability.
- The cost to remediate and monitor government-owned contaminated sites is substantial and can change as we learn more about each site.
- The Government of Yukon contracts a wide range of qualified private sector companies to complete complex assessment and remediation projects on behalf of the territory.
- The result is growing expertise and investment in the Yukon's economy.
- The Site Assessment and Remediation Unit, known as SARU [saw-roo], implements the Environmental Liabilities and Remediation Program for the Government of Yukon.
- The SARU team identifies, assesses and remediates Government of Yukon owned contaminated sites on behalf of the entire government.

Narrative**Fall 2022****Yukon Government Contaminated Sites** Environment

- With contaminated sites cleaned up, Yukoners hold less liability and will soon have more land within Whitehorse to potentially develop.
- The Environmental Liability and Remediation Program does not include large, legacy mine sites, such as the Faro mine. This responsibility lies with the Federal Government.
- Work on government sites is done in compliance with the *Environment Act*, the *Contaminated Sites Regulation*, and other applicable territorial and federal laws.
- In the past, fuel storage facilities were not built like they are now – standards for handling petroleum products and chemicals have improved. We know more now than we did years ago.
- Cleaning up past actions is always challenging and costs more than taking proactive steps to protect our shared environment in the future.
- Information on contaminated sites can be found on Yukon's online contaminated sites map.
- With this map, Yukoners seeking information on possible contamination for a land purchase or other reasons, now have access right at their fingertips.
- Currently, there are 153 listed Government of Yukon-owned or operated sites across the territory with known or suspected contamination.
- These sites are generally old industrial sites and spill sites and include highway maintenance camps, airports, and other facilities.
- The Site Assessment and Remediation Unit uses a risk-based approach when assessing which sites take priority for remediation work but also works with other departments to facilitate their requirements.
- Although technology and industry standards are improving, the costs of dealing with these liabilities do not diminish.

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Fall 2022

Yukon Government Contaminated Sites Environment

- Remediation is mostly or entirely complete at 8 sites, for example:
 - **Marwell Tar Pit:** a 1950's Canol Refinery in Whitehorse. After years of work, the site's soil was treated in 2018 and 2019, and it is now in the post-remedial monitoring and risk assessment phase. The risk assessment phase should be completed by the end of 2023, with a risk management permit being in place. Once this work is completed, we intend on making the site available for limited industrial or commercial use. Post-remedial monitoring will be for 5 years after 2023 and should not prevent any potential development plans.
 - **Former FH Collins School site:** a heating fuel spill at the school was discovered to be much larger than expected post-demolition. It was remediated to the strict standards required for schools and is now the location of the new Paul-Émile Mercier Secondary School.
 - **Swift River and Klondike River Highway Maintenance Camps:** both highway maintenance camps had significant hydrocarbon contamination that risked contaminating nearby rivers. Both were remediated and risk managed, including groundwater monitoring to ensure no risk to the waterways.
 - **5th Avenue former railyard in Whitehorse:** an abandoned railyard in downtown Whitehorse was remediated to allow for mixed-use development.
 - **The Whitehorse Emergency Shelter building:** a former gas station and garage that was remediated and is now the location of an important social services site in downtown Whitehorse
 - **A former placer mining and industrial operation near Horse Creek:** a heavy equipment repair shop and placer operation in the Lake Laberge area.

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Yukon Government Contaminated Sites Environment

- **The library in Carcross:** The contamination from a heating fuel spill has been remediated and there are no impacts to indoor air quality. Monitoring to date indicates that there are no impacts to the groundwater.
- Work is taking place right now at a number of sites all across Yukon, including:
 - **Nursing station and two aviation sites in Old Crow:** significant contamination from spills are being assessed and managed in collaboration with Vuntut Gwitchin to ensure no contamination reaches the Porcupine River. Remediation planning is ongoing and infrastructure to facilitate remediation is being planned with the community. This remediation project is intended to reduce or eliminate the risk to human health and the environment to allow for future development of this valuable site.
 - **The former Highway Maintenance Yard in Carmacks:** remediation planning is being undertaken to allow for future development of this site in a key downtown lot in Carmacks. Demolition of the buildings is planned for summer 2023 and remediation is to follow with the intention of making the site available for development in 2024.
 - **Old Fire Hall in Ross River:** monitoring continues to understand if contamination is spreading from a historical spill and to determine the best options for remediation.
 - **23 active Government of Yukon landfills:** regular monitoring helps make sure buried waste is not contaminating the environment. Some closure planning is currently underway to further reduce these liabilities.
 - **Four abandoned landfills:** monitoring and closure planning of old abandoned dumps.

Narrative


Fall 2022

Yukon Government Contaminated Sites Environment

- The former Wellgreen Mill and Tailings Site: assessment and detailed closure planning of a legacy tailings pond to prevent metals contamination to the environment.
- 10 highway camps: assessment and monitoring to determine if contamination exists or if existing contamination is a risk to the wider environment.
- This is work being done around the territory, with a variety of environmental concerns being assessed, monitored and remediated in innovative ways.

Conclusion

- The Site Assessment and Remediation Unit, along with a growing network of private sector professionals, transform contaminated sites into valuable Yukon land for the benefit of all Yukoners and the environment.
- Together, we cannot only clean up inherited contamination, but we can make sure we leave future generations with a smaller, safer and healthier environmental liability.

Approved by:
Deputy Minister of Environment
Date approved

CONFIDENTIAL**#3****Narrative****Fall 2022****Recycling and Environmental Protection**

Environment

Introduction

- A changing environment requires environmental protection to be responsive, dynamic, and adaptive.
- The Department of Environment develops, adapts, manages, and enforces legislation to minimize the impacts of individuals and industry on our natural spaces.
- We do this work to ensure a legacy of thriving ecosystems is left for future generations.

Waste Management and recycling

- Responsible waste management starts well before garbage ends up in a landfill.
- It is an effort that begins when a product is made, continues through its use or consumption, and in the latter stages of recycling, reuse or disposal.
- We are working with our partners and other government departments to have an efficient and cost-effective waste management system.
- Department of Environment staff permit and regulate municipal and commercial solid waste facilities throughout the Yukon.
- We ensure appropriate locations are used, and that waste is managed to protect the water, land, and air.
- Through the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, we collaborate with other provinces, territories and the federal government on solutions like the *Canada-Wide Action Plan on Zero Plastic Waste*.

CONFIDENTIAL**#3****Narrative****Fall 2022****Recycling and Environmental Protection**

Environment

- The single-use shopping bag ban came into effect on January 1, 2022, for plastic bags. Paper bags will follow on January 1, 2023.
- Distribution of other single-use plastics like straws, cutlery, stir sticks, some food containers, and six-pack rings could be banned federally by the end of 2023.
- Details about this can be accessed through the federal government's published draft of the proposed *Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulations*.
- Another collaborative solution we are initiating is a new *Extended Producer Responsibility Regulation*. (See [BN #30](#))
- This will make producers of packaging and products responsible for those materials at the end of the product's life.
- As seen in multiple jurisdictions across Canada, Extended Producer Responsibility shifts the cost of waste management from taxpayers to producers, promoting conservation through innovations that reduce the use of resources.
- Implementing Extended Producer Responsibility in the Yukon by 2025 is a commitment under *Our Clean Future*.
- A further commitment is to increase waste diversion to 40 percent by 2030. In 2019, the diversion rate was 25 percent.
- The Extended Producer Responsibility Advisory Committee, consisting of key Yukon stakeholder representatives, convened between January and April 2022 to provide advice that informed a legislative proposal for an *Extended Producer Responsibility Regulation*.

CONFIDENTIAL**#3****Narrative****Fall 2022****Recycling and Environmental Protection****Environment**

- Expanding our recycling program means even more materials are being kept out of landfills and the environment.

Air quality monitoring

- One of the most constant and direct connections to our environment is the air we breathe.
- The Yukon is fortunate to have some of the cleanest air in the world.
- The development and enforcement of our legislation and air monitoring initiatives ensure we continue to have clean air.
- With support from Environment and Climate Change Canada, we operate the National Air Pollution Surveillance station in Whitehorse.
- This station is part of a national network and provides the Yukon with data essential for assessing air quality trends and impacts.
- Over the last year, we worked with Canada to expand our air quality monitoring network. We now have real-time data from eleven Yukon communities available online.
- This data is particularly useful for monitoring and coordinating responses to severe air quality events like the wildfires we are seeing more often in the Yukon.

Environmental assessments

- Department of Environment scientists help review and assess the effects development has on the land, air, water, wildlife, and wildlife habitats.
 - This input includes ways to mitigate adverse effects on fish and wildlife so we can manage development projects responsibly.
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CONFIDENTIAL**#3****Narrative****Fall 2022****Recycling and Environmental Protection****Environment**

Spills and contamination

- Inspectors, engineers, and officers work with Yukoners to reduce the release of contaminants into the environment.
- The Department of Environment maintains the 24-hour Yukon spill report line.
- Spills happen. And when they do, we work with the responsible party to ensure contaminants in soil and water are properly cleaned up.
- We permit and regulate businesses that handle and treat contaminated material throughout the Yukon in order to prevent the release of contaminants, and the severe environmental impacts which can result.
- We also manage and host an online contaminated sites map which allows the public instant access to information on contaminated sites in the territory.
- The map has been accessed over 9,500 times since it was established in the Spring of 2019.
- This proves it is a critical tool for Yukoners interested in exploring information on contaminated sites and helps to illustrate overall accountability.

Conclusion

- The obligation to protect the environment from human impact does not just fall on one sector, government department, or industry.
- It is a collective effort based on laws and regulations that mandate responsible, environmentally sustainable development.

CONFIDENTIAL**#3****Narrative****Fall 2022****Recycling and Environmental Protection****Environment**

- The Department of Environment is ready to assist people and businesses in doing their part in achieving this important goal.
- In a world of rapidly changing environmental conditions, the Department of Environment is prepared to move swiftly and decisively for proactive stewardship of our natural spaces.

Approved by:

C. Shehnaz Ali

a/Deputy Minister of Environment

Sept. 27, 2022

Date approved

CONFIDENTIAL**#4****Narrative****Fall 2022****Animal Health and Protection****Environment**

Introduction

- The Animal Health Unit safeguards the health and welfare of wild and domestic animals, supporting the link between Yukoners and the animals that share their lives.
- Staff monitor wildlife to detect emerging diseases and implement programs that protect wildlife health.
- Veterinarians oversee livestock meat inspections and support veterinary services for livestock owners to produce high-quality, Yukon-raised meat, eggs and dairy products.
- The Department assists Yukon communities with animal welfare and dog control programs, including supporting communities to rehome or surrender dogs and ultimately improving public safety across the Yukon.
- The unit oversees core funding for the registered humane societies in the Yukon to provide animal welfare services across the territory.
- The unit collaborates with the Chief Medical Officer of health, providing advice on One Health issues and diseases shared between people and animals.

Disease risk monitoring

- Within the Animal Health Unit, the Chief Veterinary Officer, program veterinarians, and laboratory coordinator monitor the health of Yukon wildlife with surveillance for diseases including chronic wasting disease, winter ticks, lead exposure, avian influenza, SARS-CoV-2 and rabies.

CONFIDENTIAL**#4****Narrative****Fall 2022****Animal Health and Protection**

Environment

- Our programs offer an early warning system to understand and deal with health risks for key Yukon species like moose, caribou, wolves, ravens and fish.
- We collaborate with national partners. For example, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative, and Environment and Climate Change Canada). These partners, contribute to disease surveillance, laboratory diagnostic activities and benefit from shared resources and information.
- Hunters and trappers help keep an eye on the health of wildlife. They are encouraged to bring any unusual specimens from harvested animals to the Animal Health Unit for veterinarians to examine.
- We also encourage the voluntary submission of specimens for surveillance; for example, the heads and hides of deer and caribou.
- In addition to harvested species, we monitor the health of other species, including frogs, bats, and birds that contribute to the Yukon's biodiversity.
- These combined efforts help ensure our locally harvested food is healthy and the environment we share with all animals is conserved.

Health risk to wild sheep and goats from *M. ovi*

- Wild sheep are iconic in the Yukon, and herds can die from a bacteria called *M. ovi*, which is the short form for *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* [my-co-plas-ma oh-vah-na-moan-ee-yay].
- While *M. ovi* strains adapted to domestic sheep or goats do not cause illness in them, they may cause severe disease in wild sheep or goats.

CONFIDENTIAL**#4****Narrative****Fall 2022****Animal Health and Protection**

Environment

- While pneumonia in wild herds has not been detected in the Yukon, closely related big-horn sheep in other jurisdictions are very susceptible to pneumonia caused by this bacteria, and infected populations suffer high mortality.
- The unit has been testing nasal swabs collected from wild thin horn sheep and goats for *M. ovi* since 2015 and from caribou, moose, elk, muskox and mule deer since 2018.
- *M. ovi* was detected in one healthy caribou during collaring activities near the Yukon-Alaska border.
- We are managing *M. ovi* risks to wildlife through a five-year control order for domestic sheep and goats. This order came into effect on January 1, 2020. (see [BN #42](#))
- One part-time veterinarian manages the biosecurity and testing of domestic sheep and goats for *M.ovi*. This veterinarian:
 - makes farm calls with Agriculture Branch staff to assess fencing and take nasal swabs from all sheep or goats;
 - submits samples to laboratories and tracks results;
 - oversees the destruction of animals that have tested positive and assists with claims for compensation; and
 - assesses and supports import permits.

COVID-19 monitoring

- The expertise of Animal Health Unit veterinarians has contributed to the Yukon's response to COVID-19.

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Environment

- This virus can spread from infected people to animals, especially members of the deer, cat, weasel and bat families.
- Veterinarians established protocols for wildlife researchers to protect Yukon wildlife from potential exposure from infected researchers.

Domestic animal welfare

- The Animal Protection Officer works within the Animal Health Unit. This veterinary oversight enhances animal protection services for Yukoners.
- Individuals can call the Animal Protection Officer to report abuse or neglect of domestic animals. The officer will respond with either an investigation or information about who to call or how to proceed.
- Yukoners benefit from our animal care programs, including the Community Dog Care Initiative, Community Dog Spay program, and the Canine ID program.
- Since 2016, the Community Dog Spay program has offset the cost of dog spay surgery for over 500 Yukoners in rural communities.
- The Community Dog Care Initiative supports community leaders to work with the Animal Protection Officer, exploring options and implementing plans to help keep people and dogs in their community safe.
- This may include advice on facilities to securely hold dogs and transport to Whitehorse or Dawson City for re-homing.
- These programs support Yukoners' safety by removing unwanted dogs that could form packs and reducing the overall number of unwanted dogs by helping owners have female dogs spayed.

CONFIDENTIAL**#4****Narrative****Fall 2022****Animal Health and Protection**

Environment

- This improves the health and welfare of pets and the safety of people across the Yukon.
- Our canine ID program gives collars with ID tags to dogs in rural Yukon communities, encouraging responsible dog ownership across the Yukon.
- The Animal Protection Officer and staff work with community leaders and volunteer organizations to support spay, neuter and rabies vaccination clinics in Yukon communities.
- Having an Animal Protection Officer means that Yukoners have someone to contact who will help, who can visit their community, and who can develop solutions in partnership with communities rather than imposing actions that may not be successful or sustainable.

Working with the agriculture industry

- The Department of Environment works with the agriculture community to help balance industry growth while sustaining the health of livestock, wildlife and the natural environment.
- The Animal Health Unit partners with the Government of Yukon's Agriculture Branch to help farmers obtain veterinary care for livestock raised for food or fibre under the Livestock Veterinary Services Program.
- An AHU veterinarian is managing the program and providing veterinary care for livestock through a telemedicine service and limited on-farm herd health visits.
- Veterinarians in the Animal Health Unit oversee meat inspection at approved processing facilities to ensure locally produced meat is safe.

CONFIDENTIAL**#4****Narrative****Fall 2022****Animal Health and Protection****Environment**

- Animal health inspectors are responsible for enforcing orders under the *Animal Health Act*, including the control order.
- Offences are rare, but investigations are often complex.

Approved by:

A/Deputy Minister of Environment

2022-09-26

Date approved

CONFIDENTIAL**#5****Narrative****Fall 2022****Wildlife****Environment****Introduction**

- We share this territory with an incredible array of wildlife species.
- Yukoners understand that a healthy environment with resilient wildlife populations is directly connected to healthy communities.
- The Department of Environment strives to ensure our stewardship of these species, and our interactions with them, are responsible, sustainable and informed by scientific, local and traditional knowledge.
- Biologists and technicians study wildlife, monitor population trends, and investigate habitat requirements and patterns of use.
- This work informs decisions on harvest management, land-use planning, development-assessment processes, and various permitting and licensing needs.
- Some studies focus on how human activities influence wildlife so that we can develop strategies to lessen our impact on nature.
- Other studies seek to determine the size of a population and how this changes over time, which helps us better understand how many animals may be available for a sustainable harvest while still leaving enough mature individuals to replenish populations.
- Together, we can ensure Yukon's wildlife remains healthy and resilient, now and for future generations.

Species programs and data collection

- The Department of Environment biologists and technicians are dedicated to developing programs that monitor many Yukon species, particularly species of conservation concern and those that are harvested.

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- We monitor species like bison, caribou and moose through harvest data and population information. In some instances, such as for bears, we collect hair samples for DNA analysis from which the results are used, and harvest information, to estimate population size.
 - We determine habitat use for species like wolf, elk, bison and caribou by examining the location data sent from deployed GPS radio collars. We also use remote camera data to determine what types of habitat a species occupies.
 - Many of these projects are collaborative efforts with financial, field and logistical support. Our management partners provide this support, including Yukon First Nations governments, Inuvialuit, neighbouring governments, industry, boards and councils, Renewable Resources Councils, hunters, trappers, outfitters and citizens out on the land.
 - We collect and analyze this data to help identify management goals, set priorities for future research efforts and ultimately support evidence-based decision-making. (see [BN #52](#))
 - We collaborate with university researchers to employ cutting-edge techniques to analyze biological samples and data. For example, we have partnered with Dalhousie University to develop a new technique to census Arctic Grayling using genetics.
 - We also develop new and innovative survey techniques to improve the accuracy of our population estimates. For example, we have developed moose-survey techniques that quantitatively use local and traditional knowledge to sample low-density populations optimally.
 - We have joined with several universities to investigate the effects of climate change on the ecology of the Yukon's fish and wildlife.

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Harvest management

- Hunters are an essential partner in how we manage harvest.
- Licensed hunters have a legal obligation to report their harvest.
- Our Client Solutions staff support harvest management by:
 - selling licences and seals across the territory;
 - providing hunting maps for species like bison (so hunters know where to go to be successful), and
 - collecting harvest reports.
- This information helps us maintain sustainable wildlife populations across the Yukon while also offering harvest opportunities.
- Harvest management discussions across the territory can be challenging, but we can make informed and collaborative decisions by generating and sharing knowledge.
- We combine information from harvesters, our partners and scientific surveys so that the management of harvested species is informed by the best and most currently available data.
- We also complete regular hunter effort surveys.
- Harvest management plans are a tool to help collaboratively manage and provide sustainable opportunities for licensed hunters.

Permit hunt

- Statistics on the Permit Hunt Authorization lottery are available online at Yukon.ca so that hunters can see the distribution of permits by years applied and the number of applications for each hunting zone.

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- This information helps hunters better understand their chances for success in future lotteries.
 - The Fish and Wildlife branch works with many partners to meet mutual goals related to wildlife management and harvest.
 - For example, as part of our ongoing commitment to implement the Umbrella Final Agreement, we work closely with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and Renewable Resources Councils.
 - Similarly, we work closely with the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope) to implement the *Inuvialuit Final Agreement*.
 - We support the Yukon Fish and Game Association's operations by providing funding support for consultation efforts and their services supporting our Hunter Education and Ethics Development (HEED) program.
 - We also collaborate with the association on public education and community outreach activities like family fishing events and the stocked lakes program.

Regional programs and community planning

- Staffing Department of Environment front desks across the territory allows clients to readily access local services so they can get out and explore our vast territory – whether by purchasing an angling licence, picking up a map for a hunting trip, or enquiring about ammunition needs for bison.
- Our regional staff leads the data collection efforts for many of the Yukon's wildlife species.

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- These data contribute to informed wildlife management discussions and evidence-based decision-making.
 - Regional staff members work with the Inuvialuit, First Nations, Renewable Resources Councils and local communities to ensure local perspectives contribute to our wildlife management programs.
 - For example, we are working as a nine-government steering committee to develop a management plan for the Southern Lakes caribou. The other governments on the Committee with us are; Carcross/Tagish First Nation, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Taku River Tlingit First Nation, Teslin Tlingit Council, British Columbia and Canada.
 - We also continue implementing the Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement and the *Inuvialuit Final Agreement* by contributing to Porcupine caribou herd management activities, including population monitoring, harvest management, and habitat management.

Adaptive management and planning

- Effective wildlife management works in concert with natural and human-caused changes on the land.
- The Department of Environment employs adaptive measures to manage wildlife more responsively.
- Adaptive management is a system that uses on-the-land monitoring and harvest information to inform and adjust our actions and impacts on wildlife as needed.
- It provides the flexibility to promptly alter the harvest regime in response to changing hunting pressures on wildlife population numbers.

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- Adaptive management is a modern approach that promotes sustainable wildlife use over the long term.
 - One effective and collaborative adaptive management process is harvest or herd-specific management planning.
 - Once a plan is in place, our adaptive management regulations allow changes to be enacted as necessary.
 - We have also done an implementation review of the 2012 *Yukon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan*.
 - The implementation review included input gathered during 27 meetings with First Nations governments, boards, councils and stakeholders.
 - This review highlighted the continued respect and appreciation for wolves in Yukon's ecology.
 - Our shared priorities for the next steps include increased public education, the launch of at least one more community-driven wolf harvest program by 2023, and increased awareness of the First Nation liaison position within the Conservation Officer Services Branch.
 - We are working with our partners on the Yukon Bison Technical Team to review and update the 2012 bison management plan for the Aishihik herd.
 - The Aishihik bison herd is a popular source of wild meat for many Yukoners. We continue to manage this herd with our partners while contributing to the national recovery efforts of this iconic species.
 - The harvest management approach for bison in the Yukon has relied on adaptive management to adjust harvest as needed and meet the needs of Yukoners, all while ensuring the sustainability of the herd.

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- All of this work requires the collaboration of governments, engaging communities and the public, and thorough research to ensure the best plans for our future.

Habitat planning

- We continue to work with our partners to develop area-specific management plans for the territory.
- These plans help establish goals and strategies to manage important habitats and ecosystems.
- Our planning processes demonstrate our strong commitment to co-management and final agreement implementation. We strive for collaboration through respectful relationships and shared values.
- We have developed community-based fish and wildlife work plans in the Traditional Territories of five First Nations, including Carcross/Tagish, Little Salmon/Carmacks, Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, Champagne and Aishihik, and Vuntut Gwitchin.
- These plans are designed to address community concerns by seeking collaborative opportunities to address information gaps and identify appropriate solutions by integrating traditional, local and scientific knowledge.
- We also participate in regional land-use planning, including current work on the Dawson Regional Land Use Plan and the Beaver River Sub-regional Plan and *Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan* implementation. (see [BN #6 & #90](#))
- We are involved in this work at many levels: from collaborative workshops, identification of key information for decision making, collection

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of important baseline data, and interpretation of that data to inform zoning and management decisions.

- We are working through the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope) to implement a Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan for the Yukon North Slope.
 - This plan relies on traditional use, knowledge, and scientific information to ensure the conservation principles of the *Inuvialuit Final Agreement* remain a priority on the Yukon North Slope.
- Together with several partners, we are also developing a broad wetlands stewardship policy for the Yukon, which will help guide interactions within these important ecosystems. (See **BN #3**)
 - Delivering a wetlands policy remains a priority for this government, and we are committed to completing a policy that reflects Yukoners' perspectives.
 - The result will be a framework to help ensure wetlands, which act as crucial wildlife habitat, natural water filters and important reserves of spring meltwater, are sustained into the future.
- We also actively work with other departments, First Nations, non-government organizations, and industry on standards to map wetlands.
 - This will assist wetland avoidance or mitigation efforts and inform wetland reclamation guidance through existing project assessment and regulatory processes.
- We are actively working with multiple partners, including Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, Government of Canada, and environmental non-governmental organizations, on developing an

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integrated multi-species conservation action plan for species at risk within the Yukon South Beringia Priority Place.

Protected areas

- We develop collaborative management plans for specific protected areas.
- Establishing joint management plans for special areas is essential to bring First Nations Final Agreements to life and foster reconciliation.
- We are working on a Pickhandle Lakes Habitat Protection Area management plan with the Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation.
- Our work with the Carcross/Tagish First Nation and the Government of Canada also continues for a Tagish River Habitat Protection Area management plan.
- We review implementation progress for recommendations in existing plans and conduct management plan reviews for existing habitat protection areas.
- We are working with Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation on the management plan review of Tsâwnjik Chu [Son-Jek Chew] Habitat Protection Area.
- We are also working with Selkirk First Nation on reviewing the Łútsäw [Loot-Saw] Wetland Habitat Protection Area.

Wildlife viewing, education and outreach

- Along with the Yukon wildlife's intrinsic value, cultural importance and significance as a local food source, opportunities to respectfully view and learn about wildlife enrich Yukoners' social and economic lives.

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- The Wildlife Viewing and Environmental Education Program provides a range of experiential and curriculum-based programs that expand perspectives, stimulate inquiry, and foster appreciation and respect for Yukon's biodiversity.
 - The Wildlife Viewing Program provides guided walks across the territory, allowing Yukoners to connect with the natural environment and access the biologists and experts who work there.
 - In addition to traditional publications and trails, the program works to engage Yukoners across multiple platforms, including in-person events, online events, and social media.
 - The Environmental Education Programs engages teachers in training, connects them with resources, and works to include Yukon-specific information in the school curriculum.
 - Youth Programs at the department offer summer employment to 16 youth annually through the Yukon Youth Conservation Corps (Y2C2).
 - Youth are given extensive job training and conservation education opportunities while providing services to numerous partners, including First Nations, NGOs, and Yukon communities.
 - Conservation Action Team (CAT) camps offer wilderness experiences to youth in grades 7-10, exposing them to new places and opportunities across the territory.
 - Both Y2C2 and CAT offer valuable opportunities for the government to engage a younger demographic and have served more than 1,300 Yukon youth since the program's inception in the early 1990s.

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- All of these programs provide Yukoners with access to experts so they can ask questions, learn more, and foster respect and appreciation for the Yukon's natural environment.

Conclusion

- Department of Environment staff are dedicated and passionate professionals.
- Some of our biologists and technicians may be known to Yukoners simply as "the caribou guy" or "the bat lady," but they hold the knowledge and experience that make them leading experts in their fields and worldwide.
- We take our jobs seriously and know that an integral part of what we do is sharing that knowledge and inspiring the next generation of environmental stewards.
- Finally, we know that we do not do this alone. Our Indigenous partners and the exceptional land claims system established here in the Yukon guide our way.

Approved by:

2022-10-03

C. Shehnaz Ali
a/Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved

Narrative**Fall 2022****Fish**

Environment

Fisheries Management

- The Fish and Wildlife Branch in the Department of Environment manages freshwater fish harvest across the Yukon.
- We rely on multiple partners to guide and assist our efforts, including First Nations, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, Renewable Resources Councils, Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee, Yukon River Panel, community organizations, interest groups and the public.
- Using on-the-ground experience and local knowledge helps us to be responsive managers, so we can identify and target lakes that may require management actions.
- For example, in 2022, the fisheries program worked with Renewable Resources Councils to discuss recovery plans for Pine Lake, Snafu Lake, Tarfu Lake and Frenchman Lake.
- We strive to maintain quality fisheries and angling opportunities. To do so, we focus our resources on three main areas:
 1. monitoring fish populations by conducting surveys and assessments;
 2. assessing harvest impacts through angler harvest surveys and field programs; and
 3. maintaining the stocked lakes program.
- Recognizing that Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is the lead agency for salmon management, we also play an advisory role with First Nations and the DFO on matters pertaining to salmon management.

Narrative**Fall 2022****Fish****Environment**

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- The Fish and Wildlife Branch employs two biologists and two technicians who are dedicated to monitoring the status and health of Yukon's freshwater fish populations.
 - Maintaining viable fish populations supports important cultural and social practices in the Yukon.
 - Subsistence fishing continues to be important for First Nations.
 - The Yukon's licensed anglers are also very active in our lakes and rivers, harvesting more than 33,500 fish annually.
 - Yukon's freshwaters are low in productivity, so our fish populations are vulnerable to over-exploitation. This means we must manage our fish species carefully through conservative catch, possession and size limits.
 - In order to keep our fish stocks in the Yukon healthy, we have implemented a number of programs and surveys.

1. Lake trout and whitefish monitoring program

- The Lake Trout Monitoring Program provides robust scientific information on lake trout and whitefish growth, age and population abundances.

2. Angler surveys

- Each year the Department of Environment conducts Angler Harvest surveys, conducting face-to-face interviews with anglers, to determine recreational harvest, success and pressure.

3. Stocked lake program

- The Stocked Lakes Program includes 18 pothole lakes and has existed for 30 years.
- The stocked lakes program provides Yukoners with family fishing opportunities close to their communities and the opportunity to fish for species not normally available, including:
 - Arctic Char,
 - Kokanee Salmon, and
 - Rainbow Trout.
- Stocked lakes help to divert fishing pressure away from slow-growing native fish populations, such as lake trout, in our natural lakes.

4. Specialized Research Programs: Arctic grayling

- The Fish and Wildlife branch is working with the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and the Daylu Dena Council to monitor Arctic grayling populations within these traditional territories.
- These programs are focused on changes to Arctic grayling populations and habitats in response to placer mining and angling pressure.

Conclusion

- Whether they have felt that adrenaline from the tug on their line or watched a fish flutter under their canoe, Yukoners understand the importance of maintaining viable fish populations.

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- We look forward to working with all of our partners to protect the Yukon's fish while enjoying the cultural, social and nutritional opportunities a robust fishery brings us.

Approved by:**2022-09-26**_____
A/Deputy Minister of Environment_____
Date approved

CONFIDENTIAL**#7****Narrative****Fall 2022****Conservation Officer Services****Environment**

Introduction

- The Conservation Officer Services Branch is a law enforcement agency dedicated to promoting safe communities.
- We deliver a suite of comprehensive programs and services in support of the well-being of all Yukoners in ten districts, including Whitehorse and nine Yukon communities.
- Conservation officers investigate and enforce the Yukon's fish, wildlife and environmental laws.
- Our goal is to conserve and protect the Yukon's fish and wildlife populations, and their habitats, by ensuring everyone understands and complies with the laws meant to safeguard our natural resources.
- Yukon conservation officers have a lot of ground to cover. They work together with many partners on the land to do so efficiently, including the public, law enforcement agencies, other wildlife enforcement agencies, and First Nations.

Investigation and enforcement

- Conservation officers protect our fish, wildlife, and their habitat, through inspections and field monitoring for compliance with trapping, hunting and angling regulations. To do this, officers rely on equipment like snowmobiles, ATV's, jet boats and aircraft.
- While monitoring and compliance and enforcement promotion helps ensure conservation measures are respected; public education, support, and trust are key components to making sure Yukoners will be able to enjoy outdoor recreation experiences now, and into the future.

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- Yukon conservation officers have the knowledge and skills to assist RCMP when required, including on search and rescue missions, and have done so on a number of occasions.
- Conservation Officers make great efforts to integrate and build relationships with the communities they serve.
- They build trust in public safety and build respectful working relationships with the community by knowing, understanding, and respecting the people they are serving. Conservation Officers are a highly skilled workforce and provide backup to the RCMP on a regular basis but are not directly mandated to do so.

Human-wildlife conflict

- The Conservation Officer Services Branch is responsible for managing human-wildlife conflict. (see **BN #101**)
- Our goal is to keep people safe and keep wildlife alive.
- Conservation Officer Services Branch has one full-time human-wildlife conflict specialist conservation officer position. This officer is responsible for coordinating responses, community and stakeholder engagement, training, and leading investigations into serious wildlife conflict incidents.
- The branch is involved in numerous initiatives to educate people and mitigate human-wildlife conflict. For example, an officer chairs a working group that deals specifically with human-bear conflict in Whitehorse and surrounding areas.
- Conservation officers respond to hundreds of calls annually regarding public safety issues with wildlife.

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- Officers are first responders and the primary investigative service for human-wildlife conflict, including conflicts resulting in bodily injury or death.
- When faced with high-risk human-wildlife conflicts, conservation officers risk their own safety, including encounters with large animals such as bears and bison.

TIPP line and dispatch

- All Yukoners play a role in conserving and protecting the Yukon's wildlife and environment.
- The Conservation Officer Services Branch operates the Turn in Poachers and Polluters program commonly referred to as "the TIPP line".
- The public can call the TIPP line at any time to report:
 - suspected violations of fishing, hunting, trapping or environmental laws;
 - injured or dead wildlife;
 - wildlife sightings where wildlife or people are at risk, and more.
- TIPP reports can also now be filed online at Yukon.ca/TIPP.

Outreach and hunter education

- We also host a wide range of hunter, trapper and outdoor education programming throughout the territory, aimed at supporting Yukoners to have safe wilderness experiences.
- Topics include backcountry skills, bear spray use, catch and release, meat care, and no trace camping to promote ethical use, personal safety

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and conservation of our resources for the benefit of all Yukoners for generations to come.

- We do this collaboratively with Yukon First Nations governments, boards and councils, and local experts who are experienced on the land.
- Yukoners and non-residents can now access the Hunter Education and Ethics Development, or HEED, course online.
- The move to online delivery has been a huge success, with high enrollment.
- The HEED course is now available in French, and there are dedicated women-identified classes. These are popular and fill up quickly.
- Work continues in the development of a hunter education program for First Nations' game guardians.
- The HEED program certified two First Nation HEED Instructors (Kwanlin Dun First Nation and Dene citizens). The instructors will deliver their first, First Nation Youth HEED course in Teslin this Fall (November).
- Conservation officers are also working with Yukon First Nations' game guardians so that they can deliver the program on-demand in their communities to their citizens. This summer, some Ta'an Kwach'an government members were trained and equipped with teaching aids to deliver community bear safety courses.
- Conservation Officers and the HEED program actively engaged with the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and co-hosted workshops to help connect Indigenous students to the land and Indigenous cultures.

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- Outreach and talking with Yukoners is a key activity for Yukon conservation officers. Increasingly, this communication happens through the Yukon Conservation Officer Services Facebook page.
 - This Facebook page is a hub where Yukoners can find important public safety updates, like information on bear sightings, or learn about upcoming courses and events.
 - This information promotes compliance and hunting ethics, and helps Yukoners be more successful harvesters while minimizing human-wildlife conflict.

Trapping and trapper education

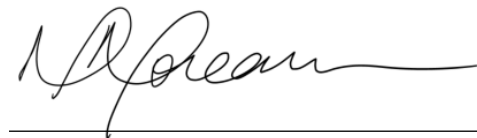
- Trapping is one of the Yukon's oldest industries. Traditionally, it was practiced by First Nations to provide food, clothing and material for trade.
- Collectively, trapping still plays an important role in Yukon communities, but as economic markets and social acceptance of this industry continues to decline, trapping and the people who participate in this activity as we traditionally know it in the Yukon, are undergoing change.
- We support the Yukon Trappers Association, which provides a collective voice for trappers.
- The Conservation Officer Services Branch offers a multi-day trapping workshop that is mandatory for those who would like to get a trapper or assistant trapper licence.
- This course covers a number of topics, including harvest ethics, First Nations' perspectives, safety and survival, and humane trapping methods.

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- Trapper education helps ensure compliance with trapping regulations, and that trapping is done sustainably and respectfully.
- In 2022, the course is offered in Carmacks, Dawson City, Whitehorse and Old Crow.

Conclusion

- The Conservation Officer Services Branch is here to support Yukoners in their outdoor pursuits; providing advice, responding to human-wildlife conflict, and holding training sessions for hunters and trappers.
- By maintaining public safety and protecting natural resources, we help ensure present and future Yukoners can enjoy our great outdoors.

Approved by:

Deputy Minister of Environment

2022-10-12

Date approved

CONFIDENTIAL**#8****Narrative****Fall 2022****Parks and Campgrounds**

Environment

Introduction

- For Yukoners and visitors to the territory, the Yukon's parks evoke thoughts of mountain vistas, crystal clear waters, and forests of crooked spruce and pine.
- Camping and parks are a priority for Yukoners and it's our job to make sure Yukoners can continue to enjoy the best possible experiences in these amazing spaces.
- That is why we developed the Yukon Parks Strategy.

Yukon Parks Strategy

- The Yukon Parks Strategy sets long-term direction for the Yukon's territorial parks system from 2020 to 2030.
- It outlines the values guiding how we will manage and invest in our system of territorial parks.
- Yukoners and visitors will see a range of benefits as we implement the strategy.
- These include:
 - Working towards an improved campground near Whitehorse that will provide recreation opportunities for all ages. (see [BN #71](#))
 - Opportunities for public input on a park system plan that ensures we have the right types of parks in the right places with the right facilities and services.
 - More year-round recreation opportunities in territorial parks.

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- More accessible wilderness experiences such as trails and paddle-in and hike-in campsites.
- Piloting of a campsite reservation system.
- Additional campsites at some existing campgrounds.
- Updated regulations to better protect natural values and improve visitors' experiences by managing issues like noise in campgrounds. (see [BN #72](#))
- A more financially sustainable system of parks and campgrounds.
- These changes speak to our commitment that territorial parks are places where we protect ecological and cultural values and advance reconciliation.

Campgrounds

- The Government of Yukon maintains 42 campgrounds with over 1,150 campsites, 12 recreation sites, and 57 territorial parks.
- We gather feedback from campers to help us continually improve the camping experiences we offer.
- We collect approximately half a million dollars of revenue every year from the sale of camping permits, but that number is small compared to what it costs to maintain the Yukon's parks and campgrounds.
- The Yukon had not increased campground fees in 20 years.
- In 2022, we increased fees in order to help sustain service levels in our parks.

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- This revenue is essential to help offset the costs of providing camping opportunities and services.
 - Even with fee increases, the Yukon continues to have some of the lowest camping fees in the country.
 - This approach reflects what we heard during our public engagement on the Yukon Parks Strategy.
 - Yukoners see parks as an important public service that needs to be funded by the Government of Yukon with a reasonable amount of cost recovery from people who use park services.

2022 Camping Season

- This past camping season was another busy year for Yukon Parks. (see [BN #70](#))
- This was the second year that Yukon's campgrounds were open as early as April 30.
- Extending the camping season delivers on one of the key commitments in the Yukon Parks Strategy.
- We recognize camping and parks are important to Yukoners, and we are committed to ensuring that Yukoners can camp safely and enjoy the great outdoors.

Investing in camping and recreation

- As the demand for clean, safe and quiet camping continues to grow, so does our investment in caring for our campgrounds and parks.

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- In 2022, we invested over \$1.2 million to update infrastructure in several campgrounds.
- Between 2021 and 2024, we have planned to invest \$3.2 million in new or upgraded boat launches at 20 plus campgrounds and recreation sites.
- We recognize that access to the outdoors includes water, trails and activities.
- We will continue to invest in upgrading, maintaining, and staffing our campgrounds to ensure they continue to be enjoyable while meeting the growing demand.
- We now have 25 campgrounds with wheelchair-accessible campsites and three with wheelchair-accessible trails at Tombstone Territorial Park, Pine Lake and Wolf Creek campgrounds.
- During the 2022 season, Pine Lake campground underwent extensive upgrades to the day-use area, including a new playground, beach extension, change rooms and boat parking.
- We also supported the Village of Haines Junction's initiative to upgrade the Trans Canada Trail to Pine Lake campground, enabling an active transport link to the village and surrounding area.
- A longer camping season is also an investment in longer employment for seasonal staff and contracts for vendors who provide public services.
- This includes campground attendants, park rangers, interpreters, and maintenance staff based in communities throughout the Yukon.

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- Improving the territory's network of campgrounds and recreation sites supports the tourism sector.
- It provides opportunities for our families to be outdoors and recreate, and it helps build healthy, vibrant and sustainable Yukon communities.

Protecting Yukon lands

- Through the Inuvialuit and Yukon First Nations Final Agreements, regional land use plans and other agreements, 19.1 per cent of the territory is currently protected.
- This includes various protected areas such as national and territorial parks, habitat protection areas, and special management areas, as well as Settlement Land parcels protected by First Nations.
- This also includes special management areas that are being established through the implementation of the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan.
- With the completion of more regional land use plans and other negotiated agreements, our network of protected areas will grow.
- Management plans are in place for four territorial parks and nine habitat protection areas.
- Territorial park management plans are in place for:
 - Tombstone, within the traditional territories of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun,

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- Ni'iinlii Njik [Nee-een-leen Jik] (Fishing Branch) Wilderness Preserve, within the traditional territory of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation,
- Ni'iinlii Njik [Nee-een-leen Jik] (Fishing Branch) Ecological Reserve, within the traditional territory of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, and
- Herschel Island – Qikiqtaruk [Kee-keek tar-rook], within the Inuvialuit Settlement Region.
- Habitat protection area management plans are up to date and in place for:
 - Ch'ihilii Chik [Tch-ill-ah-chick], within the traditional territory of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation,
 - Ddhaw Ghro [Dah-Grow], within the traditional territories of Selkirk First Nation and the First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun,
 - Tsâwnjik Chu [Son-Jek Chew] – Nordenskiöld, within the traditional territory of the Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation,
 - Van Tat – Old Crow Flats, within the traditional territory of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation,
 - Lhutsaw [Loot-Saw] Wetlands, within the traditional territory of the Selkirk First Nation,
 - Ni'iinlii'Njik [Nee-een-leen Jik]- Fishing Branch, within the traditional territory of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation,
 - Horseshoe Slough, and
 - Devil's Elbow and Big Island, within the traditional territory of the First Nation of Na-cho Nyäk Dun.

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- Together with our Indigenous partners, we continue to make progress on developing management plans for the remaining parks and habitat protection areas, including:
 - Kusawa Territorial Park, within the traditional territories of Carcross Tagish First Nation, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations,
 - Dàadzàii Vàn [dahd-zah-ee vahn] Territorial Park, within the traditional territory of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and the Tetlit Gwitch'in primary use area,
 - Asi Keyi [Ah-see kay-ee] Territorial Park, within the traditional territories of Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation,
 - Agay Mene [A-guy meh-neh] Territorial Park, within the traditional territories of Carcross Tagish First Nation and the Teslin Tlingit Council,
 - Pickhandle Lakes Habitat Protection Area, within the traditional territories of Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation, and
 - Tagish River Habitat Protection Area, within the traditional territories of Carcross Tagish First Nation.
- Protected areas are critical to the conservation of the Yukon's landscapes and biodiversity.
- They tell the story of our past, and they are important to the sustainable health and biodiversity of our future.
- They are also a testament to our commitment and dedication to managing this land together.

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- Through the establishment and collaborative management of these important places, we honor natural and cultural heritage, bring our shared agreements to life, and ensure a sustainable future for all future generations to enjoy.

Approved by:


Deputy Minister of Environment
Date approved

CONFIDENTIAL**#9****Narrative****Fall 2022****Water Resources****Environment**

Introduction

- Clean water is essential for a healthy environment and healthy people.
- The Government of Yukon is committed to strengthening our understanding of water resources to protect our waters and manage it responsibly and sustainably for current and future generations.
- The Government of Yukon's Water Resources Branch works together with federal, territorial and provincial governments, Yukon First Nations, transboundary Indigenous governments and groups, communities and other partners to ensure:
 - we can monitor and adapt to the impacts of climate change, which are already affecting our territory;
 - we know about and can prepare for flooding events to protect Yukoner's homes and livelihoods;
 - we know the health of our groundwater resources, which are depended upon by ecosystems and for drinking water;
 - our regulatory processes and guidance for industry are informed by robust science and water expertise; and
 - we can protect sensitive ecosystems connected to our waterways and maintain a healthy environment for the people and wildlife that depend on them.

Water monitoring programs

- Long-term water monitoring is essential to understand and make informed decisions about our water resources.

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- We maintain five long-term water monitoring networks to collect data and information on flood potential, water availability, climate change impacts and changes in water quality above and below ground.
- Our monitoring networks are supported by partnerships with Environment and Climate Change Canada, and agreements with First Nations governments who support regional data collection and local stewardship, and understanding and connection to our water resources.
- Together we operate:
 - 92 hydrometric stations;
 - 65 groundwater stations;
 - 57 snow survey stations;
 - 15 water quality stations; and
 - 8 meteorological stations.

Adapting to climate change impacts on water

- Our water monitoring efforts help us understand how climate change is impacting each stage of the water cycle. Climate change is altering precipitation, evaporation, surface water flows, snowpack and groundwater flow and recharge.
- The government's Our Clean Future climate strategy recognizes that the impacts of climate change are here now. One of our four key goals is to ensure the Yukon is highly resilient to the impacts of climate change by 2030.

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- We are improving our monitoring networks and tools to better understand the impacts of climate change and focusing on flood mapping to build climate resiliency.

Understanding and responding to floods

- The Yukon has experienced significant flooding events in recent years. We know the risk and likelihood of flooding is shifting due to changing temperatures, precipitation and extreme weather events.
- We want Yukoners to know we take flooding risks seriously. We recently completed a climate risk and resilience assessment for the Yukon that identifies gaps and recommendations to build resilience to flooding in the territory (See [BN #23](#)).
- Through our monitoring networks, we are already measuring the quantity of our surface water, including our water levels and flows and measuring precipitation and snowpack to understand flood risks.
- Under Our Clean Future, we are taking steps to improve our resilience to flooding and inform our emergency preparedness and response by:
 - Developing flood maps for flood-prone communities;
 - Expanding our monitoring networks and improving our monitoring tools to generate reliable flood forecasts; and
 - Analyzing flood risks along our critical transportation corridors.
- Additionally, to respond to flood risks from groundwater we've seen in recent years, we continue to monitor groundwater wells across the territory and have bolstered our well system, including six new monitoring wells installed at Army Beach in February 2022 to

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understand how groundwater levels are affected by high water events in Marsh lake (See [BN #80](#)).

Knowing the health of our groundwater

- While we protect against flooding, we also take seriously our responsibility to understand and protect the health of our groundwater. 97 per cent of the Yukon's drinking water comes from groundwater.
- Groundwater can be impacted by our changing climate, flooding and other human impacts on our waters, including industry and development.
- To better understand our groundwater resources, we monitor groundwater at 65 wells across the territory.
- Monitoring and understanding groundwater helps us make informed decisions to protect our drinking water from contamination and ensure we use it sustainably for generations to come.
- To improve stewardship of groundwater, we are working with First Nations and municipal governments to map aquifers that underly several Yukon communities.

Protecting our waters

- We know industry and development has an impact on our land and waters.
- We use our expertise in water science to provide guidance to industry to help protect our water resources against human impacts.

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- We released guidelines for adaptive management plans for water components of quartz mining projects in 2021. They support industry to minimize impacts on Yukon's freshwater.
 - In 2021 we also released the Yukon Guide for Developing Water Quality Objectives and Effluent Standards for Quartz Mining Projects.
 - Through a formalized approach, this guide will enhance water management decision-making and support the sustainable use of water, now and into the future.
 - For the first time, we applied this guidance to develop water quality objectives for the South McQuesten River watershed. These underwent stakeholder engagement in September 2022 (See [BN #82](#)).

Water Partnerships and Agreements


- Water does not respect human-made boundaries. To manage and protect our water resources effectively, we must work together and solidify partnerships across borders.
- We partner with the federal, territorial and provincial governments, Yukon First Nations, transboundary Indigenous governments and groups and municipal governments to responsibly manage our water resources, including by:
 - Developing agreements to manage the Peel, Mackenzie Delta and Liard sub-basins;
 - Working with Yukon First Nations on local water projects and water monitoring activities; and

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- Understanding the importance of Yukon First Nations and Indigenous peoples' relationship with water in the territory as part of our reconciliation efforts.
- All Yukoners play a role in the responsible stewardship of our air, water and land. Thank you to all government, industry partners and environmental groups who are working with us to strengthen our collective understanding of our water resources, and how to protect and conserve them and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Conclusion

- Yukoners deserve to know that water data and expertise are the foundation supporting our efforts to protect against flooding, to regulate projects that impact our waters, and to develop a clear picture of the health of our waters in light of climate change.
- The Government of Yukon prioritizes the protection, responsible management and long-term sustainability of water resources because water is essential to all life and is deeply valued by so many Yukoners.
- We are and will continue to work together across our territory and beyond our borders to ensure the water we share is sustained for current and future generations.

Approved by:

C. Shehnaz Ali
a/Deputy Minister of Environment

2022-10-03

Date approved