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Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is providing additional harvest opportunities for moose and deer through the permit hunt authorization lottery for the 2025-2026 hunting season.
- This year we will offer eight new moose permits in the Southern Lakes region.
- Four of the permits will be for the Fish Lake Moose Management Unit with the other four offered in the Mount Lorne Moose Management Unit. The Wheaton River Moose Management Unit will remain at four permits this year.
- These permit increases are a result of the collaborative efforts of the Southern Lakes Moose Working Group. The additional eight permits increase the moose hunting opportunities in this area from 11 to 19.
- Some permits have been reallocated in the Southern Lakes Region to account for ease of access, land use and recreational impacts and overall hunting pressures.
- Hunters are reminded to review the updated regulations and obtain the necessary licenses to ensure compliance before participating in hunting activities.
- There will also be eight additional deer permits offered this year. Six permits for various Game Management Zones in the territory, and two youth permits for the whole territory.
- This increases deer hunting opportunities in the Yukon from 12 to 20.

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 Hunting is an important part of many Yukoners lifestyle, and the Government of Yukon is dedicated to balancing hunting opportunities with responsible resource management practices.

Secondary response:

- Existing hunting opportunities in the Yukon are numerous, with minimal restrictions in comparison to other Canadian jurisdictions, and our big game seals are the most affordable in the country.
- When looking at the harvest opportunities that are currently available, much of the territory remains open for hunting big game species.
- In areas where there is easier access, high historical harvest or where conservation is a concern, we have implemented harvest management tools such as permit hunts, threshold hunts, registration hunts or adaptive Wildlife Act permits.
- From our data, we can see that most harvest opportunities in the Yukon have been fully subscribed to in areas where harvest management tools are implemented.
- These tools allow harvest opportunities to remain available, while the number of opportunities and successful harvest arising from them are carefully monitored, tracked and adjusted where required.

Additional response:

- Licensed hunters, both residents and non-residents, highly value the hunting experience the Yukon offers.
- As the territory's population continues to grow, there is an increasing demand for hunting opportunities in the territory.

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- In partnership with Yukon First Nations, the Department of Environment undertakes wildlife surveys to understand the status of the wildlife populations, ensure that wildlife are being sustainably harvested and identify additional hunting opportunities.
- In addition, the Department of Environment engages with comanagement partners, including affected First Nations, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and Renewable Resources Councils, before proceeding with changes to hunting opportunities.
- Our efforts to increase and maintain hunting opportunities in the territory are also informed by feedback from non-governmental organizations, hunters, trappers, outfitters, and Yukoners.
- The valuable input from these groups, along with the data collected by the Department of Environment, helps identify joint wildlife management goals, set priorities for future survey and research efforts, and support evidence-based decision-making for increasing harvest opportunities.

Third response:

- Hunting is a cherished practice and way of life for many Yukoners and sustainable harvest management helps preserve the Yukon hunting experience.
- Through feedback received in Hunter Effort Surveys for various species, we know that hunting is about more than just the harvest, Yukoners do not want a congested hunting experience.
- Taking this into consideration, we aim to achieve a careful balance between offering hunting opportunities using the legislative tools

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available, staying within sustainable limits, and preserving the worldclass Yukon hunting experience.

Fourth response (Hunting statistics):

- Yukoners and non-residents alike travel throughout the Yukon to take part in the many hunting and fishing opportunities offered in our territory.
- A total of 5,777 hunting licences including big game and small game licences were sold for the 2023-24 season.
- Of the hunting licences sold, 4,634 licences were sold to Yukon resident hunters, and 1,143 licences were sold to non-resident hunters.
- In 2023-24 there were 3,815 moose hunting seals sold, with 3,277 of these seals sold to Yukon residents.

Fifth Response (Public Education)

- The Department of Environment is working to ensure that affected parties are aware of and understand the new regulations through several channels including:
 - Changes in the official hunting and fishing regulations printouts and digital copies. providing easy access for hunters and anglers to review the updates;
 - Social media posts about the changes, reaching a broad audience and providing timely information to the public;
 - Regular patrols by conservation officers to inform hunters directly in the field;

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- Public service announcements on radio to help ensure that those who may not be active online or on social media are still reached;
- Signage will be placed in relevant areas to advise anglers and hunters about the changes in the affected zones.
- The Department of Environment will continue to work with hunters and anglers to ensure that they have up-to-date information of hunting and fishing regulations in the territory.

Context—this may be an issue because:

 Minister Clarke's 2023 Mandate Letter gives direction to work with Yukon First Nations, the Fish and Wildlife Management Board and stakeholders to continue to ensure Yukoners are provided opportunities to sustainably harvest fish and game while looking for new opportunities for Yukon hunters.

Background:

- The Yukon government has provided several new hunting opportunities over the past few years in areas where sustainable harvest was possible.
- For example, in 2023 the number of permits available in the Sifton-Miners Range Moose Management Unit was increased from 12 to 24.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	April 7, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

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2023-2024 hunting statistics

Page 6: Licensed big game harvest statistics

Page 7: Fishing and hunting licence sales

Page 8: Hunting seal sales

2023-2024 licensed big game harvest statistics

	Moose	Caribou	Woodbison	Sheep	Goat	Deer	Elk	Grizzlybear	Blackbear	Wolf
	7		m		T			er en	M	
Zone			Number of	f animals	taken by r	esident +	non-resid	lent hunters		
1	2+1	3+1	0+0	1+0	0+0	0+0	0+0	1+0	0+0	2+1
2	17+58	18+44	0+0	4+56	0+0	0+0	0+0	1+20	5+1	1+8
3	46+2	15+0	0+0	0+0	0+0	0+0	0+0	1+0	13+0	1+0
4	67+87	16+29	0+0	4+14	0+0	0+0	0+0	2+8	24+1	0+4
5	46+26	10+6	223+8	33+37	0+0	1+0	6+0	6+10	13+0	1+1
7	7+2	0+0	5+0	32+18	0+0	0+0	3+0	5+1	12+0	3+1
8	55+10	10+3	2+0	1+7	0+0	6+0	0+0	3+2	11+0	1+0
9	20+0	0+0	0+0	2+0	0+0	0+0	0+0	1+0	9+0	0+0
10	50+33	3+6	0+0	2+11	0+0	0+0	0+0	2+6	6+2	0+3
11	73+40	15+16	0+0	0+3	7+6	0+0	0+0	3+3	12+5	0+3
Sub- total	383+259	90+105	230+8	79+146	7+6	7+0	9+0	25+50	105+9	9+21
Total	642	195	238	225	13	7	9	75	114	30



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Fishing and hunting licences

Type of licence	# sold in 2022-23	# sold in 2023-24
	electronically	electronically
Resident fishing licence	7,029 + vendor*	7,661 + vendor*
Non-resident fishing licence	3,441 + vendor*	3,960 + vendor*
Resident hunting licence	4,546	4,634
Non-resident hunting licence	1,114	1,143

^{*}Note: An additional 4,925 paper fishing licences were sold through vendors in 2022-2023. An additional 4,894 paper fishing licences were sold through vendors in 2023-2024. The database used to track these vendor sales does not distinguish between residency type.

Total of fishing licences sold in 2023-2024 (paper and electronic): **16,515**Total of hunting licences sold in 2023-2024 (paper and electronic, and both big game and small game): **5,777**



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Hunting Seal Sales

	# of seals sold in 2023-2024				
Species	Resident	Non-resident (outfitter guided)	Non-resident (special guided)	Non- resident total	Total
Moose	3277	463	75	538	3,815
Caribou 1st seal	2294	430	48	478	2,772
Caribou 2nd seal	626	38	6	44	670
Caribou total*	2,920	468	54	522	3,442
Wood bison	2073	11	15	26	2,099
Sheep	1350	385	N/A	385	1735
Goat	398	19	N/A	19	417
Deer	12	N/A	N/A	N/A	12
Elk	850	N/A	N/A	N/A	850
Grizzly bear	1913	510	N/A	510	2423
Black bear 1st seal	2249	445	24	469	2,718
Black bear 2nd seal	431	73	1	74	505
Black bear total*	2680	518	25	543	3223
Wolf	No seal required	No seal required	No seal required	No seal required	N/A

^{*}Hunters may harvest two caribou (only one of which may be a woodland caribou) and two black bears per hunting season.

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Recommended response:

- The Department of Environment took immediate action after the heap leach failure occurred at the Eagle Gold mine site in June 2024.
- Staff have been working closely with other Government of Yukon departments, the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, the Government of Canada and other affected stakeholders to better understand and mitigate impacts to the surrounding environment and inform the overall response.
- Environment officials have been proactively communicating with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, response partners and the public.
- As of January 20, 2025, experts in the department have participated in nine technical briefings and contributed to 27 information bulletins and water quality results publications.
- Officials have also conducted briefings with the Yukon Salmon Subcommittee, Alaska Commissioner of Fish and Game, and Yukon First Nation Chiefs.

Additional response (Water monitoring):

- The Department of Environment's Water Resources Branch led the development of a Water Monitoring and Reporting Plan for the Eagle Gold Mine in collaboration with other Government of Yukon departments, the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, Environment and Climate Change Canada and consultants.
- In July 2024, the Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources hired a consultant to undertake all water monitoring identified in the Water

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Monitoring and Reporting Plan, which is now being implemented by the receiver as part of regulatory approvals.

- The Department of Environment continues to work closely with Energy, Mines and Resources and Health and Social Services to report on the latest water data results in the receiving environment.
- As of January 1, over 415,000 data points have been collected to assess water quality.
- Tests in Haggart Creek downstream of the mine site have found levels of mercury, cobalt, nitrite and cyanide that exceed water quality objectives.
- The most current water quality results are available on Yukon.ca.

Third response (Fish monitoring):

- Results from the Government of Yukon and the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun's fisheries monitoring program are currently being finalized.
- The monitoring program includes population counts and determining movement patterns to evaluate short and long-term impacts.
- The program involves:
 - Monitoring the fish populations to check and see if the number of fish changes.
 - Taking samples of fish to see if heavy metals are building up in their tissue.
 - Tracking Arctic grayling spring and fall movement.
 - Checking for changes to fish habitat in the Haggart Creek watershed.

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- Tissue samples from 141 arctic grayling and 37 slimy sculpin from 47 locations were collected to check for heavy metal concentrations and signs of tissue damage.
- Analysis of fish tissue samples indicated that mercury levels were well below consumption guidelines. Data will provide baseline information to compare against results from samples to be collected in 2025.
- This team is now planning for 2025 sampling work, to replicate assessments done in 2024, to detect changes in freshwater fish over time.
- Fish monitoring over 2025 will begin later in spring when biologists can regain access to areas of the watershed that are inaccessible due to winter freeze up.

Fourth response (Mammal monitoring):

- The Chief Medical Officer of Health has confirmed that there are no indications that meat of harvested animals in the area is unsafe to consume.
- While cyanide released into water from the mine can cause sudden death in fish that are exposed, cyanide disappears rapidly and would not accumulate in moose or caribou that have short-term contact with cyanide in water.
- This past fall, we asked harvesters of moose and caribou in Game Management Subzones north of Mayo to submit samples of liver, kidney, and muscle for heavy metal testing.

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- We also require the incisor bar (lower jaw) to get an accurate age of the animal because the metals we are concerned about are built up over the life of an animal, not within weeks or months.
- Sampling kits and instructions were available at the Mayo, Dawson City and Whitehorse district offices.
- To date, samples have been received from two caribou and four moose.
- We are also working with trappers near the mine to collect samples from fur-bearing species to assess their exposure to heavy metals in the environment or diet.

Fifth response (Cost):

- As of January 31, 2025, the Department of Environment has incurred \$1,052,905 in expenses related to the Eagle Gold Mine Site response.
- While there is a high cost of addressing this catastrophe, it is difficult to put a price cap on protecting the environment.
- Having clean air, water and land is vital to the health and wellbeing of our communities.
- Yukoners rely on Department of Environment experts to monitor, protect and report on the health of our territory's environment.
- This important work aligns with the values of Yukoners who want to live in a healthy and thriving environment.
- I am proud of the dedication and professionalism of Department of Environment experts as they have responded to this dynamic and ever-evolving situation.

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Environment

Date prepared: January 20, 2025

Last Updated:

March 25, 2025

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 The Department remains committed to environmental stewardship and will continue to work with all parties involved in the Eagle Gold Mine heap leach failure response.

Context—this may be an issue because:

• The Victoria Gold heap leach failure has received significant attention by both local and national media, Yukon First Nations, opposition parties and the public.

Background:

- The Department of Environment has requested additional funding to support the response to the heap leach failure at the Eagle Gold mine site.
- The costs for water testing are not included in the bond as there are specific criteria for what costs can be covered. The bond only covers costs for remediation at the site.
- Through discussions with the departments of Energy Mines and Resources and Finance, it is Environment's understanding that the bond only covers the direct costs to remediate the site.
- The bond does not include monitoring, operation, and maintenance costs to keep the site status quo, cost to perform analysis around the site, or costs to document further contamination or address that contamination.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	March 25, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

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Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is entering the third year of implementation of the Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement.
- The Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement aims to advance the protection of Yukon land and waters, support Indigenous-led conservation initiatives, and increase our efforts on protecting species at risk.
- The Government of Yukon has made meaningful progress towards the outcomes of the Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement, including:
 - Alongside Indigenous partners, increasing protection of lands and waters in the Yukon by an additional 2 per cent, bringing the Yukon's total to 21.1 per cent, which is currently the highest percentage of reported protected areas of any province or territory in Canada;
 - supporting Indigenous-led conservation by entering into eight funding agreements with Indigenous governments and groups under the established Indigenous-led Conservation Capacity Fund;
 - signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, the City of Whitehorse, and Parks Canada to protect Chasàn Chuà / McIntyre Creek area of Whitehorse; and
 - developing tools and advancing studies to support conservation and monitoring of species at risk.

Additional response:

 Protecting and conserving new areas in the territory is complex and challenging work, but it is more important than ever as we face challenges like population growth, industrial development, climate change impacts, and biodiversity loss.

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- The Government of Yukon will continue to work towards protecting areas in the Yukon that are of important ecological and cultural value. New areas for conservation will always be collaboratively identified with Indigenous governments and groups.
- Work is currently underway to advance protected area planning in:
 - o the Peel Watershed, where we are exploring the feasibility of establishing a new national park with the Gwich'in Tribal Council, the First Nation of Nacho-Nyak Dun and Parks Canada;
 - o the Pickhandle Lakes Habitat Protection Area with Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation; and,
 - o the Chasàn Chùa/McIntyre Creek area with Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, the City of Whitehorse and Parks Canada.
- We have also initiated pre-engagement work with Indigenous governments and groups on the co-development of an Ecological Cumulative Effects Framework and an approach to protecting species at risk in the Yukon.

Third response (Capacity funding):

- The Government of Yukon is committed to working with Indigenous partners to protect Yukon lands, waters, and biodiversity for generations to come.
- Under the Nature Agreement, the Indigenous-led Conservation Capacity
 Fund was developed to support Indigenous partners to lead or participate
 in identifying areas of conservation interest in their traditional or asserted
 territories.
- Since the establishment of this fund, eight Indigenous governments and groups have been awarded funding for their conservation projects.

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- So far \$2.6 million has been committed to Yukon First Nations and Indigenous transboundary governments and groups through this fund.
- In 2024, the Government of Yukon established a two-year funding agreement with the Council of Yukon First Nations to support collaboration, coordination and input from the Yukon's Indigenous governments and groups into the development of a management approach for species at risk and an ecological cumulative effects framework.
- We continue to work with Indigenous partners to disburse the Nature Agreement funds to support their conservation priorities.
- Addressing climate change and biodiversity loss requires a collective approach across all governments, and we are aware that Yukon First Nations have separate bilateral agreements with the Government of Canada to support conservation related work.

Fourth Response (Land use planning):

- The Nature Agreement funding is an opportunity for the Government of Yukon to accelerate conservation related initiatives. This work includes better preparation for Regional Land Use Planning processes.
- We are creating certainty and clarity for Indigenous partners, municipalities, and industry by clearly identifying the areas we mean to protect and those with opportunities for resource development.
- We are pleased to collaborate with the Government of Canada on planning for the future and ensuring the responsible management and sustainable use of our lands and resources for future generations.

Final Response (CPAWS Report Card)

 As noted in the most recent CPAWS report card on progress to protect land and oceans across Canada, the Yukon retained its B- rating and continues to lead the country in the percentage of protected land.

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- We have been able to make significant and meaningful progress towards reaching our goals outlined in the Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement.
 This includes reporting an additional 2 per cent of the Yukon's lands and waters, following the signing of the Aullaviat/Anguniarvik Traditional Conservation Area Agreement together with the Inuvialuit Parties.
- This brought the territory's protected area total to 21.1 per cent, accounting for over 101,000 km².
- The CPAWS report outlines that the Yukon has the highest percentage, proportionally, of currently reported protected areas of all provinces and territories in the country.
- The Government of Yukon will continue to work towards protecting areas in the Yukon that are of important ecological and cultural value. New areas for conservation will always be collaboratively identified with Indigenous governments and groups.
- The Government of Yukon is committed to continuing work with Indigenous partners and the federal government to protect more of the Yukon's lands, waters and biodiversity for generations to come.

Context—this may be an issue because:

• There may be questions about progress made on implementing the Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement and how the Government of Yukon is supporting Indigenous involvement in meeting the commitments.

Background:

- The funding for the Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement spans three fiscal years, starting in April 2023 until March 2026; Canada is providing \$20.6 million to the Yukon government over this period.
- Governments from around the world met at the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 conference in 2022 and agreed to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The framework includes four global goals and 23

Session Briefing Note Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement

Spring 2025

Environment

global targets to be achieved by 2030 to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and put nature on a path to recovery by 2050.

- The framework's objectives align with commitments made under the Nature Agreement, including the conservation of 30 per cent of lands and oceans by 2030.
- Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas include lands and waters where Indigenous governments or organizations have a lead role in managing and conserving ecological and cultural values. They protect Indigenous rights and reflect Indigenous laws and traditions.
- Since the signing of the Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement, two other Nature Agreements have been signed; British Columbia's is a tripartite with BC's First Nations leadership Council, while Nova Scotia's is bilateral.
- On November 14, 2024, 22 Indigenous governments signed on to a 10-year funding agreement totaling \$375 million with the governments of Canada and NWT to protect their lands. \$75 million is being provided by philanthropic organizations, the Pew Charitable Trusts, Walton Trust and Metcalf Foundation. This agreement is unique and reflects the governance structure of the NWT.
- On February 28, 2025, an Inuit-led conservation and self-determination agreement was signed with the federal government. The SINAA Agreement commits \$270 million for jobs and conservation projects in the Qikiqtani region of Nunavut. \$70 million is pledged by donors in Canada and elsewhere. This agreement utilizes the Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) model like the one established in 2024 in NWT.

Approved by:		
Dennis Berry	March 31, 2025	
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved	

TAB 06 Spring 2025

National Park/IPCA Feasibility Study in the Ross River Area

Executive Council Office

Recommended response:

- In December 2024, the Government of Yukon, Ross River Dena Council, and Parks Canada initiated a collaborative process to examine the feasibility of protecting lands in the Ross River area.
- This study will provide a basis for advancing reconciliation, land use certainty and economic development within the Kaska asserted traditional territory, where there is no treaty or Final Agreement.
- Existing land access, tenure, rights and permitted uses in the area will not be affected by the study. This includes mining land use approvals, outfitting and trapping concessions, licenced hunting, and tourism.
- We anticipate that the Steering Committee leading the feasibility study will identify opportunities for stakeholders and the public to provide input on their values and interests beginning in early 2025.

Additional response:

- In a Memorandum of Understanding signed in December 2024, the three governments agreed to consider the potential environmental, economic, socio-economic, natural resource, heritage and cultural benefits and impacts associated with different regions in the study area.
- The Steering Committee will develop recommendations on what area or areas may warrant special protection using federal or territorial legal tools such as national or territorial park designations. No decisions have yet been made about the establishment of any form of protected area.
- The area being studied is part of the Kaska asserted traditional territory in the Yukon, which has been withdrawn from mineral staking since 2013.
- This initiative is a significant step toward establishing the land use certainty that is needed for a prosperous and healthy future for Ross River Dena Council citizens and all Yukoners.

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National Park/IPCA Feasibility Study in the Ross River Area

Executive Council Office

Context — this may be an issue because:

 There was media coverage of the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and stakeholders have since expressed concerns about the potential impact of the study on mining, trapping, hunting and outfitting.

Background:

- On December 4, 2024, the Yukon government (YG), Parks Canada, and Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Feasibility of a National Park and Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA) in the Ross River Area.
- The MOU was developed in consideration of the commitments made by YG in the 2020 Yukon Parks Strategy regarding potential IPCAs, the 2022 Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement regarding potential new national parks, Our Clean Future regarding the establishment of a network of ecologically representative protected and managed areas, and a September 2024 commitment between YG and RRDC to pursue the development of an IPCA proposal. IPCAs are used in other jurisdictions to bring effect to reconciliation goals between Crown and Indigenous governments.
- Signing the MOU enabled Parks Canada to provide funding to support RRDC's participation in the process and for the feasibility assessment itself.
- On December 6, 2024, YG sent a letter to a broad range of stakeholders with interests in the Study Area to share available information about the upcoming process.
- On December 20, 2024, YG held an online information session with the Chamber of Mines and its members, which was attended by over 20 industry representatives.
- The trilateral government-to-government Steering Committee was established in January 2025. The Steering Committee is responsible for establishing the project work plan and timelines, including plans for stakeholder engagement and public communications.
- The feasibility study is anticipated to take one to two years and will result in recommendations from the Steering Committee to the three governments, all of whom would have to agree to proceed with the establishment of one or more protected areas if recommended.

Approved by:	
Justin Ferbey	2025 02 05
Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office	Date approved

Spring 2025

Extended Producer Responsibility Implementation

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Yukon is one of the last jurisdictions in Canada to implement Extended Producer Responsibility.
- The first ever Extended Producer Responsibility program for packaging in Canada was a hybrid model in Ontario in 2002.
- Then in 2014, British Columbia introduced the first full Extended Producer Responsibility program for packaging.
- More recently, all other provinces have launched Extended Producer Responsibility programs for paper and packaging.
- The latest is Alberta, whose Extended Producer Responsibility program for paper and packaging will become operational in April of this year.
- I can't stress enough that Yukoners are already paying for recycling services as the Government of Yukon has been subsidizing this service for years.
- The government is simply shifting the financial burden from Yukoners to producers and aligning the territory's recycling program with the rest of the country.

Additional response:

- Waste management and waste diversion through recycling are essential, but costly, services that Yukoners have come to expect.
- For many years, Yukoners diverted waste from landfills by recycling with financial support from the local and territorial governments and with the help of a local non-profit.

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- Extended Producer Responsibility creates a user-pay system by shifting the cost of recycling from Yukon taxpayers and municipalities to producers of products and packaging.
- Extended Producer Responsibility also provides a long-lasting solution to the underlying structural issues facing the Yukon's recycling system.
- Yukoners already pay into an Extended Producer Responsibility program when purchasing products from national chains. The Yukon government is now moving towards implementation of an Extended Producer Responsibility program within the territory.

Additional response (Benefits):

- Implementing Extended Producer Responsibility is critical to shift the responsibility of waste management from taxpayers to the businesses that produce the products.
- This will reduce the costs of waste management for taxpayers, provide financial stability for recycling, and ultimately reduce waste production.
- Extended Producer Responsibility provides long-term assurance to businesses in the recycling industry, which allows them to make strategic decisions. This contrasts with our previous recycling system which did not encourage businesses to make investments of time and capital into waste reduction and recycling.
- Extended Producer Responsibility will reduce the amount of waste that goes into landfills and help reach the waste diversion and greenhouse gas reduction targets under Our Clean Future.

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Extended Producer Responsibility Implementation

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- The Yukon will be the first territory to establish Extended Producer Responsibility for paper and packaging and we are proud of the new ground we are breaking for Canada's territories.
- Waste is just as much of a problem in the Yukon as in provinces, and many of the corporations that we buy our goods from are also active in provincial Extended Producer Responsibility programs.
- Yukoners deeply value the outdoors and all want to see waste managed properly.
- Through the implementation of the Extended Producer Responsibility program, recycling in the Yukon will be strengthened to help protect our environment and support our northern way of life.

Additional response (Cost):

- By implementing Extended Producer Responsibility, the Yukon government will reduce its spending on waste management, which currently takes the form of diversion credits paid to recycling operators and collection contractors.
- We are carefully considering how costs will be distributed among businesses. For example, we have exempted small businesses from the paper and packaging program.
- With Extended Producer Responsibility in place, businesses who
 handle and dispose of automotive and hazardous products will be
 able to dispose of that waste for free, thereby avoiding the fees that
 they are currently paying to dispose of that waste.
- Now that three stewardship plans have been approved by the Government of Yukon, the producer responsibility organizations can

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Extended Producer Responsibility Implementation

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proceed with operationalizing their plans and determining the exact costs to be borne by producer members.

Third response (Stakeholder input):

- There have been numerous opportunities for stakeholders to be directly involved in the development of Extended Producer Responsibility.
- We established the Extended Producer Responsibility Advisory
 Committee in late 2021 to provide a forum for key Yukon stakeholders
 to learn about Extended Producer Responsibility and to help us shape
 the regulatory proposal.
- During public engagement we heard from 121 organizations and 278 individuals over 15 group engagement sessions, multiple one-on-one meetings, and through a survey.
- After the public engagement we continued to talk to the stakeholders through 22 more meetings and presentations before the Regulation passed in January 2024.
- Since then, we have held more than 25 additional meetings with stakeholders to discuss implementation. And this responsive and passionate team remains available to answer any questions.
- Dating back to 2021, Yukon businesses and the Chambers of Commerce have been involved in committees and engagement processes. Yukon government officials have met with any stakeholder who has requested a meeting.
- We also connected stakeholders to the producer responsibility organizations as they are in a better position to answer certain questions regarding practical aspects of implementation.

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- Producer responsibility organizations have also held their own stakeholder engagement to inform the proposed program plans prior to submission of those plans to the Yukon government.
- The Government of Yukon will conduct a review of the program after one year of operation to identify potential opportunities for improvement. Should amendments to the regulation be necessary, we will engage stakeholders once again.

Fourth response (Implementation):

- As of April 7, three producer responsibility organizations (PRO's) have submitted three stewardship plans on behalf of producers.
- The Call2Recycle plan, starting on June 24, 2025, is focused on the recycling of batteries in the Yukon.
- The Interchange Recycling stewardship plan, starting on August 1, focuses on the recycling and safe disposal of products like lubricating oil, diesel exhaust fluid, antifreeze and automotive containers up to 55L.
- The stewardship plans include the level of service provided to Yukoners.
- Collection targets are being developed with producer responsibility organizations based on the amount of recyclable products supplied into the Yukon.
- As the department evaluates this data, we will work with producer responsibility organizations to establish baseline levels of recycling that will occur during year one to three of the stewardship plans

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- Targets for years four and five will be developed on the first three years' recovery data, with a goal of year over year performance improvement.
- The program for packaging and paper products will be operated by Circular Materials and will launch on November 1, 2025.
- A producer responsibility organization called Product Care has committed to developing a plan for hazardous and special waste.
 Product Care plans to engage with stakeholders this spring and start the program operation this fall.
- Because every province in Canada has already established an Extended Producer Responsibility program, the Yukon is able to gain cost and operational efficiencies by working with established organizations and processes.
- Moving forward with the Extended Producer Responsibility program in 2025 is essential for long-term sustainability, waste reduction and creating a cleaner environment.

Fifth Response (How EPR works in Canada):

- Extended Producer Responsibility in Canada has led to several recycling innovations. Canadian manufacturers are now responsible for covering the cost of collecting and recycling their packaging materials, which offers an incentive to reduce packaging and design products that are easier to recycle.
- In general, Extended Producer Responsibility leads to higher rates of recycling and reduced amounts of material going to the landfill – thanks to the expanded recycling services.
- Additional services are only useful if people know about them.

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Extended Producer Responsibility Implementation

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- The Yukon's Extended Producer Responsibility program requires operators to inform the public about local recycling opportunities in their region. This type of public education generally leads to increased recycling.
- As the Yukon joins established Extended Producer Responsibility networks across Canada, the choices of Yukoners at the till to buy products with less packaging will help impact how corporations package their products.
- The Yukon is benefiting from established organizations, processes and procedures by joining Extended Producer Responsibility after the provinces have established their cost structures and programs.

Sixth Response (Regulation Review):

- The Government of Yukon will monitor the implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility in the territory to ensure that producers can successfully navigate the introduction of user-pay principles in the Yukon.
- We have committed to reviewing the paper and packaging program after one year of operations to ensure that the thresholds for inclusion are set at an appropriate level.
- Should amendments to the regulation be necessary, we will engage stakeholders once again.

Context—this may be an issue because:

 On February 13, 2025, Yukon Party issued a news release stating they would support a delay in implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility due to the threat of tariffs from the United States, and that there have not been adequate opportunities for stakeholder input.

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Extended Producer Responsibility Implementation

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- The Yukon public and Yukon businesses may have questions about how the implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility framework will impact the Yukon's waste management system and Yukon businesses.
- Producer responsibility organizations have indicated to the Yukon government and stakeholders that the costs to operate these programs will be higher in the territory than seen in other jurisdictions.

Background:

- From January to May 2022, the Department of Environment worked with the
 Extended Producer Responsibility Advisory Committee to collect preliminary input on
 Extended Producer Responsibility. Public engagement on Extended Producer
 Responsibility was held from November 1, 2022, to February 17, 2023.
- In the fall of 2023, the amendments to the Environment Act were passed allowing Yukon to place Extended Producer Responsibility obligations on national brands rather than Yukon municipalities and taxpayers. On January 25, 2024, the Extended Producer Responsibility Regulation was passed.
- Producer responsibility organizations submit stewardship plans on behalf of producers. As of February 2025, three out of four producer responsibility organizations have submitted stewardship plans for Yukon government review. All three plans have been approved.
- In January 2025, Yukon government officials set up a meeting with the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, but the relevant staff of the Chamber did not attend, nor did they respond to follow-up communication.

History of EPR

- The concept of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) was first introduced in Europe in the late 1990's.
- In 2009, the Canadian Council for Ministers of Environment made a recommendation for all provinces and territories to explore EPR.
- In the Yukon, EPR was first considered back in 2014, when the Environment Act was first amended to allow for EPR.

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Extended Producer Responsibility Implementation

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- In 2018, a Ministerial Committee on Solid Waste recommended that EPR be adopted.
- In early 2022, engagement with stakeholders was launched, and engagement with the public occurred in late 2022 to early 2023.
- In January 2024, the regulation was passed, and now we are in the implementation phase.
- We are on target with all programs for implementation. Waste oil and batteries will be operational this summer, and hazardous materials and paper and packaging will be launched this fall.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	April 8, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

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Session Briefing Note

Elk-Agriculture Management

Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon works to ensure that the Yukon's elk population remains healthy and can be sustainably harvested. The Departments of Energy Mines and Resources and Environment also work to reduce the negative impacts elk can have on the production of local foods and crops.
- In 2023, the Government of Yukon implemented a two-year pilot project to minimize impacts of the Takhini elk herd on agricultural properties while maintaining the Takhini elk herd on the landscape.
- A Steering Committee is implementing the plan. The Committee is made up of representation from the Government of Yukon, the Yukon Fish and Game Association, the Yukon Agricultural Association, and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.
- In March 2024, the Steering Committee hired a Pilot Project Coordinator to work with property owners and hunters to implement measures to deter the Takhini elk herd from properties and respond when elk are present.
- The person who was initially hired for this position resigned in January 2025, and the Steering Committee hired a new Coordinator that began in late February.
- The two-year pilot project created a Limited Exclusion Zone to deter elk in the affected agricultural areas of Takhini Valley, applying localized and range-scale herd management, supporting fencing options, implementing an elk radio-collaring program, and conducting a social survey to understand more about how we interact with elk.

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Elk-Agriculture Management

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Additional response:

- In the Yukon, there are three types of Elk hunting permits:
 - Permit Hunt Authorization (PHA) for Elk, which can be obtained through the Permit Hunt Authorization Lottery, including four PHA's for the Takhini Elk Herd;
 - o Elk exclusion area permits, which allow any Yukon resident to hunt elk in select exclusion areas; and
 - Wildlife Act adaptive elk permits that are available for the Takhini Valley, through the Permit Hunt Authorization Lottery. Eight of these permits were first introduced in 2023 and are still available.
- In the 2024-2024 season a total of nine elk were harvested in the territory:
 - Four elk were killed through Wildlife Act Adaptive Elk permits in the Takhini Valley; and,
 - Five elk were killed by hunters with a Permit Hunt Authorization two in Braeburn and three in Takhini Valley.

Third response (Braeburn elk):

 Survey results from the past five years range from 12 to 36 elk, representing a significant decline in the Braeburn elk herd. The Braeburn elk herd does not have any documented conflicts with farmers or agricultural properties.

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Elk-Agriculture Management

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- To ensure the Braeburn elk herd's long-term survival and to support its recovery, the two PHA's have been paused for this hunting season.
- This pause is only for the Braeburn elk herd. There are presently no concerns with Takhini elk herd and the four PHA opportunities for that herd remain available this season.
- This is in keeping with Goal 1 of the 2016 Management Plan for Elk in the Yukon to "Ensure the Takhini and Braeburn elk herds remain healthy and self-sustaining."
- As the member opposite is the signatory to the 2016 Management Plan for Elk in Yukon, I am sure he remembers the good work of the many stakeholders involved in its creation. This includes:
 - Champagne and Aishihik First Nations,
 - o Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.
 - o Little Salmon/ Carmacks First Nation,
 - o Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board,
 - Alsek Renewable Resources Council.
 - Laberge Renewable Resources Council,
 - o Carmacks Renewable Resources Council,
 - o Yukon Game Growers Association.
 - o Yukon Agriculture Association,

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Elk-Agriculture Management

Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources

- Yukon Agriculture Industry Advisory Council, and
- o Yukon Fish and Game Association.
- All of these parties have an interest in elk management and we appreciate their efforts to create the management plan.
- The Department of Environment will continue to monitor the Braeburn elk herd abundance and recruitment rates, with the goal of reopening sustainable hunting opportunities in the near future.

Fourth response:

- The Department of Environment continues to monitor elk populations and their health to determine if there are additional harvest opportunities while ensuring that elk continue to be on the Yukon's landscape.
- The number of calls to the Conservation Officer Services Branch concerning elk-agriculture conflicts remains low, with a total of 25 complaints received since 2020.
- In 2023 and 2024, there were no applications for compensation claims.
- Any Yukoner experiencing a conflict with elk or other wildlife on their property can call the TIPP line at 1-800-661-0525 to report the issue to our Conservation Officers.
- Farmers are able to apply for funding for game fencing through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership funding program and compensation for elk damage to crops and property from Agriculture Branch.

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- Landowners and farmers can apply for a permit to shoot elk damaging their properties. These permits are only used in specific cases where there are ongoing issues and damage, and where all other reasonable measures have been unsuccessful.
- The Department of Environment continues to work closely with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources to consider additional ways to reduce conflict between the Takhini elk herd and agricultural land owners.

Context — this may be an issue because:

 Affected farmers may seek an update on government actions to address the conflict between the wild elk population and agricultural properties in the Limited Exclusion Zone.

Background:

- Since 2014, the Government of Yukon has provided funding to compensate farmers for elk damage and funding to install exclusion fencing, although it has not fully covered farmers' time and other costs associated with mitigation.
- Between 2021 and 2024, the Government of Yukon established an additional funding program for farmers to install elk exclusion fencing on agricultural properties in the Takhini Valley eastern buffer zone. \$289,576 was allocated for nine fencing projects under this program. Current and ongoing funding for elk exclusion fencing now comes from Sustainable-Canadian Agriculture Partnership.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	April 9, 2025
Deputy Minister, Environment	Date approved
Heather Mills	April 9, 2025
Acting Deputy Minister, Energy, Mines and Resources	Date approved

Session Briefing Note Spring 2025 McIntyre Creek Protected Area Planning Environment

Recommended response:

- Chasàn Chùa, also known as McIntyre Creek, is a culturally important area within the Traditional Territories of Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, with a history of use by First Nations Peoples from the past to today.
- The area supports a diversity of wildlife habitats and is also an accessible recreation area used by cross-country skiers, rock climbers, hikers, bikers, snowmobilers, and disc golfers.
- Establishing Chasan Chùa (McIntyre Creek) as a protected area continues to be a priority for the Government of Yukon and we have taken several steps to protect this area for future generations.

Additional response:

- In 2023, the Government of Yukon announced measures to protect the area from additional mineral staking and ensure land uses align with the establishment of a protected area.
- In April 2024, the Government of Yukon, the Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, the City of Whitehorse and Parks Canada signed a Memorandum of Understanding committing partners to work together towards the protection of McIntyre Creek.
- A Steering Committee, which includes representatives from all five governments, was established to guide this work.
- This Steering Committee conducted public engagement in late 2024 to gain feedback from Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council Citizens and Beneficiaries, key stakeholders and the public on the values they hold for this area.

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McIntyre Creek Protected Area Planning

Environment

- The What We Heard Report on engagement was issued March 5 and includes a summary of the feedback collected from:
 - 887 online survey responses;
 - o a public open house; and,
 - meetings with stakeholders and interest groups.
- Overall, there was strong support for protecting Chasan Chua, with the majority of respondents agreeing it should be a protected area.
- The Steering Committee is now working to review the feedback which will help inform the five governments of their recommendations on the best way to protect Chasàn Chùa (McIntyre Creek) in the future.
- The Government of Yukon, with our partners, is exploring all possible mechanisms to protect the area, including the potential for territorial park designation.

Third response (Gladiator Metals):

- The McIntyre Creek area has a multitude of land uses and interests, including mining. This highlights the importance of our work to protect the area for its cultural, recreational and environmental value.
- The Government of Yukon continues to engage with mining companies in the area to discuss opportunities and options moving forward.
- I am aware that Gladiator Metals recently submitted a proposed exploration project to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board that includes claims within the McIntyre Creek area.

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McIntyre Creek Protected Area Planning

Environment

- Any mining-related work needs to follow existing regulatory processes and comply with territorial and municipal permitting requirements.
- Planning for the future of the McIntyre Creek area considers the many overlapping interests of the area, with a goal of balancing these uses for the benefit of all.
- The Department of Environment remains engaged in any proposed mineral activity in this area and continues to work with all partners to establish protections for McIntyre Creek.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions about the Yukon government's progress toward the commitment to establish Chasàn Chùa (McIntyre Creek) as a protected area.
- A mining company, Gladiator Metals, has approval from the Government of Yukon to conduct Class 1 activities and has now submitted a project proposal to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board to conduct Class 3 exploration work on claims overlapping the current proposed area for protection.

Background:

- The City of Whitehorse has formally adopted Whitehorse 2040 as the City's new Official Community Plan. Whitehorse 2040 details the proposed boundaries for Chasan Chua/McIntyre Creek Park.
- Additional interests in this area include mining claim holders, gravel extraction and other commercial and institutional land tenures, including Icy Waters and Yukon University.
 Existing authorizations are not directly impacted by the mineral staking withdrawal or the administrative reserve.
- Existing claim holders can work on their claims if they obtain relevant permits from both the Government of Yukon and the City of Whitehorse.

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McIntyre Creek Protected Area Planning

Environment

- Gladiator Metals has authorization to work within Class 1 limits on their claims, which are near and within the proposed park area. This allows for the lowest level of exploration work.
- In February, Gladiator submitted a project proposal to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board to conduct Class 3 activities, which could allow for a significantly higher degree of exploration activities.
- As of August 1, 2024, Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN) and Gladiator Metals Corp.
 entered into a Capacity Funding Agreement regarding mineral exploration in the City of
 Whitehorse and KDFN Traditional Territory. The Agreement outlines Gladiator's
 responsibility to provide financial support for KDFN's review of their proposed projects
 and for their participation in consultation and environmental assessments.
- The Department of Environment, in conjunction with Energy, Mines and Resources, continues to engage with Gladiator Metals and other claim holders on discussions involving future plans for the area, and the potential for claim relinquishment.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	April 8, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

Session Briefing Note Gladiator Metals

Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to ensuring that resource development is done responsibly, and that any proposed mineral development project adheres to our regulatory framework.
- In late 2024, Gladiator Metals applied for a Class 1 authorization to conduct exploratory work on its claims in the Whitehorse Copper District in three areas: Cowley Creek (behind Mary Lake subdivision), along the Copper Haul Road north of Sima, and near McLean Lake Road.
- In January 2025 consultation was initiated with Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council on the Class 1 application.
- Most of the claims included in the Cowley claim block were staked decades ago, but Gladiator has staked new claims in this area that are outside of the City of Whitehorse staking prohibition boundary.

Additional response:

- Gladiator has staked 55 additional claims in the Łu Zil Män (Fish Lake) planning area outside of the City of Whitehorse municipal boundary. These claims are subject to mineral development and environmental laws, official community plans, local area plans and zoning regulations.
- Should the company submit a Class 1 application in the Łu Zil Män (Fish Lake) area, this will be reviewed, assessed for potential environmental impacts, and consulted on with affected First Nations before any project is approved.

Additional response (if asked about radon):

Session Briefing Note Gladiator Metals

Energy, Mines and Resources

- We have heard some residents raise concerns that mining exploration could increase the risk of radon in groundwater.
- Radon is sometimes present in groundwater in the area, but core drilling for exploration is unlikely to alter groundwater quality.
- The Government of Yukon is collaborating with the University of Saskatchewan, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and the City of Whitehorse on a three-year project funded by NRCan to examine groundwater quality and hazards in Whitehorse and better understand the risks of radon in the groundwater.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- There is significant public interest in Gladiator Metals' exploration program given the locations of these activities and the recent court case.
- The Fish Lake Steering Committee and local residents have raised concerns about Gladiator Metal's staking of 55 new quartz claims that were registered on May 21, 2024 in the Fish Lake planning area.

Background:

- On May 11, 2023, the Mineral Resources Branch received a complaint about the Class 1 activities near the Cowley Creek site, and requested the Compliance, Monitoring and Inspections Branch inspect the site. A Natural Resource Officer inspected the site and identified numerous violations.
- The company was convicted of six offences for unauthorized activities. On August 30, 2023, the company was fined \$38,000, plus a \$5,700 victim fine surcharge.
- On November 14, 2023, Gladiator Metals received a new authorization to conduct Class 1 quartz exploration near the former Whitehorse Copper property. The site lies along the Copper Haul Road, north of the Mt. Sima Road, not near residential subdivisions. Exploration work commenced in early January 2024. The Class 1 authorization was amended to include claims in the Cowley Creek area and remediation was completed prior to November 13, 2024.

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- On January 18, 2024, a Natural Resource Officer collaborated with bylaw officers from the City of Whitehorse and company representatives to inspect the site. No concerns were noted at the time.
- Due to the overlap with the City of Whitehorse municipal boundaries, the company requires development permits from the City to proceed with work.
- Natural Resource Officers regularly inspect the Class 1 activities to ensure the company is complying with its authorization conditions. An inspection conducted on July 10, 2024, identified several reclamation issues that required attention.
- An inspection on August 13, 2024, confirmed that the previously outstanding reclamation issues had been corrected and no further issues were noted.
- Gladiator's proposed exploration work along the Copper Haul Road corridor is within a block of 586 claims and 7 crown grants between west of the Mary Lake subdivision to west of the Whitehorse landfill.
- On May 21, 2024, Gladiator Metals registered 55 new quartz claims in the Łu Zil Män (Fish Lake) land planning area.

Approved by:	
Sierra van der Meer	February 3, 2025
Deputy Minister Department of Energy, Mines and Resources	Date approved

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Peel Land Use Plan Implementation / National and Territorial Peel Parks

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon continues to work with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and the Gwich'in Tribal Council to implement the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan.
- We have been working together to designate specific Special Management Areas identified in the Peel Plan as protected areas under legislation.
- As part of this work, we are collaborating with the federal government, Gwich'in Tribal Council, and the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun on a feasibility assessment for a national park that could include the Turner Lake Wetlands, Caribou River, and the Peel River corridor areas.
- We are also working toward full protection of the Special Management Areas that include the Richardson Mountains and Vittrekwa River area, as well as the Wind, Snake and Bonnet Plume Rivers.
- Combined, these three areas cover over seven percent of the Yukon.

National Park Feasibility Assessment in the Peel Watershed:

 Recently, the Government of Yukon, Gwich'in Tribal Council, the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun and Parks Canada, held a public engagement period for the proposed new national park in the Turner Lake Wetlands, Caribou River, and the Peel River corridor.

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Peel Land Use Plan Implementation / National and Territorial Peel Parks

Environment

- This engagement period was an opportunity for Yukoners and Canadians to provide input on designation, boundaries, and management of this area.
- The input received through the engagement will be considered as part of the overall feasibility and desirability of a national park.
- If established, a new national park would permanently protect 3,000 square kilometres of rich and diverse landscapes.
- Protection of this area is a key step toward implementing the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan and supports the conservation and protection goals of the Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement.

Peel Territorial Parks:

- The Parties to the Peel Plan, which include the governments of First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, the Gwich'in Tribal Council and Yukon, are discussing the establishment of two territorial parks in the Peel Watershed.
- We are working together to designate the first park under the Yukon's Parks and Land Certainty Act in the Richardson Mountains and Vittrekwa River.
- Once designated, the Government of Yukon will work with First Nation partners to co-develop the management direction for the park, which will include an opportunity for the public to provide input.
- The Parties are also working together to achieve full protection of the Special Management Area that includes the Wind, Snake and Bonnet Plume Rivers.

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Peel Land Use Plan Implementation / National and Territorial Peel Parks

Environment

 This area covers about six per cent of the Yukon and, if designated as a territorial park, would be 14 times larger than Tombstone Park.

Additional response:

- Other implementation activities from the Peel Plan include the establishment of two hydrometric stations on the Snake and Wind Rivers. These stations monitor water levels and flow and are used to forecast the likelihood of flooding. Data from these stations can be accessed by the public in real time.
- Accessible water data increases the safety of river users and is valuable for understanding environmental change in the area.
- We have also produced publicly-available mapping products, which used satellite imagery to map wetlands and areas of existing disturbance. These products can be used to inform future land management planning and decision-making.
- Two areas within the Peel Watershed have been nominated by the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute to be National Historic Sites. These are areas of great cultural importance to the Tetłit Gwich'in. The nominations are supported by all five parties to the Peel Plan.
- We look forward to continuing collaborative work with First Nations partners to implement the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The public continues to show interest in the implementation of the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan.
- Public engagement for the Teetł'it Gwinjik (Peel River) National Park ended on March 17, 2025.

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Peel Land Use Plan Implementation / National and Territorial Peel Parks

Environment

Background:

- The Peel Plan Implementation Committee consists of representatives from all five governments who are signatories to the Peel Plan and are responsible for overseeing the Plan's implementation.
- In the proposed territorial park areas, non-industrial land uses, such as hunting, trapping, outfitting, and commercial tourism will be allowed to continue within the parks. As per the Peel Plan, no new industrial development or new surface access will be allowed. Existing mining claims will be recognized.
- The proposed national park area does not overlap with any outfitting concession and licensed resident hunters rarely visit the area because of its remoteness. Subsistence harvest rights in this area will not be affected should it become a national park. Portions of approx. 20 mineral claims overlap the proposed national park boundary. The Peel Plan Implementation Committee and staff at EMR are continuing to encourage the holder of these claims to relinquish them.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	March 31, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved



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Land Treatment Facility – Mackintosh Gravel Pit

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon considered YESAB's recommendation for the Land Treatment Facility project at the Mackintosh Gravel Pit.
- On March 14th, the Department of Environment issued a Decision Document that accepted Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board's (YESAB) recommendation that the project proceeds with more stringent conditions.
- The Decision Document includes more stringent conditions and measures to mitigate negative impacts identified during the YESAB process including specific measures to address concerns raised by the public.
- These conditions include additional protections to mitigate the risk of transport of dust from the site, increase the type of information that must be shared with local residents, and require a more detailed system for local residents to submit feedback.
- Issuing the Decision Document concludes the environmental assessment process and allows the project to advance to the regulatory phase.
- This allows the Proponent to apply for the necessary permits for the Land Treatment Facility (LTF) under the Environment Act and the Lands Act.
- If the project completes the regulatory phase, the Government of Yukon will keep monitoring to ensure the project complies with environmental regulations. This includes regular inspections and

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Land Treatment Facility – Mackintosh Gravel Pit

Environment

ongoing reporting to confirm that the project does not harm the environment or local communities.

Additional response:

- The Department of Environment's mission is to contribute to a healthy, sustainable and prosperous future through environmental stewardship and the effective management of Yukon's natural resources.
- There are seven commercial land treatment facilities in the Yukon, including two in Whitehorse. There is no facility in western Yukon.
- Development of a facility near Haines Junction may reduce the cost of remediation of contaminated sites in this region.

Third response (permitting process):

- At this stage, the proponent requires both an Environment Act permit and a land use permit under the Lands Act to operate.
- It is expected that the proponent will submit applications to obtain these permits.
- The regulatory review associated with the permitting regime includes additional technical requirements related to the protection of land and water.
- Upon receipt of the application, department officials review all required documentation including construction plans, siting information, and a hydrogeological assessment.
- Construction plans must include berm dimensions, treatment area dimensions, and liner type and construction.

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Land Treatment Facility – Mackintosh Gravel Pit

Environment

- Site information must include site grade, distance to surface water, distance to residences, and distances from a 25-year floodplain.
- The hydrogeological assessment must assess groundwater depth, groundwater flow direction, groundwater travel time to any nearby water body and wells, as well as aquifer depth, type and distribution.
- An additional third-party review of the hydrogeological assessment would be conducted at the expense of the proponent. This review would confirm the assessment was accurate and conducted as per the industry's best practices.
- Permit conditions for land treatment facilities vary based on facility construction, YESAB decision document conditions and site-specific factors such as nearby human and environmental receptors.
- The proponent would be required to adhere to the Contaminated Sites Regulations, land treatment facility guidelines and protocols, and YESAB decision document recommendations.

Fourth response (Monitoring and inspection):

- If issued, the Environment Act permit would contain terms and conditions intended to reduce potential environmental risks and impacts and protect the land and water.
- This may include requirements for dust control, groundwater monitoring, and requirements regarding handling and movement of contaminated material to and from site.
- A land treatment facility must be inspected every two weeks to ensure all the infrastructure is functioning as it should.

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Land Treatment Facility – Mackintosh Gravel Pit

Environment

- All records regarding treated material origin, contaminants present, contaminants treatment and volumes must be recorded and reported annually.
- Groundwater monitoring wells must be sampled regularly and all analytical data recorded and reported.
- If contamination is detected in the groundwater monitoring wells, a permitted facility would be required to prepare and implement an adaptive management plan to ensure contamination is contained.
- An adaptive management plan may also be developed to address risks such as spills or compromised liners.
- Prior to closure, the permit holder must provide a decommissioning plan which adheres to Department of Environment protocols. The facility must then be decommissioned and proof provided that no contamination remains on site.

Context—this may be an issue because:

 Residents expressed concerns regarding location and operations, and a petition in opposition of the Project is online with over 400 signatures.

Background:

- YESAB is an independent board whose role is to conduct a neutral assessment of proposed projects in the Yukon considering all information provided to them through a public process and then make a recommendation on whether the project should proceed.
- As the delegated Decision Body on this project, the department has an obligation to give full and fair consideration to scientific information, traditional knowledge and

Session Briefing Note Land Treatment Facility – Mackintosh Gravel Pit

Spring 2025

Environment

other information that is provided with the recommendation, including comments from local residents.

- In March of 2024 Castle Rock Enterprises submitted a project proposal to YESAB to build and operate a land treatment facility approximately 11 km west of Haines Junction, within 1 km of the Bear Creek and Nygren residential areas.
- This proposed land treatment facility would accept, store and treat soil and water contaminated with petroleum hydrocarbons.
- The YESAB assessment was completed on January 23, 2025, and YESAB's recommendation was that the project be allowed to proceed subject to recommended terms and conditions.
- On March 14th, the Department of Environment issued a Decision Document that accepted Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board's (YESAB) recommendation that the project proceed.
- The Department is responsible for permitting land treatment facilities under the current <u>Contaminated Sites Regulation</u>. A land use permit and land lease would be required from Energy, Mines and Resources if the project proceeds.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	March 4, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved



ENV #20 / EMR #54 Spring 2025

Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- Yukoners recognize that our territory, alongside jursidictions around the world, is facing a climate emergency that is increasingly impacting our communities and way of life.
- In 2020, the Government of Yukon released Our Clean Future, the territory's first climate strategy that is guiding our response to climate change and climate adapation.
- We continue to make significant progress on implementing Our Clean Future. In November 2024, we shared the 2023 Our Clean Future progress report that highlights our progress in adapting to climate change impacts and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- As of the end of 2024 we:
 - Registered 597 zero emission vehicles in the territory and all road-connected communities are equipped with fast chargers;
 - Provided over 1500 rebates for electric bikes:
 - Completed over 300 high performance residental retrofits including over 50 high performance commerical and industrial building energy retrofits;
 - Installed 219 smart heating devices in homes and buildings;
 - Installed 10 megawatts of renewable electricity through the Micro-Generation Program.
- In addition, we recently launched a new income tested heat pump rebate, which was fully subscribed with in a month, providing 84 households with funding for heat pumps this year and next.



ENV #20 / EMR #54 Spring 2025

Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources

• By the end of 2023, the Government of Yukon has completed 68 Our Clean Future actions, 105 are in progress or ongoing and 5 have not yet been started.

Additional response:

- As we continue to address climate change, it is important for us to look back on our progress and continue to assess how we can better respond to climate change and reduce our emissions.
- In 2023, we announced the addition of 42 new actions to help us reach our climate goals, which brings the total number of climate actions to 178.
- These new actions are a product of the important work of the Yukon Climate Leadership Council, the Yukon Youth Panel on Climate Change, Navius Research and the findings in the Climate Risk Assessment report.
- The new actions focus on reducing the Yukon's emissions, supporting accessible, reliable and affordable renewable energy, climate adaptation and transitioning to a green economy.
- By the end of 2024, we have made significant progress, including:
 - Completed flood maps for the Southern Lakes region, Teslin and Carmacks. Flood hazard maps are underway for Old Crow, the City of Dawson and the Klondike Valley, and Mayo.
 - Worked with municipalities and First Nations governments to finalize the Community Wildfire Protection Plans in Faro, Haines Junction, Teslin, the City of Dawson and Whitehorse. Plans for Beaver Creek, Mayo, Old Crow, Watson Lake, Destruction Bay and Burwash Landing are underway.



ENV #20 / EMR #54 Spring 2025

Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources

- Advanced climate change preparedness by initiating development of a permafrost monitoring system for key public buildings, and guidelines to address climate hazards in major infrastructure projects.
- o Established a geohazard mapping program to understand risks from climate change to the Yukon's transportation corridors.
- Completed flood risk mapping for all transportation corridors in the Yukon.
- We are committed to efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and we support Yukoners in the transition to cleaner transportation options and energy efficient homes and buildings.
- In 2024, we:
 - We passed legislation to set a target of a 45 per cent reduction in mining sector emissions per unit of production by 2035.
 - o Began providing rebates for medium-duty electric vehicles.
 - o Installed electric vehicle chargers in every road-accessible community in the Yukon, enabling zero-emissions travel throughout the territory. 20 fast charging stations are now operational throughout the territory, and one new Level 2 charger in Swift River. (See EMR BN #30)
- Since 2020, we have provided rebates for 543 energy efficient new homes, exceeding our 2030 target of 500.



ENV #20 / EMR #54 Spring 2025

Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources

Third response:

- Existing actions put us on track to reduce the Yukon's emissions by 30 per cent by 2030. However, there is still significant work required to meet our target reduction of 45 per cent by 2030.
- One of the major drivers of emissions is population more people means more cars on the road and more homes to heat.
- However, as the population of the Yukon continues to grow, we aren't seeing the rate of emissions increase that we would expect.
- We are seeing lower emissions per Yukoner than we saw in 2010; this is a promising sign that the emissions intensity of everyday life for Yukoners may be starting to decrease.
- We will continue to build on Our Clean Future as we learn more and implement new actions. This will be reflected in the annual reports.
- We will continue to find opportunities to reach our targets as we work with experts, stakeholders and partner governments across the territory and beyond.

Context — this may be an issue because:

• Climate change and the government's progress in delivering on Our Clean Future commitments is of interest to Yukoners.

Background:

• Our Clean Future was released on September 14, 2020, and now has 178 actions, of which 136 are original actions and 42 are new actions. These actions seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support the Yukon to be highly resilient to the impacts of climate change by 2030.



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Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources

- The Government of Yukon reports annually on progress for the implementation of Our Clean Future. Four Annual Reports have been published to date, with the latest report released on November 12, 2024 (capturing 2023 data).
- The Our Clean Future website was launched in December 2023, which shows the government's commitments and successes towards fighting climate change.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	February 5, 2025
Deputy Minister, Environment	Date approved
Paul Moore	February 5, 2025
Deputy Minister, Energy, Mines and Resources	Date approved



Session Briefing Note Mining Intensity Target

Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- Last fall we amended the Clean Energy Act to set an intensity-based target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the mining sector, completing action I9 in Our Clean Future.
- The mining intensity target is a 45 per cent reduction in the mining sector's greenhouse gas emissions intensity by 2035.
- An intensity-based target allows for trends to be tracked regardless of how many mines are operational at any one time. It will show our progress in reducing mining-related greenhouse gas emissions and encourage mine operators to adopt low carbon practices.

Additional response:

- We have turned our attention to collecting data for our first reporting year.
- Implementation of the approach will include comprehensive engagement with industry to ensure it is designed to work within the Yukon's unique context.
- The mining intensity approach recognizes the differences between separate quartz and placer operations throughout their mining lifecycles, including post-production.
- Including post-production and abandoned mines in the target means that emissions from projects like the Faro Mine remediation will also be captured in annual reporting on progress.

Ref #32 EMR #33 Spring 2025

Session Briefing Note Mining Intensity Target

Energy, Mines and Resources

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Keno Hill is currently the only quartz mine in operation since Victoria Gold experienced a failure of its heap leach facility in June 2024.
- The Government of Canada is seeking regulatory approval to begin remediation of the Faro mine. It is anticipated that GHG emissions from this remediation will be significant.

Background:

- Since 2022, quartz mines have been required to estimate their greenhouse gas emissions, identify reduction measures, and report on greenhouse gas emissions.
- The percentage of emissions from mining is variable year-to-year. From 2009-2020, it contributed 8 to 15 per cent of the Yukon's total greenhouse gas emissions.
- A target of an overall mining emissions intensity reduction of 45 per cent below 2023 levels for 2035 and subsequent years was announced during the spring 2023 legislative session.
- Energy, Mines and Resources worked with a consultant to inform the development of baselines and benchmarks to measure progress towards the target.
- During spring 2024, the consultant and Energy, Mines and Resources presented the results and proposed baseline methodology to industry at a series of in-person and virtual meetings.
- Using data provided through the quartz mine licensing process and from fuel tax data, the Government of Yukon will track the sector's progress toward achieving greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.
- Canada's approach to pricing carbon pollution for emissions-intensive trade-exposed industries, such as mining, includes an Output-Based Pricing System. Depending on their size, quartz mines in the Yukon may be subject to this system.
- The Department of Finance is leading a separate project to see how to return carbon levies collected from larger mines under the Output-Based Pricing System. No Yukon mines have their levies currently collected under this system. Energy, Mines and Resources is assisting with this work. (See BN #32)

Prepared for Minister Streicker

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

Date prepared: Last Updated: January 20, 2025



Session Briefing Note Mining Intensity Target

Energy, Mines and Resources

Approved by:	
Heather Mills	January 24, 2025
Acting Deputy Minister Department of Energy, Mines and Resources	Date approved

ENV #22 / FIN #24 Spring 2025

Session Briefing Note Carbon Pricing (Corporate Note)

Environment & Finance

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon has supported carbon pricing to help reduce emissions and reach our climate targets. We remain committed to taking action on reducing emissions across the territory and to meeting our commitments outlined in Our Clean Future.
- However, we anticipate that the consumer carbon price in Canada will likely end in the near future.
- As Minister of Finance, I have asked Canada to provide certainty with respect to how and when carbon pricing will end and also what actions will be taken to contribute to emission reductions in lieu of carbon pricing.
- We will continue to monitor federal actions on carbon pricing diligently and are committed to keeping Yukoners informed about any changes that may affect them. This includes recent comments by Prime Minister-designate Carney to end the consumer carbon tax "immediately".

Additional response (federal government changes in policy):

- The Government of Yukon will continue to work with our federal counterparts to ensure we remain compliant to any evolving regulations or changes to carbon pricing programs at the federal level.
- All federal Liberal party candidates, along with the federal leaders of the other parties, have signaled that they will end or significantly change the consumer carbon pricing program. The end of the federal carbon price means that the Yukon would no longer receive revenues to sustain the carbon rebate program.

ENV #22 / FIN #24 Spring 2025

Session Briefing Note Carbon Pricing

Environment & Finance

- Carbon Pricing (Corporate Note)
 - The Yukon's carbon rebate is revenue neutral, and on average, Yukoners receive more than they pay in carbon pricing levies.
 - We have written to the federal government, requesting collaboration on a systematic wind down of the Yukon carbon rebate program. We have also urged the cancellation of the carbon levy increase planned for April 1, 2025.
 - Carbon pricing is just one tool to address climate change. Our plans outlined in Our Clean Future extend beyond any federal programing. Our government will continue to aspire to meet our greenhouse gas emissions target by 2030.

Third response:

- The departments of Environment and Finance continue to work with federal counterparts to assess the implications of carbon pricing on large industrial emitters that are subject to the Output Based Pricing System in the territory and ensure the needs of the Yukon are recognized in national policy.
- The Output Based Pricing System is separate from the consumer carbon price. Canada is currently conducting a review of that system.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On February 25, Yukon's Minister of Finance issued a statement confirming that he had written to the federal government, requesting collaboration on a systematic wind-down of the Yukon carbon rebate program and urging the cancellation of the planned carbon levy increase set for April 1, 2025.
- Carbon pricing remains a sensitive topic across the country with many provinces and territories voicing their own perspective on how they would like to see this pricing mechanism handled moving forward.

ENV #22 / FIN #24 Spring 2025

Session Briefing Note Carbon Pricing

Environment & Finance

Carbon Pricing (Corporate Note)

• The federal carbon pricing system is expected to be a central talking point as part of any forthcoming federal election.

Background:

- Most provinces and territories, including British Columbia and the Northwest Territories, have publicly opposed the federal carbon pricing system.
- Recently, federal liberal leaders have committed to ending the federal carbon tax in Canada.
- On April 1, 2025, the carbon levy will increase from \$80 to \$95 per tonne.
- The new Liberal leader and other federal party leaders have expressed their commitment to end or change the consumer carbon levy.
- The new federal Liberal leader has indicated the consumer carbon levy would be eliminated "immediately". No specific dates or timelines have been provided yet.
- Given that the end of the federal carbon price means that the Yukon will no longer receive revenues to sustain the carbon rebate program, on February 24, 2024, Minister of Finance Sandy Silver wrote to federal Ministers Guilbeault and LeBlanc asking for collaboration in winding down the Yukon's carbon rebate program, including a request to cancel the scheduled April 1, 2025, increase to the carbon levy.
- On February 25, 2024, Minister Silver issued a statement outlining the Yukon's request to federal Ministers.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	March 10, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved
Jessica Schultz	March 10, 2025
Deputy Minister of Finance	Date approved

Session Briefing Note Reducing Government of Yukon Emissions

Spring 2025

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon continues to work towards reducing the territory's greenhouse gas emissions and building a more climate resilient Yukon now and for generations to come.
- We know that this work needs to happen in partnership with Yukoners but also requires a shift in how the Government of Yukon operates and impacts the Yukon's environment.
- The Government of Yukon tracks greenhouse gas emissions from our internal operations and evaluates how climate change may be impacting government-owned infrastructure.
- In 2022, the government generated 48.7 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.
- Of this total, the Government of Yukon's departments emitted about three quarters of this, at about 33.3 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, with government corporations and Yukon University making up the remaining quarter.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon's emissions are largely the result of heating and powering buildings, operating road maintenance equipment and fleet vehicle use.
- Given this, the Department of Highways and Public Works represents the largest share of emissions, due to the significant role they play in maintaining our buildings, roads, airports, and fleet vehicles.
- The Department of Highways and Public Works also leads a onegovernment approach to reduce emissions from Government of Yukon

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Reducing Government of Yukon Emissions

Environment

buildings by improving energy efficiency and installing renewable energy systems.

- Investments in buildings are not tied to any one department and are prioritized where they will make the most impact in reducing emissions.
- The Government of Yukon also provides homes, healthcare, and electricity for Yukoners. These areas also represent a high portion of the Government of Yukon's emissions.

Third response (actions):

- To reduce emissions from our operations, we have, among others:
 - o Finished 31 retrofits to Government of Yukon buildings to improve efficiency and reduce emissions;
 - o Completed 112 energy assessments in high-emitting Government of Yukon buildings. 36 of those were completed in 2024;
 - o Installed a biomass heating system at Elijah Smith School and invested in a district heating system expansion at Whitehorse Correctional Centre connecting Takhini Haven and Young Offenders Facility; and
 - o Installed solar and battery energy storage projects at the Klondike and Ogilvie highway maintenance camps and started work on solar projects at Blanchard and Tuchitua highway maintenance camps.
- The Government of Yukon will continue to invest in reducing the impact that our operations have on the territory's emissions and climate change.

Session Briefing Note Reducing Government of Yukon Emissions

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Environment

Context—this may be an issue because:

• Emissions from the Government of Yukon have increased since 2010 as the Yukon's population grows.

Background:

• Every year, the Department of Environment publishes a report on the Government of Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions alongside the Our Clean Future annual report and the Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the Yukon report.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	February 5, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

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Reducing Government of Yukon Emissions

Environment

Appendix A: Total Government of Yukon emissions

Organization type	2022 emissions (ktCO₂e)
Departments	33.3
Corporations	13.0
Yukon University	2.5

Appendix B: 2022 emissions by department*.

Department**	Building emissions (ktCO ₂ e)	Government Fleet, waste and refrigerants (ktCO ₂ e)	Total (ktCO₂ e)
Community Services	0.8	1.9	2.7
Economic Development	0	<0.1	<0.1
Education	7.3	0.1	7.4
Energy, Mines and Resources	0.1	0.2	0.3
Environment	0.1	0.7	0.8
Health and Social Services	4.1	0.4	4.5
Highways and Public Works	6.8	8.8	15.6
Justice	0.9	<0.1	0.9

Prepared for Minister Clarke Department of Environment Date prepared: January 20, 2025

Last Updated:

Spring 2025

Reducing Government of Yukon Emissions

Fnvironment

Tourism and Culture	0.1	<0.1	0.1
Unknown***	0.5	0.3	0.8
		DEPARTMENT TOTAL	33.3

^{*} The total emissions listed in the Government of Yukon greenhouse gas emissions report do not include leased buildings, as the Government of Yukon does not have access to that data. Therefore, not all departments listed in this table will have emissions linked to their operations.

^{**} In many instances, Departments have limited control over energy use, and therefore greenhouse gas emissions, in their assigned buildings. Departments are focused on providing programing out of their assigned government buildings and thus have limited control over reducing building emissions. However, the Department of Highways & Public Works is leading the greenhouse gas reduction initiatives for all Government of Yukon buildings by delivering building energy retrofit and renewable energy projects.

^{***} A small percentage of emissions are not allocated to a specific department. These come from buildings used by multiple program areas and vehicles not assigned to a specific department.



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Predator Control and Principles of Wildlife Population Management

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Department of Environment works to support wildlife management decisions that are responsible, sustainable, and informed by scientific, local, and traditional knowledge.
- We base our management decisions on species-specific guidelines, management plans, harvest and mortality data, information gathered from hunters, Indigenous harvesters, community and co-management partners, and survey results.
- Ungulates, including moose, caribou, sheep, goat, bison, elk, and deer, are highly sought after by Yukon hunters, and many of these species are culturally significant to Yukon First Nations.
- Ungulates are often targeted by predators in the Yukon, such as wolves or bears. The Department of Environment does not use large-scale predator control programs for predators as a method to increase ungulate populations.

Additional response:

- Predators play an important role in our northern ecosystem. Wolves and bears are considered keystone species and help maintain the health, structure and balance of ecosystems in the Yukon.
- Predator control programs are costly and have been shown to have only short-term impacts. In addition, many Yukoners are strongly opposed to large-scale predator control.
- Instead, we manage licensed harvest, habitat use and human activity to conserve and maintain wildlife populations.

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Predator Control and Principles of Wildlife Population Management

Environment

 Licenced hunters in the Yukon are permitted to hunt coyotes and wolves without the need for a seal. However, the pelt of every harvested wolf must be sealed with a metal furbearer seal after the hunt.

Third response:

- The Government of Yukon will continue to conserve and protect wildlife and their habitats to ensure populations remain healthy and support sustainable harvest opportunities for Yukoners into the future.
- A sustainable approach to harvest management supports conservation goals and allows new hunting opportunities to be offered in areas where wildlife populations are healthy.
- In addition to responsibly managing licensed harvest, the Department of Environment will continue species management planning at the regional, traditional territory, and/or territory-wide scale.

Context — this may be an issue because:

• During past sittings, the Opposition asked about predator control to increase moose populations in the territory.

Background:

- Species management plans are co-drafted with our co-management partners and consider habitat availability, subsistence needs and overall management objectives for species populations.
- Existing management plans that guide predator management in Yukon include the 2012 Wolf Conservation and Management Plan and the 2019 Conservation Plan for Grizzly Bears in Yukon.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	February 5, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

Spring 2025

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Department of Environment takes wildlife data gathering and analysis very seriously, and accurate data is of utmost importance.
- Biologists at the department, who are often leading experts in their fields, work to understand wildlife populations through collecting and analyzing survey data as well as data submitted by licensed harvesters, and our co-management partners.
- Information from Yukoners, Yukon First Nations, Inuvialuit, and nonresidents help us evaluate harvest sustainability and fill gaps between survey years.
- With this information, we make informed decisions about harvest opportunities and conservation efforts.

Additional response:

- Collecting and analyzing wildlife data requires significant resources and is needed to ensure that we make evidence-based decisions about wildlife in the Yukon.
- We prioritize surveys based on species, population concerns, community concerns, land use planning needs, species recovery needs, and population risks from impacts such as industrial activity and climate change.
- This work involves close collaboration with partners to analyze and report on population levels, harvest trends, and risks. Through this work, we aim to ensure fish and wildlife populations remain sustainable for future Yukoners.
- Because data accuracy is so important to our work, the department has a robust process to check and analyze all data gathered or submitted.

inform decisions is as reliable as possible.

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Environment

These checks and balances provide reassurance that the data used to

Third response:

- Surveys are ongoing throughout each year. In 2025, we expect to continue our focus on surveying populations of caribou, sheep, moose, bison, deer, lake trout, Arctic grayling, burbot, pikas, and bats.
- Survey results are first shared with wildlife co-management partners, including Indigenous governments, Renewable Resources Councils, the Wildlife Management Advisory Council for the North Slope, and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board. Results are then shared with interest groups, such as the Yukon Fish and Game Association.
- We are committed to transparency in our work by sharing research and monitoring activities with the public on Yukon.ca.

Fourth response (Report timelines):

- In an effort to increase transparency and in the spirit of data sharing, we
 are making a concerted effort to release all reports in a timely fashion,
 including previously unpublished reports.
- To share information in a timely manner, the Department of Environment strives to release a preliminary two-page summary of survey methods and results within six months of the completion of a survey.
- We prioritize the completion of detailed technical reports of surveys, which may take one or more years, based on the urgency or the importance of the information they contain.
- Since 2023, the Department of Environment has released 33 reports on a variety of species, giving us important insights into the current state of wildlife populations in the territory.

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• While some reports posted on yukon.ca are from surveys completed many years ago, they still provide information that may be of interest to boards, councils, and environmental non-governmental organizations.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The Opposition has raised questions regarding how the government makes informed decisions regarding harvesting opportunities in the Yukon.
- First Nations have raised concerns around increased pressures on wildlife populations.

Background:

- Yukon's growing population, pressure from industrial and recreational land use, advances in fishing and hunting-related equipment, and climate change have placed significant pressures on our fish and wildlife resources. As a result, the need for monitoring has increased.
- In 2024, the Department of Environment allocated approximately \$35,000 for one moose-related project (Late-Winter Moose Distribution Manual for major project proponents) and approximately \$258,000 for elk and deer-related projects, including a drone contract to census both elk and deer, and seven radio-collar deployments for deer.
- Also in 2024, approximately \$900,000 was spent on projects related to the Northern Mountain population of woodland caribou, including one population survey (Klaza herd), three radio-collar deployments, and 12 fall composition surveys. Approximately \$500,000 was allocated to projects related to migratory caribou (Fortymile and Porcupine herds), and \$120,000 towards a habitat inventory project focused on lichen recovery.
- In 2024, the Department of Environment allocated \$43,000 to obtain a population estimate for thinhorn sheep herds in the Arkell and Pilot Sheep Management Units. An additional \$12,000 was allocated to obtaining lamb recruitment estimates in various regions; however, these funds were ultimately reallocated towards other projects outside of the Sheep and Goat Program on a needs basis.
- In 2024, the Department of Environment allocated \$49,000 to work in partnership with academic researchers to continue long-term monitoring of boreal food webs, including berries, voles, hares, and lynx.



Spring 2025

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	April 8, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

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Environment

Appendix: 2024-25 Fish and Wildlife Surveys

Region	Location	Species	Management tool	Survey completed	Analysis Completed
Southern Lakes	Pelly	Northern Mountain Caribou	Open	Collar deployment; Nov 2024	No
	Laberge	Northern Mountain Caribou	Open in some GMSs	Fall rut composition survey; Fall 2024	No
	Carcross	Northern Mountain Caribou	Closed	Fall rut composition survey; Fall 2024	No
	lbex	Northern Mountain Caribou	Closed	Fall rut composition survey; Fall 2024	No
	Wolf Lake	Northern Mountain Caribou	Open	Fall rut composition survey; Fall 2024	No
	Caribou Mountain	Sheep	Not Open	Summer 2023	Yes
	Teslin Lake	Lake Trout, Pike	Catch/Possession Limits, Harvest slot size, gear restrictions	Angler Survey Summer 2024	No
	Lake Laberge	Lake Trout	Catch/Possession Limits, Harvest slot size, gear restrictions	Population Assessment 2024	No



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Marsh	Lake Lake Trout	Catch/Possession Limits, Harvest slot size, gear restrictions	Population Assessment 2024	No
lbex ar Carcro Herds		Stewardship through education and outreach	Research on recreation impacts	Partially
Variou	s Little Brown Bats	Stewardship through education and outreach	Population monitoring	Yes
Kusaw Lake	ca Collared Pika	Stewardship through education and outreach	Population monitoring	No
Whitel	norse Voles, Hares, Lynx	n/a	Population monitoring	Yes



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Region	Location	Species	Management tool	Survey	Analysis
				completed	Completed
Liard	Hyland	Moose	Open Permit	Early-winter	No
				abundance and	
				composition; Nov	
				2024	
	Coal River	Northern	Open	Fall rut	No
		Mountain		composition	
		Caribou		survey;	
				Oct 2024	
	Finlayson	Northern	Closed	Fall rut	No
		Mountain		composition	
		Caribou		survey; Oct 2024	
	Liard River	Bison	NA	Mark-Resight	No
				September-	
				October Fall 2023	
		Bull Trout	Federal Management	Occupancy	No
	Hyland		Plan	Survey	
	River				
	Watson	Voles,	N/A	Population	Yes
	Lake	Hares, Lynx		monitoring	

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Environment

Region	Location	Species	Management tool	Survey completed	Analysis Completed
Northern Tutchone	Ethel Lake	Northern Mountain Caribou	Open (voluntary closure)	Fall rut composition survey; Oct 2024	No
	Tatchun	Northern Mountain Caribou	Open	Fall rut composition survey; Oct 2024	No
	Clear Creek	Northern Mountain Caribou	Open	Fall rut composition survey; Oct 2024 Collar deployment: Nov 2024 and March 2025	No
	Clear Creek	Caribou Moose Bear		Game Camera Study: Cumulative effects	No
	Klaza	Northern Mountain Caribou	PHA	Fall mark- resight population and composition survey; Oct 2024	No
	Bonnet Plume	Northern Mountain Caribou	Open	Collar deployment: March 2025	No

Prepared for Minister Clarke Department of Environment Date prepared: Last updated:

February 2, 2025 April 8, 2025

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Wildlife Survey and Data Use

Mayo	Caribou Moose Bear	Varies	Game Camera Study: Cumulative effects	No
Ddhaw Ghro HPA	Sheep	HPA, closed	Fall recruitment survey; Sept 2023	No
Minto Bluff	Sheep	HPA, closed	Fall recruitment survey; Sept 2023	No
Granite Creek	Arctic Grayling	Catch/ Possession Limits, Harvest slot size, gear restrictions	PIT Tag / Movement study	No
Haggart Watershed (Victoria Gold)	Arctic Grayling	Area of Special Consideration, Catch/Possession Limits	Population Assessment, Habitat Assessment, PIT Tag / Movement Study, Tissue Analysis	No
Mayo	Voles, hares, Lynx	N/A	Population monitoring	Yes

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Region	Location	Species	Manag ement tool	Survey completed	Analysis Complet ed
Kluane	Chisana	Northern Mountain Caribou	Closed	Fall rut composition survey; Oct 2024	No
	Aishihik	Northern Mountain Caribou	PHA	Fall rut composition survey; Oct 2024	No
	Ruby Range	Sheep	Open	Minimum count Summer 2023	Yes
	Brooks Arm	Sheep	Open	Minimum count Summer 2023	Yes
	Flat Top	Sheep	Open	Minimum count Summer 2023	Yes
	Donjek	Sheep	Closed	Minimum count Summer 2023	Yes
	Aishihik Lake	Bison	Open permit	Collar deployment/Ma rk-Resight; Fall 2023 and 2024	Yes
	Kluane Lake area	Lynx, wolverine, marten, moose, fox and assorted small mammals	N/A	Game Camera Study (8 years of data)	Yes
	Kluane Lake area	Voles, hares, Lynx	N/A	Population monitoring	Yes
	Pine Lake	Lake Trout	Catch limits	Population Monitoring	No

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Region	Location	Species	Management	Survey completed	Analysis
			tool		Completed
North Yukon	Hart River	Northern Mountain Caribou	Open	Spring calving parturition survey; May 2024	No
				Fall rut composition survey; Sept 2024	
	Fortymile	Migratory Caribou	Summer registration hunt and winter threshold hunt	Calving, calf mortality, fall rut composition, survival monitoring, photo census population estimate	No
	Goldfields	Moose	Open	Early winter population and composition survey; Nov 2023	No
	Coffee Creek	Caribou Moose Bear		Game Camera Study: Cumulative effects	No
	Tombstone Park	Sheep	Open	Summer recruitment survey; July 2022	Yes
	Ogilvie Mountains	Black bear and grizzly bear		Population survey and camera study; June 2022	No
	Dawson Goldfields	Wolverine, lynx, marten	n/a	Camera study	No

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Wildlife Survey and Data Use

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

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Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to ensuring that Yukon species continue to thrive for future generations.
- Most of Yukon's 10,000 plus plants and animals are considered secure. For 53 threatened or at-risk species, the Department of Environment may be required to take additional actions to ensure their protection and success.
- The Government of Yukon continues to work on species at risk conservation with wildlife management partners, including Yukon First Nations, the Inuvialuit, transboundary Indigenous governments and groups, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, Renewable Resources Councils, the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope), interest groups and other government organizations.
- The Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement is increasing the Yukon's capacity to work collaboratively with parties on a variety of species at risk matters, including the potential to develop species at risk legislation for the Yukon.

Additional response:

- Work is currently underway with our partners to explore an approach
 to protecting species at risk in the Yukon. We are working
 collaboratively with our First Nation and Indigenous partners. Codevelopment of policy and legislative initiatives of this magnitude take
 time.
- The Department of Environment continues to learn from other jurisdictions regarding reducing the endangerment of species at risk.

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 The Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement funding supports surveying and monitoring of species at risk in the Yukon such as Northern Mountain caribou and collared pika as well as supports the protection of sensitive habitats in the territory.

Third response:

- While the Government of Yukon is exploring legislative approaches to protect species at risk in the Yukon, the Department continues to monitor vulnerable populations of species to ensure they are safeguarded through existing management tools.
- This is evident in the Government of Yukon's work to ensure federally-listed species at risk, such as wood bison and grizzly bear, are stable and continue to thrive in Yukon; this work is guided by management plans developed cooperatively with Yukon First Nations, the Inuvialuit, Renewable Resource Councils, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, the Wildlife Management Advisory Council (North Slope) and with public input and review.
- We will continue to work with Yukon First Nations, Inuvialuit, and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups, to identify, protect and conserve species at risk in the territory.

Context — this may be an issue because:

• There may be questions about species at risk, including the implementation of the commitments outlined in the Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement.

Background:

 The Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement commits the Government of Yukon to increase surveying and monitoring of species at risk and engage with Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups on developing an approach to protect species at risk in the Yukon.



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Yukon Species at Risk

Environment

 Currently, the Yukon has 43 species listed as being at risk under the federal Species at Risk Act. Ten additional species in the Yukon are recommended by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada to the federal government for listing.

Approved by:

Dennis Berry February 5, 2025

Deputy Minister of Environment Date approved

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Environment

Recommended response:

- The Yukon is home to many rare, unique, or at-risk species found only in this region.
- Yukon Draba and Yukon Goldenweed are examples of plants found nowhere else in the world other than here in our backyard.
- The Yukon is also home to a wide range of species with abundant populations such as wolverine, bison, caribou and grizzly bears.
- Part of what makes the Yukon such a special place to live is the diversity and abundance of the species found here.
- The Department of Environment remains committed to conserving the Yukon's biodiversity, habitats, species at risk, and protecting the environments these species depend on.

Additional response:

- Ongoing work supporting the conservation of Yukon's biodiversity includes regional land use planning, implementing the Yukon's climate change strategy, working with First Nations and the Inuvialuit to fulfill commitments under the Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement, and continuing to implement the wetland stewardship policy.
- By studying biodiversity in the Yukon, we know there is an incredible richness of species, which we are just beginning to understand.
- We have conducted "bio-blitz" events in various areas of the territory since 2015 to engage citizens in documenting the Yukon's biodiversity.

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- A 2022 Government of Yukon-led inventory of biodiversity in the Beaver Creek area, supported by various technical experts in Canada, identified 1,852 species, of which only 27 were not native to the region.
- This bioblitz was one of the most successful in North America in terms of species observed. Many species new to Canada and Yukon were recorded, and several species previously unknown to science were described based on collections made at this bioblitz.
- In 2024, a bioblitz along the Haines Road identified nearly 800 different species over one weekend, with more results expected as specimens are processed. We observed several species that had never been documented in the Yukon before.

Third response:

- We continue to work collaboratively to advance the protection of biodiversity with Yukon First Nations, the Inuvialuit, Indigenous groups, wildlife co-management boards and councils, interest groups, and other governments.
- This work includes developing species-specific conservation and management plans for wildlife and habitat to guide how the Yukon's northern ecosystem is managed.
- For example, in 2019, the Department of Environment released the Yukon's first conservation plan for grizzly bears in collaboration with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, and in 2024, we released an updated conservation plan for Aishihik wood bison.

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- We are also currently implementing the wetland stewardship policy, which will improve our knowledge of the Yukon's wetlands, manage and minimize our impacts on wetlands, and protect the most important wetlands while promoting paths towards responsible and sustainable resource development and land use activities.
- In 2022, we signed the Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement, which supports our efforts to monitor and conserve Yukon's unique biodiversity, advance land use planning, increase Indigenous leadership in conservation, and support the protection and conservation of species, lands and waters.
- These initiatives will help inform protected area planning, identify species that require additional monitoring or support and improve our efforts to conserve the Yukon's biodiversity.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Species in the Yukon and worldwide are facing increasing pressures from factors like climate change, resource extraction, and development.
- The Yukon currently lacks stand-alone legislation for the protection of species at risk and biodiversity.

Background:

- The Yukon government began reporting on the Yukon's rich biodiversity in our annual State of the Environment report, which started in 1996.
- Globally, biodiversity is under serious threat from a variety of factors broadly linked to human use and alteration of the natural environment. Recently, Canada co-led the development of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in an effort to improve biodiversity conservation.



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- In late 2022, in support of action biodiversity conservation, Canada and the Yukon signed the Canada-Yukon Nature Agreement, which provided significant additional resources and capacity to the Yukon [see BN #3 on CYNA].
- The Yukon remains home to a variety of at-risk species which appear to be stable in the Yukon, but are seeing significant declines in other jurisdictions, e.g., Barrenground caribou (Porcupine caribou herd), grizzly bear, wolverine, wood bison.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	February 5, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

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Environment

Recommended response:

- Our government continues to work with the Yukon Outfitters
 Association and individual outfitters to support the industry while
 ensuring the sustainability of Yukon wildlife.
- The Yukon's outfitting industry has a long history in the territory one that continues to flourish today.
- The average annual harvest by non-residents has increased since the 2020-2021 hunting season, showing that the industry has recovered from the pandemic's impact and bounced back to pre-pandemic levels.
- In fact, the highest annual number of licenses sold to non-residents has occurred over the past 10 years with the past year being the highest ever.

Additional response:

- Sheep, moose and caribou remain the most popular big game species harvested by non-residents.
- The principles of sustainability and conservation guide the Department's management of all wildlife species in the Yukon.
- When making decisions about hunting opportunities, we first consider subsistence harvest needs before allocating licensed hunting opportunities between resident and non-resident hunters, including outfitter clients, ensuring continued hunting opportunities for Yukon residents is prioritized over non-resident hunting opportunities.
- Department of Environment staff meet often with Yukon outfitters and the Yukon Outfitter Association to answer questions, address specific issues of concern, and identify potential solutions.

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• The Government of Yukon remains committed to working collaboratively with the outfitting industry to resolve issues of concern.

Third response (Review of the Outfitter Quota Guidelines):

- In 2023, the Department of Environment received a recommendation from the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board to modernize the Guidelines to Establish Outfitter Quotas.
- We agree that modernization of these guidelines is needed to ensure they conform with the Yukon Wildlife Act, address the Yukon's legal obligations to consult First Nations, and better align with how wildlife management is conducted in the Yukon.
- The Government of Yukon invited the Board to initiate the review and engagement on the guidelines, given its mandate to make recommendations on all matters related to Yukon fish and wildlife management, legislation, research, policies, and programs.
- The Board recently submitted a proposed work plan and budget for a potential review and engagement on the guidelines.
- The guidelines and, more broadly, wildlife management are important issues for many Yukoners. For this reason, the department is taking the necessary time to consider the proposal and speak with partners about next steps.
- We continue to meet with the Board to discuss this initiative and how the Government of Yukon can inform and support the process.

Fourth response: (Multi-Year Quotas):

 The Government of Yukon understands the certainty and flexibility that multi-year quotas provide to Yukon outfitters. However, the historical

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practice of issuing multi-year quotas and roll-over provisions does not comply with the Wildlife Act.

- The Department of Environment has implemented an interim process which states that unless a legal, environmental, or socio-economic factor necessitates or warrants a change in the non-resident harvest allocation, quotas will remain unchanged.
- This interim solution provides outfitters with certainty, flexibility, and predictability until new quota allocation guidelines are in place.
- We remain committed to working with the outfitting industry,
 Renewable Resources Councils, Yukon First Nations, the Yukon Fish and
 Wildlife Management Board and licensed hunters to ensure that a fair,
 transparent, and sustainable approach to harvest is applied.

Fifth response (Concession ownership):

- Outfitting concession holders, or "the outfitter" must be Canadian citizens.
- The Yukon has 20 outfitting concessions or "outfitting areas".
- An outfitting concession holder has exclusive rights to provide a guide for a non-resident hunter in his or her outfitting concession as a commercial service.
- All concession holders are registered and licensed annually with the Department as an outfitter and licensed to guide in their concession.
- The Wildlife Act allows the outfitting concession holder to name an eligible corporation to support or carry out business activities. The concession holder must be listed as an active director of the corporation.

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- All 20 outfitting concessions or "outfitting areas" in the territory, have a
 permitted corporation named to carry out business activities on behalf of
 the outfitter.
- Eight of the 20 corporations have Directors citing an American address.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Ongoing questions have been raised in the Legislative Assembly and the media regarding outfitter guidelines, outfitter harvest quotas, and the quota appeal processes.
- The Premier has publicly stated that measures aimed at Yukon outfitting industry clients could be implemented in response to U.S. tariffs imposed on Canada.

Background:

- The Department of Environment meets often with the Yukon Outfitter Association and Yukon outfitters.
 - o In 2024, the Yukon Outfitter Liaison Committee, comprised of representatives from the Department of Environment and the Yukon Outfitters Association, met three times to discuss issues important to the industry.
 - The most recent Yukon Outfitter Liaison Committee meeting occurred on November 27, 2024.
 - The Wildlife Harvest Biologist and other Fish and Wildlife Branch staff meet with individual Yukon outfitters, as needed. This includes providing information on the quota process, individual quotas, conditions of annual operating certificates, appeal processes, harvest information and the status of wildlife populations.
- The Government of Yukon remains committed to supporting quota appeals and decisions under the Wildlife Act-legislated Concession and Compensation Review Board process and through the Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee
- The Department of Environment received one request for a Concession and Compensation Review Board appeal in 2024-25. The hearing took place in January this year, and the Minister responded to the CCRB's recommendation in late March 2025.
- No appeals for the CCRB were received by the Minister of Environment by the April 10 deadline for 2025-26.

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- The Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee Secretariat is in discussions with one outfitter representative who has requested a hearing with the Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee regarding their 2025-26 moose and caribou quotas for one concession, and their 2025-26 caribou quotas for another concession.
- The Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee was established in 1996 through Cabinetapproved outfitter quota guidelines. This appeal option remains available to outfitters.
- Membership of the Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee consists of one member nominated by the Yukon Outfitters Association, one member nominated by the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and Renewable Resources Councils, and a third member nominated by the first two. The nominees are then appointed by the Minister of Environment.
- The Committee has one member as of March 2025, nominated by the YOA. The other two members' appointments expired.
- The Department has been working to support the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and Renewable Resourced Councils to identify a nominee. Once a nominee is identified, the department will process the appointment.
- In 2024-2025, 578 big game hunting licenses were issued to American hunters to allow their participation in guided hunts.
 - o This accounts for 81% of outfitters' clients with the remainder coming other Canadian jurisdictions (13%) or other countries outside of Canada and the United States (6%).

Approved by:		
Dennis Berry	April 30, 2025	
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved	

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Yukon River Salmon

Environment

Recommended response:

- Salmon are a keystone species in the Yukon's ecosystem, are culturally important, and are a subsistence resource to Yukon First Nations.
- While the Government of Yukon does not play a leading role in salmon management, we are committed to ensuring that Yukon salmon are conserved and protected for future generations.

Additional response:

- As in previous years, the 2024 Chinook and Chum salmon returns to the Yukon were low.
- Just over 24,000 Yukon River Chinook entered Canada, meeting the preseason forecast of 19,000 – 28,000. However, this remains well below the goal of 71,000 Canadian-origin Chinook reaching the international border.
- Of these, only 355 Chinook reached the Whitehorse Fish Ladder by September 7th.
- The Chum salmon returns to the Fishing Branch River fell significantly short of the annual goal of 22,000 to 49,000, with only 5,765 fish recorded.
- Currently, all public and commercial fishing for Chinook and Chum Salmon continues to be closed in the Yukon.
- The Department is collaborating with Yukon First Nations and Fisheries and Oceans Canada to develop a Yukon River Chinook Salmon Rebuilding Plan.
- These conversations are ongoing, with a focus on restoring Yukon stocks, protecting critical habitat, and working to determine the viability of conservation hatcheries.

Yukon River Salmon

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Third response (Victoria Gold):

- The implications of the Victoria Gold Heap Leach failure on salmonrearing habitats are uncertain. Recent monitoring in the area was inconclusive as to whether salmon are currently using Haggart Creek.
- Work is underway by Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Department of Environment to determine the amount of suitable habitat for overwintering freshwater fish and salmon to gain a better understanding of the potential effects.
- The Department of Environment remains committed to ensuring that salmon are protected and conserved for future generations.

Agreement Regarding the Recovery of Yukon River Salmon:

- In 2024, the Government of Yukon welcomed an agreement signed by Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Alaskan State government that commits the parties to take action to recover Chinook salmon in the Yukon River Drainage.
- This agreement commits parties to increase Chinook salmon numbers to at least 71,000 Canadian-origin Chinook salmon entering the Yukon from Alaska over the next seven years.
- The agreement directs the Yukon River Panel to develop a recovery plan, while placing priority on traditional and local knowledge to better understand the causes of low Chinook salmon counts.
- Since the signing of the Agreement, Department of Environment staff remain engaged in discussions supporting the development of a recovery plan for salmon.

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Yukon salmon report from the federal Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans:

- The Government of Yukon is aware of the report from the federal Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans regarding the challenges to the sustainability of Yukon River salmon stocks.
- The report echoes the priorities we have identified in discussions with salmon recovery partners through the Yukon River Panel and Joint Salmon Rebuilding Committee.
- While the health and well-being of Yukon River salmon continues to be under the purview of the Government of Canada's Department of Fisheries and Ocean, the Government of Yukon is committed to working with all partners, including Alaska and Yukon First Nations, to ensure the success of Yukon River Salmon.
- We welcome the recommendations for the federal government to work with the Government of Yukon to collaborate with other levels of government and jurisdictions, particularly Alaska and the United States, to increase support for locally led salmon recovery efforts informed by traditional and local knowledge. These include:
- Recommendation #9: to develop a water management strategy for the Yukon River.
 - o The Government of Canada is the lead for any water-related strategy that crosses international borders. As the Yukon River spans across the Yukon and Alaska, the Government of Yukon is committed to working with intergovernmental partners to advance this joint recommendation.
- Recommendation #11: to work with Canada to increase efforts to monitor placer mining effects on salmon spawning grounds.

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Yukon River Salmon

- Monitoring of placer mining effects, such as water quality objectives, is under the purview of Energy, Mines and Resources. The Department of Environment is a part of the joint Fish Habitat Management System with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Council of Yukon First Nations, and other affected First Nations, which monitors fish habitat where placer mining occurs. The Department's focus in this group is to provide advice for freshwater fish of concern.
- Recommendation #12: to work with Canada to settle jurisdictional disagreements as they relate to the health and wellbeing of Yukon salmon population.
 - o In April 2024, the Government of Yukon welcomed the agreement between Canada and the United States to place a moratorium on salmon harvest for 7 years. The new agreement aims to have 71,000 Chinook salmon crossings from Alaska to the Yukon.
- Recommendation #13: to review environmental assessments and regulations for placer mining operations and the impact they have on water quality in rivers.
 - o The department remains committed to continuing to provide technical recommendations through the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board process. This includes providing comments on placer mining operations, including recommendations on water quality, freshwater fish, and cumulative impacts on our watersheds.
- Recommendation #15: That the Department of Fisheries and Oceans works with the Governments of Yukon and Alaska to ensure the protection of wild salmon habitats.

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Yukon River Salmon

- The Department of Environment is working closely with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans on the protection of fish habitat, including salmon habitat. Over the past year, we have advocated the need to improve Yukon salmon habitat in meetings with the federal minister, the Alaska Fish and Game Commissioner and the United States Consul General.
- o In addition, we are working with the federal government and Yukon First Nations to develop the Chinook Rebuilding Plan that includes strategic actions to rebuild Yukon Chinook Salmon.
- The draft plan includes four working groups:
 - Habitat Monitoring identifying key spawning, rearing, and overwintering sites
 - ii. Marine Issues assessing marine impacts on Chinook
 - iii. Public Engagement promoting salmon awareness and education
 - iv. Regulatory improving policies to better protect salmon
- The Department of Environment is active in all groups and on the Steering Committee developing the final plan.
- Recommendation #31: That the Government of Yukon work with Yukon First Nations and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to develop the Kwanlin Dün First Nations Salmon Stewardship Centre, which will include a feasibility study for a Yukon-based conservation hatchery for Yukon Salmon.
 - The department has worked closely with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Kwanlin Dün First Nation on the potential development of a Salmon Stewardship Centre. Currently,

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Kwanlin Dün First Nation is leading a feasibility study, which we anticipate being completed by early 2026. Following its completion, we look forward to discussing options with both governments.

- Recommendation #32: That the Government of Canada and the United States, in collaboration with the Yukon and Alaska, shift from the previous Yukon River Salmon Agreement to focus on a comprehensive binational agreement with the goal of restoring and rebuilding Yukon River Salmon.
 - As mentioned previously, the Government of Yukon applauds the new agreement signed between parties in 2024, which focuses on the recovery of Yukon River Salmon on both sides of the border.
- I would like to thank the Committee and the organizations and individuals who participated as witnesses, drafted and submitted briefs or otherwise contributed to this report's drafting and publication.
- I look forward to our continued work with Yukon First Nations and the Government of Canada to rebuild salmon stocks in the Yukon River.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement and Minister Clarke's 2023 Mandate letter include a commitment to take immediate action to protect salmon and restore population levels.
- There is concern about the overharvesting of Canadian-born salmon populations in Alaskan waters.
- Recently, the Victoria Gold Heap Leach failure resulted in concerns regarding salmon health and habitat in the Haggart Creek watershed, the South McQuesten River and the Yukon River.

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Yukon River Salmon

Environment

Background:

- Yukon First Nations voluntarily restricted salmon harvest for many years. This voluntary prohibition remained in place during the 2024 run.
- The Chinook salmon spawning escapement goal of 42,500 to 55,000 has not been met since 2018.
- The Department of Environment has met with the Fisheries and Oceans Regional Director General and the US Consul General and raised the need for international collaboration on recovery and limiting harvest.
- On October 24, 2024, the federal Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans released a report entitled "Challenges to the Sustainability of the Yukon Salmon Stocks" examining the decline of the Yukon River salmon.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	April 16, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

Session Briefing Note Wildlife Act Amendments

Spring 2025

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is required to conserve wildlife in a way that aligns with First Nations, Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Final Agreements and Indigenous rights.
- Following requests from Yukon First Nations and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, a Technical Working Group was established under the Yukon Forum Fish and Wildlife Working Group.
- The Technical Working Group will identify needed amendments to the Wildlife Act to ensure consistency with the First Nations, Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Final Agreements and Indigenous rights.
- The Technical Working Group will build off previous efforts to amend the Wildlife Act by identifying outstanding policy issues and recommending solutions.
- Through this work, the Government of Yukon seeks to further support the implementation of First Nations, Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Final Agreements and strengthen our relationships with Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups.

Additional response:

- The Wildlife Act has not significantly changed since 2001, when it was amended to incorporate wildlife and harvest provisions reflecting the Inuvialuit Final Agreement.
- There are sections of the Wildlife Act that are inconsistent with land claim provisions, contributing to confusion in implementation.
- Amendments to the Wildlife Act are needed to adequately recognize Indigenous rights and the roles, responsibilities and authorities

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described within the land claim agreements and provide operational clarity for all users.

- We intend to focus on making strategic amendments to the Wildlife Act to address the areas of most pressing concern, including:
 - o consistency with subsistence harvest rights,
 - o enabling Total Allowable Harvest provisions,
 - fulfilling the specific obligations under Chapter 16 of First Nations Final Agreements to give effect to Renewable Resources Councils bylaws, and
 - o trapline administration.

Third response:

- The Technical Working Group includes representatives from Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups.
- Initial conversations with Technical Working Group representatives highlight the need for resources to support and enable meaningful participation by Indigenous governments.
- The Yukon Forum Fish and Wildlife Working Group will report back to the Yukon Forum as this important initiative advances.

Context—this may be an issue because:

This review is focused on creating consistency between the Umbrella Final
Agreement and the Wildlife Act and provisions that are inconsistent with
Indigenous rights. Other user groups may be frustrated that further amendments
are not being considered now.

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Background:

- The Technical Working Group first convened on January 22, 2025, following several one-on-one discussions held with the First Nations that expressed interest in being involved in the Wildlife Act review.
- In April 2024, the Government of Yukon sent letters to all Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups inviting their participation on a Technical Working Group.
- February 16, 2024, Yukon Forum Action Item: To reinvigorate the joint working group on Fish and Wildlife and establish a technical working group as part of the process to amending the Wildlife Act to ensure consistency with First Nations Final Agreements.

Approved by:		
Dennis Berry	February 5, 2025	
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved	

Session Briefing Note Fish and Wildlife Regulation Change Process

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Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife
 Management Board work collaboratively to manage and conserve the
 territory's fish and wildlife.
- This work ensures populations remain healthy and resilient and can continue to be sustainably harvested for generations to come.
- This includes working together to engage with the public on how the territory's fish and wildlife regulations are working for them and to ensure the Yukon's regulatory framework for the conservation and management of fish and wildlife remains current and relevant.
- Our shared approach for fish and wildlife regulation changes is to ensure it is cost-effective, timely, and avoids duplicating efforts.
- In December 2024, the Yukon government and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board jointly announced the launch of a revised and improved process for amending fish and wildlife regulations.
- This announcement represented the resumption of a longstanding and ongoing collaborative process between the Yukon government and the Board that had been on pause since the 2019 regulation change cycle.

Additional response:

- The revised regulation change process places an emphasis on ensuring that Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups are properly and adequately consulted.
- It also recognizes the interests and authorities of non-Umbrella Final Agreement co-management partners.

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Fish and Wildlife Regulation Change Process

Environment

- The revised process better aligns with the Yukon's land claim agreements, clarifies roles and responsibilities, improves transparency and streamlines the regulation change process.
- It will also provide greater certainty to Yukoners of when and how regulation changes are identified and put forward for review and consideration.
- Proposals are now being accepted throughout the year using a rolling intake process, where previously they were only accepted every two years. Public callouts will be done twice a year, and public engagement will occur every two years, similar to the previous process.

Third response:

- On March 3, 2025, the joint Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and Government of Yukon regulation change process Review Committee sent correspondence to co-management partners and public interest groups reminding them that the fish and wildlife proposal intake is open and encouraging them to submit.
- We also worked with the Board to place ads on social media platforms advertising that the intake period is open and that the cutoff for the 2025-2026 regulation change cycle closes on May 1, 2025.
- If Yukoners are interested in submitting fish and wildlife regulation change proposals, they are encouraged to visit the regulations change page on the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board website to get a proposal form and find out how to submit it.
- We are committed to ensuring public participation in decisions when it comes to fish and wildlife matters.

Session Briefing Note Fish and Wildlife Regulation Change

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 We encourage all Yukoners to voice their opinions and make their concerns heard during the public engagement on any new or amended fish and wildlife regulations.

Context:

Process

- On August 23, 2024, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the
 Department of Environment signed "A Collaborative Process to Amend the Wildlife
 Act Regulations and Yukon Territory Fisheries Regulations" which outlines an
 updated regulation change process.
- Co-management partners, stakeholder groups and members of the hunting community may be interested in when the next intake will occur.
- The opposition asked about the Wildlife Act regulation change process during the Spring 2024 sitting.

Background:

- Typically, every two years, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board has an intake of proposals for regulation changes to the Wildlife Regulations, Trapping Regulations and Yukon Territorial Fishery Regulations.
- The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the previously established regulation change cycle.

Approved by:		
Dennis Berry	April 1, 2025	_
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved	

Session Briefing Note Little Atlin Lake Fishing Regulation Change

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Environment

Recommended response:

- The Department of Environment has made three changes to the Yukon Territory Fishery Regulations to protect the population of lake trout in Little Atlin Lake.
- A popular lake due to its proximity to Whitehorse, Little Atlin Lake is facing increased fishing pressure.
- The Department of Environment analyzed results from the past 20 years of surveys to determine increased fishing pressure on Lake Trout and Northern pike populations in Little Atlin Lake.
- It is estimated there has been a 61% decline of lake trout populations between 2015 and 2021.

Additional response:

- In December 2024, in partnership with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, the department launched a public engagement on the proposed regulation changes for fishing lake trout in Little Atlin Lake, which are to:
 - o Implement a harvest slot, allowable fish size, for lake trout from 58.5 cm to 65 cm;
 - o implement a seasonal closure for lake trout on Little Atlin Lake from July 1 until November 30; and
 - o require the use of single-point barbless hooks for all fishing on Little Atlin Lake.

Session Briefing Note Little Atlin Lake Fishing Regulation Change

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Environment

- In addition, the Department engaged with Carcross/Tagish First Nation, Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, the Yukon Fish and Game Association, and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board.
- Feedback from the public, stakeholders, First Nations and comanagement partners was widely supportive of the proposed regulations.

Third response:

- These regulation changes are in effect as of April 1, 2025, to ensure greater protection for the vulnerable lake trout population, while still maintaining fishing opportunities on this popular lake.
- Thank you to all Yukoners who participated in the public engagement and provided their valuable feedback.
- Results from the public engagement are available on Yukon.ca.

Context—this may be an issue because:

 Restrictions on recreational fishing can be controversial or unpopular. However, without protections for this population now, a closure of lake trout fishing in Little Atlin Lake will become necessary.

Background:

- Little Atlin Lake experiences high recreational fishing pressure, primarily for pike, but also for lake trout.
- The Little Atlin lake trout population is small, as the lake is on average only 10.6 metres deep and provides relatively little suitable habitat for lake trout which prefer colder and deeper waters.

Session Briefing Note Little Atlin Lake Fishing Regulation Change

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- In 2021, Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council relayed their concerns around the current level of fishing pressure on Little Atlin Lake to the Department of Environment which analyzed results from the past 20 years of surveys and found that the population of lake trout in the lake has declined.
- Section 6.4 of the Fishery (General) Regulations of the federal Fisheries Act allows
 the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Branch of the Department of Environment to
 vary, by order, the close time, fishing quota, limit on the size or weight of fish or
 fishing gear or equipment. These Variation Orders may only apply in non-tidal
 waters and to fish other than salmon.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	April 1, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

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Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is making significant progress on several initiatives to implement the wetland stewardship policy.
- All projects undergoing environmental assessment by the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB) are reviewed for potential impacts to wetlands.
- We are working to improve guidance for operators and project proponents to identify and mitigate potential impacts to wetlands during the environmental assessment stage.
- The Government of Yukon is working to complete territory-wide wetland mapping. To date, the Department of Environment has mapped around one third of the Yukon's wetlands.
- In 2024-25, we completed extensive field data collection in the central Yukon and are working with our Environment and Climate Change Canada partners to develop wetland mapping for this region.
- The territory-wide wetland map will be made available online to the public once it has been completed.
- We have developed a draft guidance document for the nomination and evaluation of Wetlands of Special Importance. This draft guidance document is currently being reviewed by our management partners. Subject to that review, we are aiming to have this document finalized in 2025.

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- Developing the guidance document and sharing them with Indigenous governments and groups, partner boards, and councils is identified as a near-term implementation action in the Wetland Stewardship Policy.
- Once this guidance is finalized, we can begin the first intake of Wetlands of Special Importance nominations.
- We have also drafted Yukon-specific wetland classification standards.
 These standards will establish a common foundation for all future
 work relating to wetlands in the territory. This document is currently
 being reviewed by our management partners.

Additional response:

- The Department of Environment also supported Ducks Unlimited Canada to develop an accessible and user-friendly field guide to identify wetlands. This document is now available through Ducks Unlimited Canada.
- We are supporting a new research effort led by the Wildlife
 Conservation Society Canada that looks at how carbon is stored and
 released in Yukon wetlands and how it may be impacted by industrial
 activities. This includes quantifying the effects of placer mining and
 reclamation activities on peatland greenhouse gas emissions and
 removals in the Yukon.
- You can now find information about Yukon wetlands, how the policy is being implemented, and guidance for industry on Yukon.ca. We are also developing a new public-facing information hub for wetlands maps and related spatial information.

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Third response:

- We acknowledge the importance of responding to new information as we continue to improve our understanding of the Yukon's wetlands through scientific, traditional and local knowledge.
- We will continue to engage with other governments, departments, agencies, regulatory bodies, and external partners to discuss specific aspects of wetland stewardship policy implementation.
- We remain committed to addressing wetland stewardship and protection within land use planning discussions and project reviews.

Context — this may be an issue because:

• Implementation of the Wetlands Policy and the ongoing management of wetlands is of significant interest to Yukoners.

Background:

- On January 10, 2023, we released A Policy for the Stewardship of Yukon's Wetlands. The goal of the policy is to ensure the benefits of Yukon's wetlands are sustained.
- The Government of Yukon committed \$1.68 million over two fiscal years (2023-24 to 2024-25) for the departments of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources to begin jointly implementing the wetland stewardship policy.
- In January 2023, the Government of Yukon formed an internal working group to advance and coordinate the implementation of the wetland stewardship policy.
- The working group is composed of members of Environment, Energy, Mines and Resources, Executive Council Office, and Highways and Public Works.
- The group meets monthly to advance various aspects of policy implementation and ensure a whole-of-government approach to policy implementation.

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- Departmental staff are working with Environment and Climate Change Canada on a 3-year funding agreement to advance territory wide wetland mapping.
- See Appendix A for updates on implementation status.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	March 20, 2025
Deputy Minister, Environment	Date approved
Paul Moore	March 20, 2025
Deputy Minister, Energy, Mines and Resource	Date approved

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Appendix A: Actions within the wetland stewardship policy			
Policy Actions (bold = near-term priorities)	Timeline * priority adjusted	Lead	Status update Not Started Initiated Underway Near_Complete
Develop guidance for the evaluation of wetland benefits in the Yukon	Long- term	ENV	We have completed some initial work comparing processes in other jurisdictions.
2. Update and finalize a Yukon wetland classification system	Near- term	ENV	Targeted engagement underway (February to April 17 th , 2025).
3. Develop an accessible and easy to use guide to identifying Yukon's wetlands for proponents and the public	Mid- term	External	We supported Ducks Unlimited Canada in developing an accessible field guide for public use, aligned with our classification system (action 2). Ducks Unlimited Canada released this field guide in July 2024.
4. Develop wetland mapping standards for regional, local, and project specific mapping applications	Near- term	ENV	We are continuing to develop a draft wetland mapping standards document. Following internal government review, we will circulate the draft to management partners and interested stakeholders for review.
5. Create a broad scale territory-wide wetland inventory	Near- term	ENV	We have now completed approximately 81,000 km² of broad scale wetland mapping. We continue to work on development of a Yukon-wide wetland map. We completed fieldwork and working to map a further 62,000 km² within the Yukon Plateau-North and Selwyn Mountains ecoregions. Results from this data collection and production of a predictive wetland map for this area are anticipated in summer of 2025.

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6. Support local scale wetland mapping, where	Near- term*	ENV	Next steps: We will continue collection of data for the Liard Hylands and Southern Lakes ecoregions in summer of 2025. We have partnered with EMR's Forest Management Branch, to collect stereo (3D)
needed		= 1 = 1 = 1 = 1	aerial imagery for the Yukon Plateau region.
7. Promote northern wetland research	Near- term*	EMR/ENV	Environment is supporting a three-year research project that began in summer 2024, led by the Wildlife Conservation Society, with additional funding support from Environment and Climate Change Canada.
8. Promote public awareness of wetlands	Long- term	ENV	We anticipate that the release of the Wetlands of Special Importance Guide and the Yukon Wetland Classification Standards will provide some awareness, as will the future launch of the wetlands information hub at Yukon.ca and the first designations of wetlands of Special Importance. Longer-term public information actions are not yet planned.
9. Develop guidance for the application and use of the mitigation hierarchy	Near- term	EMR/ENV	EMR is leading the development of guidance for the application and use of the mitigation hierarchy and the development of wetland reclamation plans. ENV is continuing to work with regulatory agencies, particularly related to mining activity, to address wetland impacts during project assessment and regulatory approvals.
10. Update or develop proponent guidance to be used when submitting wetland impact mitigation information	Near- term	EMR	Plans are in place to develop proponent guidance on how to communicate impact mitigation plans.

Prepared for Minister Clarke and Streicker, Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources Date prepared: Last Updated: March 18, 2025

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11. Update or develop Standard Operating Procedures / Preferred Management Practices for different activities impacting wetlands	Long- term	EMR	EMR has developed standard terms and conditions for Class 1 mining activities. These are now being applied at the regulatory stage. EMR will review the effectiveness of these standard terms and revise as necessary. EMR has also developed draft standard terms and conditions for higher impact mining activities that will be applied at the regulatory stage once finalized.
12. Update or develop general wetland reclamation guidelines, and, where required, sector specific guidelines	Near- term*	EMR	EMR continues to apply the Ruby Creek reclamation plan guidelines for placer activities in the Indian River area. Reclamation plans are not currently required outside of this area however wetland areas must be reclaimed to these standards.
13. Develop guidance for offsetting wetland impacts	Long- term	ENV/EMR	A long-term objective that will be explored after near-term and midterm priorities have been advanced.
14. Develop specific and measurable guidance for the interpretation and application of Wetland of Special Importance nomination criteria	Near- term	ENV	We have completed a draft implementation document: Wetlands of Special Importance: Nomination and Evaluation. Targeted engagement underway (February to April 17 th , 2025).
15. Establish a process for legal designation of Wetlands of Special Importance (e.g., through existing legislation such as application of Wilderness Management Areas under the Environment Act).	Mid- term*	ENV	The Department of Environment is evaluating how existing legislative and policy tools can be applied to Wetlands of Special Importance.
16. Create a publicly accessible catalogue of	Mid- term	ENV	In advance of the first call for Wetlands of Special Importance (WSI), we are developing the tools and systems to support a public

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Date prepared: Last Updated: March 18, 2025

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Wetlands of Special		catalogue. This will be available on the wetland
Importance.		hub at Yukon.ca, once complete.

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Grizzly Bear Management – hunting and conservation

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon acknowledges there are differing views on grizzly bear hunting in the Yukon.
- While grizzly bears are listed as a Species of Special Concern in Canada, data collected in the Yukon, as well as local and Traditional Knowledge holders, indicate the population of grizzly bears in the territory is currently stable.
- A Conservation Plan for Grizzly Bears in Yukon was completed in 2019, as recommended by the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board. The plan's management goals and recommended actions serve as guidance for grizzly bear monitoring and management in the territory.
- To improve our understanding of grizzly bears and their habitat, the Department of Environment has been working to estimate grizzly bear and black bear population densities in different Yukon ecoregions on a 2-year cycle.
- Grizzly bear management decisions incorporate Traditional Knowledge from Yukon First Nations and Inuvialuit as well as insights from Renewable Resources Councils and other Yukoners who work closely with the land.
- This information is used to monitor bear populations and adjust harvest levels if the data indicates a conservation concern.

Additional response:

• Grizzly bears are killed by hunters and collisions with vehicles, for defence of life or property and public safety.

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Grizzly Bear Management – hunting and conservation

Environment

- During the last ten years, the yearly average grizzly bear harvest was 68, very similar to the harvest for the previous 10 years, which was 66.
- Over this same period, there was an average of 2,240 grizzly bear seals sold annually, an average annual increase of 736 seals compared to the previous 10 years. Despite this increase in seals, the average annual grizzly bear harvest only increased by two bears.

Third response (Road-side bear hunting):

- In 2022, following a recommendation from the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, the Government of Yukon amended the Wildlife Adaptive Management (General) Order to enable local prohibitions on roadside hunting of grizzly bears.
- Following a proposal from Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council and Taku River Tlingit First Nation, roadside grizzly bear hunting is now prohibited on certain roads and highways in the Southern Lakes area.
- This adaptive framework enables any local community or First Nation government to request a prohibition of roadside hunting of grizzly bears in their area. If the proposal receives the support of the local community, the Minister of Environment can enact the prohibition.
- Most recently, the Department of Environment collaborated with Champagne and Aishihik First Nations to implement a road-side closure near Klukshu in the Kluane region.

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Grizzly Bear Management – hunting and conservation

Environment

- Beginning April 1, hunting grizzly bears will be prohibited within 100 meters of the centerline along the Haines Road corridor from Gribbles Gulch to Unnamed Creek #1.
- This closure applies to the east side of the road (Game Management Zone 7), where grizzly bear hunting was previously allowed, while the west side of the road (Game Management Zone 6) remains closed due to existing restrictions on grizzly bear hunting.
- The Government of Yukon will continue to work with Yukoners, local communities, and our co-management partners to ensure that we continue to protect and manage grizzly bears in the Yukon.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In November 2023, the harvest of a grizzly bear in the Klukshu area received media attention when charges were laid against the hunter and then dropped. There may be questions about why the charges were dropped.
- Following a bear attack near the Pine Lake Campground in June 2024, Conservation
 Officers were deployed to the area and killed three bears that were in the vicinity of
 the attack.

Background:

- In 2022, the Department of Environment implemented a recommendation from the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board to adaptively regulate hunting of grizzly bears from the roadside.
- In 2023, Grizzly Bear Protection Yukon submitted a petition calling on the Yukon government to ban roadside hunting, ban trophy hunting, and prioritize wildlife viewing.
- In June 2024, Alberta lifted an 18-year moratorium on grizzly bear hunting to address conflict bears or those in 'areas of concern.' Hunters will be selected through



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Grizzly Bear Management – hunting and conservation

Environment

the Alberta licensing and draw system, similar to the Yukon's Permit Hunt Authorization lottery process.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	March 31, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

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Environment

Recommended response:

- In October 2024, the Government of Yukon, alongside our bison management partners, developed and released a new management plan for the Aishihik Wood Bison herd in southwestern Yukon.
- This plan updates the 2012 management plan and seeks a balance between bison recovery and bison harvest.
- The plan contains updated actions intended to support the vision and associated management goals and align local management with national and international conservation efforts.
- As an adaptive management plan, many of the actions are enabling and will only be implemented on an "as needed" basis. All changes will be made in consultation with affected First Nations, Renewable Resources Councils, and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board.

Additional response (Bison population):

- Nationally, bison are a threatened species. However, the Yukon's bison population is healthy and growing, which allows us to harvest some animals each year.
- A 2022 population survey estimated the Aishihik bison population to be just under 2,000 adult animals, indicating continued population growth.
- One of the goals of the new plan is to ensure the bison population remains viable, which will require managing harvest to maintain a minimum population of 1,000 bison.

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 As the current population of bison remains healthy and viable, hunters will not see a reduction in bison harvest opportunities for the 2025-2026 season.

Third response (Bison refugia):

- Action 4.15 of the conservation and action plan enables the Bison Technical Team to recommend to the Yukon government areas that should be temporarily set aside as refuges from bison hunting, should the need arise.
- Creating a hunting refuge is a traditional harvest management approach that lets an area rest and recover from hunting pressure. This action was added to the management plan based on input from First Nations partners.
- These areas will be identified using scientific data and local and Indigenous Knowledge and may vary in size according to the needs of the animals. While these areas are set aside as refuges, other areas of the bison range will remain open for hunting.
- This action is enabling and will only be implemented on an as-needed basis. No areas are identified or suggested for closure at this time.

Fourth response (Statistics):

- In 2023-2024, the Department of Environment sold 2,105 wood bison seals with 2,079 purchased by residents and 26 by non-residents (9 through outfitters and 17 for special guiding).
- During the 2023-2024 hunting season, a total of 239 bison were harvested, including 134 males and 105 females.

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• Eight bison were harvested by non-residents, with five occurring through outfitter-guided hunts and three through hunts that were special-guided by a Yukon resident.

Fifth response (Shortened bison season):

- Starting in 2026, the bison hunting season will be shortened by one week, closing on March 24.
- This change, recommended by the Aishihik Bison Technical Team, is designed to reduce pressure and stress on pregnant and lactating cows, thus helping to protect the bison herd during a critical reproductive period.
- Bison cows begin giving birth as early as the last week of March, and throughout April and May. The early calving coincides with when we typically see an increase in bison harvest in late March due to warmer weather and longer daylight hours.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Bison hunting has become extremely popular in the Yukon, with bison often being the second-most hunted species by Yukon hunters.
- Following the October 2024 release of the plan, the Opposition asked about bison refugia hunting closures and no hunting zones.

Background:

- The new Conservation and Action Plan for the Aishihik Bison Population was developed with input from affected Yukon First Nations, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the public.
- The Yukon is an important global steward of Wood Bison, a species which were once nearly extinct. The Aishihik bison population was reintroduced to southwestern

Prepared for Minister Clarke Department of Environment Date prepared: January 20, 2025 Last Updated: March 31, 2025

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Yukon 36 years ago to help restore the species to its native range and it is now one of the largest free-ranging populations.

• To date, there have been no restrictions on which age or sex of bison licensed hunters can kill. Licensed hunters are permitted to kill only one bison per year.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	March 31, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

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Bison Harvest – monthly harvest for 2023-2024 and monthly average over the last five years.

Table 1. Five-year average and number of bison harvested by licensed hunters in the Yukon between the hunting season 2018-2019 and 2022-2023 and the number of bison harvested in 2023-2024*.

	2018/2019 - 2022/2023		2023/2024*
Month	Harvest #	5 yr average	Harvest #
September	79	15.8	22
October	27	5.4	6
November	111	22.2	24
December	84	16.8	9
January	113	22.6	17
February	241	48.2	69
March	524	104.8	89
Total	1179	235.8	236

^{*}The harvest from the 2023-2024 hunting season is incomplete as some harvest from March is still being processed and data sets must be verified.

Session Briefing Note Caribou Herd Management

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Recommended response:

- Caribou are culturally and ecologically important for Yukoners, with many people relying on caribou for subsistence and spiritual well-being.
- Conserving and protecting key caribou habitats, calving areas, summer ranges, and migration corridors is important to ensure herd health and abundance.
- There are 30 different caribou herds that range within the Yukon.
- The primary tools we use to manage caribou populations are population monitoring, harvest management and habitat management.
- We use our monitoring data to better understand the needs of the caribou herds and develop information-sharing tools, including maps of habitat quality, caribou distribution, movement pathways, and assessments of harvest sustainability.
- This information may be used to develop herd and habitat management plans, guide harvest management and inform land use planning.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon uses permit hunt authorizations, outfitter quotas, registration hunts, and season closures to manage licensed caribou harvest.
- These management tools are intended to ensure harvest stays within sustainable limits or to allow a herd to recover from a population decline.
- Outfitting quotas for caribou have now been established for all herds, fulfilling a commitment that was agreed to by the Government of Yukon and the outfitting industry in 1996.

Third response (Caribou surveys):

• The Department of Environment is committed to working to better understand caribou populations throughout the Yukon.

Prepared for Minister Clarke Department of Environment Date prepared: January 27, 2025

Last Updated:

Session Briefing Note Caribou Herd Management

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- Information collected through caribou population surveys is analyzed alongside data submitted by licensed harvesters and information shared by our co-management partners.
- The Department of Environment conducted various northern mountain caribou surveys in 2024-25, including:
 - GPS-collar deployments in the Pelly, Bonnet Plume, Hart River, Carcross and Clear Creek herds;
 - o a population survey of the Klaza herd;
 - o a calving survey of the Hart River herd; and
 - o composition surveys in the Liard, Southern Lakes, Northern Tutchone, North Yukon, and Kluane regions.
- The department also conducted or collaborated on several projects on migratory caribou, including:
 - Planned deployment of GPS-collars on the Porcupine and Fortymile herds;
 - o Calving surveys on the Porcupine and Fortymile herds; and
 - Population estimate and a fall rut composition survey for the Fortymile herd;

Context — this may be an issue because:

• First Nations and Inuvialuit may have concerns about caribou populations and potential overharvest in their traditional territories and settlement lands.

Background:

• Some of Yukon's shared caribou populations (e.g., Fortymile and Nelchina) have seen precipitous declines since 2018, following a similar pattern as herds elsewhere.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	February 5, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

Prepared for Minister Clarke Department of Environment Date prepared: January 27, 2025

Last Updated:

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2025

Moose Management in Southern Lakes

Environment

Recommended response:

- Moose populations have increased in size in the Whitehorse-Southern Lakes area following collective conservation actions to support their recovery.
- Licensed harvest has been restricted in these areas for the past 35 years following the implementation of a Permit Hunt Authorization system in 1989.
- The allocation of 11 permits across three Moose Management Units, which are Fish Lake, Mount Lorne and the Wheaton River, were established in 1998 and remain in place today.
- Survey results in these three Moose Management Units from 2021 confirm a significant increase in numbers of moose, which can support an increased licensed harvest.
- Following consultation with affected First Nations, Renewable Resources Councils and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, I am pleased to announce the addition of eight moose permits in the Southern Lakes region.
- The Fish Lake and Mount Lorne Moose Management Units will each see four new permits. Wheaton River Moose Management Unit allocations will remain unchanged at four.
- The additional moose permit opportunities are well within sustainable harvest guidelines to ensure long-term stability of the moose populations.

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Moose Management in Southern Lakes

Environment

- Some game management subzones will be excluded from the increase in permits where there are concerns with increased land use and recreation impacts to wildlife in general, largely owing to easy access and off-road vehicle use, and some localized hunting pressure from various users.
- The Department of Environment will continue to look for opportunities to increase hunting opportunities where and when possible.
- Ongoing population surveys will provide additional data to assess trends in the moose population and ensure sustainable hunting opportunities.
- The success of this management change will be tracked through regular monitoring of moose population demographics and harvest data.

Additional response:

- Following initial discussions with Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, and after receiving written responses from the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council, the department acknowledged the need for all co-management partners to convene to share concerns and identify a collaborative approach to moose management.
- The Southern Lakes Moose Working Group was established in 2024 with five Southern Lakes First Nations, three Renewable Resources

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Moose Management in Southern Lakes

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Councils, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the Government of Yukon.

• Discussions within the Working Group include access issues with respect to off-road vehicles, education, monitoring, habitat enhancement, predator harvest, moose harvest, land use pressures, and overall governance around wildlife management.

Third response:

- A Southern Lakes Moose Action Plan was drafted to address these co-management issues, and it includes a commitment to identify additional hunting opportunities.
- Harvest opportunities for moose are informed by discussions with comanagement partners, the best available survey data, the Science-Based Guidelines for Management of Moose in Yukon, land and access pressures and land use planning exercises.
- We look forward to continued collaboration with all parties in the Working Group to implement the co-management plan for moose in the Southern Lakes.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Moose are the most harvested species by Yukon hunters. Licensed harvesters are interested in additional hunting opportunities.
- Minister Clarke's 2023 mandate letter commits the Government of Yukon to "work with Yukon First Nations, the Fish and Wildlife Management Board and stakeholders to continue to ensure all Yukoners are provided opportunities to sustainably harvest fish and game while looking for new opportunities for Yukon hunters to pursue activities across the Yukon."

Background:

Prepared for Minister Clarke Department of Environment Date prepared: January 20, 2025

Last Updated: March 31, 2025

Spring 2025

Moose Management in Southern Lakes

Environment

- Of the 11 permits available for these MMUs each year, over the past 5 years approximately five moose are harvested each year by licensed hunters.
- The 2021 moose survey indicates that these MMUs can sustainably support a harvest of 57 moose each year.
- Although we do not have information on First Nation moose harvest in this area, the current data and information supports having a significant increase in licensed harvest opportunities.

Approved by:		
Dennis Berry	March 31, 2025	
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved	

Session Briefing Note Deer/Country Residential Hunting

Spring 2025

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is providing eight additional deer permits for the 2025-26 hunting season.
- This includes six additional permits for various Game Management Zones in the Yukon and two additional youth permits for the whole Yukon.
- This brings the total deer permit hunt authorization opportunities from 12 to 20 with four of these permits limited to 14- and 15-year-old hunters.
- Ongoing harvest reporting and population monitoring will help us ensure that the harvest of deer remains sustainable.
- The Government of Yukon has offered 10 deer permits per year through the permit hunt authorization process since 2006. In 2009, two additional permits were added for youth hunters aged 14 or 15.
- Deer permits are only offered to licensed Yukon resident hunters. During the 2024-25 hunting season, licensed hunters harvested ten deer in the Yukon.
- To better understand deer behavior and numbers in the territory, we launched the Yukon's first-ever deer monitoring project using an aerial drone survey, trail cameras, and collars.

Additional response:

 This past winter, the Department conducted an aerial drone survey to count deer in the Takhini Valley, along the Takhini Hot Springs Road and the North Klondike Highway to Grizzly Valley.

Session Briefing Note Deer/Country Residential Hunting

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Environment

- The solar powered drone was equipped with conventional and infrared cameras and has been proven to spot deer more efficiently than helicopter surveys.
- The results of this project are helping the Department estimate the population size and sex ratio of deer near the Whitehorse area, where density is thought to be among the highest in the territory. This information is critical for informing decisions on future deer harvest opportunities, including expansion of the deer hunt.
- The survey results indicated a minimum of 125 deer in the area. This supports our decision to increase the number of permits, as the population can sustain additional harvest opportunities.

Third response (Country residential hunting):

- Deer range across much of southern Yukon. Hunting in country residential areas is permitted if hunters:
 - o have a permit;
 - have permission from landowners to hunt on private land and/or within one kilometre of private land;
 - are hunting within an area where the permit hunt authorization applies; and
 - are following all other laws of general application, for example restrictions on discharging a firearm within the municipal boundary of Whitehorse.

Session Briefing Note Deer/Country Residential Hunting

Spring 2025

Environment

 Hunters are also prohibited from hunting in a way that is likely to injure any person or cause damage to personal property, crops, livestock or domestic animals.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Deer hunting is becoming more popular, and applications are increasing over time.
- Concerns have been raised about deer hunting in country residential areas. Takhini valley residents have concerns pertaining to hunters seeking permissions to access private properties and hunters being too close to residential properties.
- Minister Clarke's 2023 Mandate Letter directs him to work with Yukon First Nations, the Fish and Wildlife Management Board and stakeholders to continue to ensure Yukoners are provided opportunities to sustainably harvest fish and game while looking for new opportunities for Yukon hunters.

Background:

- The season to hunt male deer is August 1 to November 30. Only male deer hunting is permitted.
- Deer hunting is currently permitted in all Yukon Game Management Subzones, except for subzones within National Parks, and GMS 4-51 (surrounding the Faro area).
- As of November 4, 2024, there were 11 motor-vehicle collisions with deer, with six in the Lake Laberge area.
- In 2024-2025, 757 applications were received for 10 permits. 24 applications were received for the two youth permits. This is a total of 781 applications for 12 permits.
- In 2023-2024, 742 applications were received for 10 permits. 27 applications were received for the two youth permits. This is a total of 769 applications for 12 permits.

Approved by:		
Dennis Berry	March 31, 2025	
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved	

Session Briefing Note Sheep Management

Spring 2025

Environment

Recommended response:

- In the Yukon, sheep are an iconic species that hold significant environmental, cultural, and commercial value.
- The largest numbers of thinhorn sheep in Canada are found here in the Yukon and the Government of Yukon works to monitor sheep populations in the territory to ensure they remain sustainable and resilient.
- Sheep populations cycle in abundance and population fluctuations are to be expected.
- Recently, the population of sheep in the southwest Yukon/Kluane region significantly declined, raising concerns as this population also faces climate change related pressures.
- In 2024, we reached a Memorandum of Understanding with comanagement partners to develop a long-term sheep conservation and management plan for southwest Yukon.
- The consensus-based working group continues to discuss further management actions to protect sheep and outline their vision for a long-term management plan.
- The Department of Environment will continue to work with partners in establishing effective wildlife co-management in the Yukon and ensuring healthy and sustainable sheep populations.
- We understand Yukoners and Yukon First Nations want to harvest this iconic species and we will continue to work with all partners to identify additional sheep harvest opportunities in the territory.

Session Briefing Note Sheep Management

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Additional response (Kluane Sheep Permit):

- Due to the recent decline in sheep numbers in the southwest Yukon/Kluane Region, which includes the Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary, the Government of Yukon is not issuing the permit for the 2025-2026 hunting season.
- Kluane First Nation also cancelled their 2025-2026 request to issue a non-resident sheep permit in the Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary.
- The Department of Environment continues to monitor sheep in southwest Yukon and is working with Kluane First Nation to reestablish the once-in-a-lifetime Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary sheep permit hunting opportunity.
- Co-management partners in southwest Yukon are actively working together to address a variety of concerns to conserve and protect sheep populations and habitats.
- This includes an assessment of climate factors affecting sheep, land use impacts, aircraft/helicopter disturbance, habitat enhancement options, predator management tools and approaches, management of human harvest, and other ways to survey and monitor sheep.
- I look forward to reviewing the progress of our partners as we work through these issues, and hopefully we will see a rebound in our sheep populations in the coming years.

Third response:

• The Government of Yukon acknowledges there are declines in sheep numbers across the north and the Department of Environment remains committed to protecting and conserving sheep across the territory.

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- Decisions about sheep management and harvest opportunities are informed by all available data, including surveys, traditional and local knowledge and the Science-based guidelines for management of thinhorn sheep in the Yukon.
- We will continue to work with all partners to monitor sheep populations in the territory.
- This includes working together to identify additional harvest opportunities in the territory, and when necessary, avoid harvest pressure to support sheep recovery.

Context—this may be an issue because:

• Yukoners may want to know whether the Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary Sheep Permit will be available for the 2025-2026 hunting season.

Background:

- The Yukon government cancelled the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 lotteries for the resident, single Permit Hunt Authorization for Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary, in response to the sheep declines observed in this region.
- Due to conservation concerns with sheep populations in their Traditional Territory, Kluane First Nation cancelled their auction of the Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary sheep permit during the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 hunting seasons.
- Our 2023 sheep survey from Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary shows a steep decline in the population compared to the previous survey from 2011.
- The population in the Sanctuary, excluding lambs, showed a 57% decline in the sheep population compared to the 2011 survey.
- Sheep population declines have been documented in recent years across a broad geographic range that includes Alaska, Yukon, and northern British Columbia.

Approved by:

Dennis Berry
Deputy Minister of Environment

April 8, 2025
Date approved

Prepared for Minister Clarke Department of Environment Date prepared: February 13, 2025 Last Updated: April 8, 2025



Session Briefing Note Parks Strategy Implementation

Spring 2025

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Yukon Parks Strategy is the Government of Yukon's guide to enhancing the Yukon's parks system while preserving and protecting the ecological and cultural values of these special places and creating new and better park experiences.
- In October 2024, the Government of Yukon released the Yukon Parks Strategy Progress Report. The report summarized progress made since the strategy's release in 2020 as well as plans for future implementation between now and 2030.
- After four years of implementing the 10-year Yukon Parks Strategy, the Department of Environment has completed 11 of the 24 strategic actions, 11 are in progress and two are currently in the planning phase.
- We have implemented the Parks General Regulation, effective April 1, which is designed to better protect the natural, cultural and historical values of Yukon Parks while fostering a welcoming and peaceful environment for users.
- The Department of Environment has submitted a proposal to the Yukon Environmental Assessment Board to create 22 new campsites at the Pine Lake Campground, a new space for group gatherings and events, and upgrade trails in the area.
- We are also working in partnership with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Community Development Corporation to develop the Charcoal Ridge Trail in Tombstone Territorial Park.
- Last season, Yukon Parks replaced boat launches at Nunatuk, Frances Lake, Little Salmon Lake and Simpson Lake. Replacement of the Teslin Lake boat launch is expected to be completed this winter.



Session Briefing Note Parks Strategy Implementation

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 The Yukon Parks branch continues to implement actions identified in the Yukon Parks Strategy to enhance visitor experiences in Yukon parks and campgrounds.

Additional response:

- Since 2020, the Government of Yukon has made significant progress, including:
- Launching the two-year campground reservation service pilot project for the 2024 operating season, which allows campers to reserve campsites online at Wolf Creek, Pine Lake, Marsh Lake and Tombstone Mountain.
- Updating day-use areas and playgrounds at Fox Lake, Watson Lake, Yukon River, Five Mile Lake, Klondike River, Pine Lake, Congdon Creek, Kookatsoon Lake, Marsh Lake and Wolf Creek.
- Replacing eight boat launches and repairing six boat docks.
- We have added 69 campsites to the territory's campground network to increase camping opportunities for both visiting and local campers; and.
- We are developing a Yukon parks system plan that will guide the development of existing and emerging parks and the establishment of future parks. It will ensure that Yukon parks are in the right places with the right facilities and services.

Third response (Reconciliation):

 Reconciliation is a priority for Yukon Parks and is a key pillar in the Yukon Parks Strategy. The Strategy outlines how Yukon Parks is building meaningful partnerships and relationships with Yukon First

Session Briefing Note Parks Strategy Implementation

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Nations and Inuvialuit for park management planning, monitoring and facility development.

- Parks throughout the Yukon enable access to lands and waters through facilities such as boat launches, parking lots and campsites. Yukon Parks has streamlined its process and approach to facility use requests from Indigenous governments for special events. This has facilitated opportunities for greater access and efficient, appropriate use of park facilities.
- The Department of Environment continues to regularly engage with First Nations, the Inuvialuit, communities and Yukoners to identify how we can continue to enhance park and campground experiences across the Yukon.
- Our work will continue with meaningful engagement with First Nations and Inuvialuit, providing valued park services and a modernized parks system.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Yukoners will be interested to know the progress the Government of Yukon has made on the implementation of the Yukon Parks Strategy.
- The first Yukon Parks Strategy progress report was released Fall 2024.

Background:

The Government of Yukon released the Yukon Parks Strategy in September 2020.
 The Strategy sets the direction for the Yukon's system of territorial parks.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	May 1, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

Session Briefing Note Campground Improvements and Planning

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Recommended response:

- Yukoners and visitors value the experiences that Yukon parks and campgrounds provide, and the Government of Yukon is committed to continuing to invest in territorial parks and campgrounds as they become more popular across the territory.
- The Department of Environment is working with Yukon First Nations to enhance camping opportunities near Whitehorse and across the territory while respecting and prioritizing the protection of cultural and ecological values.
- This includes our proposed work with Champagne and Aishihik First Nations to create 22 new campsites, a new space for group gatherings and events, and an upgraded trail network at Pine Lake campground beginning in 2025.
- This also includes our recent work with Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation to redesign and enhance Tatchun Lake campground in the coming years in a way that will honor and celebrate the cultural significance of the area while creating enhanced opportunities for recreation and connecting with nature.
- Subject to regulatory approvals, this work will include an improved day-use area, interpretive signage to share cultural stories, adding group-use campsites, and improving trails in the Tatchun Lake area.
- In 2024, we added 14 new campsites to the territory's network, including 10 new sites at the Snafu Lake campground and four new sites to Ethel Lake campground.
- In addition, this past year Yukon Parks completed a full revamp of facilities at Grizzly Lake Campground in Tombstone Territorial Park

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Environment

including new tent pads, cook shelters, bear-proof food storage, outhouses, and grey-water barrels.

Additional response:

- Last season, Yukon Parks replaced boat launches at Nunatuk, Frances Lake, Little Salmon Lake, and Simpson Lake. Replacement of the Teslin Lake boat launch is expected to be completed this winter.
- Since 2022, the Department of Environment has built 11 new boat launches at Aishihik Lake, Otter Falls, Tagish Bridge, Ethel Lake, Twin Lakes, Nunatuk, Frenchman Lake, Frances Lake, Simpson Lake and Little Salmon Lake.
- New docks were installed at Watson Lake, Simpson Lake, Nunatuk, Frenchman and Tatchun Lakes, Pine Lake, Squanga Lake and Twin Lakes campgrounds.
- And, in 2024, trails at Lapie Canyon and Conrad Campground were also improved.

Appendix A: Campsites added since 2017

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	TOTAL INFILL
Congdon Creek	Congdon Creek								
Back-in Sites	2						41		43
Tent Sites	20								20
Total	22						41		63

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Appendix A: Campsites added since 2017 (continued)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	TOTAL INFILL
Conrad	Conrad								
Back-in Sites									
Tent Sites	6								6
Total	6								6
Ethel Lake									
Back-in sites								4	4
Tent Sites									
Total								4	4
Five Mile Lake									
Back-in Sites			6						6
Tent Sites									
Total			6						6
Little Salmon									
Back-in Sites				8					8
Tent Sites									
Total				8					8

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Campground Improvements and Planning

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	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	TOTAL INFILL
Marsh Lake									
Back-in Sites	10						-2		8
Tent Sites					7				7
Total	10				7		-2		15
Snafu Lake									
Back-in Sites								10	10
Tent Sites									
Total								10	10
Tombstone - G	irizzly La	ake							
Tent Sites	4							3	7
Total	4							3	7
Twin Lakes									
Back-in Sites									
Tent Sites			3						3
Total			3						3

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Campground Improvements and Planning

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	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	TOTAL INFILL
Wolf Creek									
Back-in Sites									
Tent Sites							4		4
Total							4		4

Appendix B Infrastructure Improvements:

			Projects	
Location	2021	2022	2023	2024
Aishihik Lake			New boat launch	
Congdon			New playground	
Creek			equipment	
Conrad		New trails		Trail developments
Dezadeash	New boat launch			
Lake				
Ethel Lake			New boat launch	Upgrades to existing
Editor Edito				infrastructure
	New playground			Improvement of the
Five Mile Lake	equipment			day-use area (in
				progress)
		New		
Fox Lake	New playground	pedestrian		
	equipment	bridge		
Frances Lake				New boat launch

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			Projects	
Location	2021	2022	2023	2024
Frenchman Lake			New boat launch	New dock
Klondike River				Trail rehabilitation and bridge replacement
Lapie Canyon				Trail improvement
Little Salmon Lake				New boat launch
Marsh Lake			New playground equipment	
Nunatuk				New boat launch New dock
Pine Lake	New boat launch	Day-use area improvement: new playground, parking upgrade, changing cabin	New dock	
Simpson Lake				New dock New boat launch
Snafu Lake				Day use parking improvements and additional infrastructure (in progress)
Squanga Lake			New dock	

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		•	Projects	
Location	2021	2022	2023	2024
				New dock
				[2025 - Potential
				campground
Tatchun Lake				improvement by
				adding more sites,
				improving day-use
				areas and new trails.]
Teslin Lake				New boat launch
Twin Lake		New trails	New boat launch	
	New playground			New dock
Watson Lake	equipment			Minor site
				improvements
			Trail improvement	
Wolf Creek			New playground	
			equipment	

Third response:

- Recently the Department of Environment submitted a proposal to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board for planned enhancements at Pine Lake campground.
- The proposed project would create 22 new campsites, a new space for group gatherings and events, and an upgraded trail network.

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- Work is planned to happen over several years, beginning in 2025, to ensure that this campground can continue to be operational during the camping season.
- We are also working in partnership with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Community Development Corporation to develop the Charcoal Ridge Trail in Tombstone Territorial Park.

Campsite development:

- Since 2017, the Government of Yukon has invested in the development of 126 campsites across the territory.
- This includes 80 drive-in sites and 46 walk-in sites (See Appendix A).
- Specifically:
 - o 63 sites at Congdon Creek;
 - o 4 sites at Ethel Lake:
 - o 6 sites at Five Mile Lake;
 - o 8 sites at Little Salmon;
 - 15 sites at Marsh Lake;
 - o 10 sites at Snafu Lake
 - o 7 sites at Grizzly Lake;
 - o 3 sites at Twin Lakes:
 - 4 sites at Wolf Creek; and
 - o 6 sites at Conrad.
- The Government of Yukon will continue to work with Yukon First Nations, Inuvialuit, and transboundary Indigenous governments and

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Campground Improvements and Planning

Environment

groups to expand camping opportunities and enhance park experiences across the territory.

Context—this may be an issue because:

• The Yukon Parks Strategy includes commitments to expand camping opportunities near Whitehorse and to add campsites to existing campgrounds.

Background:

- Yukon Parks operates 42 road-accessible campgrounds offering 1,189 campsites.
- Twelve recreation sites provide day-use recreation opportunities including picnic shelters and boat launches.
- Significant facility development projects in territorial parks involve engagement with Indigenous governments and groups, stakeholders and local communities.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	February 5, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date Approved



Spring 2025

Campground Reservation System and Visitor Service Operator Pilot

Environment

Recommended response:

- Yukon campgrounds continue to be popular with both Yukoners and visitors to the territory.
- Through our engagement with Yukoners on the 2020 Yukon Parks Strategy, we heard that many survey respondents (58%) were in favour of testing out a reservation service at territorial campgrounds.
- Last year, the Department of Environment launched an online campground reservation service pilot project, meeting our commitment in the Yukon Parks Strategy.
- This camping season, the service will continue to be available at four of the territory's most popular campgrounds to help improve fair access to these campsites and allow campers to better plan their camping trips.

Additional response:

- The online reservation service for front-country campgrounds will remain available at Wolf Creek, Marsh Lake, Pine Lake and Tombstone Mountain campgrounds.
- Half of the campsites at each of these four front-country campgrounds are available for reservations. The remainder continue to operate on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Annual campground permit holders can now reserve campsites at participating front-country campgrounds, at no additional cost, by calling 867-667-5648 from Monday to Friday between 9 am to 4 pm (YST)

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Campground Reservation System and Visitor Service Operator Pilot

Environment

- In total, this means 103 of approximately 1,100 front-country campsites across the territory will be available for reservations.
- In 2024, 5,819 reservations were made, accounting for 7,948 nights of camping at the four campgrounds in the pilot project.
- To support Yukon campers and visitors with this new reservation service, Visitor Service Operators will continue to be onsite at Wolf Creek, Marsh Lake, and Pine Lake campgrounds to assist with checking in, providing information and education on campground rules, and monitoring campground use.
- Backcountry campsite reservations for Tombstone Territorial Park have been available online for 12 years, and in 2024 were moved to this modernized reservation service.
- Yukon resident seniors aged 65 years and older continue to receive a 50 per cent discount on all campsite permits, including permits purchased through the campground reservation service.
- The Government of Yukon values the opinions of Yukoners and will continue to incorporate their feedback into decisions about the future of this initiative.

Third response (Feedback and Next Steps)

- A post-camping survey for the first-year reservation service pilot project shows that campers overall had a 91% favourable experience.
- Following completion of the 2025 camping season, the Government of Yukon will evaluate the online campground reservation in Yukon Territorial Parks.

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Campground Reservation System and Visitor Service Operator Pilot

Environment

 Online reservations for Tombstone Territorial Park backcountry sites opened March 5, 2025, at 9AM YST. Reservations for Marsh Lake, Pine Lake, Wolf Creek and Tombstone Mountain campgrounds opened April 9, 2025, at 9AM YST.

Fourth response (Site Saving):

- The campground reservation service pilot project provides a new way to ensure a positive camping experience for campers.
- After the first year of the pilot project, Yukon Parks noticed a decrease in site-saving behavior at participating campgrounds.
- In the 2023 camping season, 23 campsite evictions were issued by Park Rangers due to site saving in those campgrounds.
- In the 2024 camping season, when four of the Yukon's most popular campgrounds had a reservation service in place, only 3 evictions were issued due to site saving.
- Reducing user conflicts is an objective of the reservations service pilot project, and the Yukon Parks Strategy aims to improve fair access to campsites by decreasing site saving.

Context – this may be an issue because:

• The Yukon Parks Strategy commits to testing online reservations to improve fair access to some of the busier campgrounds. The public will be interested in the new system when it launches for the 2nd year of the front-country pilot on April 9, 2025.

Date prepared:

Last Updated:

January 15, 2025 March 12, 2025

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Background:

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Campground Reservation System and Visitor Service Operator Pilot

Environment

- All of Yukon's 42 road-accessible campgrounds are available on a first-come-firstserved basis.
- The 2025 serviced camping season runs from May 9th to October 1st, 2025.
- 91% of post-camping survey respondents were satisfied with the reservation information about parks and amenities provided.
- Campsite reservations can be made by visiting yukon.goingtocamp.com.
- 88% of respondents would recommend the reservation service to a friend.

Approved by:		
Dennis Berry	March 12,2025	
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved	

Revenue from campground permit sales

Frontcountry (road-accessible) campgrounds only

Permit type	2023 campi	ing season	2024 camping	j season
	# permits sold	Revenue collected	# permits sold	Revenue collected
Annual permit	1,206	\$241,200	1,146	\$229,200
Annual permit – 65+	458	\$45,900	585	\$58,500
Annual Permit - vendor sales	443	\$88,600	139	\$27,800
Online daily permit	4,566	\$82,188	3,849	\$69,282



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Campground Reservation System and Visitor Service Operator Pilot

Environment

Online daily permit – 65+	101	\$909	52	\$468
Reservation service reservations	Not applicabl	e	5819	\$161 000
FCFS permit envelope	32,562	\$697,183	26,519	\$592,541

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Session Briefing Note

Spring 2025

Parks (Campground) Regulations

Environment

Recommended response:

- As committed in the Yukon Parks Strategy, the Government of Yukon has introduced a new Parks General Regulation under the Parks and Land Certainty Act.
- The previous Campground Regulation under the Parks and Land Certainty Act, established in 1984, did not reflect the diversity of parks in the Yukon and their various uses across the territory.
- Engagement with Yukoners and Indigenous partners on the Yukon Parks Strategy identified the need for updated regulations to better manage issues that affect park environments and the enjoyment of all park users.
- In 2022, we engaged with the public on the proposed regulations, helping us ensure they meet the needs of the community and enhance the overall park experience.
- This modernized regulation is designed to better protect the natural, cultural and historical values of Yukon Parks while fostering a welcoming and peaceful environment for all users.
- The new regulation, which comes into effect on April 1, applies to all areas within territorial park boundaries, including front and backcountry campgrounds, day-use areas and recreational sites.

Additional response:

- Updates include refinements and clarifications to existing regulations and are intended to improve user experience. These include:
 - Formalizing quiet hours at campgrounds from 11 pm to 7 am;

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Session Briefing Note

Spring 2025

Parks (Campground) Regulations

Environment

- o regulating drone usage;
- o prioritizing the use of accessible campsites;
- o formalizing policies for responsible firewood use;
- clarifying activities that require a park permit;
- addressing concerns about campsite occupancy and ensuring fair access to Yukon campgrounds;
- formalizing land use zones to support the implementation of park management plans;
- requiring pets to be leashed in campgrounds, day-use areas,
 and park trails to ensure the safety of both pets and wildlife; and
- clarifying designated areas for off-road vehicles and snowmobiles.
- These efforts will improve park management in collaboration with Indigenous partners, promote responsible behaviour and enhance park user experience across the territory.

Third response:

- This summer, Yukon Parks will prioritize an education-first approach to enforcement of the new regulations, focused on helping the public to understand and comply with the new regulations.
- In addition, accessible information to help visitors understand the new regulations will be available on Yukon.ca, social media, and on-site signage.

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Parks (Campground) Regulations

Environment

- The changes aim to better protect the natural beauty and cultural heritage of Yukon parks, while fostering a welcoming and peaceful environment for all park users and promoting safety and enjoyment for everyone who enjoys camping, hiking, and outdoor activities.
- Yukon Parks will continue to emphasize education and awareness, encouraging users to respect park guidelines and the natural environment. This helps ensure that everyone can enjoy the beauty and safety of our parks for generations to come.

Context—this may be an issue because:

 Yukoners will be interested to know how a new proposed regulation will affect their camping, recreating or operations experience within Yukon parks and campgrounds.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon released the Yukon Parks Strategy (2020-2030) in September 2020. The Strategy sets the direction for the Yukon's system of territorial parks.
- Modernizing regulations under the Parks and Land Certainty Act is identified as one
 of the Strategy priorities to effectively manage the Yukon's system of parks.
- Over 1,400 individuals provided feedback to the public survey and overall, there was significant support for all proposed regulations.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	March 31, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

ENV #60/EMR #12 Spring 2025

Environment Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- The Animal Protection and Control Act is a modern framework that guides all aspects of animal protection and control in the Yukon.
- The Act regulates animal businesses and rescues, clarifies ownership
 of exotic pets, and creates tools to address feral and high-risk animal
 species to better protect Yukoners and the environment.
- This includes new provisions that provide protection for feral animals from abuse such as feral horses or feral cats.
- The Act and regulations were developed following extensive engagement and reflect Yukoners' values with respect to animal care and control.

Additional response:

- Changes under the new legislation include new permit and inspection requirements for animal-related businesses such as rescues, boarding facilities, and pet stores. Department staff are in the process of contacting business owners to begin the permitting process.
- The new legislation creates opportunities for partnership agreements with Yukon First Nations and municipal governments to establish deputy enforcement officers and caretakers to deliver education and enforcement that is community specific.
- This legislation is shared between the Departments of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources. Officers in the Agriculture Branch

ENV #60/EMR #12 Spring 2025

Environment Energy, Mines and Resources

respond to welfare and control concerns regarding livestock, and officers in the Animal Health Unit respond for all other species.

Third response:

- Education and information sharing are cornerstones in the implementation of this new legislation.
- In July 2024, the Department of Environment hired a Program Manager to support officers in both responsible departments to inform Yukoners of the new requirements under the Act.
- The Department is working with stakeholder groups in the Yukon to help train officers to better understand the unique complexities of caring for animals in the north, such as sled dogs or horses used for outfitting.

Fourth response (Implementation):

- The Departments of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources understand the unique needs and specific concerns of animal care and control in Yukon communities.
- A 'one-size-fits-all' approach is not effective for Yukon communities.
 We are working with communities to understand their individual needs.
- We also appreciate that local resources are limited and that communities have different ideas of how they would like the Act to be enforced and implemented within their jurisdiction. Our approach is flexible to accommodate the unique views and values in Yukon communities.

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Environment Energy, Mines and Resources

- We anticipate that additional resources will be required to operationalize agreements with local governments, including for training, equipment and animal caretakers.
- Existing resources within the Animal Health Unit and Agriculture
 Branch will be allocated to priority areas of work in the first phase of
 implementation. Allocation of resources will be reassessed as we
 better understand community needs.
- The Animal Health Unit's existing animal care programs support the implementation of the new Act, these include:
 - o The Community Dog Care initiative that supports community leaders and volunteer organizations to organize spay, neuter and vaccination clinics in Yukon communities;
 - the Community Dog Spay program, which offsets the cost of dog spay surgery for dogs from Yukon communities. Since
 2016 the fund has supported more than 950 surgeries; and
 - o the canine ID program that gives collars with ID tags to dogs in rural Yukon communities, encouraging responsible dog ownership across the Yukon.
- The Agriculture Branch's Livestock Health Program and Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) programs provide support and funding for care, management, and overall health of livestock. This includes the Veterinary Services Program, which is administered by the Animal Health Unit with funding from Sustainable CAP.

ENV #60/EMR #12 Spring 2025

Environment Energy, Mines and Resources

 The Department of Environment and Department of Energy, Mines and Resources will continue to work closely with First Nations and Yukon communities to ensure that animals across the territory are properly cared for and protected.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions about the support available to rural communities to enable local enforcement by delegated officers.
- There may be questions about what the Government of Yukon is doing to enforce
 the new requirements when there have been complaints on social media about
 some individuals who operate animal related businesses in Yukon and feral
 horses.

Background:

- The Act was passed in the fall of 2022 and there was extensive engagement with stakeholders to finalize the regulations which were brought into effect on April 4, 2024. A What We Heard report was published summarizing feedback received on the compliance and enforcement framework, permitting commercial facilities, animal control, cosmetic surgeries, standards of care and ownership of animals.
- Changes under the new legislation include new permit and inspection requirements for animal-related businesses such as rescues, boarding facilities, and pet stores. These businesses have until April 5, 2025 to obtain their permits. Permitting work is ongoing and staff from both the Department of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources are available to assist with the process and arrange initial inspections.
- The legislation enshrines care and control of livestock animals specifically for the agriculture sector. This provides a framework to raise and produce livestock in Yukon through national industry codes of care for livestock animals.

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Environment Energy, Mines and Resources

Under the legislation, Eurasian boar and all hybrids are prohibited and considered
a high-risk species in the Yukon. Staff of the Agriculture Branch have obtained an
inventory of all Eurasian boar that exist. These are being depopulated from the
Yukon through the options of relocating outside of the Yukon, and by harvesting at
slaughter size to avoid wasting Yukon grown meat, with appropriate
compensation.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	April 1, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved
Paul Moore	March 31, 2025
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources	Date approved

Session Briefing Note Domestic Sheep and Goat Control Order

ENV #61 / EMR #17 Spring 2025

Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon has a role to play in protecting thinhorn sheep and mountain goats in the Yukon from the risk of infectious diseases that could spread from domestic sheep and goats.
- One of these diseases is a respiratory disease caused by a type of bacteria that is commonly called *M.* ovi, that can be fatal to wild sheep and goats and may infect other wild species.
- In 2020, we issued a 5-year Control Order requiring domestic sheep and goat owners to meet testing and fencing requirements to prevent disease transmission to wild sheep and goats.
- Based on the continued risk of the disease and information from independent reports and program evaluation data, the Ministers of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources issued a new 10-year Control Order that came into effect January 1, 2025.
- The new Control Order reduces the administrative burden on domestic sheep and goat owners while continuing to mitigate the risks of transmission.

Additional response:

- The new Control Order is based on program evaluation, an industry impact assessment, and an updated risk assessment report, which shows there is an ongoing risk of disease transfer between domestic and wild populations.
- Stakeholders and partners were engaged during the creation of these reports to help us understand the impacts of the Control Order and the current risk of disease transfer to wild sheep and goats.
- The new Order includes changes that focus on testing and inspection activities based on risk and offer new options for animal importation.

Session Briefing Note Domestic Sheep and Goat Control Order

ENV #61 / EMR #17 Spring 2025

Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources

 These changes will reduce the paperwork for sheep and goat owners and will provide new options to help owners purchase animals from outside the territory.

Third response:

- The Government of Yukon continues to test domestic sheep and goats for this respiratory pathogen and assess fencing to mitigate risks, monitor for presence of the disease and assist owners of sheep and goats to comply with the order.
- We keep informed with new research findings and we have confidence in the testing methods and laboratories we use to monitor the disease in sheep and goats.
- Annual testing of sheep and goats in the Yukon shows that importing live animals presents a high risk of bringing the disease to the Yukon.
- There is no cost to farmers for testing sheep and goats in the Yukon and they can apply for compensation for the destruction of an animal that tests positive, if that animal was bred in the Yukon or previously tested negative prior to import.
- We also continue to monitor wildlife populations for pathogens. To date, no cases of *M.* ovi have been detected in the Yukon's wild sheep or goats.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Sheep and goat owners and wildlife stakeholders are aware of the commissioned reports and the new Control Order.
- Interested stakeholders are asking how the new Control Order will be implemented.

Background:

• The Yukon has the largest population of wild thinhorn sheep in Canada. This species is of intrinsic, cultural and commercial value.

Session Briefing Note Domestic Sheep and Goat Control Order

ENV #61 / EMR #17 Spring 2025

Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources

- The three commissioned reports that helped inform the new Control Order are:
 - 'Risk Assessment of Respiratory Pathogen Transmission from Domestic Small Ruminants to Thinhorn Sheep and Mountain Goats in the Yukon and Northern British Columbia': an updated assessment of the risk of pneumonia disease transfer from domestic sheep and goats to wild sheep and goats;
 - 'Sheep and Goat Control Order Impact Assessment Synthesis Report': an assessment of the impact this order had on domestic sheep and goat owners in the Yukon; and
 - o 'Mycoplasma spp. testing in domestic sheep and goats and wildlife: Assessment of testing options and recommendations for the Yukon: a summary of the best available information about the options for testing for M. ovi.
- The Risk Assessment report concludes there is a potential ongoing risk of pathogen transfer from domestic sheep and goats to wild populations.
- Members of Yukon Renewable Resource Councils, Yukon First Nations, agriculture
 associations in the Yukon and neighboring jurisdictions as well as veterinarians of
 state, territorial and provincial governments and representatives from national and
 regional wildlife associations, were engaged in developing the Risk Assessment
 report. Members of the Yukon Wild Sheep Foundation and B.C. Guide Outfitters
 Association also provided their comments.
- All past and current sheep and goat owners subject to the Control Order were invited to participate in the industry impact assessment. Representatives from agriculture associations and subject matter experts from the Agriculture Branch and Animal Health Unit were also interviewed.
- From the time the Control Order was announced (October 2018) to December 2024, about \$515,000 was spent on compensation and funding to help sheep and goat owners mitigate risks to meet its requirements.

Approved By:	
Dennis Berry	February 18, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date Approved
Paul Moore Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources	February 18, 2025 Date Approved

Prepared for Ministers Clarke and Streicker Departments of Environment; Energy, Mines and Resources Date prepared: January 20, 2025 Last Updated:

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Session Briefing Note Feral Horses

EMR #20/ ENV #62 Spring 2025

Energy, Mines and Resources and Environment

Recommended response:

- On January 29, a report was received of a dead horse in Ibex Valley.
- Information in the report also indicated that a feral horse well-known to locals had not been seen since early January 2025.
- Following the report, which included statements, images and location
 of the horse's remains, the Animal Protection and Control Officer
 attended the scene to gather additional information.
- Based on the report, statements, aerial images and site inspection, there was no evidence to support the complaint of human involvement or violation under the Animal Protection and Control Act.
- The cause of death remains unknown. There were signs of wolf feeding activity near the site where the horse was found.

Additional response:

- We understand Yukoners feel strongly about the feral horse population and that there are diverse values and viewpoints.
- The Government of Yukon's Animal Protection and Control Act was developed through extensive engagement with Yukoners and will guide our territory in managing all aspects of animal protection and control in the Yukon.
- The Animal Protection and Control Act established measures for care and control, along with measures against abuse that apply to domestic animals and livestock across the territory.

Session Briefing Note Feral Horses

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- Horses are defined as livestock under the Act's regulations.
- Members of the public can report concerns about livestock, including feral horses, to the Agriculture Branch in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources which coordinates responses with the Department of Environment.
- The Animal Protection and Control Officer within the Agriculture Branch is the lead officer for any reports on livestock species, including feral horses.

Context—this may be an issue because:

 Members of the public are currently calling for increased protection for feral horses.

Background:

- Under the Animal Protection and Control Act, it is illegal to for a person to kill or capture a feral animal that is at large unless authorized to do so (Section 46(1) of Animal Protection and Control Act).
- The Animal Protection and Control Act defines a feral animal as "an animal that is not owned or controlled by any person and has the capacity to establish a population that may be sustained in the wild."
- The Yukon's feral horse population does not meet the definition of 'wildlife' under the Wildlife Act, which defines wildlife as vertebrate species that are 'wild by nature'. The feral horse population in the Yukon originated from domestic horses that have been let loose by their original owners. Some of these animals have survived in the wild for several generations.
- It is estimated that there are less than 50 feral horses along the Alaska Highway between Whitehorse and Haines Junction.

Session Briefing Note Feral Horses

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- In 2023, members of the public raised concerns that feral horses in the Champagne area were being destroyed or injured. The Animal Protection Officer patrolled the area but was unable to locate horses in distress.
- Since April 2024, the Agriculture Branch has responded to four reports regarding the welfare of horses (issues resolved), 12 reports of loose horses on the highway (owners found or feral horses) and two deceased horses (one hit by a vehicle and the second of natural causes).

Approved by:	
Paul Moore	March 5, 2025
Deputy Minister Energy Mines and Resources	Date approved
Dennis Berry	March 3, 2025
Deputy Minister Environment	Date approved

Session Briefing Note Vet shortage

Spring 2025

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is taking steps to address the livestock veterinary shortage through the Livestock Veterinary Services Program, which has been in place since 2015.
- This program supports Yukon producers in accessing veterinary care for animals raised for food and fibre and is jointly delivered by the Agriculture Branch and the Animal Health Unit. Currently, program services include:
 - o free veterinary telemedicine consultations;
 - o access to prescription medications for livestock;
 - o limited on-farm herd health services; and
 - o reimbursements for private veterinary consultations, when a veterinarian is available.
- In response to input from Yukon farmers and veterinarians, the program was expanded in 2022 to include telemedicine which is currently provided via the VETSon app, allowing registered users to consult with livestock veterinarians, free of charge.
- While horses are not eligible under the Livestock Veterinary Services Program, equine owners are encouraged to use the VETSon app for consultations and prescriptions.
- The Animal Health Unit works with VETSon to make equine medications available for pick-up in Whitehorse. Registered users can book a consult and purchase medications via the app for equine services.

Session Briefing Note Vet shortage

Spring 2025

Environment

Additional response:

- We acknowledge that this situation underscores the need for longterm strategies.
- The Government of Yukon is participating in national discussions on veterinary capacity, and we continue to explore future-focused solutions. This includes:
 - supporting Yukon students to pursue veterinary studies through reserved seats at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine;
 - developing student externship opportunities with the Animal Health Unit, expected to launch in 2026; and
 - o continuing participation in the Student Training and Employment Program (STEP) to foster local interest and training in animal health careers.
- The Government of Yukon remains committed to supporting animal health and agricultural sustainability in Yukon.
- As this situation evolves, we will continue to review our programs and collaborate with local, regional and national partners to ensure that Yukoners can access essential veterinary support.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Alpine Veterinary Clinic announced they can no longer provide large animal veterinary services, causing concern for livestock and equine owners.
- There is an international veterinary shortage making recruitment challenging.

Background:

• The Department of Environment's Animal Health Unit has been successful in filling one Animal Health Assistant STEP position in 2023, 2024 and 2025.

Prepared for Minister Clarke Department of Environment Date prepared: Last Updated: April 23, 2025 N/A

Spring 2025

Vet shortage

Environment

- Prior to 2023, positions were filled in 2016, 2017 and 2019. Offering these positions is contingent upon funding and department capacity.
- In addition to the Animal Health Unit position, there have been a range of other animal care and wildlife research related positions offered by the department, for example: Wildlife Interpreter Field Assistant, Fisheries Research Assistant, Habitat and Ecological Monitoring Technician, Field Research Assistant, Assistant Wildlife Technician, and Conservation Officer Assistant.
- In the private sector, for the first time in ten years, All Paws Veterinary had a Veterinary Assistant STEP position for 2025.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	April 24, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

Session Briefing Note Flood Mapping

Spring 2025
Environment

Recommended response:

- Our Clean Future, the Yukon's climate strategy, commits the Government of Yukon to develop flood hazard maps for flood-prone communities across the territory.
- Flood hazard maps are important tools that show an area that may be impacted by flooding under different flood scenarios and are used for land use planning, flood preparedness, emergency management and increasing awareness of flood risk.
 - We are developing flood hazard maps for 14 flood-prone Yukon communities through a phased approach that prioritizes communities based on multiple criteria, including flood risk, available data and information, and development pressures.

Additional response:

- In 2024, the Government of Yukon released the territory's first flood hazard maps for the communities of Carcross, Tagish, Marsh Lake, Lake Laberge, Carmacks, and Teslin.
- Currently, the Government of Yukon is working on developing flood hazard maps for Old Crow, Dawson City, and the Klondike Valley and anticipate that these maps will be completed this year.
- The Government of Yukon will develop flood hazard maps for Mayo and Ross River next and we anticipate that these maps will be available by spring 2026.

Third response:

 Flood maps provide Yukoners with information on the hazards that potential flooding poses to an area and will help everyone make informed decisions.

Session Briefing Note Flood Mapping

Spring 2025

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- Input from municipal and First Nation governments, as well as the public, is informing our work to ensure that finalized flood hazard maps are accurate and reflective of local knowledge.
- All completed flood hazard maps are available publicly to view by visiting the Government of Yukon's Flood Atlas at floodatlas.service.yukon.ca.
- As official flood maps are developed, we will continue to work with all levels of government and the Yukon's Emergency Measures Organization to support flood preparation, mitigation, and response.

Context:

• The release of flood hazard maps may lead to questions regarding how flood maps will be used to make decisions and how the information may impact home insurance, development, and property value.

Background:

- The 14 flood-prone communities identified for flood hazard mapping are Teslin, Carcross, Tagish, Marsh Lake, Lake Laberge, Upper Liard, Mayo, Pelly Crossing, Ross River, Whitehorse, Carmacks, Dawson, Klondike Valley, and Old Crow.
- Completing flood hazard maps for all 14 communities is dependent on available resources but is expected to be completed by 2028. Federal funding covers most costs; each flood hazard map is expected to cost between \$400,000 and \$500,000.

Approved by:		
Dennis Berry	January 29,2025	
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved	

Session Briefing Note Online hunting and fishing licences vendor system

Spring 2025

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Department of Environment is committed to improving online service delivery for Yukoners and out-of-territory visitors.
- In April 2024, we introduced our online e-Vendor Licensing System, enabling authorized vendors to issue permits and licenses electronically, replacing traditional paper-based processes.
- Clients can now manage their hunting, trapping, and fishing licences, and apply for annual hunting lotteries (Special Game Licence and Permit Hunt Authorization) through their online e-Licensing account.

Additional response:

- This new system has improved service to the public and increased efficiency of sales, inventory, reporting requirements and data collection.
- The system connects to a client's Environment e-services account, so all licences and permits are up to date.
- This means that if a physical copy is lost, the client's most up to date information can be reprinted or viewed online.
- Clients no longer need to produce a copy of their hunting or fishing licence in-person to purchase permits and seals, only a valid government-issued ID.
- Permits are automatically added to a client's licence with the purchase of a hunting seal.
- This new system is removing the administrative burden of the previous paper system, while simplifying the process for private vendors and customers.

Spring 2025

Online hunting and fishing licences vendor system

Environment

Third response:

- The Department of Environment remains committed to enhancing its online licensing and permitting services by continuously evaluating and improving the user experience.
- This year, fishing licences were made available for purchase in-person and online from March 17, 2025, and are valid from April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026.
- Sport fishing licences are required for:
 - o fishing using a dip net for whitefish and suckers;
 - fishing using set lines for burbot;
 - o fishing at Tetl'ámān (Tatlmain) Lake or Wellesley Lake;
 - snagging cisco for bait off the Tagish Bridge or Carcross Foot Bridge (Nares River); and
 - o fishing derbies.
- Clients can conveniently access and purchase fishing, camping, and hunting licences, as well as permits, through their MyYukon account, a streamlined and secure way to access online services.
- For more information or to purchase licences, visit Yukon.ca.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Some Yukoners and visitors may be unaware of the new process for purchasing licenses and permits.
- A local tourism operator has raised concerns with the Wilderness Tourism
 Association of Yukon and Tourism Industry Association of Yukon about the new
 vendor e-Licensing system not aligning with their business needs.



Spring 2025

Online hunting and fishing licences vendor system

Environment

Background:

• Licences and permits were first made available for purchase online:

o Fishing: 2015/16

o Hunting: 2018/19

o Camping: 2016/17

o Trapping: 2021/22

Approved by:

Dennis Berry March 20, 2025

Deputy Minister of Environment Date approved



Session Briefing Note First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun Regional Planning

EMR #95 / ENV #80 Spring 2025 Energy, Mines and Resources

and Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is working with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun to finalize a Memorandum of Understanding which advances land use planning in the Nacho Nyak Dun area, including the Beaver River watershed.
- We are dedicated to prioritizing the important work of land planning and are eager to see this regional land use planning process advance.

Additional response:

- The draft Memorandum of Understanding proposes that the Beaver River planning process will be incorporated into the Chapter 11 regional land use planning process for the Nacho Nyak Dun area.
- The outcomes of the recent appeal decision for the proposed Metallic Metals exploration project in the Traditional Territory of the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun highlight the important role of land use planning.

Context — this may be an issue because:

 There may be questions regarding land use planning in the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun's Traditional Territory.

Background:

Regional Land Use Planning:

Regional Land Use Planning is detailed in Chapter 11 of the Final Agreements.
 Under the Final Agreements, the Government of Yukon and involved First Nations (the Parties) sign a Terms of Reference establishing a Regional Land Use Planning Commission which develops and provides a Recommended Regional Land Use Plan



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to the Parties. If necessary, the Commission also develops and provides a Final Recommended Regional Land Use Plan.

- The Government of Yukon and involved First Nations have typically developed a Memorandum of Understanding on how the parties will work together to advance Chapter 11 Regional Land Use Planning for a region, in advance of finalizing the Terms of Reference for the Commission.
- The Government of Yukon and the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun have been negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding for regional land use planning in the Nacho Nyak Dun area since 2022.
- The heap leach failure at Victoria Gold Corporation's Eagle Mine on June 24, 2024, and ongoing emergency response has required a significant diversion of Government of Yukon and First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun personnel and resources.

Beaver River Land Use Planning:

- The Beaver River land use planning process is not an Umbrella Final Agreement
 Chapter 11 sub-regional planning process. Rather, it comes out of the 2018
 Intergovernmental Agreement between the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun and the
 Government of Yukon, which supports the proposed (ATAC) Hecla Mining Company
 all-season tote road.
- The 2018 Agreement states that a land use plan must be finalized before any road construction occurs.
- ATAC Resources Ltd. has sold many of its mineral holdings in the Yukon to Hecla Mining Company, including its Rackla Gold and Connaught projects.
- On March 15, 2021, the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun petitioned the Supreme Court of Yukon to set aside the Government of Yukon's issuance of a Decision Document for the Metallic Minerals proposed exploration project in the Beaver River watershed in part due to the ongoing Beaver River Land Use Planning process.
- On January 31, 2023, the Supreme Court of Yukon ruled consultation with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun to be inadequate and overturned the Government of Yukon's decision document for the Metallic Minerals project. The Government of



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Yukon appealed this court decision to the Yukon Court of Appeal. The Court of Appeal largely dismissed the Government of Yukon's appeal in a decision released on April 9, 2024. (See EMR BN #109)

Approved by:	
Paul Moore	February 6, 2025
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources	Date approved
Dennis Berry	February 5, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date Approved



Energy, Mines and Resources and Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon submitted proposed modifications to the Recommended Dawson Regional Land Use Plan to the Dawson Regional Planning Commission on November 25, 2024, marking an important milestone in the regional planning process.
- In our response, the Government of Yukon is requesting modifications to the Recommended Dawson Regional Land Use Plan and is providing rationales for all proposed changes.
- Key proposals in the response address implementation feasibility, sustainable development, staking withdrawals, cumulative effects thresholds, reclamation and restoration, and boundaries and designations.
- We support a regional plan that balances development, such as forestry, agriculture, mining, tourism, outfitting and other activities, while protecting ecologically sensitive and culturally important areas.

Additional response:

- The independent Dawson Regional Land Use Planning Commission is now reviewing the proposed modifications submitted by the Government of Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government and will develop a Final Recommended Dawson Regional Land Use Plan.
- Once the parties receive the Final Recommended Plan from the Commission, we will conduct another round of public engagement



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and consultation prior to determining whether to accept, reject or modify the final recommended plan.

- The Government of Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government both endorse the vision that the Dawson Region encompasses a unique landscape that enables our community to build a diverse and sustainable economy and maintain a rich cultural legacy and a healthy environment.
- The Government of Yukon submitted proposed modifications in Fall 2024, as we stated would occur in the many months prior. This timeline is based on consultation with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government ending April 30, 2024, consultation with White River First Nation occurring June through August 2024, and the required time for governmental review and approval of the final submission package.

Context — this may be an issue because:

• The Dawson Regional Land Use Plan and the Government of Yukon's response to the Recommended Plan are of high interest to Yukoners.

Background:

- Key proposed modifications in the Government of Yukon response are:
 - o **Implementation Feasibility:** Proposed modifications to the Recommended Plan text to improve the clarity of the document for all users, so it is implementable.
 - o Sustainable development and socio-economic wellbeing: Proposed modifications to integrate sustainable development and socio-economic wellbeing more fulsomely throughout the Plan. Sustainable development is a socio-economic benefit that does not undermine the ecological and social systems on which communities and societies are dependent.



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- o **Staking withdrawals:** Support for staking withdrawals in Special Management Areas. Proposed that the Final Recommended Plan should provide sufficient direction to allow for sustainable development in Integrated Stewardship Areas; this would enable removing interim withdrawals in these areas.
- o Cumulative Effects Thresholds: Support for the surface disturbance thresholds for Integrated Stewardship Areas 1 and 2 and the linear disturbance thresholds for all Integrated Stewardship Areas. Proposed minor changes to surface disturbance thresholds for Integrated Stewardship Area 3s increasing from 2 per cent to 2.5 per cent and for Integrated Stewardship Area 4s increasing from 4 per cent to 5 per cent.
- o Reclamation and Restoration: Proposed that the Final Recommended Plan should provide clear definitions of reclamation and restoration. Also seeking that the Final Recommended Plan defines the process for determining when previously disturbed land is recovered.
- o Designations and Conservation: Support for designating about 40 per cent of public lands in the region as Special Management Areas, contributing to about 45 per cent of the region having a conservation objective. The 12 Integrated Stewardship Areas allow some level of development or disturbance. Recommended the four Land Management Units with the most mineral interests allow the most development, with the remaining areas allowing lesser amounts of development.
- The Government of Yukon and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government have sought as much consensus as possible on the Recommended Plan.
 - o There is consensus on adding an access and access management chapter, and agreement that more collaborative work is needed on caribou stewardship areas and the cumulative effects framework.
 - o There is consensus on the designations for 15 of 21 Landscape Management Units (LMUs 1, 2, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, and 21).

Session Briefing Note Dawson Regional Land Use Planning

EMR # 4 / ENV #81 Spring 2025

Energy, Mines and Resources and Environment

- o There is partial consensus on the designations for LMU 3 and 7 (agreement for Special Management Area designation but not on boundaries).
- o There is consensus to establish Wetlands of Special Importance (a new tool under the Wetlands Policy) for the Scottie Creek, Flat River and Ladue Wetlands.
- o There is consensus to keep the linear feature density thresholds as recommended.
- The Government of Yukon and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government formed the Dawson Regional Planning Commission in December 2018, following a pause from 2012-2018 due to the Peel Watershed court case.
- The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement Chapter 11 process provides the Commission with the autonomy to develop and recommend a plan to the Parties for their consideration.
- The Commission delivered the Recommended Plan to the Parties (the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government and the Government of Yukon) on June 10, 2022.
- The Government of Yukon and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government conducted a public consultation on the Commission's Recommended Plan from September 20 to December 20, 2022.
- Interim withdrawal of land proposed by the Commission was approved by Order-In-Council on June 15, 2021. This Order was amended on September 7, 2022, to reflect the Recommended Plan. The interim withdrawal is in effect until April 1, 2026 and is anticipated to be extended to allow time to complete a final plan for the region.
- The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government concluded party-to-party discussions to achieve consensus on response to the Recommended Plan and submitted their proposed modifications to the Recommended Plan pursuant to 11.6.4 of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement on April 30, 2024, to the Commission.
- The Government of Yukon commenced consultation with the White River First Nation, pursuant to a bilateral Consultation Agreement and legal duty to consult,



Energy, Mines and Resources and Environment

in May 2024. On August 21, 2024, White River First Nation submitted a written consultation response to the Government of Yukon.

Approved by:	
Paul Moore	February 5, 2025
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources	Date approved
Dennis Berry	February 4, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

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Recommended response (if asked about resources in the Arctic Offshore):

- Our government supports the protection of the Arctic's ecosystem as well as a strong, sustainable, and viable Arctic economy.
- To achieve these goals, we work together with our partners the Governments of Canada, Northwest Territories and the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation - under the Western Arctic-Tariug (Offshore) Accord which we ratified in 2023.
- Legislation to implement the Accord is being developed by the Government of Canada with input from all signatory parties.
- Under the Accord, the Government of Yukon is an equal partner with a strong role in the management of resource development and environmental protection in our northern coastal waters.
- In response to recent changes in United States' executive policy towards Arctic energy, we are working with our partners to present a united, coordinated, and collaborative response.

Recommended response (if asked about Arctic National Wildlife Refuge):

- The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is an essential calving ground for the Porcupine Caribou herd.
- The Yukon continues to review and provide input into Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decisions around the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.
- It is well-documented that exploration and other oil and gas industrial activity introduce high risks of significant negative

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impacts to wildlife populations, particularly migratory caribou herds like the Porcupine Caribou herd.

- We and our partners have consistently identified and demonstrated the sensitivity of caribou to development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and we have long sought the protection of caribou and their critical calving grounds.
- The Governments of Yukon, Canada, and the Inuvialuit recently signed the Aullaviat / Anguniarvik Traditional Conservation Area Agreement to further protect the herd's calving areas in Canada.
- The Government of Yukon remains deeply engaged in the work of the Porcupine Caribou Technical Committee, under the International Porcupine Caribou Agreement, in monitoring the health of the herd and its habitat.
- We maintain the position that any development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge will have significant adverse impacts and recently re-iterated this position in our letter to the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the Record of Decision and the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

Recommended response (if asked about moratorium on offshore oil and gas development):

• The moratorium on offshore oil and gas development in Canada's Arctic remains in place.

Date prepared: Last Updated: February 20, 2025

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- The governance structure under the Accord strengthens our collective role in consultation and decision-making related to the moratorium and any future oil and gas activities in the Beaufort Sea.
- The Accord gives the Government of Yukon a voice in national offshore oil and gas management and, if development occurs, will ensure that the Yukon's socio-economic and environmental interests are respected.

Recommended response (if asked about Canada-US border):

- Canada and the U.S. have an ongoing dispute over the maritime boundary in the Beaufort Sea that has resulted in an overlapping disputed area.
- A joint Canada US task force was created in September 2024 to resolve the overlapping claims.
- Global Affairs Canada is engaging with the Governments of Yukon and Northwest Territories and the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation on the issue.
- We expect that negotiations will be ongoing for several years.

Recommended response (if asked about historic Beaufort revenues):

- We are in discussions with Canada and the Northwest Territories about revenues collected from historical oil and gas activities in the Beaufort area.
- Discussions are proceeding positively towards securing an allocation of these revenues for the benefit of Yukoners.

Date prepared: Last Updated: February 20, 2025

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Context — this may be an issue because:

- There may be questions about how the Yukon is or will be responding to recent changes in United States policy around Arctic energy and specifically the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.
- The United States' Executive Order seeks to maximize the development and production of natural resources in Alaska, particularly energy projects.
- There may be enquiries about the status of the implementation of the Accord.
- There may be concerns about the protection of the Porcupine Caribou Herd, particularly from the Vuntut Gwitch'in First Nation.

Background:

Canada / US relations as it relates to the Region

- U.S. President Trump has noted an intent to increase domestic oil and gas production. This may lead to increased interest in offshore resource development in the Beaufort Sea.
- On January 20, U.S. President Trump signed Executive Order "Unleashing Alaska's
 Extraordinary Resource Potential" which directs agencies to maximize the
 development and production of natural resources on public lands including oil and
 gas reserves in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge. The order:
 - o directs agencies to rescind regulations that hinder development and production of natural resources and to expedite and/or initiate permitting and leasing of energy and natural resource projects.
 - provides direction to develop and produce oil and gas on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge northern coastal plain by withdrawing halted activities, rescinding existing lease cancellations, rescinding environmental impact statements and initiating new leasing.
 - o directs the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to deny the pending request of the Gwich'in in Alaska to establish the coastal plain of the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge as an Indigenous sacred site to protect the Porcupine

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caribou herd.

- The Canadian/US Offshore border remains in dispute between the countries, which could lead to additional tension in the area, should offshore exploration and production increase.
 - If drilling is implemented under the Unites States' projected borders it would directly impact the Yukon's interest in the area under the Arctic-Tariuq (Offshore) Accord.
 - The departments of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources are assessing what this means for the Yukon. There are a number of legal actions that are expected to arise from the order.

Western Arctic-Tariuq (Offshore) Accord / oil and gas resources

- The Beaufort Sea, on the Yukon's north coast, is considered a world-class oil and gas basin.
- The Western Arctic-Tariuq (Offshore) Accord fulfills a federal commitment from the 1993 Canada-Yukon Oil and Gas Accord and the 2013 NWT Lands and Resources Devolution to negotiate an offshore Agreement with the Yukon and Government of NWT.
- The Offshore Accord is a co-management and revenue-sharing agreement between the parties. Shared management and regulation will be implemented in three phases.
 - Phase 1 (current). Pre-implementation phase remains in effect until the Accord is implemented in legislation. The Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada consults with the signatories to manage oil and gas matters in the Accord area.
 - Phase 2. Transitional phase begins when the Accord is enacted into law. An
 executive co-management committee of Ministers from Canada, the Yukon
 and Northwest Territories governments and a representative from the
 Inuvialuit Regional Corporation is established.
 - o **Phase 3**. If the moratorium lifts and development proposed for the region, an Independent Joint Board would be created and constituted in legislation.
- The Accord is currently being formalized in federal legislation, through a

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process that includes input from all parties to the Accord.

• Since the Federal Parliament was prorogued in January, all parliamentary activities are suspended but the drafting of legislation by Canada continues.

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

- The Arctic National Wildlife Range was established in 1960 to preserve unique wildlife, wilderness and recreational values. In 1980, this was expanded and re-designated as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA).
- The Refuge protects 19.6 million acres of northeastern Alaska with the stated purpose of: conserving fish and wildlife populations in their natural diversity, fulfilling international wildlife treaty obligations, providing opportunities for continued subsistence uses, and protecting water quality and quantity.
- While the majority of the Refuge is designated as wilderness under ANILCA,

 1.5 million acres of the Coastal Plain area has been in a constant state of limbo
 as Section 1002 of ANILCA deferred a decision on whether or not to allow oil
 and gas exploration and development in this area. This area has come to be
 referred to as the '1002' lands.
- Since this time, an act of U.S. Congress is required to either permanently
 protect the Coastal Plain of the Refuge or open it up to exploitation. For
 decades, efforts by various levels of government, Indigenous organizations,
 conservation groups and the public have prevented oil and gas exploration and
 development in the Refuge despite strong lobbying by big oil companies and
 the desire of some members of U.S. Congress.
- The Vuntut Gwitch'in First Nation has stated that they will continue to use
 every legislative, regulatory and legal tool they have available to protect the
 Refuge. They are actively identifying next steps for the period leading up to the
 US mid-term elections as well as for the duration of the current 4-year
 mandate.
- Vuntut Gwitch'in First Nation states it will continue these protection efforts

Prepared for Ministers Streicker and Clarke Departments of Energy, Mines and Resources and Environment Date prepared:

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along with the Gwich'in Steering Committee, Arctic Defense Campaign, and Parties of the Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement.

The Arctic Offshore Moratorium

- In 2016, the Government of Canada enacted an indefinite moratorium on offshore oil and gas exploration in the Western Arctic.
- The moratorium will be reviewed every five years by Canada in consultation with the other parties, with the next review due in 2028.
- In 2019, the Parties established a Five-Year Review Committee to undertake a science-based five-year review of the federal moratorium.
- The first five-year science-based review concluded in 2023, after which the Government of Canada decided to maintain the indefinite moratorium and support a subsequent review to quide future decisions about the moratorium.
- The second review, focusing on climate and marine science, is underway. The Five-Year Review Committee is also conducting studies on socio-economic and geopolitical issues, as well as the impacts of sea ice change and greenhouse gas emissions in the Western Arctic offshore region.
- The observations from the Five-Year Review Committee will be shared with the decision-makers to determine whether the moratorium should be maintained.
- The Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and Government of Northwest Territories
 publicly stated that they are not in support of the moratorium and would like to
 see it lifted so that northerners can make their own decision about future oil and
 gas development
- There have been no public statements on the moratorium by the Government of Yukon.

Canada-US Border

- Canada and the U.S. have an ongoing dispute over the maritime boundary in the Beaufort Sea.
- Canada's position is that the 1825 Treaty establishes the maritime boundary along the 141st meridian of longitude, as an extension of the agreed land boundary.
- The United States' position is that the 1825 Treaty only established the land

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boundary between Canada and the United States, and that the maritime boundary follows an equidistance line from the coast.

- A joint Canada US task force was created in September 2024 to resolve the overlapping claims.
- The Government of Yukon is updated periodically on the task force work from Global Affairs Canada.
- The intention of Global Affairs Canada is to engage with the governments of Yukon and Northwest Territories and the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, as all Parties will be affected by any loss of jurisdiction to the United States.

Historic Beaufort revenues

- In the 2022 Federal budget, Canada committed to a one-time payment of \$25.8M
 to the Government of Yukon and Government of the Northwest Territories to fulfill a
 commitment to pay revenues from offshore oil and gas activities between 1993
 and 2016.
- Although the commitment was made to the Yukon solely through the 1993 Canada

 Yukon Oil and Gas Accord, Canada indicated that the money will be paid to both
 the Yukon and Northwest Territories in a division to be decided between the
 territories.
- Since 2022, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories have been negotiating a division of the funds; the 2023 election in the Northwest Territories delayed the process.
- As of early 2025, the process is proceeding and there is indication that an agreement is imminent.
- The timeline is uncertain for Canada to provide payment when the negotiation is complete.

EMR #83 /ENV #82 Spring 2025

Energy, Mines and Resources and Environment

Approved By:	
Paul Moore	March 5, 2025
Deputy Minister	Date Approved
Department of Energy, Mines and Resources	
Dennis Berry	February 28, 2025
Deputy Minister	Date Approved
Department of Environment	

Session Briefing Note Human-Wildlife Conflicts

Spring 2025

Environment

Recommended response (Bears):

- The Department of Environment has a range of tools and expertise to help residents address wildlife concerns on their property and reduce human-wildlife conflicts.
- Managing garbage and other food-related attractants is the most effective way of reducing human-wildlife conflict, especially when it comes to bears.
- As of January 2025, the Department of Environment responded to approximately 166 bear-related calls. Black bears accounted for 128 calls while 33 calls were related to grizzly bears. Five other bears were reported but not identified by species.
- In some situations, bears can be captured and relocated to remote areas away from the conflict location. However, relocating bears has limited success as bears often return to the conflict location, cause a conflict in a new location, or may die because of being moved to another bear's territory.
- In 2024, Conservation Officers relocated 7 black bears (no grizzly bears) and killed 28 black bears and 9 grizzly bears. Killing wildlife, including bears, is always the last resort and only occurs after all other measures have failed or if wildlife poses a significant risk to public safety.
- In addition to the 37 bears killed by Conservation Officers, seven black bears were killed by the public in defense of life or property.
- In 2024, 75% of calls related to nuisance bears involved attractants.
- The Department of Environment works to educate the public on ways they can reduce human-bear conflicts and stay safe in bear country by offering bear safety courses, school education programs for all grades

Session Briefing Note Human-Wildlife Conflicts

Spring 2025

Environment

and by hosting a community bear fair every spring to engage and educate Yukoners.

• Yukoners dealing with aggressive wildlife or those who witness someone feeding wildlife should call the TIPP line at 1-800-661-0525.

Additional response (Pine Lake bear incident):

- We recognize that human-wildlife conflicts can be extremely traumatic and dangerous for those involved. The Government of Yukon works to prevent incidents such as the Pine Lake bear attack that occurred last summer.
- In circumstances like this, critical decisions are made in conjunction with predator attack response protocols to ensure public safety. These are difficult decisions that conservation officers do not take lightly.
- Yukon Conservation Officers have concluded their investigation into the attack in the Pine Lake area.
- Officers met with the survivor, as well as representatives from the Alsek Renewable Resources Council, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and Village of Haines Junction, to present their findings from the investigation and discuss future safety measures for the area.
- The Department of Environment is committed to continuing to reinforce
 the importance of bear awareness in the Yukon. I encourage all Yukoners
 and visitors to visit yukon.ca/bears for bear safety tips or attend one of
 the bear safety courses offered by Conservation Officer Services.

Final response (Vehicle collisions):

- Animals are attracted to roadways for many reasons, including foraging and travel ease.
- In partnership with Highways and Public Works, the Department of Environment works to mitigate and manage wildlife collisions on Yukon highways.

Session Briefing Note Human-Wildlife Conflicts

Spring 2025

Environment

- This includes managing vegetation to improve visibility alongside highways, increasing signage, and announcing cautions through public education campaigns.
- The Department of Environment collects wildlife collision data to inform wildlife-vehicle collision mitigation measures and is working to make this information publicly available to help drivers make informed decisions.

Context — this may be an issue because:

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

Background:

- The Department of Environment continues to raise awareness with media, social media, campaigns, and communication initiatives to help minimize conflicts between people and wildlife.
- The Departments of Environment and Highways and Public Works work together to develop and implement adaptive strategies to decrease the rate of wildlife-vehicle collisions on Yukon roads, such as signage and brush clearing to improve visibility.

Approved by:		
Dennis Berry	January 29, 2025	
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved	



Spring 2025

Environmental Liabilities and Remediation Program Project Updates

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is working to clean up government-owned contaminated sites in the territory.
- We do this work to protect the health of our communities, land, water and air.
- By cleaning up contaminated sites, we are not only protecting the environment but also supporting future development.
- Clean land can be bought and sold, while contaminated lands continue to be an environmental liability and result in challenges and limitations for development and land transfer.

Additional response:

- The cost to remediate and monitor government-owned contaminated sites is substantial and can increase as assessment work progresses and we learn more about each site.
- Each year, the Government of Yukon earmarks money for assessment, monitoring, and remediation work at government-owned contaminated sites.

Wellgreen Mine

 We are continuing to monitor the water quality and stability of the Wellgreen mine site to ensure there are no negative impacts to the surrounding environment.

Prepared for Minister Clarke Department of Environment Date prepared: January 20, 2025 Last Updated: March 3, 2025

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Environmental Liabilities and Remediation Program Project Updates

Environment

• We are working closely with Kluane First Nation to assess opportunities to ensure that the community benefits economically and that the land and water is protected.

Old Crow Nursing Station

- The soil and supra-permafrost groundwater at the former Old Crow Health Centre is contaminated by petroleum hydrocarbons caused by historic fuel spills and leaks that have accumulated over time.
- In early 2024, the Department of Environment completed a reevaluation exercise for managing the contamination at the site. This exercise determined that allowing the contamination to naturally degrade overtime, while eliminating or managing the risks to human health and the environment, was the preferred option to remediate the site.
- We continue to provide updates to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation regarding this site, as well as other contaminated sites in Old Crow, and are committed to working collaboratively as these projects progress.

Ross River Fire Hall

- The Ross River community water well remains protected and clean.
- Annual groundwater monitoring continues at the former Fire Hall in Ross River to monitor and assess contamination origins and migration paths.

Prepared for Minister Clarke Department of Environment Date prepared: January 20, 2025 Last Updated: March 3, 2025

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Environmental Liabilities and Remediation Program Project Updates

Environment

 This work is being completed in partnership with the Ross River Dena Council-owned Dena Cho Environmental and Remediation Inc.

Wolverine Mine

- The Departments of Environment and Energy Mines and Resources are working together to assess and manage the remediation of the Wolverine Mine.
- In 2023/24 fiscal year, reclamation planning was paused to focus budget and staffing resources on the Minto Mine.
- A Transfer Payment Agreement was established with Ross River Dena Council to financially support their work in the reclamation planning for the site, and we are awaiting a response from Liard First Nation before providing their funding.
- A tender for procuring a water treatment service provider to lower water levels in the tailing's storage facility during the summer in 2025 and 2026 recently closed.

Minto Mine

- The Departments of Environment and Energy Mines and Resources are working together to assess and manage the remediation of the Minto Mine.
- \$21 million is anticipated to be spent implementing year-two activities detailed in the Government of Yukon-approved 2018 Reclamation and Closure Plan. Costs associated with reclamation plan implementation for the Minto Mine are 100% recoverable from the

Prepared for Minister Clarke Department of Environment Date prepared: January 20, 2025 Last Updated: March 3, 2025

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Environmental Liabilities and Remediation Program Project Updates

Environment

- surety bonds held against the site, and the Government of Yukon is reimbursed by the bonding company monthly.
- Energy Mines and Resources awarded contracts to Yukon companies for site operations, earthworks reclamation, and environmental monitoring of surface and groundwater.

Whitehorse Highway Maintenance Yard

- A phase 2 site assessment was completed in March 2024 and development of remedial options was completed in May 2024.
- A groundwater monitoring program, with water sampling at the Yukon River, has been initiated to better understand the extent of known contamination at the property and surrounding environment.
- Construction of the new replacement facility at a new location is scheduled for 2028-29, with demolition of the current site scheduled for 2031.

Third response:

- Remediation is mostly or entirely complete at five sites across the Yukon for the 2024/25 fiscal year. These sites include:
 - o 5th and Rogers Title was transferred on February 11, 2025 to the new landowner.:
 - Carmacks Grader Station Transfer to new site owner is pending with a Risk-Based Closure Permit that provides parameters for future site use;

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Date prepared: January 20, 2025

March 3, 2025

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Last Updated:

Environmental Liabilities and Remediation Program Project Updates

Environment

- Marshall Creek Forest Road remediation; and
- Other sites nearing closure include: The Kwanlin Dun First Nation Old Motorways site in downtown Whitehorse and JV Clark School in Mayo.
- Yukoners can go to the contaminated sites information map on Yukon.ca to see the location of contaminated sites, a summary of the contamination and the work completed at those sites.

Context—this may be an issue because:

 Undertaking assessment and remediation work at contaminated sites is visible and expensive – this leads to questions from the Opposition, the public and the media

Background:

 As of the fall of 2024/2025 fiscal year, 141 Government of Yukon- owned or operated sites have been identified as contaminated or where contamination is suspected.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	February 5, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

ECO #5/ EMR #108 / ENV #101 Spring 2025

Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project (BMC Minerals)

ECO - EMR - ENV

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon respects the clarity provided in the ruling by the Yukon Court of Appeal on December 6, 2024.
- The court set aside the Decision Document for the Kudz Ze Kayah Project to allow Decision Bodies to consult further with Kaska on the economic feasibility of the project.
- The Government of Yukon is committed to meeting the Court of Appeal's direction that all parties avoid delay during consultation.
- Until a new Decision Document is issued, the review of BMC's regulatory applications for the Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project is on hold.
- We are committed to meaningful consultation and reconciliation with the Ross River Dena Council, Liard First Nation, Dease River First Nation and Kwadacha Nation and value the direction provided by both the Supreme Court of Yukon and Court of Appeal of Yukon.

Additional response:

- While mining is an important part of our territorial economy, we must ensure that industry operating today is not doing so at the expense of Yukoners or the environment.
- The Government of Yukon expects proponents to build relationships with and provide funding to First Nation governments and communities impacted by development projects.

ECO #5/ EMR #108 / ENV #101 Spring 2025

Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project (BMC Minerals)

ECO - EMR - ENV

Context — this may be an issue because:

- During the project assessment and subsequent consultation, Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation identified impacts from the project to their asserted Aboriginal rights. The First Nations oppose the project being licensed.
- On March 3, 2025, BMC Minerals Ltd. filed a motion for direction to the Court of Appeal requesting it direct the parties to conclude consultation by April 30, 2025, and issue a Decision Document mid-May 2025.
- The hearing occurred on March 28, 2025 and the Appeal Court dismissed BMC's application in oral reasons.
- Questions related to the Project regulatory review process were raised during the Yukon Legislative Assembly question period on Thursday March 27.

Background:

- On June 15, 2022, the Governments of Canada and Yukon issued a joint decision document to vary the Executive Committee's recommendations to allow the Project to proceed, subject to terms and conditions specified in the Final Screening Report.
- On July 20, 2022, the Ross River Dena Council, on its own behalf and on behalf of the Kaska First Nations, filed a petition for judicial review of the decision.
- In August of 2022, BMC Minerals Ltd. submitted applications to the Yukon government for a quartz mining licence and land leases. A Type-A water licence application was submitted to the Yukon Water Board.
- The Supreme Court of Yukon hearing for the petition was held in April of 2023.
- On January 2, 2024, the Supreme Court of Yukon issued its Reasons for Decision on the judicial review of the decision document for the Kudz Ze Kayah Project.
- The Supreme Court of Yukon concluded that the governments of Yukon and Canada failed to consult on Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation's concerns raised in the June 14, 2022, submission.

ECO #5/ EMR #108 / ENV #101 Spring 2025

Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project (BMC Minerals)

ECO - EMR - ENV

- The Yukon government's regulatory review of BMC's regulatory applications was paused because of the Court's decision, which set aside the June 15, 2022, decision document, until consultation obligations were fulfilled and a new decision document issued.
- As directed in the January 2, 2024, Supreme Court of Yukon's decision, the Government of Yukon and Government of Canada consulted on the Project with Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation on February 7 and 8, 2024 in Ross River.
- In February of 2024, Ross River Dena Council filed an appeal to the January 2, 2024, decision from the Supreme Court of Yukon.
- In their appeal of the Supreme Court's decision, the Kaska First Nations requested that:
 - o both the January 2, 2024, Supreme Court decision and the June 15, 2022, decision document be set aside;
 - decision bodies complete meaningful and deep consultation with the Kaska First Nations on the Project; and
 - the Court refers the project back to Decision Bodies for reconsideration or to a Panel review by YESAB (Yukon Environmental & Socio-economic Assessment Board).
- On March 8, 2024, decision bodies issued a Decision Document recommending the project proceed to the regulatory phase.
- The Yukon Court of Appeal hearing for the appeal was held September 2024 and a decision was issued December 6, 2024.
- The Court of Appeal was explicit that it was setting aside the Decision Document for the limited purpose of additional consultation on one further issue, economic feasibility.
- On January 17, 2025, Yukon government and Federal Decision Bodies sent a letter to Liard First Nation and Ross River Dena Council initiating consultation and proposing a workplan for consultation on the economic feasibility of the Project.

Prepared for Premier Pillai and Ministers Streicker and Date prepared: August 8, 2024
Clarke Last Updated: April 7, 2025
ECO-EMR-ENV Page 3 of 4

ECO #5/ EMR #108 / ENV #101 Spring 2025

Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project (BMC Minerals)

ECO - EMR - ENV

- On March 28, 2025, Justice Groberman dismissed BMC's application for a court prescribed schedule for consultation on economic feasibility. Justice Groberman indicated it is up to the decision bodies to establish a reasonable schedule and that he did not have jurisdiction or sufficient background to amend the Court of Appeals decision.
- Following Justice Groberman's dismissal, the Government of Yukon and Federal Decision Bodies have been corresponding with Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation to establish meetings as per the proposed schedule that concludes consultation in mid-June.
- (See ECO TAB 37 Ross River Dena Council Issues and Initiatives).

Approved by:	
Justin Ferbey	2025 04 16
Deputy Minister of the Executive Council Office	Date approved
Heather MillsA/DM	_April 10, 2025
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources	Date approved
Dennis Berry	April 7
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

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#102

Session Briefing Note Landfill Adaptive Management Plans

Spring 2025

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Department of Environment regulates landfills in the territory. The Department of Community Services and municipalities operate those landfills for the benefit of all Yukoners.
- Semi-annual groundwater and surface water quality sampling and annual reporting are required as a condition of the permit for operation of a landfill.
- Based on the most current groundwater and surface water quality data, up to 20 Solid Waste Disposal Facilities have now triggered the requirement for an Adaptive Management Plan as described in the Contaminated Sites Regulations.
- The Contaminated Sites Regulations require Adaptive Management Plans in cases where contaminants have been identified multiple times over a two to three-year period.
- Community Services is working with each municipality to develop a cost-sharing agreement for the mitigation work and Adaptive Management Plans required for landfills.

Additional response:

- In August 2024, the Department of Environment notified six municipalities and the Department of Community Services that Adaptive Management Plans were required for their specific sites.
- Adaptive Management Plans provide for ongoing monitoring and analysis, tailored for a specific landfill, that allows the operator to continue to deliver a high level of service to the public while ensuring the Yukon's air, land and water are protected.

#102

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2025

Landfill Adaptive Management Plans

Environment

 Next steps are for landfill operators to draft the plans. We aim to work with all operators to have all plans submitted, reviewed and approved by the fall of 2025.

Third response (Cost):

- We recognize that municipalities may have concerns about potential cost increases associated with the Adaptive Management Plans.
 These include the costs for plan preparation, data collection and potential adaptive measures, which are all site specific.
- While exact costs will not be known until Adaptive Management
 Plans are fully developed, both the departments of Environment and
 Community Services are committed to working with municipalities on
 the most effective cost sharing approach.

Context—this may be an issue because:

• The requirement for Adaptive Management Plans for the Yukon landfills will result in additional costs to the permittees, including Yukon municipalities.

Background:

- The approximate costs for developing Adaptive Management Plans are in the range of 25k-40k per plan. The shared costs of additional monitoring, well installation and other actions set out in the plan cannot be quantified until Adaptive Management Plans are fully developed.
- The regional funding agreements specifically state that the Department of Community Services and the municipalities shall work together on environmental issues and monitoring.
- The 6 municipal sites include:
 - o Watson Lake

o Teslin

Whitehorse

o Faro

Prepared for Minister Clarke Department of Environment Date prepared: January 20, 2025

Last Updated:



Spring 2025

Landfill Adaptive Management Plans

Environment

- o Carmacks
- Haines Junction
- The 14 Community Services sites include:
 - Ross River
 - o Braeburn
 - o Burwash Landing
 - o Carcross
 - Deep Creek
 - o Horsecamp Creek
 - o Keno

- o Mount Lorne
- Silver City
- o Johnson's Crossing
- o Marsh Lake
- o Pelly Crossing
- o Tagish
- o Upper Liard

Approved by:

Dennis Berry
Deputy Minister of Environment

Denuty Minister of Environment

Denuty Minister of Environment

Denuty Minister of Environment

#103

Session Briefing Note Lodgepole Lane

Spring 2025

Environment

Recommended response:

- Since 2008, the Government of Yukon has been aware of issues reported at 2 Lodgepole Lane regarding public health, safety, and potential environmental concerns.
- The Department of Environment has worked with the appropriate agencies to address concerns regarding this property.
- There are a wide range of reported concerns at the property involving multiple agencies including Health and Social Services, Fire and Protective Services, the City of Whitehorse and the RCMP.
- The City of Whitehorse is the lead agency for this property.

Additional response:

- Spills on private properties are common, and living near a site with contamination does not necessarily present an inherent risk to public health.
- The Department of Environment operates within its legislative authority, namely the Environment Act, Waters Act, Wildlife Act, and associated regulations.
- Based on testing completed by the City of Whitehorse, the levels of contaminated soil on the site do not warrant an intervention by the Department of Environment.

Third response:

• The department continues to offer the City of Whitehorse support with technical expertise and assistance in navigating applicable regulatory requirements.

#103

Spring 2025

Session Briefing Note Lodgepole Lane

Environment

- Number 2 Lodgepole Lane was added to the Contaminated Sites Information Map, which is a public inventory of properties for which the department holds evidence of some level of contamination at one point in time.
- The public is encouraged to report all spills, on or off private property, to the Yukon Spill Line at 867-667-7244. Proper management of spills is key to ensuring long-term contamination is prevented.

Context—this may be an issue because:

• The opposition has raised the issue of 2 Lodgepole Lane in past sessions.

Background:

- Complaints regarding 2 Lodgepole Lane are numerous and cover a wide range of
 issues, many of which are the mandate of other agencies (e.g., management of
 human waste, dealing with a building that has been deemed hazardous by the City's
 Fire Chief, dealing with suspected criminal activity at the site, etc.).
- Without strong evidence of a clear responsible party or significant adverse effects, the department has no ability to order or direct the current property owners to remediate.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	March 4, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved

Session Briefing Note Permitting and Compliance

Spring 2025

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Department of Environment works to guide Yukoners and Yukon businesses through permitting processes for the protection of the land, water and air in the territory.
- The Department of Environment permits, monitors and inspects activities that may produce pollution in the environment, such as diesel generation of electricity and disposal of waste.
- The same standards are applied to these activities whether they are conducted by a private business, a municipality or by a Yukon government department or corporation.
- When organizations or businesses fail to comply with the terms of their permits, Environmental Protection and Assessment Branch inspectors will use their authorized discretion in managing any noncompliance and may use enforcement if necessary.

Additional response (YEC facilities):

- The Yukon Energy Corporation provides an essential service to Yukoners and the Government of Yukon works with YEC to facilitate environmental assessment and permitting of their activities.
- In early April, the Government of Yukon and Government of Canada both released decision documents that allow the Whitehorse Rapids Hydroelectric Generating project to proceed to water licensing.
- These documents contain conditions related to protecting fish and wildlife and First Nations land use.
- Yukon Energy Corporation applied for a 60-day Type A Water Licence, while the Yukon Water Board reviews their application for a 20-year Type A Water Licence.

Session Briefing Note Permitting and Compliance

Spring 2025

Environment

- The public comment period on the 60-day licence opened on April 11, 2025 and closes on April 29, 2025.
- The Department of Environment will work with Yukon Energy Corporation to ensure that this essential service is not interrupted as they seek relicensing.
- YESAB released an Evaluation Report for the Mayo Hydro Generating Station on April 23, 2025.
- A proposal for increased thermal generation in Faro is in the evaluation stage until May 9, 2025.

Third response (Old Crow Incinerator):

- The Department of Community Services holds a Waste Management Permit for solid waste management in Old Crow that authorizes operation of an incinerator for combustible solid waste.
- The Department of Environment does not condone any open burning of waste at the facility. Open burning produces more air pollutants than incineration of waste.
- Environmental Protection and Assessment Branch inspectors last inspected the facility on November 29, 2024.
- The incinerator was functioning as intended at the time of the inspection, and there was no evidence of any open burning at the site.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- In the fall 2024 session, questions were raised by the Opposition party about whether standards, compliance and enforcement were being equally applied to Yukon government solid waste facilities and municipal solid waste facilities.
- There is also concern from some stakeholders that Yukon Energy Corporation will become non-compliant when their permits and licenses expire because some new assessment or licensing processes have not yet been completed.

Session Briefing Note Permitting and Compliance

Spring 2025

Date prepared: January 27, 2025

Last Updated:

May 1, 2025

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Environment

Background:

Yukon Energy Corporation

- YEC holds various environmental authorizations with the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Water Board including Environment Act permits and water licences, for air emissions, special waste generating and storing, power generating, etc.
- Environmental Protection and Assessment Branch inspectors are responsible for verifying compliance with these authorizations.

Old Crow Incinerator

- Community Services has invested significant resources in ensuring the unit is functional and operating as intended.
- Contingency plans are being prepared by Community Services to ensure no further open burning happens at the landfill.

Approved by:		
Dennis Berry	May 1, 2025	
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved	



Session Briefing Note Wellgreen Tailings

Containment Facility

Spring 2025

Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon has a responsibility to clean up contaminated sites in the territory.
- Groundwater data collected at the Wellgreen mill and tailings site in the fall of 2024 indicated that the tailings were generating acid, but contamination had not breached the tailings containment facility.
- The Department of Environment continues to monitor for signs of contamination outside of the facility to inform the need for mitigation measures to prevent contamination from reaching Quill Creek and Kluane River.

Additional response:

- We recognize the concerns raised by both the Kluane and White River First Nations about the risks posed by this site if remediation and closure of the site is not undertaken.
- These concerns and other considerations are addressed in the closure plan that was submitted to the Yukon Environmental Socio-economic Assessment Board in 2020 and in subsequent discussions between the Government of Yukon and both First Nations.
- Removal of the mill footings was of importance to Kluane First Nation. The mill footings were demolished and buried in an on-site landfill in 2023 by a direct award contract to Kluane First Nation.

Third response:

• As contamination on the Wellgreen site is currently contained, the Government of Yukon is focused on managing contaminated sites with an immediate risk to the receiving environment.

Spring 2025

Wellgreen Tailings Containment Facility

Fnvironment

• We are continuing to consider options for full remediation and closure of the site in the longer term.

Context—this may be an issue because:

• The budget for remediation expenditures in 2025-2026 is for monitoring of the tailings containment facility. Funding for remediation and closure has not yet been secured. There may be concerns from First Nations regarding status of the remediation and closure program.

Background:

- The Wellgreen mill and tailings site operated in the 1970s and was originally permitted by the Government of Canada prior to devolution; the site is now under the care and control of the Government of Yukon.
- The Government of Yukon sent letters in November 2024 signed by the Premier of Yukon and the Chief of Kluane First Nation to the Government of Canada and the former mining companies requesting funding to support closure of the site. No additional funding has been secured at this time.

Approved by:	
Dennis Berry	February 5, 2025
Deputy Minister of Environment	Date approved



Housing Landscape

Yukon Housing Corporation

Recommended response:

- Access to housing remains a priority, and work continues to address key challenges, including:
 - o Expanding housing with support services for those in need.
 - o Increasing the supply of affordable rental units.
 - o Helping Yukoners navigate housing costs.
- Yukon Housing Corporation and its partners are adapting to high construction and borrowing costs by finding innovative ways to develop and maintain housing.
- The corporation's five-year strategic plan, *Creating Home*, is driving a more client-focused and collaborative approach to affordable housing and integrating support services to improve outcomes for Yukoners.

Additional response:

- Governments and stakeholders are working together to develop new land, expand housing options, and respond to the findings of the 2022 Office of the Auditor General Report on housing.
- Housing projects continue to move forward to meet the needs of Yukoners.

Context:

• The combination of high rental costs, limited affordable housing options and difficulties in securing mortgages continues to be a challenge for many Yukoners.

Background:

Section 1: Yukon population

- In June 2024, the estimated Yukon population was 46,640; an increase of 1,354, or 3.0%, compared to the revised figure for June 30, 2023 (45,286).
- The Yukon's population is forecast to increase to 51,520 by 2030.
- While the population of most age groups is expected to increase over this period, the number of seniors and people between the ages of 55 and 64 is expected to grow the fastest.

Section 2: Housing statistics

Housing Landscape

Yukon Housing Corporation

Average Whitehorse house prices (YBS)

	2023 Q3	2024 Q3	% Change
Single-detached house	\$627,400	\$684,500	3.0%
Condominium	\$416,000	\$457,400	7.2%

Yukon rents and vacancies (YBS)

	<u>October</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>April</u>
	<u>2022</u>	2023	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Median rent (all types)	\$1,300	\$1,325	\$1,350	\$1,420
Vacancy rate (all types)	1.9%	2.2%	1.8%	1.8%

New residential permits issued, Yukon (YBS)

Year	# of new residential permits
2020	657
2021	635
2022	416
2023	429

Residential building construction, Yukon (YBS)

	January-December 2023	January-December 2024
# residential permits issued*	988	839
\$ value of new permits*	\$81.1 million	\$156.2 million (92%
		increase)

^{*}In addition to new dwelling units, residential permits include renovations, garages, and additions. The totals do not include permits issued for plumbing or stoves.

City of Whitehorse, new housing completions (CMHC)

Year	Homeowner	Rental	Condo	All
2018	66	100	61	227
2019	55	78	110	243
2020	80	116	152	348
2021	86	57	53	196
2022	111	194	181	486
2023	129	189	126	444
2024	73	19	151	243

Section 3: Capital projects recently completed by YHC or partners

Since 2022:

- 10 YHC-led projects have been completed, creating a total of 77 new residential units; and
- 8 major Housing Initiatives Fund partnership projects have been completed, creating over 276 new units.

YHC projects completed 2022-2024

TAB #1 Spring 2025

Housing Landscape

Yukon Housing Corporation

YHC Project	Construction Start Date	Construction Completion Date	Number of Units
401 Jeckell Street, Whitehorse	May 2020	December 2022	47
RHI affordable triplex, Whitehorse	June 2021	June 2022	3
RHI affordable triplex, Watson Lake	June 2021	March 2022	3
RHI affordable triplex, Mayo	June 2021	March 2022	3
Accessible duplex, Mayo	July 2022	June 2023	2
Accessible duplex, Carmacks	August 2022	July 2023	2
RRDC staff trailer, Ross River	June 2023	December 2023	3
10-plex*, Old Crow (*Asset owned by HPW/ managed by YHC)	Summer 2021	Jan 2024	10
Accessible duplex, Faro	Summer 2023	Spring 2024	2
Affordable duplex, Dawson City	August 2022	June 2024	2
Total units completed (YHC projects):			

Major partnership projects completed 2022-2024

Project (Lead)	Construction Completion Date	Number of Units
Bringing Citizens Home, Whitehorse (Champagne and Aishihik FN)	Summer 2022	20
Cornerstone multi-use building, Whitehorse (Opportunities Yukon)	July 2022	53
Normandy Living seniors' supportive residence, Whitehorse (KBC)	December 2022	84
Boreal Commons apartments, Whitehorse (536754 Yukon Inc)	January 2023	87
Affordable modular housing, Mayo (Na-Cho Nyäk Dun FN)	March 2023	8
Jëje Zho 12-bed men's shelter, Dawson City (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in FN)	July 2023	8
VGFN elders complex, Old Crow (Vuntut Gwitchin FN)	January 2024	9
VGFN mobile homes, Old Crow (Vuntut Gwitchin FN)	March 2024	7
Total units completed (major partnerships):		

Section 4: Underway or upcoming housing capital projects for YHC and partners

YHC projects underway

The projects under tray			
Project	Start Date	Anticipated	Number of
		Completion Date	Units
Watson Lake - 10-unit supportive living residence (TAB #20)	Summer 2023	Winter 2025	10
Dawson – 34-unit housing project – Korbo lot (TAB #19)	Fall 2024	2026-27	34
Whitehorse – 45-unit Ryder replacement	Fall 2024	Spring 2026	45
Burwash Landing – 1 staff duplex (TAB #25)	Fall 2024	Summer 2026	2
Whitehorse – Purchase of 190 Olive May Way (TAB #5)	July 2024	February 2025	18
Total units underway:			109

Major partnership projects underway or completed

Project	Start Date	Anticipated	Number
		Completion Date	of Units
Safe at Home Society's supportive housing "The Hearth"	March 2024	Spring 2026	67
Safe at Home Society's supportive housing at 408 Alexander	May 2024	Completed	17
DDDC's affordable rental project "Winter Crossing"	Spring 2024	Spring 2026	105

TAB #1 Spring 2025

Housing Landscape

Yukon Housing Corporation

Northern Community Land Trust Society's affordable homeownership "Project 1096"	June 2024	December 2025	32
HIF-7 funding recipients	Spring 2024	Fall 2026	78
		Total units:	299

YHC projects planned

Project	Anticipated Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date	Number of Units
Teslin – 6-plex with Village and Teslin Tlingit	Design – 2025/26	2027/28	6
Council			
Carcross – 6-plex	Lot selected, YESAB	2027/28	6
	approval in progress		
Mayo – 10-Unit Community Housing Project	Lot selected,	2029/30	10
	Design – 2027/28		
Destruction Bay and Pelly – accessible staff	2026/27	2028/29	4
duplexes			
Ross River – duplex	2026/27	2028/29	2
Haines Junction – 6-plex	2027/28	2029/30	6
Whitehorse – Accessible Triplex at 44-13 th Ave.	Deferred due to lack of	of city sewer/water	3
	infrastructure, plan to u	pgrade in 3-5 years.	
		Total units planned:	37

Section 5: Support for new residential land development

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Section 6: Tenants in Yukon Housing RGI units

YHC Unit Status as of March 27, 2025

Breakdown	Employee	RGI	Total
Occupied	166	664	830
Under Allocation	2	13	15

TAB #1 Spring 2025

Housing Landscape

Yukon Housing Corporation

Under Capital	2	9	11
Under Repair	3	25	28
Total	173	711	884

Length of RGI tenancy as of March 27, 2025

Length of RGI tenancy in years	Non-Senior	Senior	Total
<1 Year	79	41	120
01-02 Years	96	39	135
02-03 Years	38	33	71
03-04 Years	29	15	44
04-05 Years	18	17	35
05-10 Years	78	97	175
10-15 Years	21	25	46
15-20 Years	8	13	21
20+ Years	7	9	16
Total	374	289	663
Average Years	3.7	5.6	4.5

^{*}The longest running tenancy is 29 years.

Section 7: Waitlist

YHC waitlists for seniors and non-seniors as of March 27, 2025 (TAB #13)

Community	Non-Senior	Senior	Total
Carcross	1	0	1
Carmacks	4	0	4
Dawson City	12	9	21
Haines Junction	2	2	4
Ross River	1	0	1
Watson Lake	14	3	17
Whitehorse	174	102	276
Total	208	116	324

As of March 27, 2025, 13 employees are on the waitlist (TAB #10)

Community	Employee
Dawson City	5
Faro	1
Haines Junction	3
Pelly Crossing	1

TAB #1 Spring 2025

Housing Landscape

Yukon Housing Corporation

Ross River	2
Teslin	1
Total	13
Community	Employee

^{*}Note Beaver Creek, Destruction Bay, Old Crow and Pelly Crossing do not have Rent-Geared-to-Income units and Whitehorse does not have employee housing units.

RGI Waitlist based on Priority Status as of March 27, 2025

Priorities	Non-Senior	Senior	Total
Affordability	127	65	192
By-Name List/Homeless (Community)*	5	2	7
Priority – Medical	11	17	28
Priority – Mobility	9	31	40
Priority – Gender-based violence	56	1	57
TOTAL	208	116	324

^{*}Note this category is used to identify homeless priority in the rural communities outside of Whitehorse. This does not represent the total number of individuals and/or households on the Community By-Name List. Individuals who are homeless may be included in the affordable category until information is shared from the Coordinated Housing Access Team.

Time on Waitlist based on Secondary Status

<u>Breakdown</u>	Affordable	By-Name List	Medical Medical	Mobility	Gender-based violence	<mark>Total</mark>
<1 Year	<mark>122</mark>	<mark>6</mark>	<mark>18</mark>	<mark>23</mark>	<mark>25</mark>	<mark>194</mark>
1-3 Years	<mark>49</mark>	<mark>0</mark>	<mark>7</mark>	<mark>13</mark>	<mark>30</mark>	<mark>99</mark>
3-5 Years	<mark>11</mark>	<mark>0</mark>	3	<mark>2</mark>	<mark>2</mark>	<mark>18</mark>
5-7 Years	9	<mark>1</mark>	0	<mark>2</mark>	<mark>0</mark>	<mark>12</mark>
7+ Years	1	O	0	0	<mark>0</mark>	<mark>1</mark>
Total	<mark>192</mark>	<mark>7</mark>	<mark>28</mark>	<mark>40</mark>	<mark>57</mark>	<mark>324</mark>
Average Years	<mark>1.3</mark>	1.2	<mark>1.3</mark>	<mark>1.3</mark>	<mark>1.0</mark>	1.2

^{*} The By-Name List category identifies homeless priority in the rural communities outside of Whitehorse and VoV identifies victims of violence.

Section 8: Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit (TAB #9)

- The program helps low-to-moderate-income Yukoners in private market rental housing who cannot
 afford rent. Applicants can receive \$200, \$400, \$600 or \$800 per month, which will be paid directly
 to the individual.
 - Applicants must provide proof of income to be eligible.
 - o Since the program's launch in November 2020, over 300 households have been supported.
- As of March 27, 2025:

Housing Landscape

Yukon Housing Corporation

- 202 households were approved for the original benefit.
- o 17 households were approved for the gender-based violence stream.

Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit - Rental stream breakdown by benefit level as of March 13, 2025.

Benefit Level	# of Clients	Monthly Budget
\$200	72	\$14,400.00
\$400	34	\$13,600.00
\$600	47	\$28,200.00
\$800	40	\$32,000.00
Total	193	\$88,200.00

Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit - Rental stream recipients as of March 13, 2025.

Community	Non-Senior	Senior	Total
Dawson City	5	4	9
Haines Junction	3	0	3
Watson Lake	1	0	1
Whitehorse	145	44	189
Total	154	48	202

Section 9: Loans and Grants programs

Developer Build Loan (DBL) Program – Provides loans for short-term construction financing
to Yukon developers who may be unable to secure funding from traditional lenders. The
program is for land and infrastructure development for residential purposes or building
homes and multi-unit residential buildings. The loan is fully repayable to Yukon Housing
Corporation.

Developer Build Loan Program

		J					
Applications	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-Jan25	Total	%
Approved	1	1	1	0	2	5	46
Declined	0	0	2	1	0	3	27
Cancelled	0	2	0	1	0	3	27
TOTAL	1	3	3	2	2	11	100

2. Home Ownership Loan Program (Rural until 2023-24) – Offered loans to eligible residents to buy or build their primary residence. The program is under review.

Home Ownership Loan Program

TAB #1 Spring 2025

Housing Landscape

Yukon Housing Corporation

		Rural Progra	m	Expanded to Whitehorse		
Applications	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total	%
Approved	11	4	3	0	18	15%
Declined	11	10	16	24	61	50%
Cancelled	10	14	3	15	42	35%
Total	32	28	22	39	121	100%

3. Municipal Matching Rental Construction Program (MMRCP) – This is a one-time capital grant for projects that receive a municipal development incentive. It is meant to help increase the supply of rental housing in communities.

MMRCP

Applications	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-Jan 25	Total	%
Approved	13	12	17	12	10	64	64.6
Declined	2	1	3	4	0	10	10.1
Cancelled	1	0	12	10	2	25	25.3
TOTAL	16	13	32	26	12	99	100

4. **Home Repair Program** – Funding to repair or upgrade primary residence. This program includes emergencies, accessibility and wildfire grants and a home repair loan. *Note: Three intakes have been completed for the fiscal year 2023-2024.*

Grants stream:

Applications	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-Jan 25	Total
Approved/Pre-Approved	40	46	34	17	3	140
Declined	0	2	3	3	2	10
Cancelled	6	14	9	8	8	45
Total	46	62	46	28	13	195

Loans stream:

Applications	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-Jan 25	Total
Approved/Pre-Approved	0	6	8	10	2	26
Declined	0	5	10	12	5	32
Cancelled	0	25	32	24	20	101
Total	0	36	50	46	27	159

Accessibility stream:

Applications	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-Jan 25	Total
Approved/Pre-Approved	10	8	14	7	5	44
Declined	0	1	2	1	2	6
Cancelled	1	3	8	14	1	27
Total	11	12	24	22	8	77

Finance

Session Briefing Note 2024-25 Supplementary Overview (Corporate Note)

Embargoed until tabled

Recommended response:

- The changes outlined in the Supplementary Estimates No. 2 highlight the government's commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing of Yukoners and communities. The government is making important investments in health and social services, education, environmental protection, and in needed infrastructure across the territory.
- The Government of Yukon continues to maintain a budgetary surplus of \$57.6 million. Increased spending of \$130.1 million is partially offset by additional revenue and recoveries of \$19.5 million.
- Despite increases in O&M and capital expenditure, we continue to work to ensure that government spending is allocated in a way that meets key priorities and long-term goals.
- Many of the O&M pressures in Supplementary Estimates No. 2 related to health and education are ongoing pressures for services and will continue to be reflected in the Main Estimates.
- The ability to remain in a surplus position despite an increase in spending is largely owed to:
 - Infrastructure investments, which are mostly tangible capital assets. As they are anticipated to provide benefits over many years, their impact on the surplus/deficit position is recognized over their expected life.
 - Also, the additional \$55 million funding to the Receiver for the Victoria Gold Corp. is provided as a loan, which offsets the impact of these expenditures on the budgetary surplus.



Session Briefing Note 2024-25 Supplementary Overview (Corporate Note)

Finance

Embargoed until tabled

 Even with significant financial pressures in recent years, and in particular the response to the heap leach failure at the Eagle Gold mine, the Yukon remains on a strong financial footing. The government continues to make strategic investments that support economic growth, protect the environment, and enhance the quality of life for all Yukoners.

Additional response:

- The 2024-25 Supplementary Estimates No. 2 forecasts an overall gross increase of \$114.3 million in O&M spending, with an offsetting increase of \$7.9 million in recoveries-mainly for the following pressures:
 - \$55 million in advances to the Receiver for environmental protection work at the Eagle Gold Mine.
 - \$20.7 million in additional health-related funding to support Insured Health pressures, Yukon Hospital Corporation operations, emergency medical services, and legislated grant programs.
 - \$13.8 million for education related pressures, including Collective Agreement increase for the Yukon Association of Education Professionals and funding the First Nation School Board.

Finance

Session Briefing Note 2024-25 Supplementary Overview (Corporate Note)

Embargoed until tabled

- Capital adjustments in the Supplementary Estimates No. 2 reflect an overall gross increase of \$15.8 million in spending and a \$3.8 million increase in capital recoveries. These adjustments are primarily driven by:
 - Increases of \$21.7 million for accelerated work on the Nisutlin Bay bridge replacement and to address capital pressures related to ongoing land development projects;
 - \$7.8 million in decreases due to updated cash flow forecasts and revised timelines for major school replacement projects and the Watson Lake solar project.
- Revenues are projected to increase by \$7.8 million, driven by higher personal income tax and fuel tax revenue forecasts, as well as accrued loan interest from the Victoria Gold Corp. receivership

Context—this may be an issue because:

• The 2024-25 Supplementary Estimates No. 2 is tabled in the spring session and will be the subject of debate.

Approved by:	
Jessica Schultz	February 24, 2025
Deputy Minister, Finance	Date approved



Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Update on Calls to Action

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- Reconciliation is an ongoing process and a shared responsibility of all governments and individuals in the Yukon.
- Our government is deeply committed to advancing reconciliation through collaboration and partnership with Indigenous governments and groups.
- We continue to share our progress toward addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, most recently through a progress report and Pathways magazine both released in fall 2023.
- The magazine and report provided an update on the actions being taken across the Yukon government and in collaboration with Yukon First Nations governments in areas including child welfare, health, education and justice.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations governments are leaders in demonstrating a collaborative approach to reconciliation.
- While there is still work to do, targeted investments are resulting in meaningful change and creating better programs and services for all Yukoners.
- We will continue our collaborative work to implement and report on the Calls to Action, including through work on the Yukon Forum joint priorities and by implementing the Putting People First recommendations.

Context—this may be an issue because:

 The 2023 mandate letters include a commitment to fulfill the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC's) Calls to Action. The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement includes a commitment to working with Yukon First Nations to continue to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission through targeted investments.

Background:



Truth and Reconciliation Commission Executive Council - Update on Calls to Action

Office

- The TRC report Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future was released in 2015 and contains 94 Calls to Action on redressing the harms resulting from residential schools and creating better relations between the federal, provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous Peoples. There are 32 Calls to Action that relate directly to YG.
- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations (YFNs) collaborated on addressing the Calls to Action under the 2017 Yukon Forum Joint Priority Action Plan and through other reconciliation initiatives, such as supporting the important work of the YFN-led Yukon Residential Schools and Missing Children Project.
- The Government of Yukon has taken additional steps to address the Calls to Action, including:
 - establishing the position of Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations Initiatives at the Department of Education, signing an agreement to establish a YFN School Board and entering into education agreements with all YFNs (speaks to Calls 7 and 10 directed to the federal government);
 - supporting Indigenous athletes and the North American Indigenous Games (Call 88);
 - implementing the YFN Procurement Policy (relates to Call 92) and the Representative Public Service Plan: Breaking Trail Together (relates to Call 7);
 - working with YFNs and Yukon Indigenous women's groups to implement the Yukon's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit+ People Strategy (MMIWG2S+ Strategy) (relates to Call 41);
 - participating at the Trilateral Table on the Wellbeing of YFN Children and Families to address gaps for culturally appropriate parenting programs (Call 5); and
 - receiving input from YFNs on Health and Social Services programming through the Mental Health Advisory Committee (relates to Call 19).

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey 2025 01 30

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office Date

Session Briefing Note Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Finance

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon remains committed to supporting Yukoners with day-to-day affordability.
- While inflation has improved, high shelter and food costs remain the largest drivers of overall inflation. These elevated prices continue to stretch the budgets of Yukon households, with lower-income households often feeling the greatest impact.
- We are pleased to report that price pressures eased throughout 2024, with local inflation averaging 2 per cent for the year well below 2023's rate of 4.9 per cent.
- Inflation stabilized in March after rising to 3.5 per cent in February. Further moderation is expected for April following the elimination of the consumer carbon price.
- The Government of Yukon continues to monitor inflation and its impact on Yukoners to ensure we can take effective steps to ease financial burdens.

Additional response:

- Budget 2025-26 builds on existing supports for Yukoners by ensuring access to essential services at affordable prices.
- This year's budget includes investments to advance housing projects across the territory. This includes affordable housing initiatives such as the replacement of the Ryder Apartments in Whitehorse and the recently completed supportive housing project in Watson Lake. It also supports ongoing residential land development projects, including Whistle Bend Phases 12 and 13 in Whitehorse, the Mountain Ridge

Session Briefing Note Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Finance

Development in Haines Junction, and the Frances Avenue Development in Watson Lake.

- The budget provides more than \$47.3 million for early learning and child care programs, including the Yukon Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund to expand and improve child care spaces. The universal child care program continues to lower costs, reducing fees to an average of less than \$10 per day.
- Budget 2025-26 allocates \$4.8 million to the National School Food Program, helping support families and ensuring every child has access to nutritious meals at school.
- We are also making life more affordable through the Yukon-wide dental program, which remains a national leader with \$5.4 million in continued funding for 2025-26.
- To support workers, the Temporary Paid Sick Leave Rebate has been extended again, ensuring more Yukoners can stay home when they are ill.
- The Interim Electrical Rebate is being replaced by the new Winter Electrical Affordability Program to help Yukoners manage higher electricity costs during peak winter months.
- The government continues to support the free transit program, launched last year by the Department of Community Services, which provides free bus passes to Yukoners.
- Also, the Government of Yukon is working with partners such as Connective and the Safe at Home Society to expand supportive housing options in Whitehorse.

Session Briefing Note Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Finance

Third response

- The Government of Yukon has also remained responsive to higher inflation in recent years through its various grants and subsidies, which are indexed to inflation. These include:
 - Subsidies for medical travel
 - The Yukon Child Benefit
 - Social Assistance Payments
 - Student Financial Assistance
 - o Seniors' benefits
 - o The Pioneer Utility grant
 - o The Comprehensive Municipal Grant Regulation
 - o Residential rent caps
- The Yukon's minimum wage is also responsive to price changes, as its annual change is tied to inflation in the previous year.
- After growing 6.8 per cent in 2023, the minimum wage increased a further 4.9 per cent in 2024 and will again increase on April 1, 2025, to \$17.94 per hour.
- The Yukon's minimum wage is the second highest in Canada, behind only Nunavut's minimum wage of \$19.00 per hour.
- These increases also contribute towards the strong earnings growth we continue to see in the territory. Average weekly earnings grew 5.3 per cent over the first eleven months of 2024, the third strongest growth in the country.

Session Briefing Note Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Finance

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Inflation has fallen from historic highs, but Yukoners are still dealing with higher prices for goods and services following a lengthy period of elevated inflation.
- The moderation of inflationary pressures that began to take hold late in 2023 continued throughout 2024. Growth in the Whitehorse Consumer Price Index (CPI) was much lower in every month in 2024, and annual inflation of 2 per cent was much improved from 2023.
- Both nationally and in Whitehorse, Inflation has picked up in the first three months
 of 2025. While inflation declined nationally in March compared to February,
 Inflation of 3.5 per cent for Whitehorse was unchanged from February, and
 remains the highest in the country for a second-straight month.

Background:

<u>Inflation – Recent performance and outlook</u>

- Following ten increases in the overnight rate since March 2022, the Bank of Canada made five rate cuts in 2024, with the overnight rate dropping from 5.0 per cent to 3.25 per cent. As of March 12, 2025, there have been two additional cuts of 0.25 percentage points and further rate cuts are expected this year, given economic uncertainty around tariffs. These cuts will further reduce pressure on shelter prices as mortgage rates decline.
- Both locally and nationally, price pressures lessened in 2024, with inflation near historic norms.
- After much improved inflation figures throughout 2024, inflation has moved higher over the first three months of 2025. March's inflation of 3.5 per cent for Whitehorse was unchanged from February and remains the highest in the country for a second-straight month.

Session Briefing Note Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Finance

- Nationally, inflation fell from 2.6 per cent in February to 2.3 per cent in March, with inflation down in most jurisdictions.
- Shelter costs continue to be a major driver along with restaurant prices and traveller accommodation.
- With the consumer carbon price ending at the end of March, lower gasoline and fuel oil prices in April should weigh on overall Whitehorse inflation. April data will be released on May 20, 2025.
- The current outlook for the Whitehorse CPI reflects expectations of a return to 'normal' levels of inflation, with the inflation forecast of 2 per cent in 2024, much improved from 4.9 per cent in 2023 and 6.8 per cent in 2022. Annual inflation is expected to average 2 per cent over the period 2025 to 2029.

*** Programs that support affordability listed below ***

HOUSING

Capital projects supporting housing affordability

- Programs such as the Housing Initiatives Fund and investments through the Permanent Affordable Housing program support Yukon Housing Corporation's five-year strategic plan, Creating Home, which prioritizes innovative projects and partnerships to expand affordable housing, close gaps in the housing continuum, and increase homeownership opportunities for Yukoners. These partnerships address housing needs and support economic development.
- Eighteen new units in Whistle Bend have been purchased to support a range of housing needs along the continuum.
- Work has begun on the old Korbo lot in Dawson City, which will provide an additional 34 Rent Geared to Income units, scheduled for completion in 2026.
- Groundwork began at the old Ryder Apartments in Whitehorse in September 2024 and we are aiming for completion in spring 2026. When completed, the new complex will deliver 45 new affordable housing units.

Finance

Session Briefing Note Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Supportive Housing (Health and Social Services & Yukon Housing Corporation)

- \$1.5 million for Safe at Home will go towards establishing temporary supportive housing at 408 Alexander Street.
- As well, we are contributing \$900,000 in 2025-26 of a total \$12.9 million dollar commitment towards Safe at Home Society's 67-unit project (The Hearth), which will provide safe, supportive and permanent housing in Whitehorse.
- Construction of a 10-unit housing complex in Watson Lake was completed in January 2025 which will open its doors in spring 2025.

<u>Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit Rental Subsidy</u> (Yukon Housing Corporation)

- The Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit offers a rental subsidy for low-to-moderate income renters.
- Funded through the National Housing Strategy, the Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit rent subsidy has helped over 300 low- to moderate-income Yukoners with affordability challenges since 2020.
- In addition, the Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit gender-based violence rent subsidy helps survivors access safe housing, so they are not forced to return to unsafe situations due to housing costs.

Winter Electrical Affordability Rebate (Yukon Development Corporation)

• As a replacement for the Interim Electrical Rebate, Yukon Development Corporation will launch the Winter Electrical Affordability Rebate to assist Yukoners with electricity costs in the winter months.

Energy retrofits and funding to improve efficiency (Energy, Mines and Resources)

• Funding that supports reducing energy costs is available for the transportation sector, renewable heating sector, home and building owners, and the construction industry.

Session Briefing Note Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Finance

- Innovative programs like the Better Buildings Program that offer up-front funding, combined with our Good Energy rebates, make energy retrofits more accessible and affordable for Yukoners.
- For existing homes, the Energy Branch offers the Good Energy Rebate Program for high performance heating systems and upgrades to thermal enclosures including insulation and windows, and high-performance new homes. Taking these measures will save homeowners money by reducing their energy costs.

Affordable Heat Pump Program (Energy, Mines and Resources)

- The Affordable Heat Pump Program aims to help low-to-middle-income households cover the cost of purchasing and installing a heat pump, a device that has the potential to significantly reduce a homeowner's energy costs.
- Since the launch of the Affordable Heat Pump Program late last year, the response has been overwhelming, with over 90 applications.
- The program quickly reached its funding capacity and we are working with our federal partners to seek consideration for additional funds.
- People can still apply to a waitlist and applications will be approved in the order they are received. The program website remains the best way to stay informed about the program.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

<u>Dental Care program</u> (Health and Social Services)

 The Yukon's Dental Program was launched in 2023 and provides \$1,300, per year, in dental benefits to Yukoners without dental coverage. The program will cover dental treatments necessary to relieve pain and infection, prevent disease, treat cavities, and restore chewing and social function. It will also offer full coverage for preventive care, such as routine dental cleaning.

Yukon Seniors' Income Supplement (Health and Social Services)

• The Yukon Seniors' Income Supplement provides a monthly income supplement for eligible Yukoner senior's receiving Old Age Security (OAS) and the Guaranteed

Prepared for Minister Silver Department of Finance Date prepared: February 24, 2025

Last Updated: April 15, 2025

Session Briefing Note Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Finance

Income Supplement (GIS) from the federal government. This amount is adjusted for inflation in October, each year.

Social Assistance Review (Health and Social Services)

- Health and Social Services is undertaking a review of the Yukon's Social Assistance rates to inform options to improve the delivery of the program and ensure it is meeting the needs of program clients.
- While the review is underway, the department is providing a \$100 monthly increase to eligible Social Assistance recipients.

FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

<u>Universal Child Care Program</u> (Education)

• Universal child care is available to all Yukon families using licensed child care spaces. The universal child care program has reduced fees to less than \$10 per day, on average, for families across the Yukon.

Yukon Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund (Education)

- The Department of Education has a three-year agreement covering the years 2023-24 to 2025-26 with the Government of Canada that will see \$7.7 million in new funding flowing to the Yukon that can be used to create spaces and increase accessibility for not-for-profits and First Nations governments.
- This partnership with the Government of Canada will support a mutual vision of high-quality early learning and child care that is affordable, accessible, and inclusive.

Food in Schools program (Education)

- Good nutrition is vital for students' mental and physical health and increases all students' learning potential.
- On April 1, 2024, Canada announced a \$1 billion investment over five years to create a National School Food Program.

Session Briefing Note Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Finance

- The new National School Food Policy outlines principles and objectives to support the vision of every child having access to nutritious food in school
- Budget 2025-26 includes \$4.8 million for the National School Food Program.

Fertility Tax Credit (Finance)

- We are committed to improving access to fertility and surrogacy treatments for Yukoners.
- The value of the refundable credit will be 40% of eligible expenses to a maximum of \$10,000 per year per taxpayer with unlimited lifetime availability.
- This generous support is in addition to the new medical travel coverage for fertility treatment and enhances existing support in the tax system, such as the Medical Expense Tax Credit and Northern Residents Deduction.
- Alongside the recently announced medical travel coverage for fertility treatments, the tax credit in this bill will help relieve financial pressures for Yukon families who are accessing these treatments.

Yukon Child Benefit (Health and Social Services and Finance)

• The Yukon Child Benefit provides monthly payments to modest and low-income households who have children under 18. The maximum benefit, per child, is now tied to inflation, effective for the 2023–24 benefit year.

Out of Home Childcare Increases (Health and Social Services)

- To offset inflationary cost of living increases and provide sufficient financial resources to meet the needs of children placed in their care, Health and Social Services provided an ongoing 10 per cent increase to monthly payments to caregivers of children in out of home care in 2023-24, on top of the annual indexed increase. Combined, this amounted to a 16.46 per cent rate increase for community and extended family caregivers.
- Rates are indexed annually to the Whitehorse Consumer Price Index, most recently increased by 2.4 % in October 2024.

Session Briefing Note Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Finance

BUSINESSES and COMMUNITIES

Paid sick leave program (Economic Development)

- The Paid Sick Leave Rebate program is now extended until March 31, 2026.
- On April 1, 2023, the Department of Economic Development launched the Paid Sick Leave Rebate as a temporary program offering up to 40 hours of paid sick leave to employees and self-employed Yukoners that earn less than the average private-sector wage of \$33.94/hour.
- The program includes all illnesses (and injuries not covered by any other Act, benefit, or program). The program is available to employees regardless of whether their employer offers paid sick leave, though employees must use all paid sick leave available to them through their employer before they are eligible for the Paid Sick Leave Rebate.

Yukon Trade Resilience Program (Economic Development)

- In preparation for the potential of tariffs on Canadian goods being considered by the United States or other negative impacts on trade, the Department of Economic Development is creating a program to support Yukon businesses.
- The US remains the territory's most important international partner. We are working closely with our federal, provincial, and territorial partners to ensure that we have programming available to mitigate the impact on the Yukon by ensuring support is available if needed.
- The program is still in early stages and will evolve in response to outside factors.

<u>Curbside Recycling</u> (Community Services)

• The Yukon government is supporting the City of Whitehorse with up to \$2.4 million over two years, through 2024 and 2025, for a curbside collection program. The City's program is now in place and the Yukon government's support reduces the cost for Whitehorse households by roughly 50 per cent.

Session Briefing Note Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Finance

Approved by:	
Jessica Schultz	April 15, 2025
Deputy Minister, Finance	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note Eagle Gold Mine – Impacts

Spring 2025

EMR-ECO-FIN

Recommended response:

- We recognize the seriousness of the heap leach failure and continue to treat our response to the situation with the appropriate urgency.
- Our priorities are to ensure the health and wellbeing of Yukoners and to protect the environment.
- We are committed to working with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak
 Dun to develop remediation strategies for the failure. A joint team of
 technical experts hired by the Government of Yukon and the First
 Nation meet on a regular basis to inform our actions.
- We have full confidence in the court process governing all aspects of the Receivership proceedings, including the appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers as the Receiver.
- As the Eagle Gold situation continues to unfold, we will continue to assess and improve our understanding of the impacts on Yukoners and the local economy.
- For the most up-to-date information on the situation at Eagle Gold Mine and actions that we are taking, you can visit Yukon.ca.

Additional responses:

 An Independent Review Board has been established to investigate the heap leach failure that occurred at the Eagle Gold mine. The Board has developed its own work plan and timeline to conduct its

Session Briefing Note Eagle Gold Mine – Impacts

Spring 2025

EMR-ECO-FIN

review, and we respect the Board's autonomy in this regard. (See EMR BN #1)

- Impacts on human health and on the environment are being monitored by technical experts from the Government of Yukon, the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun and the Government of Canada.
- Our government continues to monitor labour market data, such as the number of unemployed and the number of Employment Insurance claimants, for potential impacts of the mine closure.

Context — this may be an issue because:

• The June 24, 2024, heap leach failure at the Eagle Gold Mine affects the environmental and socio-economic wellbeing of Yukoners – from an environmental and business perspective.

Background:

- The Yukon.ca website is updated with information bulletins to inform the public on the Victoria Gold heap leach failure's current situation.
- See 'historic overview' section for overview of key dates.

Economic and labour market

- The Eagle Gold Mine heap leach failure has changed the outlook for mineral production in the Yukon and resulted in a notable downward revision in the medium-term outlook for the Yukon's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- The effect of closure on the labour market has been minimal, as displaced workers were reabsorbed into the Yukon's tight labour market. At 4.3 per cent in 2024,

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Yukon's unemployment rate was the lowest in the country. The economy continued to add jobs with employment up by 5 per cent annually.

- At the close of 2023. Victoria Gold had 471 direct hires and another 134 on contract.
- Of the more than 600 employed, the company reported that about 34 per cent were local, amounting to approximately 200 local workers. This represents about 0.8 per cent of territorial employment in 2024.
- As of January 16, 2025, there are 30 liens against Victoria Gold worth over \$60.2 million.

Finances

- PwC manages project finances and procurement for the site in its capacity as the court-appointed Receiver and as an officer of the court must ensure funds are being spent responsibly.
- As approved by the Court, the Government of Yukon has advanced \$105 million to the Receiver for urgent works on site in 2024-25.
- The Government of Yukon has drawn down \$55 million of security for this work to date. The remaining \$49 million has been requested via demand letter and will be used for the upcoming works.
- \$118 million is included, as part of Energy, Mines and Resources' budget 2025-26, to continue to respond to the heap leach failure.
- Funding advanced to the receiver has a net zero impact on the government's surplus and net financial debt, as the Government of Yukon has priority to recover these advances from the assets of the company.
- Interest applies to all loans advanced to the Receiver at a rate of 9 per cent. An estimated \$3 million of interest will be accrued in 2024-25 and \$9.5 million is forecast to be accrued in 2025-26.

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Local procurement

- As part of the agreements established under the receivership order, the Government of Yukon requires that the receiver take steps to maximize local benefits and report to the Government of Yukon on those metrics.
- To date, \$20.8 million has been provided to local contractors under the receivership.
- The Receiver has contracted nine local contractors and in the past month, 72 per cent of the contracted work force were local Yukon contractors.

Independent Review Board

- An Independent Review Board was launched under the Government of Yukon's Guidelines for Mine Waste Management Facilities.
- The Independent Review Board will provide a thorough and expert review of the heap leach failure. It will operate with full autonomy, with contracts managed by the court-appointed receiver, ensuring impartiality in the process.
- The Terms of Reference can be found in the Second Report of the Receiver on the Receiver's website at pwc.com.
- In accordance with the terms of reference, the IRB will provide its report to the Receiver, the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources by June 15, 2025. The Receiver will make public the report on its website by July 15, 2025.
- Highly qualified experts are on the Independent Review Board. The Independent Review Board Members are:
 - o Dr. Jean-Marie Konrad, M.Sc., Ph.D., FCAE, FEIC
 - o Mark E. Smith, P.E., P.Eng.
- More information about the Board Members can be found on Yukon.ca.
- There has been no decision as to whether an inquiry will also be established under the Public Inquiries Act.

Prepared for Minister Streicker, Premier Pillai and Minister Silver Energy, Mines and Resources, Executive Council Office and Finance

Session Briefing Note Eagle Gold Mine – Impacts

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• If the Office of the Auditor General decides to conduct an audit, we will support its requests for participation and information.

Historic overview

- On June 24, 2024, a failure occurred at the heap leach facility of the Eagle Gold Mine operated by Victoria Gold Corporation.
- On July 30, 2024, the Premier provided remarks to the Council of Yukon First Nations' General Assembly on a variety of topics including mining and the incident at Eagle Gold Mine
- On August 5, 2024, the Premier provided a statement on mining activity in the Traditional Territory of First Nation of Nacho Nyäk Dun.
- On August 12, 2024, the Government of Yukon submitted an application for receivership of Eagle Gold Mine, which was supported by the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun.
- On August 14, 2024, PricewaterhouseCoopers Inc. was appointed by the court as Receiver of the assets and property of Victoria Gold Corp. The Receiver is responsible for overseeing remediation of the heap leach failure and its environmental impacts, including compliance with territorial and federal orders.
- On October 1, 2024, PricewaterhouseCoopers released a report that shared receiver's communications with former Victoria Gold Corp's employees, advising they may be eligible to make a claim for outstanding wages up to \$8,500.00, vacation and/or severance pay under the Wage Earner Protection Program Act.
- On December 20, 2024, the Yukon Water Board approved the Receiver's application for an emergency amendment to the site's water licence to allow for the discharge of partially treated water. The amended discharge criteria expired on March 31, 2025 and is no longer in effect.

Session Briefing Note Eagle Gold Mine – Impacts

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- On December 28, 2024, PricewaterhouseCoopers issued a notification to the Government of Yukon and the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun regarding a potential leak in a newly constructed containment pond.
- As of February 18, 2025, the Government of Yukon has done 11 technical briefings to continue to keep Yukoners informed with up-to-date information.

Approved by:	
Sierra van der Meer	April 14, 2025
Deputy Minister Department of Energy, Mines and Resources	Date approved
Justin Ferbey	2025 04 10
Deputy Minister	Date approved
Executive Council Office	
Jessica Schultz	April 8, 2025
Deputy Minister	Date approved
Department of Finance	

ECO TAB 3a Spring 2025

Canada and United States Relations – Corporate Response

Executive Council Office

Recommended response:

- Canada and the United States (U.S.) have one of the strongest and mutually beneficial relationships of any two countries in the world.
- The U.S. is Canada's largest trading partner, and I hope to see more Yukon companies benefiting from that relationship.
- The Premier has been meeting regularly with Premiers and the Prime Minister to inform a united Team Canada approach to U.S. relations.
- Our government is doing its part to ensure the relationship between our countries remains secure and prosperous.
- The Yukon has had a lot of success over the last four years with the U.S. government, including a trade mission, solving border issues, and funding the Alaska Highway.
- Our interests in Arctic security, a healthy environment, critical minerals, robust transportation infrastructure and access to tidewater serve both our jurisdictions as investment and geopolitical focus remain on the North.
- We are working together to advance shared priorities that will improve the prosperity, stability and wellbeing of both jurisdictions.
- We continue to engage regularly with Governor Dunleavy, Alaskan congressional officials, and the U.S. Consul General in Vancouver.

Response to Tariffs

• On April 2, 2025, the U.S. Administration decided to push forward with unjustified and short-sighted global tariffs.

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Canada and United States Relations – Corporate Response

Executive Council Office

- While we are relieved that the "Reciprocal Tariffs" Executive Order does not result in new tariffs for Canada, we remain concerned about the considerable tariffs which remain.
- The tariffs imposed by the U.S. administration challenge the U.S.'s reliability as a trading partner.
- As the U.S. Administration continues to be impulsive in their decisions relating to tariffs on Canadian goods, we will hold steady on our response until all threat of tariffs have been removed.
- U.S. tariffs on Canadian imports are deeply concerning and will harm workers and businesses on both sides of the border.
- These tariffs are unjustified, harmful to economic stability, and run counter to the spirit of free and fair trade that has defined our relationship for decades.
- While we value our relationship with the United States, we will not accept unfair trade practices that threaten Canadian jobs and prosperity.
- The Government of Yukon has developed a path forward to support a strong Team Canada response to see these tariffs lifted and to limit the impact on Yukoners.
- As part of our initial response, our government will:
 - Reduce purchasing products of American origin, such as liquor;
 - Limit U.S. business access to government procurement;
 - Mitigate impacts on Yukon businesses through the development of an assistance program;

ECO TAB 3a Spring 2025

Canada and United States Relations – Corporate Response

Executive Council Office

- o Support the development of buy local campaigns; and
- Work to break down interprovincial and trade barriers.
- Additionally, in response to U.S. tariffs on automobiles and auto parts, we are reducing our reliance on U.S. companies by:
 - Suspending our EV rebate program for Tesla vehicles.
 - o Suspending all Yukon government X accounts; and
 - Cancelling YG Starlink contracts except for those essential for emergency services and business continuity
- We are also working closely with the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to push back against U.S. tariffs.
- The only acceptable solution is the removal of all tariffs for Canada and Canadian products and businesses.

Economic and Trade Impact of Tariffs

- The imposition of U.S. tariffs on key Canadian exports creates uncertainty for Canadian businesses, discouraging investment, slowing growth, and straining cross-border economic relationships.
- We saw the damaging impact of past tariffs in 2018, and we will not hesitate to take strong action to protect Yukon jobs and industries.
- Retaliatory measures are never our first choice, but we will defend our economic interests, as necessary.
- CUSMA was signed to ensure fair and open trade between our countries. The United States should uphold its commitments under this agreement.

First Ministers' Meetings



Canada and United States Relations – Corporate Response

Executive Council Office

• The Premiers, the Prime Minister and key federal ministers have held regular discussions, both virtually and in person, since U.S. tariffs were first threatened in November 2024.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Canada-US relations and threats from the Trump administration have seized all leaders in Canada.
- First Ministers have met regularly to discuss Canada-U.S. relations, which has been well covered by local and national media.

Background:

Canada-US relations

• Summary of U.S. tariffs imposed on Canada to date:

Туре	Rate	Date of entry into effect
Fentanyl/Migration tariffs –	10% for potash & energy	March 4
non-CUSMA compliant goods	25% for all other goods	
Fentanyl/Migration tariffs –	0%	March 7
CUSMA compliant goods		
Steel and aluminum	25%	March 12
Autos	25% on all autos that do not	April 3
	meet the CUSMA rules of	
	origin	
	25% on the value of non-U.S.	
	content, for autos that qualify	
	for CUSMA preferential	
	treatment, but only once the	
	Commerce Secretary certifies	
	the determination of U.S.	
	content on a model-by-model	
	basis	

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Canada and United States Relations – Corporate Response

Executive Council Office

Auto Parts	0% for auto parts that qualify	To be announced in Federal
	for CUSMA preferential	Register, but May 3 at the
	treatment	latest
Reciprocal Tariffs	10% baseline does not apply	April 5
	to Canada (and Mexico) due to	
	the current Fentanyl/Migration	
	Tariffs	

- On April 3, the U.S, Administration announced they will impose expansive country-specific tariffs ranging from 10 to 49 per cent on global trading partners, but did not levy any additional tariffs against Canada and Mexico. The U.S. stipulated that exemptions will continue for goods from Canada and Mexico that are compliant under the Canada-United States-Mexico (CUSMA) free trade agreement.
- The Prime Minister of Canada announced new countermeasures on April 3 to protect Canadian workers and businesses and defend Canada's economy. These countermeasures include:
 - o Twenty-five per cent tariffs on non-<u>CUSMA</u> compliant fully assembled vehicles imported into Canada from the United States.
 - Twenty-five per cent tariffs on non-Canadian and non-Mexican content of CUSMA compliant fully assembled vehicles imported into Canada from the United States.
 - o Canada's intention to develop a framework for auto producers that incentivizes production and investment in Canada.
 - Every dollar raised from these tariffs will go directly to support our auto workers.
- The evolving tariff situation has prompted diplomatic efforts and political discourse. Canadian officials are engaging in negotiations to seek clarity and potential exemptions, while U.S. policymakers deliberate on the broader implications of the proposed tariffs.

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Canada and United States Relations – Corporate Response

Executive Council Office

• The Yukon-U.S. two-way merchandise trade in 2023 stood at \$150.1 million, down from \$240.5 million in 2022. Roughly 85 to 95 per cent of this annual trade is with Alaska.

Yukon government's April 3, 2025 response

• In response to U.S. auto tariffs, YG will: Immediately suspend our EV rebate program for Tesla vehicles, suspend all Yukon government X accounts (formerly known as Twitter) and cancel YG Starlink contracts except for those essential for emergency services and business continuity.

Yukon government's March 4, 2025 response

- Reduce purchasing of products of American origin: Direct the Yukon Liquor
 Corporation to stop placing orders of U.S.-made alcohol and to remove U.S.-made
 products from all Government of Yukon liquor stores. Because we do not want to
 hurt local businesses, licensees may continue to sell American-made products
 they already have in stock, but no new orders for U.S.-made alcohol will be
 placed.
- Limit U.S. business' access to government procurement: Direct the Department of Highways and Public Works to update territorial government procurement policies to encourage the purchase of more goods and services from local businesses and non-U.S. companies and minimize the purchase of U.S. goods and services.
- Mitigate impacts on Yukon businesses: Our government is allocating \$1 million to develop an assistance program, complementary to federal support programs, to help Yukon businesses adapt to the uncertain economic environment created by these tariffs. The goal of this funding is to keep support as flexible as possible, to be tailored to the specific needs of affected businesses. This program is funded through Budget 2025-26 and subject to legislative approval. Contingency funds in Budget 2025-26, also subject to legislative approval, will also be available to support Yukon businesses.



Canada and United States Relations – Corporate Response

Executive Council Office

- Support "Buy Yukon" campaigns: Support the development of buy local campaigns organized by local chambers of commerce.
- Break down interprovincial and international trade barriers: Through the
 Department of Economic Development, work with Yukon chambers of commerce
 and provincial and territorial partners to reduce barriers to internal trade and
 promote access to non-U.S. markets.

Approved by:	
Justin Ferbey	2024 04 07
Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office	Date Approved

Session Briefing Note

Corporate Note – Budget Highlights

Finance

Embargoed until day of budget tabling

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to supporting Yukoners and communities while considering how to most effectively allocate financial resources.
- Budget 2025–26 plans for gross O&M spending of \$1.88 billion, addressing significant O&M pressures in health and education, as well as the response to the heap leach failure at the Eagle Gold mine.
- Overall, Budget 2025-26 forecasts a surplus of \$82 million, thanks in part to our continued capital investments in strategic infrastructure that will provide lasting benefits for Yukoners.
- Despite increases in expenditure, we continue to work to ensure that government spending is allocated in a way that meets key priorities and long-term goals.
- The Yukon remains on a strong financial footing. Budget 2025-26 prioritizes strategic investments that support economic growth, protect the environment, and enhance the quality of life for all Yukoners. It fulfills our commitment to making life affordable for Yukoners while investing in the programs and infrastructure the territory needs to thrive.

Additional response

• Affordability for all: Budget 2025-26 reflects our commitment to keeping life affordable for Yukoners with over \$47.3 million in funding for early learning and child care programs, including the universal child care program; \$3.8 million for the new Winter Electrical Affordability

Prepared for Minister Silver Finance

Date prepared: February 24, 2025

Session Briefing Note

Corporate Note – Budget Highlights Embargoed until day of budget tabling

Finance

Rebate; \$4.8 million for the National School Food Program; and increases in Legislated Grants such as Social Assistance, post-secondary grants and the homeowners grant.

- Budget 2025-26 also includes a record-setting \$57.6 million capital investment in the Yukon Housing Corporation for the construction of new affordable housing units, continued tenancy support and programs responding to the housing needs of Yukoners.
- Territory-wide growth: The budget reflects investments in infrastructure across the territory, including major projects such as \$75.5 million for runway and infrastructure upgrades at Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport, over \$50 million for bridge infrastructure, and \$31 million for repairs and upgrades to the North Klondike Highway.
- Building prosperity through reconciliation: The Government of Yukon maintains its commitment to reconciliation with First Nations, as demonstrated through a number of partnerships in 2025-26, intended to build economic prosperity. This includes working with Kluane First Nation on the \$15.7 million investment in the Kêts'ádań Kù School construction in Burwash Landing and partnering with Kwanlin Dun First Nation on the Range Point subdivision with an investment of \$5 million.
- Safe and healthy families and communities: Health care continues to be a significant source of financial pressure across Canada. Budget 2025-26 provides an additional \$47 million to address ongoing pressures on Insured Health Services and an additional \$24.5 million in Operations and Maintenance and \$4.2 million in capital to support

Prepared for Minister Silver Finance

Date prepared: February 24, 2025

Session Briefing Note

Corporate Note – Budget Highlights

Finance

Embargoed until day of budget tabling

the Yukon Hospital Corporation. These funds will support orthopedic surgeries, new acute care beds, breast cancer screening, medical travel, physician fees, pharmacare, and medical treatments both in and out of the territory.

- Protecting our environment: Budget 2025-26 will grow our green economy with \$59 million in investments for Our Clean Future initiatives such renewable energy infrastructure and building retrofits. We are making further efforts to protect the environment with an additional \$118 million in additional funding to support environmental protection efforts at the Eagle Gold Mine site, and \$21.5 million for reclamation at the Minto Mine.
- Supporting Yukon businesses and industry: The Government of Yukon will continue to provide support for Yukon businesses and industry with over \$11 million for diverse and responsive initiatives that provide sustainable economic benefits to Yukon communities. A few examples include the Innovation Strategy, the Economic Development Fund, the Community Destination Development Fund, the Creative and Cultural Industries Strategy, and the development of a Yukon Trade Resilience Program to support Yukon businesses impacted by possible U.S. tariff decisions.

Context — this may be an issue because:

 The 2025-26 Main Estimates will be debated during the March 2025 legislative session.

Prepared for Minister Silver Finance

Date prepared: February 24, 2025

TAB #23

Session Briefing Note

Spring 2025

Corporate Note – Budget Highlights

Finance

Embargoed until day of budget tabling

Background:

- Gross O&M expenditures are forecast to increase by \$282.6 million, or 17.7 per cent, from the 2024-25 Main Estimates.
- The O&M recovery forecast has also significantly increased over the 2024-25 Main Estimates, by about \$10.5 million. Net O&M expenditures are forecast to increase by \$272.1 million, or 19.3 per cent, compared to the 2024-25 Main Estimates.
- Gross capital expenditures are forecast to be about \$477.3 million for 2025-26, which is a \$6.7 million decrease from the 2024-25 Main Estimates. Capital recoveries are forecast to decrease by \$10 million.
- The \$75 million contingency is not included in departmental budgets and would still need to be presented to the legislative assembly for approval, but is included in our fiscal plan so that, if required, it will not affect Yukon's forecast fiscal position.
- On a consolidated basis, when all government reporting agencies, such as Yukon University and public corporations are included, the 2025-26 Main Estimates forecast an annual surplus of \$132.7 million and net debt of \$402.2 million.
- There are 5,561.5 FTEs in the 2025-26 budget, which is an increase of 76.6 FTEs from 2024-25. Growth is primarily for long-term care and home care, Emergency Medical Services, and education personnel, including operational positions for Whistle Bend School and teachers and clerical based on enrollment.

Approved by:	
Jessica Schultz	February 25, 2025
Deputy Minister, Finance	Date Approved

Prepared for Minister Silver Finance

Date prepared: February 24, 2025