



VUNTUT GWITCHIN GOVERNMENT



Letter of Approval for the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan

In accordance with the approval process described in Section 11.6.0 of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Final Agreement (VGFNFA), the Yukon and Vuntut Gwitchin governments hereby present the approved “*North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan*”.

The review and approval of the North Yukon Regional Planning Commission’s Final Recommended Plan under 11.6.0 of the VGFNFA included formal consultations in Old Crow and with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun as an affected First Nation.

We congratulate the North Yukon Regional Planning Commission for its outstanding work in completing Yukon’s first regional plan under a First Nation Final Agreement. Their dedication and commitment to the process and their vision for sustainable development in the North Yukon Planning Region is to be commended. We offer our sincere thanks to the Commission and its staff.

In approving this plan, the Vuntut Gwitchin and Yukon governments are approving the following:

1) Landscape Management Units

The governments recognize and approve the 23 land management and sub-management units.

2) Land Use Designation System

A zoning system based on intensity of use rather than type of use is also approved.

The Vuntut Gwitchin and Yukon governments will address and immediately implement the zoning recommendation concerning the areas affected by the lifting of the North Yukon land withdrawal.

The governments approve the specific Land Use Designation system wherein Land Management Units are designated either Protected Area (PA) or Integrated Management Area (IMA). Designated IMAs are further classified into one of four zones (or management intent) which range from a conservation emphasis to a development emphasis based on the values and the sensitivity of the land and natural resources.

3) Cumulative Effect Indicators

The governments will use surface disturbance and linear density indicators to track new activity, with consideration being given to previous activity in the planning region. For greater certainty governments will use these indicators as guides for adaptive management and will establish necessary protocols as part of implementation of the Plan. The indicator levels will not necessarily be construed as limits to development as these will be determined by the Parties depending on the particular circumstances.

4) Recommendations

Subject to the above points of clarification, the governments approve and commit to implement all the recommendations in the Plan including (but not limited to):

- a) Establishing a Whitefish Wetland protected area and a study area for the proposed Summit Lake – Bell River protected area and related land withdrawals;
- b) Accepting the recommended zoning for the balance of the North Yukon withdrawal area and removal of related land withdrawals as soon as possible;
- c) Tracking surface and linear disturbance, and agreeing to meet to discuss management options if an LMU disturbance (indicator) level is reached; and,
- d) To review and modify the plan at regular intervals.

5) Plan Implementation

In addition to committing to implement the plan recommendations, the governments will:

- a) Establish a protocol so that either party may trigger a review and amendment of the plan as it applies to its respective jurisdiction to accommodate significant nonconforming uses or changing circumstances;
- b) Commit to tracking access from the Dempster Highway which is utilizing existing linear disturbances; and,
- c) Take into consideration the general management directions in making land and resource decisions.

The Vuntut Gwitchin and Yukon governments will continue to jointly monitor plan implementation and to ensure proponents and resource decision makers understand and adhere to this plan.

Mahsi' Cho / Thank you,

Signed in Old Crow, June 29, 2009

Joe Linklater
Chief
Vuntut Gwitchin Government

Honourable Dennis Fentie
Premier
Government of Yukon