



# What We **Heard** About Plan Alternatives

From the Plan Alternatives  
Review and Feedback Period  
February 3 - March 2, 2014



Dawson Regional  
Planning Commission  
Moving Forward • Nān kāk ndā trädäl



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## Thank You!

The Dawson Regional Planning Commission (DRPC) would like to sincerely thank all those who provided their valuable input during the Plan Alternatives public review and feedback period from February 3 to March 2, 2014. Whether you attended a public meeting, provided a written submission, filled out an online survey form, or stopped by the office to talk with our staff and ask questions, your time and effort are greatly appreciated!

Our intent when presenting the five Plan Alternatives was not to produce a statistical analysis, to count the number of “votes” for each alternative, or to pick the most popular as the one to move forward with. It was to explore a wide range of possible options, to generate discussion and ideas about what people liked (and didn’t like) and why.

We did not receive any petition or form letter type of responses. Each submission was unique, some were very long and detailed, and some even included the person or organization’s own “preferred alternative”. This type of feedback was very interesting and useful, but took much longer for our small staff to analyze and summarize. With frequent Commission meetings to organize, as well as some later decisions on restructuring the format of this report, it has taken us far longer than anticipated to complete it. We would like to thank everyone for their patience and understanding during this time.

It was an honour and a pleasure to read your comments and to learn from your diverse thoughts and perspectives. We truly appreciate the intelligent analysis, constructive criticism, and creative solutions that were suggested. Your feedback has been (and will continue to be) used to guide Commission discussions, inform our decision making, and help define a sustainable vision for the future of the Dawson region that minimizes land use conflicts and provides certainty.

We encourage feedback and comments at any time, and look forward to your active participation in the Dawson planning process as it continues to unfold. See yourself in the Dawson plan!

Dawson Regional Planning Commission  
Members and Staff

# Introduction

This report is organized into five sections:

Section 1: Background

*Short summary of the Dawson planning process and prior public participation opportunities.*

Section 2: What We Did

*A comprehensive look at the communications approach used for gathering feedback during the Plan Alternatives phase of the process.*

Section 3: What We Heard

*A concise look at the key themes and ideas that came from analysis of the submitted feedback.*

Section 4: What's Next

*A description of how the Commission is using the feedback provided and information about the Draft Plan stage.*

Section 5: Appendices

*The complete text of every submission received during the review and feedback period are attached as Appendices, as well as additional notes from other meetings and informal conversations, except where a specific request was made for confidentiality.*

Submissions or comments received after midnight on March 2, 2014 were still accepted but are not included as part of this report. They have been posted on the DRPC website (with permission) and are being considered by the Commission, as are any other comments received in between official public review periods.

We have, however, included the submissions from the three Parties in this report (Appendix G), which were received in late March and early April. The Parties (because they are the Parties!) had additional time to prepare their written submissions to the Commission. We feel it is important to include them in this report as they are a reflection of the current views and opinions of those governments who will eventually be responsible for making the decisions to approve, reject or modify the Draft Plan and (later) the Recommended Plan.

Any quoted text is reproduced exactly as it was written, and staff took great care in proofreading and verifying transcribed or converted submissions (e.g. with a handwritten survey and comment form being typed into digital form) to ensure the integrity of these documents. Any typographical or other errors found in the original submissions have not been corrected. Similarly, transcripts for the question & answer sessions at the public meetings were typed by staff verbatim from the audio recordings as best as they were able, with no corrections or other changes made to what was said. Readers are encouraged to review the full feedback submissions included in the Appendices.

We believe that this document provides a fair and accurate summary of all the verbal and written input received during the Plan Alternatives public review and feedback period. Staff have made every effort to maintain their objectivity, and to honestly reflect the views and perspectives of the many individuals and groups who took the time to participate. The opinions and comments expressed do not necessarily express the full diversity of possible viewpoints on these issues, nor the full range of issues the Commission must discuss and make decisions about.

Because the review and feedback period allowed input from multiple sources, it is possible that individuals or organizations provided input more than once. For example, Wildlife Conservation Society Canada submitted their response online using the SurveyMonkey® program, but later also provided a letter (they wanted to include some information in a table format and the online form did not display it very well). Both versions are provided and counted for the purposes of this report, but the reader should be aware of this duplication. It is also possible that an individual could have attended a public meeting and voiced their comments (reflected in the transcripts) and provided a signed written submission and completed an anonymous survey and comment form online using SurveyMonkey®. It would be difficult to know or document these instances. However, this report is not a statistical analysis - the numbers of submissions received in various forms are presented for summary purposes only, and we feel the identification of key themes with example quotes in Section 3 effectively shows the wide range of input we received.

We have completed this report to very high standards, but acknowledge the possibility that we may have made mistakes. We apologize for any inadvertent errors or omissions, and will immediately correct any that are brought to our attention.







## Section 1 – Background

The Dawson Regional Planning Commission (DRPC) was established in August 2010 under Chapter 11 of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement (THFA). It is an independent body with six members, appointed by the Yukon Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources based on nominations received from the Parties. The Parties are the governments who are responsible for managing lands and resources within the planning region – for this plan, the three Parties are: Yukon Government (YG), Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (TH), and Vuntut Gwitchin Government (VGG). Na-Cho Nyak Dun First Nation is not an official Party, but is an observer to the process as per their agreement with TH regarding overlapping traditional territories.

The Commission's job is to develop and present a Recommended Land Use Plan to the Parties, after which the Commission dissolves. The Parties make the final decision on whether the plan is approved, modified or rejected. The Parties are also responsible for implementing any approved plan – Yukon Government for public (Crown) lands, and First Nations governments for Settlement Lands.

Planning regions in the Yukon are based mostly on First Nations Traditional Territories and watersheds. The Dawson Planning Region covers about 46,000 km<sup>2</sup> in the northwestern part of the Yukon. The Commission cannot make recommendations about land that is within the City of Dawson municipal boundaries, land that is already managed under a Local Area Plan (e.g. West Dawson/Sunnydale), or existing protected areas (Tombstone Territorial Park). However, the Commission does consider these lands and any existing management plans when giving direction for the rest of the region.

**“The purpose of a regional land use plan is to create a vision of future land use, including identifying conservation and development areas, and providing land use decision makers with guidance and direction. By bringing clarity to the appropriate uses and levels of use of the land, a regional plan helps create certainty for land users and assists in avoiding future land use conflicts.” (DRPC Terms of Reference 2008)**

**Want to know more?** We encourage you to read the Plan Alternatives Information Package (February 2014), available on the DRPC website <http://dawson.planyukon.ca> or you can ask for a printed copy. The first two sections contain detailed information about the Commission including its mandate, membership, vision statement and goals. It has maps of the planning region and a timeline showing where we are in the overall planning process. The package also tells you about all the activities the Commission has completed over the

past three years, and how we developed the five Plan Alternatives that were released for public review. On our website you can also find our Terms of Reference, meeting minutes, presentations, workshop summaries, the submissions and summary report from the Interests and Issues phase (2011), and the Resource Assessment Report (2013) which has detailed chapters and maps for all the important values in the region.

If you would like more general information about regional land use planning in the Yukon, or the two other regional planning processes that have been completed (North Yukon and Peel Watershed), please visit the Yukon Land Use Planning Council (YLUPC) website at <http://www.planyukon.ca>

## Public Participation: An Important Part of Regional Land Use Planning

Since the Parties will eventually decide whether to approve, modify or reject the Commission's Recommended Plan we have to consider their positions very carefully. However, Chapter 11 of the THFA and our Terms of Reference also state that the regional land use planning process must provide for public participation and consider the knowledge and views of all people who have interests in the planning region.



In developing the plan, the Commission shall (THFA Section 11.4.5):

- Ensure adequate opportunity for public participation
- Use the knowledge and traditional experience of Yukon Indian People, and the knowledge and experience of other residents of the planning region
- Promote the well-being of Yukon Indian People, other residents of the planning region, the communities, and the Yukon as a whole (while having regard to the interests of other Canadians)

Our Terms of Reference also has a section on Participation and Engagement (Section 12.1). It says that throughout the planning process the Commission will:

- Ensure adequate opportunity for public and stakeholder participation including a forum for Yukon-wide planning issues relevant to the Dawson planning region
- Seek views of adjacent jurisdictions where trans-boundary issues and/or resources are identified
- Utilize the knowledge and experience of residents of the planning region, including the traditional experience, traditional knowledge and traditional land management practices of the First Nations

- Seek views of land and resource management agencies (e.g. Dawson District Renewable Resources Council, Porcupine Caribou Management Board) that are active in the planning region and in adjacent areas that affect the planning region

Throughout the planning process so far, the Commission has provided a number of opportunities for public participation and input. See Section Two of the Plan Alternatives Information Package (February 2014) or our website for more details on the various public meetings, planning conferences, stakeholder workshops, and regular Commission meetings (open to the public) that took place in 2011-2013.

This report details all the feedback we received during the Plan Alternatives Public Review and Feedback Period (February 3 to March 2, 2014). We also talk about our communications strategies and approaches during the review period, and how the Commission has been using the information provided to help us make key decisions for the Draft Plan.

We remain committed to keeping the public informed and engaged in the planning process. See Section Four of this report, What's Next, to learn about more upcoming opportunities for review and feedback during the Draft Plan stage.



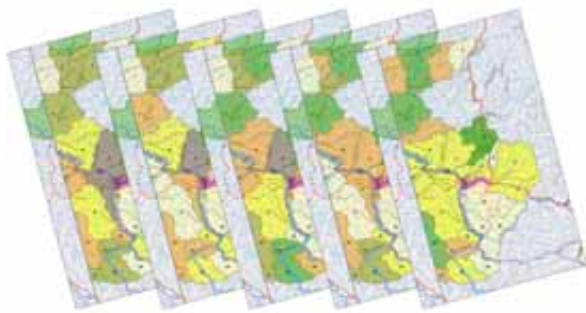




## Section 2 – What We Did

### Communications Strategy

At their regular meeting in January 2014, the Commission finalized five Plan Alternatives for release to the public, each aiming for a balanced approach to managing land use in the region. They also made further changes to the Land Designation System (the zones), and identified several other topics where they wanted to gather public feedback and ideas.



The Commission recognized that it was very important at this stage of the planning process to provide substantial and varied opportunities for public participation and input, and to maintain good communications efforts for the remainder of the process.



A communications strategy specifically for the Plan Alternatives review period was developed by staff and approved by the Commission. We wanted to make sure that our message and request for feedback reached as many people as possible, and that the feedback we got would help us make our

decisions.

We also wanted to raise awareness of the planning process, particularly within the community of Dawson, and make sure we heard from a good cross-section of people with knowledge, experience and views about the planning region.

Key messages for the Plan Alternatives communications strategy were:

**1) The DRPC is creating a vision of future land use for the Dawson region.**

We want to educate people about where regional planning processes in the Yukon come from (First Nations Final Agreements), as well as the responsibilities of the Commission and the Parties.

We want to inform people about the purpose and goals of the land use plan.

We want people to know who the Commission members are and how they were appointed.

We want to attract people not previously aware of or involved in our process to date.

**2) The Dawson planning process continues to move forward.**

We want to update people on work completed to date, and what stage we are at in the overall planning process.

We want to tell people how we will use the feedback they give us, and what the next steps are.

**3) Your voice matters in the Dawson regional planning process.**

The Commission wants and needs public feedback.

We are using many different ways to get our message out.

There are many different ways you can get your input to us.

The slogan for the review period, “See yourself in the Dawson regional land use plan”, was created by staff and displayed on various posters and advertising materials. It was meant to encourage people to get involved and provide their feedback to the Commission, because the plan could affect the things they value and the activities they enjoy doing in the Dawson region.



Staff created a comprehensive 85-page Plan Alternatives Information Package which presented the five alternatives maps, the draft Land Use Designation System (zoning), and some tools for evaluating them. For those who may not have been aware of previous activities, the package also provided an overview of how and why the Commission was formed and the work done so far. The package was designed to be a highly visual, engaging and interesting plain language explanation of major land use planning concepts, as well as a presentation of ideas that the Commission was considering.

On January 29<sup>th</sup> we sent a press release to various media outlets notifying them of the pending public release and start of the review period. On January 31<sup>st</sup> we sent the “almost finished” information package to representatives of 20 key stakeholder groups, and then on February 1<sup>st</sup> the completed package. These people had attended several Commission workshops in 2013 and provided focused input on draft products and concepts. At the December 2013 workshop, they requested a slightly earlier “heads up” than the general public in order to better prepare for questions from their own membership. We also recognized that they represent a much larger group of people whose input is vitally important to the Dawson planning process, so we requested that they help us with our communications efforts by forwarding information to their internal mailing lists.

The package was made available to the general public on February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00am, the official start of the Plan Alternatives review and feedback period. The Parties, Dawson region residents, affected First Nations, stakeholder groups, and the general Yukon public were invited to provide input on the Plan Alternatives and on the draft Land Use Designation System prior to midnight on March 2, 2014. A wide variety of other communications tools and products were designed to advertise and promote the review period, and to collect and document feedback. These are summarized in the following table, and some examples of the communications products are shown on the pages following the table.

Product	Number	Location
Plan Alternatives information package	50 professionally printed packages, digital copy available online	Printed copies available at DRPC office, YLUPC office, and at community meetings. Also available for download on DRPC website.
Survey and comment form (paper version)	Approximately 100	Included in the Plan Alternatives package. Additional copies available at DRPC office, YLUPC office and at public meetings.
Survey and comment form (online version)	Via SurveyMonkey®	Link provided in email updates to distribution list, in Plan Alternatives package, and on DRPC and YLUPC websites
Community meetings	2 - combination of scheduled presentations/question & answer sessions and open house format	Whitehorse (February 7) Dawson City (February 12)
11x17" poster	Approximately 15	Key community locations around Dawson City and Whitehorse (e.g., library, post office, grocery stores, arena, First Nation office)



Product	Number	Location
Email updates	3 emails – one at the start of the review period, a reminder email halfway through, and a thank you email following the review period	Sent to the DRPC email distribution list. Stakeholder groups were encouraged to forward the updates to their internal mailing lists. Many questions during the review period were also received and answered by staff via email.
Mail out postcards	814	Cards placed in mailboxes of all Dawson City and Old Crow residents and extras available at DRPC office and public meetings. Stacks of cards also placed in key locations in Whitehorse (e.g. post office, YLUPC office).
Newspaper advertisements	10 – one version advertising start of the review period and public meeting dates, another version halfway through with reminder of closing date for comments	Yukon News, Klondike Sun, Whitehorse Star
Press release	<p>Sent to 9 media outlets prior to start of review period</p> <p>5 interviews were given by Commission Chair and Acting Senior Planner during the review period</p> <p>Staff tracked 6 print articles, 2 letters to the editor, 3 radio interviews aired, 2 radio website news articles</p> <p>The DRPC was also noted in several media stories pertaining to the release of the Yukon Government's approved Peel Watershed Land Use Plan during the time of the review period.</p>	<p>Yukon News, Whitehorse Star, and Klondike Sun newspapers</p> <p>CBC and CKRW radio stations</p>
Public Service Announcement	1	In rotation on CFYT radio for 2 days leading up to the community meeting in Dawson City
Rolling ads	Approximately 4 weeks	Dawson City cable television channel



Product	Number	Location
Newsletter updates	2	The review period and public meetings were noted in Dawson City Chamber of Commerce and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Heritage Department newsletters
Social media updates	Approximately 6	Dawson City related Facebook pages
Updates/presentations to Dawson community groups just prior to or during review period	3 - Dawson District Renewable Resources Council, Dawson City Chamber of Commerce, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Elders	Dawson City
Websites	2 - both websites noted links to the other for more information	DRPC website: Plan Alternatives package and link to online survey and comment form  YLUPC website: Planning Atlas contained spatial data for download (layers for plan alternatives and resource values)

11x17" advertising poster for key locations around communities

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## see yourself in the dawson regional land use plan

The Dawson Regional Planning Commission members are excited to show you what they have been up to! Check out their five plan alternative maps - available for review February 3, 2014.

Help the Commission towards developing a preferred alternative for the draft plan by providing your comments on their initial plan ideas. A plan alternatives information package will be available February 3, 2014, on the website or by contacting the office in Dawson. Comments will be accepted until March 2, 2014.

### public meetings

Meet the Commission and find out more about the planning process and alternatives phase by attending one of our upcoming public meetings.

Whitehorse	Dawson City
February 7, 2014	February 12, 2014
10 am - 8 pm	10 am - 8 pm
Old Pex Hall	at YCOOP Hall
1105 1 <sup>st</sup> Ave	King St and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ave
Presentations @ 12, 5 and 7 pm for both events	

For more information:  
[www.dawson.plan yukon.ca](http://www.dawson.plan yukon.ca)  
 1075 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, Dawson City  
 (next to hardware store)  
 867-993-4400  
[dawsonplan@plan yukon.ca](mailto:dawsonplan@plan yukon.ca)

Double-sided 5x7" mail-out cards sent to post office boxes

**Dawson Regional Planning Commission**  
Moving Forward - 2020-2025

## see yourself in the dawson regional land use plan

Give us your feedback on plan alternatives!

The Dawson Regional Planning Commission is excited to show you what it has been up to! Check out their 5 plan alternative maps - available for review February 3, 2014.

Help the Commission towards developing a preferred alternative for the draft plan by providing your comments on their initial plan ideas. A plan alternatives information package will be available February 3, 2014, on the Commission's website or by contacting the office in Dawson. Comments will be accepted until March 2, 2014.

Meet the Commission and find out more about the planning process and alternatives phase by attending one of our upcoming public meetings.

Whitehorse	Dawson City
February 7, 2014	February 12, 2014
10 am - 8 pm	10 am - 8 pm
Old Pex Hall	Location to be announced soon
1105 1 <sup>st</sup> Ave	
Presentations @ 12, 5 and 7 pm for both events	

For more information:  
[www.dawson.plan yukon.ca](http://www.dawson.plan yukon.ca)  
 1075 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, Dawson City  
 (next to hardware store)  
 867-993-4400  
[dawsonplan@plan yukon.ca](mailto:dawsonplan@plan yukon.ca)

## Examples of newspaper advertisements

**Join Us for a COMMUNITY MEETING**  
**Give us your feedback on Plan Alternatives!**

Help the Dawson Regional Planning Commission towards developing a preferred alternative for the draft plan by providing your comments on their initial plan ideas. An information package will be available on our website or by contacting the office from February 3 - March 2, 2014, comments welcome during this period. Come to one of the following public meetings to find out more!

<b>Whitehorse</b> Feb 7, 2014 10am - 8pm @ The Old Fire Hall 1105 1 <sup>st</sup> Ave	<b>Dawson City</b> Feb 12, 2014 10am - 8pm @ The YOOP Hall 2 <sup>nd</sup> and King
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**Presentations at 12, 5 and 7 for both events!**

**For More Information:**  
[www.dawson.planyukon.ca](http://www.dawson.planyukon.ca)  
 1075 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, Dawson  
 867-993-4400  
[dawsonplan@planyukon.ca](mailto:dawsonplan@planyukon.ca)




**Don't forget!**  
 The Dawson Regional Planning Commission's public review and feedback period for plan alternatives ends March 2, 2014!



Help the Dawson Regional Planning Commission towards developing a preferred alternative for the draft plan by providing your comments on their initial zoning ideas. An information package is available on our website or by contacting the office. *Thanks to everyone who came out for our public meetings this month!*

**For More Information:**  
 website: [dawson.planyukon.ca](http://dawson.planyukon.ca)  
 email: [dawsonplan@planyukon.ca](mailto:dawsonplan@planyukon.ca)  
 office: 1075 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, Dawson City  
 phone: 867-993-4400



## Poster of planning process displayed at public meetings



## How did we collect and record feedback?

Comments on the five Plan Alternatives, the Land Designation System, and any other aspect of the Dawson regional plan or planning process were collected and recorded in a variety of ways throughout the review period:

- a. Survey and comment form
- b. Letter submissions
- c. Public meetings
- d. Updates to Dawson community groups
- e. Additional staff notes on conversations and discussions

### *Survey and Comment Form*

The 20-question survey and comment form was designed by staff based on Commission input about what kind of information would be useful to receive from the public, in particular what would help them with the decisions they need to make for the Draft Plan. Some of the questions were also designed to help evaluate the communications approach for the public review period, and to identify improvements that could occur for the Draft Plan review period at a later date. The majority of questions were open-ended (i.e. not multiple choice), and the last question asked people for any general thoughts or opinions that had not been covered by the others.


The form provided a standardized way to collect and organize responses. It was available as a paper version in the printed Plan Alternatives information package, and additional printed copies were also available at the DRPC office and at the public meetings. We offered to help people review the alternatives in person at our office, and write down their responses to the questions. The form could also be completed online via a computer program called SurveyMonkey® using a link provided on the DRPC website and in an email notification sent to our distribution list.

Forms filled out online using SurveyMonkey® did not request or collect any personal information, so they were automatically anonymous. For hard copy forms that were filled out and returned to the DRPC office, staff manually entered the responses into the online SurveyMonkey® format. This made it easier for us to summarize and compile the results. We did not include the names or any other personal information of the people who gave them to us. All the responses received were available for viewing on our website immediately after their submission. We sent emails to our distribution list with a description of how to view the responses, and also posted this information on our website.

The SurveyMonkey® program was designed to “turn off” at the end of the review period (at midnight on March 2nd) and not permit any further submissions.

A total of 30 survey and comment forms were received during the review period, and were numbered in order of date of receipt. All of the respondents identified themselves as Yukon residents. A report was generated through SurveyMonkey® that provided quantitative analysis of multiple choice questions and compiled all responses by question for open-ended questions (see Appendix A). Commission members committed to reading and considering all input received.

### First page of printed survey and comment form



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Plan Alternatives Survey and Comment Form

1. Before this public review and feedback period, were you aware of the Dawson regional planning process
  - a. Yes, I have attended other meetings/workshops
  - b. Yes, I had heard of it but have not been involved in any previous events or provided feedback
  - c. No, I didn't know about it
2. How did you hear about this public review and feedback period for the plan alternatives? (Choose all that apply)
  - a. Newspaper advertisements
  - b. Newspaper articles
  - c. TV Rolling ads
  - d. DRPC Website
  - e. Facebook
  - f. Organization you belong to or associate with
  - g. Word of mouth
  - h. Other \_\_\_\_\_
3. Where do you reside?
  - a. Yukon
  - b. Canada
  - c. International
4. Do the zones used in the proposed land designation system adequately explore a range of conservation options?

## Letter Submissions

In addition to the survey and comment forms, a total of 27 letters were received via email or in person from groups, corporations and individuals as shown in the table below. Some letters did address specific questions from the survey and comment form, while others did not. Commission members committed to reading and considering all input received.

From	Number
Groups or Organizations	10
Corporations	3*
Individuals	14

Copies of these submissions are provided in Appendices B, C\* and D of this report.

Letter comments and responses to the open-ended questions from the survey and comment form were broken down into 365 separate smaller comments, and organized into a spreadsheet by topic to facilitate discussion and decision-making at Commission meetings. Organizing the feedback in this way also helped us identify the key themes documented in Section 3 of this report.

\*The submission referred to in the yellow sidebar, which was requested to remain confidential, came from a corporation. Therefore, only two and not three submissions appear in Appendix C.

### A note about confidentiality

*When a submission was received, staff responded with an email “thank you” and, in an effort to share the various perspectives, requested permission to post the submission publicly on the DRPC website and within the appendices of this report.*

*Where requested, or in the case of no reply, personal information was removed (blacked out) from the submission but the content was posted. In one situation, it was requested that a complete submission remain confidential and be read by Commission members, staff and Technical Working Group members only. This submission was not posted in any form and is not quoted or contained in this report.*



## Public Meetings

Day-long public meetings (10am-8pm) were held in Whitehorse on February 7<sup>th</sup> at the Old Fire Hall and in Dawson City on February 12<sup>th</sup> at the Yukon Order of Pioneers Hall. Large format maps and charts were displayed along with various posters explaining the planning process and the Plan Alternatives. Handouts available included the Plan Alternatives information package, mailout postcards, survey and comment forms, and copies of previous



**Public meeting in Whitehorse, February 7, 2014**

Commission products such as the Interests & Issues Report and summaries of discussion from stakeholder workshops. Commission members and staff, as well as Technical Working Group representatives of the Parties and staff of the Yukon Land Use Planning Council were in attendance. Approximately 47 members of the public attended the Whitehorse meeting throughout the day, and approximately 52 in Dawson City.

The public meetings were designed to be a combination of “town hall” format and typical “open house” format, in order to appeal to the broadest range of people. Three presentations were scheduled throughout the day at 12 noon, 5pm and 7pm that consisted of a brief (approximately 15 minutes) Power Point presentation by DRPC staff as an overview of the Plan Alternatives Information Package. No new information was presented that was not contained in the package. Each presentation was followed by a recorded question and answer period. These “town hall” sessions worked well for people who prefer open discussions with microphones, allowing everyone in the room to hear questions and Commission responses. Recording of these Q&A sessions and preparation of verbatim transcripts (see Appendix E) was essential to provide a record of these discussions and comments, particularly for Elders whose oral testimony would not otherwise have been documented. The scheduled 7pm presentation in Whitehorse was not given due to the small number of people in attendance. The Commission decided to engage with those people directly in a small group format rather than providing a formal presentation, so no recording of the question & answer session was made. However, comments from that discussion are reflected in the additional notes from staff (Appendix F).

In between the scheduled presentation times, the format was more of an “open house”.

People could look at the display materials, ask questions, and talk directly with DRPC staff and Commission members. These were one-on-one or small group conversations, and were not formally recorded. This format worked well for people who couldn't make the scheduled presentation times, and/or for those not comfortable speaking in front of a crowd or into a microphone. Discussion points from these conversations were noted as much as possible by staff and are included in Appendix F.

While we did not hold a meeting in Old Crow at this stage of the planning process, copies of all posters and large presentation materials were sent to VGG staff to use for internal meetings. A public meeting will be held in Old Crow at the Draft Plan stage.

### ***Updates to Community Groups and Additional Staff Notes***

Just prior to the review period start, Commission staff were invited to give presentations to the Dawson City Chamber of Commerce and Dawson District Renewable Resources Council (these groups as well as 18 others had also recently been invited to a stakeholder workshop in Whitehorse on December 18, 2013 where focused input was requested on key Commission concepts and ideas). Commission staff also requested an opportunity to provide an update to Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Elders. This meeting took place on February 17<sup>th</sup> in Dawson at the Community Support Centre, and was also attended by one Commission member.

Comments from the Elders' meeting, as well as the numerous conversations and correspondence which took place throughout the review period (in person at the Dawson office as well as via telephone and e-mail), were noted by staff to the best of their ability and are summarized in Appendix F.





## Section 3 – What We Heard: Key Themes

The written and online submissions received during the review period were read by Commission members and staff. Staff then systematically broke down and categorized every submission into smaller “pieces” (e.g. sentences or paragraphs) organized by themes or topics, and presented them in a chart which also noted the source of each “piece”. The chart was printed in large format for Commission members’ use at monthly meetings after the review period ended. This was done in an attempt to synthesize the large volume of comments received, and to present it in a way that would better facilitate Commission discussions.

From this diversity of comments and range of perspectives, we recognized several key themes that emerged, documented in this section in no particular order or priority.

In an effort to be concise, the themes noted here represent new thoughts and ideas that were particular to the Plan Alternatives phase and haven’t, in most cases, been raised or documented during public feedback periods at earlier stages of the planning process. For example, while it was clear that many respondents view mining as an important driver of the Yukon economy, these ideas have previously been captured during the Interests and Issues phase and in the writing of the Resource Assessment Report. Although obviously still being considered by the Commission, this report focuses on more specific comments.

Comments specific to particular Landscape Management Units (LMUs) or particular Plan Alternatives (A through E) have also been separated and organized, and are being considered by the Commission during planning discussions as they work through the region LMU by LMU.

The key themes which follow include a short overview of what was heard on that particular topic, followed by specific quotes given as examples. The quotes support the characterization of the themes, and provide an illustration of the broad range of “voices” we heard. Readers are encouraged to review the full feedback submissions included in the Appendices of this report.

Any quoted text is shown in italics, and is reproduced exactly as was written (or said, in the case of transcripts for recorded audio). Staff took great care in proof reading and verifying transcribed or converted submissions to ensure the integrity of these documents. Any typographical or other errors found in the original submissions have not been corrected.

## Provide more clarity on zones

The plan has to clearly define each zone used in the Land Designation System, including the intention of the zone and the management tools/strategies that will be used to achieve the goals of each zone. It was suggested that there were too many zones, with some of the zones being too similar. There was particular concern and/or confusion around the proposed Conservation Area, Traditional Economy Area, Yukon River Corridor, and Community Area zones as defined in the Plan Alternatives document. Each of these proposed zones are discussed in turn on the following pages.

Example quotes:

“With respect to the Plan Alternatives A to E published in the Dawson Regional Planning Commission Plan Alternatives package, the devil is in the details. Specific restrictions and conditions associated with each land management category should have been established prior to requests for feedback, because the exact nature of the restrictions and conditions will strongly impact the amount and type of mineral exploration and development companies will be likely to conduct within each LMU category.” *-Strategic Metals Ltd.*

“IMA zones, Conservation Areas, and the Yukon River Corridor are a little too vague, are there tools and guidelines for each zone and if so what are they?” *-Dawson District Renewable Resources Council*

“Clarify what, if anything would be different in the IMAS and Conservation Areas. If there is no real difference then reduce the number of different zones.” *-Survey Respondent #20*

## Integrated Management Areas (IMAs)

The Integrated Management Areas (IMAs) are regarded as the “working landscape,” enabling multiple uses on the land. In the Plan Alternatives package, the Commission proposed three IMA levels (II, III, and IV) to maintain consistency with the North Yukon plan, but without the specific details on how each IMA zone would be managed many respondents found it difficult to comment. It was noted that adopting cumulative effects indicators and indicator levels used in the North Yukon plan would not be appropriate for the Dawson region, particularly in the south, and there was worry about additional restrictions on industry.

“First it’s hard to make good decision on what land use Scenario to choose from if we don’t really understand the consequence of what restriction we will have to live with. The Alternative Packages only states that management regime is most restrictive for Zone 2

and least for Zone 4." *-Submission 2 (personal information redacted)*

“We think that the proposed designation system is too elaborate, and that the number of IMA and other zones...could be reduced. Although the land designation system proposed here includes numerous zones not labelled as integrated management, a closer look indicates that all zones call for some, if not extensive, integration of land uses.” *-Wildlife Conservation Society Canada*

“A different set of threshold measures should be applied to IMAs in the Dawson planning region than has been used in the North Yukon and Peel Planning regions. The measures of disturbance that differentiate levels of IMA need to be appropriate for the footprint associated with hard rock and placer mining activity, not oil and gas, especially in the southern portion of the planning region.” *-Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society*

“There should be more areas designated at IMA IV and fewer areas that have excluded placer mining and mineral exploration/development.” *-Submission 1 (personal information redacted)*

### **Conservation Area and Protected Area**

Comments called into question the effectiveness of the proposed Conservation Area in achieving conservation goals, highlighting the overlap between the definition of this zone and the IMA zones. Some called for one true protected area designation, but there was an obvious range of opinion on the need for protected areas and how much. While some highlighted the need for ecological connectivity and benchmark areas with monitoring regimes in place, others were concerned about the cost and effectiveness of protected areas and the effect they have on the ability to develop in adjacent areas. “Grandfathering” existing claims was troublesome for some respondents from both a development and conservation point of view. Suggested management tools for a conservation-type zone included the use of Special Operating Areas and Off-Road Vehicle Regulations.

Example quotes:

“In the Plan Alternatives document the Conservation Area (CA) category is deceptive- it allows staking so should be renamed Integrated Management Area (IMA) or the description changed to withdraw these areas from mineral development” *-P. Davis*

“**M**ake all land open to all development, no further parks or protected/conservation areas are needed. This is not to say that development should occur unregulated, but alienating land from development is bad for the economy as there is very little people can do up here besides resource based industries.” *-Survey Respondent #21*

“**T**here should be a broader discussion about how much “protected area” is appropriate, the lowest level seems to be 11% when a smaller number like 5% might be more appropriate with good management practices on all industries (including outfitting, tourism, mining etc.).” *-Submission 1 (personal information redacted)*

“**T**his plan seems primarily development oriented. At the public meeting in Whitehorse someone asked about what would happen if a protected area was between an area zoned for industrial activity and the Dempster Hwy and she was told that a road would go through the protected area because no mining claim can be expropriated. Once again the archaic free mining system trumps all conservation values, implying that the highest values of land is in its non renewable resources.” *-Survey Respondent #5*

“**P**rotected areas have an ‘echo’ or donut effect, and areas near PAs become very difficult to work on. Cumulative protected areas, when looked at Yukon-wide, create a difficult climate for the mineral economy.” *-D. Heon*

“**O**ur principal reservation with the current proposal is the grandfathering of sub-surface rights in the Protected Area (PA) zone. Grandfathering sub-surface rights quite strongly compromises conservation opportunities, primarily because it results in a high likelihood of consequent road building to access claims and possibly develop mines and oil and gas wells. The result of industrial road building and associated increase in access is an increase in disturbance to and harvest of wildlife, not only along the transportation corridor but widespread across the landscape with off-road vehicles. PAs are then not truly protected.” *-Wildlife Conservation Society Canada*

### **Traditional Economy Area**

There was a wide range of opinion on the need for this zone, but it was clear that the name of the zone and how it was defined in the Plan Alternatives document caused confusion about its intent. For example, it was inferred by some respondents that LMUs with this designation would be under First Nations administration, which was not stated anywhere in the Plan Alternatives document and is not what the Commission intended. It was repeatedly noted that the renewable resource activities proposed for this zone have the potential for environmental impacts comparable to or exceeding mineral exploration and development. Suggestions were made for more specifically applying sustainable development principles to renewable resource activities in this zone, such as limiting activities to projects like micro-

hydro initiatives, small-scale selective timber harvesting, and small-scale market garden farming.

Example quotes:

“*I* don’t understand what the traditional economic area designation is supposed to accomplish. It looks like it’s a combination of promoting a return to a hunter-gatherer society but allowing long term alienation of land through modern agriculture.” –*Survey Respondent #24*

“... *t*he proposed Traditional Economy Area designation would be little more than “Class B lite” – conferring authority over surface rights to First Nations on a quantum of land in excess of that already granted under Land Claims Agreements.” –*Yukon Prospectors’ Association*

“*W*e are somewhat confused by the naming of [the Traditional Economy Area]. One of the most “traditional” of economic activities in the region is placer mining which, at first reading of the designation system, appears to be curtailed (i.e. limited to grandfathered claims) in this zone. Meanwhile agricultural land conversions and commercial timber harvesting (often viewed as more modern economic activities) would be allowed. So the word “Traditional” seems inappropriate, and a more meaningful name might be Renewable Resource Area.” –*Wildlife Conservation Society Canada*

“*T*he “Traditional Economy” area proposed in alternatives A, B and C would allow forestry, farming and hydro development but there would be a (“temporary” at least 10 year) ban on placer or quartz staking. This is a very biased area concept as forestry, farming and hydro-electric development have a much larger impact on the land and water than almost any form of mining which typically affects less than 1% of the land base.” –*Klondike Placer Miners’ Association*

“*R*enewable resource activities [in the TEA] should be small scale and not limit the use and enjoyment of the area by Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in citizens in pursuit of their traditional activities. For example agriculture should be confined to small holdings of less than 4ha, which has been shown to be economic for market gardens. Grazing leases and hay and grain farms would not be appropriate in TEAs. Similarly, the size of forestry operations typically in use currently in the planning region would be appropriate, larger operations with extensive clear cuts should not be permitted. Dispositions of land for small holdings and residences could be compatible with this designation.” –*Yukon Conservation Society*

## Yukon River Corridor

It is clear from the comments that the Yukon River is regarded as a unique multi-use corridor with economic, ecological, and cultural values. While it was suggested by some that the Commission should recommend a sub-regional plan be developed with an interim rights withdrawal during the sub-regional planning process, others expressed concern about an interim withdrawal, additional restrictions on existing industrial projects, and implications for future projects. Some respondents seemed to infer that the YRC zone would be a protected area and the Commission will need to be clearer in the future that their intent for this area is to enable multiple uses. It was also confusing how the Yukon River Corridor could be both an LMU and a zone in the Land Use Designation System, and it was repeatedly suggested that there could be a Major River Corridor zone that could be applied to other rivers in the region, not just the Yukon River. It was also clear from the comments that the Commission needs to consider alternative boundary rules and provide sound rationale for how the boundaries of this corridor are eventually defined.

Example quotes:

“*I* am confused how the Yukon River Corridor can be both a landscape unit and a planning zone. I appreciate that the river floodplains and adjacent slopes are particularly important in the planning area and deserve special consideration, but encourage you to keep the Yukon River corridor as a landscape unit and give this planning zone type another name. This way you can assign the special planning zone qualities to a number of important riverine areas, such as places along the Stewart River.” *-B. Smith*

“*I* think the usage and belief that the Yukon River needs to be protected is not necessary. The river has long been used for development purposes, it was once a bloodline for Dawson and continues today to be a key to mineral operations, it allows access to areas without creating extra roads and infrastructure. It now still serves a purpose and is used by miners in many cases. The Corridor being 3km wide is an unprecedented protection, in an area that has already had development occur.” *-Survey Respondent #14*

“*Y*ukon River Corridor: sub-regional plan be developed for this area. If so, should be withdrawn from staking until this plan is completed.” *-P. Davis*

“It is not necessary to have a 6 km wide corridor along the river as the view impacts would extend less than 50 m from the shore. Many of the “pristine” areas that canoeists view were actually cut down for cord wood for the steamers in the Gold Rush days. River transportation and other developments including placer mining along and near the river have been on-going since before the great Klondike Gold Rush and should be encouraged as part of the river’s development and heritage, not discouraged in any land use plan.” *-Klondike Placer Miners’ Association*

“If there is a YRC corridor designation, I do not think that mineral rights should be withdrawn and that access routes should be available to be constructed to access other areas.” *-Submission 1 (personal information redacted)*

“I support the concept of a YRC, and the development of a management plan subsequent to recommendations from the Commission.” *-S. Jones*

### **Community Area**

From the feedback provided on the Community Area overlay, there was obvious concern and confusion about how the Community Area boundary interacts with the existing Dawson City municipal boundary and overlapping LMU designations. While the Commission was not suggesting an extension to the existing municipal boundary, their intention for this overlay will need to be further developed. The validity of the *Klondike Valley District Land Use Plan* was called into question and the Commission will need to investigate further the applicability of this plan and its current implementation prior to further refining this designation.

Example quotes:

“Greatly reduce the Dawson Community boundary proposal. That is the boundary that was proposed in 1990-91 and soundly rejected by Dawson and the Municipal Board. A large portion of the east end of the proposal is withdrawn from trapping and is recognized as a lynx refugium because of the abundance of lynx and hares. To include the area in a community expansion boundary would be contradictory to the concept of a lynx refugium. Offer a more realistic proposal perhaps as far as Bear Creek. That would probably suffice for the next hundred years allowing plenty of time for thoughtful expansion.” *-Survey Respondent #1*

“I don’t like the 5 km buffer around Dawson City and West Dawson and junctions of the Klondike Highway. I feel a buffer is not needed. This has been a mining area for the last 120 years. If ground is dropped in this area it should be able to get re staked.” *-C. Brown*



“We believe that the Community Area should not overlap other land management units, as its zoning as two different designations will lead to conflicts over which designation takes precedence. The land management units should be re-drawn to provide the Community Area with its own land management unit so that this region only falls under one land use designation.” –*Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society*

## The Commission needs to fully consider the existing regulatory regime and its effectiveness

It was repeatedly noted that the mining industry is heavily regulated, and the Commission should inform themselves of and make decisions based on the current regulatory regime and not historical practices. There was concern that additional layers of restrictions will discourage investment in the Yukon and negatively impact the economy. However, others suggested that the current regulatory regime is not adequate to address things like cumulative effects and the potential impacts of climate change.

Example quotes:

“... there is more than enough regulation, consultation, permitting and monitoring in place in Yukon rendering the DCRP redundant. Compared to other jurisdictions in Canada, Yukon is way ahead with the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board (“YESAB”). There is no other place in Canada where a transparent, open process is available to all stakeholders and interested citizens to comment on, contribute to, and consult upon a proposed economic development project. YESAB’s mission as stated on its website is “...to protect the environmental and social integrity of Yukon, while fostering responsible development in the territory that reflects the contributions of First Nations.” The YESAB process is comprehensive and takes a minimum of six months to complete depending on the level or category of development. Moreover it is project specific and deals with concrete proposals and locally defined consequences. It does not rely upon vague “Evaluation Criteria” that are intrinsically restricted and flawed by lack of data which are then fed into a dubious “Decision Framework” modelling computer program. And YESAB is just the first step. Project proponents also have to deal with a host of other agencies, regulators and inspectors throughout the life of a project. With all this regulation, consultation, permitting and monitoring already in place it is clear that the DCRP’s goals of active management, equitable balance and stewardship are already being met. More interference by yet another entity will only hinder the SRCP’s other stated goal of economic prosperity.” –*M. Fekete*

“There are numerous gaps in the current regulatory system that require review. The free entry staking system, archaic mining laws and mining within municipalities and residential areas must be reviewed to better reflect the rights of residents and municipalities.



The role and influence of YESAB should be enhanced to allow YESAB assessment decisions to become mandatory and YESAA changed to allow for full assessments and not the current limitations to review 'adverse impacts' only. The impacts of climate change must be reflected in regulatory legislation and approvals. The assessment and implementation of cumulative impacts should become more stringent to better reflect the impacts of activities." *-J. Taggart*

"In order to actualize their vision, I trust the Commissioners will keep in mind the reach of the various laws, regulations and consultation processes already controlling activities on the land. From a subsurface rights perspective, only a few low impact activities (known as Class 1) can proceed without permitting or community consultation. The thresholds for the different levels were developed in consultation with industry, First Nations, and conservation groups. Therefore, even land proposed here as IMA IV is already under some form of protection." *-D. Heon*

"Current legislative tools are not sufficient to address cumulative effects for the [Porcupine Caribou Herd] and the PCMB believes it is appropriate that cumulative effects are considered at the land use planning stage through the application of land use zones and appropriate tools." *-Porcupine Caribou Management Board*

## Knowledge gaps and issues with data and modeling need to be addressed

It was pointed out that certain data sets used by the Commission were outdated or not representative of the region, in particular the mineral potential map and mineral claims information. While some respondents were encouraged by the use of the decision framework system as a transparent tool for evaluating the alternatives, it was repeatedly noted that the weighting methodology applied to the evaluation criteria was not realistic and resulted in bias against mining and oil and gas sectors. Knowledge gaps were identified, particularly for fish and wildlife in the northern part of the region and it was unclear how or if climate change impacts and cumulative effects had been incorporated into the evaluation of alternatives. Many respondents provided additional information on regional values that are being incorporated into the Landscape Management Unit descriptions for the Draft Plan.

Example quotes:

"Estimates of mineral potential are widely considered to be deficient by the mineral exploration industry. Estimates of mineral endowment are by their nature backward looking and fail to appreciate the inertial effects of previous discoveries in distorting estimates of potential in comparatively unexplored areas. Shawn Ryan found the White Gold and Coffee deposits by exploring in areas considered to be of low mineral potential by the

majority of professional geoscientists working in the exploration industry. Discoveries are disproportionately made by the 1% who think differently rather than the 99% who build the consensus. The commission should not make assessments of mineral potential based on this flawed approach." *-Yukon Prospectors' Association*

"A lot of the northern part of the Ogilvie Mtns has really weak assessment information. I know it is remote, but given the lack of assessment information perhaps it should go into a "not enough information" category in this version of the plan. Some areas there have very high ecological and heritage values (eg the caribou fence near the upper Miner)." *-B. Smith*

"The databases you have used to determine which areas have or do not have mineral deposits are woefully out of date. Areas that at present do not have any known mineral deposits may in the future be shown to host mineral deposits with further exploration." *-Survey Respondent #11*

"We appreciate that your staff have attempted to provide a quasi-analytical review of the many diverse opinions and land use options through the Strategic Decision Making Process (SDM). This process, unlike processes used for the Peel and North Yukon plans, has the potential to provide for a fairer, more realistic and balanced approach to land use planning. We also appreciate the work done to prepare the many resource and "value" maps for the analysis but question their accuracy due to the lack of data for their subject matter. It is particularly difficult to estimate placer and other mineral resource which often remain hidden underground until discovered with extensive exploration. The White Gold District south of Dawson did not exist ten years ago and would have been ignored by a land use plan at that time. Both the placer and hard rock mining industry need to expand their frontiers in the search for new deposits as the older deposits are mined out. It is for this reason that any land use plan must allow the mining of new deposits in new areas and recognize the reclamation of previous mined areas. Unfortunately the use of unrealistic ranking/performance factors in the SDM modeling exercise has led to the creation of alternative plans which are extremely biased against the mining and natural gas & oil sectors of the economy. For example, it is unrealistic that a zero performance value for environmental, wildlife and First Nation values is allocated to IMA IV zones when it is clear to impartial observers that many of these values are present and often abundant in many reclaimed placer mined areas." *-Klondike Placer Miners' Association*

"Climate change and its impacts are covered in detail in RAR, but how the issue was addressed and its role in developing alternatives is not really explained in the same way existing rights to resources (for example) have influenced potential uses in LMUs. I would prefer to see the regional and global climate impacts of resource extraction and use, for example, more clearly evaluated and incorporated into the alternative outcomes. There

could be more information available on how (or if) climate change impacts on landscapes and permafrost were incorporated when creating LMU designations and how this may impact future uses. Similarly, the theory and practice of cumulative effects is well documented in the RAR, but has seemingly little role to play in the assessment of plan alternatives. The primary limitation apparent in the protocol utilised in previous YLUPC plans is the assessment of what is considered the 'footprint' of activities. In the earlier plans the extent of disturbance is restricted only to the actual physical disruption of an activity or feature. Thus, the cumulative assessment of a highway will be restricted purely to the area of land that will be disrupted. It takes no apparent account of the sphere of influence that a facility, road or trail will have on the local environs or wildlife – normally covering a far greater area than the actual physical infrastructure." *-J. Taggart*

## **Use management tools that will be effective and implementable, and whose economic impacts have been fully considered**

As the Commission develops the Draft Plan, it will be considering specific tools for helping to achieve the management intent for each LMU. While there are a range of planning tools available, feedback from the Plan Alternatives review period focused mostly on access management, rights withdrawal, cumulative effects indicators and levels, regulatory amendments, and timing windows. Regardless of the specific management tool, it was clear from the feedback that respondents feel careful consideration should be given to a management tool's effectiveness on the ground, implementability, and suitability for this region. It was repeatedly noted that withdrawal of subsurface land rights will negatively impact the regional economy.

Example quotes:

“Overall,...we lack good science to understand how the specific geographical layout and intensity of use of the human footprint, as it is currently developing in the northern boreal mountains of Yukon, might be affecting wildlife values. Such research is needed in order to better understand potential cumulative effects of an increasing footprint. Yukon Environment and consultants are addressing this issue (Shawn Francis, pers. commun.). Without such direction, our strongest tool (at least conceptually) is access management, which would immediately put limits on intensity of use of new access corridors and the easily accessed habitats they go through.” *-Wildlife Conservation Society Canada*

“My personal feeling is that IMA zone II, III, IV. Are reasonable approaches as they take into account and allow for continued development in these regions. The Key to development is access and ability to stake. Leaving large areas open to both doesn't mean they will be mined.” *- Survey Respondent #17*

“*P*rotected Areas need special attention with respect to off-road vehicles. Protected Areas with public road access through them will not remain protected, especially in the Ogilvie and Mackenzie Mountains where areas of sparse forest cover and extensive subalpine and alpine habitats will be opened up to off-road vehicle access. The Plan needs to specifically provide for exclusion of off-road vehicles in Protected Areas. To supplement such a definition of access restrictions, the Plan needs to assert, and provide mechanisms, that such roads to access industrially-extracted resources will be industrial roads only, without public access. One potential tool for influencing off-road vehicle use is the Off-Road Vehicle Management Area zoning provided for in the recent amendments to the Territorial Lands Act (Bill 64; December 2013).” –*Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society*

(The following quote was made in response to a survey question about whether any other information should have been considered in the development of Plan Alternatives.)

“*Y*es. Clear understanding of what, if any tools are actually available to manage access or manage to a higher standard in certain zones. Realistically there are very few.”  
–*Survey Respondent #20*

“*F*or all the extensive data gathering and analysis, the final discussion seems to be whether we withdraw sub-surface rights or not. Since withdrawal of these rights has huge social consequences, I support a plan that will minimize the amount of land withdrawn. I do think we have the legal and management tools necessary to ensure the integrity of the land without having to put a fixed fence around all the values we wish to protect. To achieve this goal, it will take a willingness to drop a polarizing stance, to realistically evaluate risk, and to develop familiarity with existing management tools such as laws, regulations, and required consultations. From such a place, we can make informed decisions.” –*D. Heon*

“*I*would like to see more specifics about how exactly the conservation oriented zones will actually truly protect landscape and wildlife values. I admit to being suspicious of government motives after the shameful way the Yukon Party government has tried to deceive the public into believing that the so called protected areas in the Peel Plan actually protect much of anything. (eg RUWA’s still open for existing mineral claim holders to access their claims through RUWAS (roads, bridges, etc), and claim holders inside RUWAS still working their claims.” –*Survey Respondent #5*

“*I*t seems to me that the Commission is proposing land withdrawals and legislative/regulatory restrictions which selectively target mineral exploration and mine development beyond that of other users of the land. Environmental impacts of most mineral exploration is no greater than those of trappers, outfitters, wilderness tourism operators, outdoor clubs and the general public. This is exceedingly unjust and probably illegal.” –*L. Carlyle*

“It is easy to look at things with a black and white approach and too often people have this tendency. For instance, if you want to protect an area from being negatively impacted by mining for example, our first instinct is to shut it down, stopping this activity from occurring thus eliminating the threat. What people tend to forget is that most times too much of any one thing can cause negative effects. All things have thresholds and I see this as being the key to sustainable management; too much mining can be harmful just as too much hunting, trapping or eco tourism. We have hunting and trapping seasons for a reason; they are used often as successful management tools. I feel that this process should be used right across the board with all activities that have the potential to permanently harm wildlife or the habitat they need to survive.” *-D. Reynolds*

“Seasonal or timing restrictions. The YPA objects to this measure being used as a management tool to limit or obstruct mineral exploration. The Wheaton River area has provided an excellent example of the folly of this approach. Prospectors and junior mining companies engaged in mineral exploration in the area are effectively limited to a 60 day operating season during the April through November period by virtue of overlapping or bounding land use restrictions. Is it reasonable to expect that a company or individual would contemplate mineral exploration potentially leading to development in an area where they can operate for only two months a year? Our experience in the Wheaton River area leads us to conclude that MLUR permits granted with these conditions effectively prohibit mineral exploration in the area.” *-Yukon Prospectors’ Association*

“More regulations for class 1 exploration licenses also need more enforcement tools and personnel to regulate class one development” *-Dawson District Renewable Resources Council*

“I do not think percentage thresholds for surface disturbance applied over vast land areas have any use at all. There will be sites where the industrial disturbance is solely physical, other areas where the disturbance will involve treatments with industrial chemicals (eg heap leaching), some areas where the exposed tailings will have dangerous acid drainage, and some areas where ponds will be created that have dangerous chemicals. The plan could say that this is YESAB’s job to make appropriate assessments and keep the risks low, but I think the land designation system should consider risks and say that in some areas we have a zero tolerance for anything but physical disturbance. I am particularly concerned with the construction of all weather roads, and think the designation system should be clear on roads. I note that you have referred to the access road policy etc, but think that the policy should be described as it applies to landscape units.” *-B. Smith*





## Section 4 – What’s Next



### How has the Commission used this feedback?

At our regular Commission meetings in March, April, May and June 2014 we have been reviewing and talking about all the feedback everyone gave us, and discussing the Parties’ positions on certain issues. We are carefully considering everything we have learned and heard, including all the creative new suggestions and ideas for improvements.

We have been reviewing the Landscape Management Units (LMUs) and talking about some potential changes to the total number and the boundaries. We have also had extensive discussions about the Land Use Designation System (LDS) and what kinds of zones we will use in the Draft Plan. We are working on a revised LDS with a detailed description of the zones and what kinds of activities can happen in each one. We have also reviewed the results of a contractor’s work on “futuring” scenarios for the Dawson planning region, using a model to project what kinds of changes might occur on the landscape in the next 20 years for several major industries. These scenarios are helping to inform our discussions about potential cumulative effects issues, and different management tools and strategies that are available.

We invited a series of guest speakers at our March and April meetings to better inform ourselves about the existing regulatory regime, and to gather additional suggestions for how the regional plan can address potential land use conflicts and make improvements. Several other individuals and organizations requested a delegation to speak with us directly at our meetings, and we have accommodated these requests as well as advertised our regular meetings and encouraged people to come and listen.

We discussed doing further work to refine the evaluation criteria that were used in the decision framework, in particular focus group sessions with key groups of “experts” to get consensus on weighting. We decided, however, that additional work would not make sense until we have a more clearly defined zoning system. We definitely see the value of this tool for future Commissions to use as a transparent method for evaluating options and alternatives.

We also talked about the effectiveness of our communications efforts, tools and strategies during the Plan Alternatives review period, and are ready to incorporate improvements and new ideas for the Draft Plan review period. Over the past year we have kept the Parties, representatives of key stakeholder groups, and our distribution list informed of our progress; provided regular updates on our website; talked to people at public events like the Dawson City Gold Show; and maintain an open door policy at our Dawson City office.

## **What will the Draft Plan look like?**

The Draft Plan will be a fairly large document with the following sections:

### **Section 1 – Introduction**

This section will describe the context and scope of the plan, and will have a message from the Commission about their vision and goals for the region and how they made their decisions. There will also be a description of how the plan is organized, directions on how to use it, acknowledgements to all those who helped us, and an executive summary or highlights.

### **Section 2 – Description of the Planning Region**

This will be a short, abbreviated version of the Resource Assessment Report (2013). It will give a brief overview of the Dawson region including the physical environment, community and people as well as all the important ecological, cultural, social and economic values.

### **Section 3 – Plan Concepts**

We will have a more detailed description of the Land Use Designation System, with clear definitions of all the zones and what they mean. We might have cumulative effects indicators and levels for the Integrated Management Area (IMA) zones, or other ways to distinguish between them, and additional recommendations on what kinds of activities can happen in each zone.

### **Section 4 – General Management Directions (GMDs)**

This part of the plan will talk about any recommendations, strategies, priorities or best management practices that we think will help the Parties achieve the goals of the plan. Some GMDs will apply to the whole planning region. Others might only apply to specific zones, resource values, or types of land use activities.

### **Section 5 – Landscape Management Unit (LMU) Descriptions**

There will be about two pages for each LMU, describing its physical characteristics and what specific resource values it contains. It will tell you what kind of zoning has been applied to that LMU, and why the Commission decided that way. There will also be a section for



any Special Management Considerations – these are recommendations that we are making only for that particular LMU. For example, there may be a small area within an LMU that contains important wildlife habitat or a rare plant species – through Special Management Considerations, we can make sure those things are protected while zoning the rest of the LMU to allow a higher level of activity.

#### Section 6 – Plan Implementation and Revision

This section will describe who is responsible for implementing the plan (putting it into action), when it should be reviewed, suggestions for things to consider during the review, and how any changes will be made. The Commission can also recommend what things should be monitored, or how we'll be able to tell that the goals and objectives of the plan are being accomplished.

#### Appendices

Maps, summary tables for recommendations, other management plans that apply to the region, best management practices, etc.

## Then what?

Once the Draft Plan is released, there will be a public review and feedback period of at least two months. We will have public meetings in Whitehorse, Dawson and Old Crow.

After we have summarized and considered all the feedback, we will make any changes that we think are necessary, and that will become the Recommended Plan that goes to the Parties. The Parties then conduct their own consultations before deciding whether to approve, reject or modify the plan (accept it with some changes). If one or more Parties do not approve the Recommended Plan, we will come back to talk about it again, make some more changes, and write a Final Recommended Plan.

## Don't forget...

The Plan Alternatives phase was a way for us to show you some initial ideas that we had for the region, and to ask what you thought. The Draft Plan will have more detailed information and better developed ideas, but it will still be just a draft. Even the Recommended Plan may still need some changes, depending on what the Parties decide.

There are still many opportunities for you to have input and tell us what you think the future vision of the Dawson region should look like.

We are committed to an open, transparent decision-making process. We will openly share all the information we are using and all the comments we receive. We will show how it is being used in our work, and honestly communicate the reasons for our decisions. We want everyone to feel that their participation and efforts are valued and worthwhile.

# THANK YOU!



## Section 5 – Appendices

### List of Appendices

**Appendix A** – SurveyMonkey® summary report

**Appendix B** – Submissions from groups or organizations

**Appendix C** – Submissions from corporations

**Appendix D** – Submissions from individuals

**Appendix E** – Transcripts of Q&A sessions from public meetings

**Appendix F** – Additional staff notes

**Appendix G** – Submissions from Parties