PLANNING TOOLBOX

1. Zoning

- Identifying a desired state for a given landscape
- Identifying a desired level of acceptable change for a given landscape
- Permitting or excluding specific land use activities
- Identifying a % of multi-use
- Identifying a % of specific use(s)

Benefits:

- Provides geographical clarity
- Visual – easy to comprehend

Shortcomings:

- Without quantifiable or prescriptive definitions for each zone, they can lack clarity or certainty, or make it difficult to distinguish one zone from another.
- Can get confusing if there are zones within zones, or exceptions (ex. Dempster Highway in NYPC Plan)
- Sometimes requires complicated legislative processes (i.e. protected areas).

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2. Timing Windows

- Seasonally:
  - to avoid conflicts
  - to avoid key wildlife activities
  - to avoid sensitive habitat (i.e. wetlands in spring/summer)

- Day to Day: Staggering Usage:
  - to avoid conflicts

- Opportunistic:
  - Based on wildlife presence (i.e. caribou, nesting or staging birds, etc.)

- Specific to:
  - conflicting land use activities
  - particular wildlife species/habitat
  - particular geographic locations of conflict

Benefits:

- Provides flexibility.
- Less restrictive or "invasive"; more accommodating.

Shortcomings:

- Difficult to enforce.
- Difficult to predict.
- Land use activities are often complicated further by weather conditions.

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3. Thresholds / Carrying Capacity

- Specific to one or more land use activity
- Specific to sub-regions
- Specific to landscape types
- Specific to particular wildlife habitats
- Specific to seasons (e.g. water, wildlife)

- Thresholds must:
    a. Act as an effective indicator that accurately reflects the status of ecological integrity.
    b. Be easy to track and monitor the success of implementation.
    c. Be flexible, in terms of adjusting to best available information to justify the threshold.
    d. Be scientifically sound, or an accurate reflection of societal thresholds.
    e. Be accompanied by an action plan if the thresholds are being approached.

- % Footprint (X km^2/LMU)
- % Wilderness (X km^2/LMU) (reverse footprint measure)
- Linear Density (X km/km^2/LMU)
- # of recreational paddlers on a river (# of people per day, week, month?)
- Frequency of creek crossings (crossings/km^2) (crossings/creek)
- # of new access roads – winter or all-season (#/LMU) (#/sub-watershed)
- Water Quality (X ppm within X m of outflow)
- Water Consumption (X l/min.)

Benefits:

- One of few methods of monitoring and addressing cumulative impacts.
- Easier to monitor success of implementation.
- Provides greater clarity, accountability and transparency.
- More tangible targets/limits.

Shortcomings:

- Requires periodic reporting by the proponents and monitoring by the land managers.
- Often need baseline data in advance.
- Difficult to choose thresholds: must be good indicators, easy to monitor.
- Science behind targets is rarely conclusive.

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4. General Management Directions

- Apply to the entire Planning Region
- Apply to particular land use activities throughout the Planning Region
- Apply to particular land use activities in particular locations in the Planning Region, or throughout the Planning Region
- Apply to particular LMUs
- Apply to particular landscape types
- Apply to particular wildlife habitat
- Apply to particular seasons
- Inclusion or exclusion of particular land use activities.

Benefits:

- Can be applied to very specific issues/concerns.
- Less "invasive" than excluding an activity
- Doesn't require legislation or (sometimes) legislation.

Shortcomings:

- More difficult for land managers to keep track of all of the GMDs.
- More difficult to track status of implementation.
- Could be confusing to follow/understand, given the numerous possible variations.

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5. Best Management Practices

- YTG Oil & Gas Branch's BMPs
- WTAY Wilderness Tourism
- Industry standards / BMPs
- NGO recommended BMPs (ex. Pembina Institute)
- Commission-drafted BMPs

Benefits:

- Sometimes already endorsed by industry and land managers.
- Sometimes tested and tried elsewhere.
- Usually offer clear direction for land users and YESAB.

Shortcomings:

- Does not address cumulative impacts. ("You can BMP into oblivion!" – George Hegmann)
- BMPs in the Plan could become obsolete when standards & technologies change/improve.
- BMPs are sometimes set on economic parameters (i.e. "BMPs are OK as long as they don't hinder the profitability of a development.") rather than ecological.

6. Communications Guidelines

- Recommend communications protocols between land users to minimize conflicts.
    - aerial mineral exploration and outfitters
    - air charter companies shuttling tourism/rec paddlers
    - mineral and outfitting camps on common lakes/sites
    - mineral or oil exploration and trappers, FN communities
    - mineral or oil/gas exploration and biologists

Benefits:

- Most effective for addressing land use conflicts.
- Generates dialogue among land users.
- Can result in greater efficiencies – i.e. cost sharing/savings for land users, fewer ecological impacts (i.e. fewer flights, fewer trails/roads, etc)
- Puts onus on the land users.

Shortcomings:

- Not good at addressing conflicts associated with ecological values.
- More difficult for land managers to monitor and ensure compliance.
- Mostly a voluntary provision. Success depends on personalities and good will.