DAWSON REGIONAL LAND USE PLAN

5: MANAGEMENT DIRECTIONS



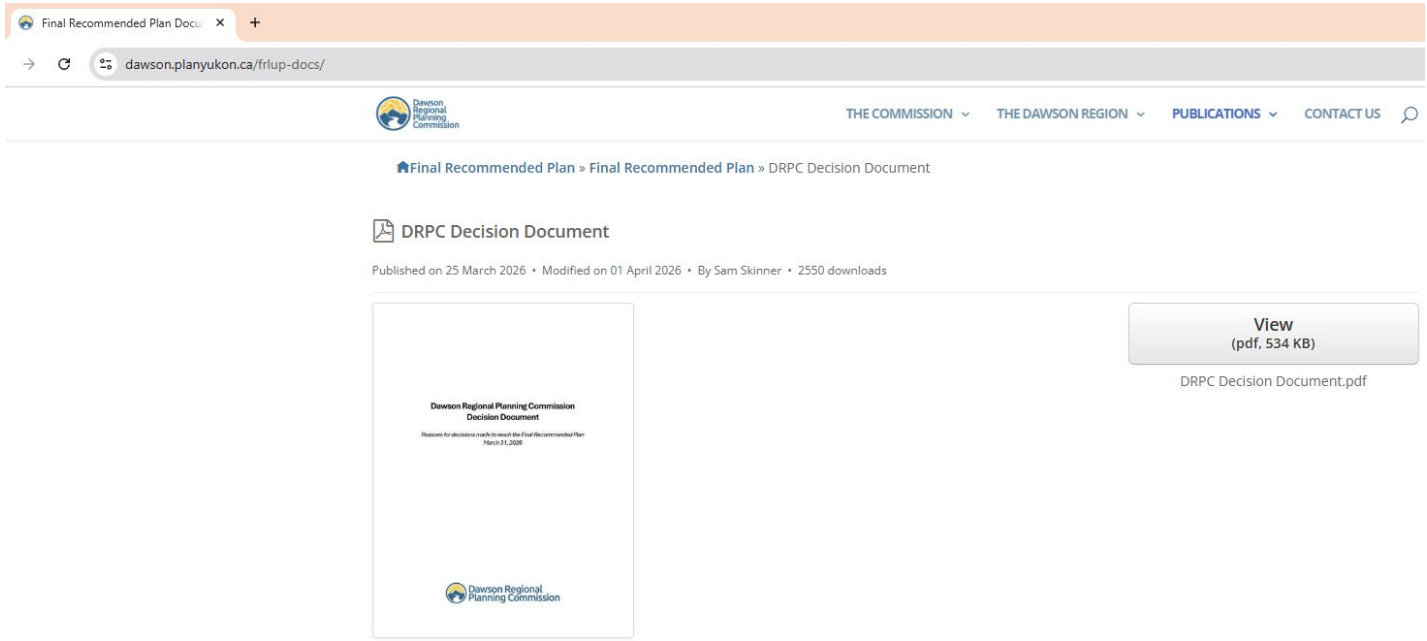
INTRODUCTION

This is a video series about the Final Recommended Dawson Regional Land Use Plan.

These videos provide a summary of the Plan.

For full details, please refer to the complete plan and associated content: www.dawson.planyukon.ca

For details about why certain decisions were made during the most recent version of the planning process, refer to the Commission's decision document: www.dawson.planyukon.ca/frlup-docs



INTRODUCTION

- Section 5 provides Management Directions for the Region, centred around the values. Since values are complex and connected in many ways, this section should be read and considered in its entirety.
- However, this presentation will only focus on the Management Directions in Section 5 that changed a lot between the Recommended and Final Recommended Plans.

Each value section follows the same format:

Value description: Main attributes and importance of the value, including planning-related issues for the value in the Region.

Goals: Specific and measurable steps that lead to a Plan goal, phrased as desired states.



STEWARDSHIP DIRECTIONS

Everyone on the land is required to follow these directions in order to achieve the goals of the value and the Plan. All Stewardship Directions apply immediately upon Plan approval.



IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Directions for completing work required to implement this Plan (includes both discrete and ongoing tasks). These are the roadmap for successful implementation of this Plan; some will be immediately actionable while others will require some time. Implementation Actions are directed to one or more of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the Government of Yukon, and the Implementation Committee, and may require collaboration with the Commission and/or Plan Partners.



GOVERNANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

High-level, strategic, and long-term recommendations to revise or create policy, legislation, plans, or agreements. Governance Recommendations are directed at Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and/or the Government of Yukon. In instances when another agency may have overlapping jurisdiction (for example, Government of Canada), the Parties are expected to actively engage and collaborate with that agency to identify shared responsibilities and determine the most effective path to realizing the Plan's vision. The realization of these recommendations may require a phased or extended timeframe.



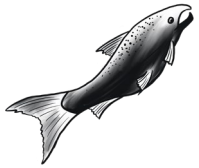
KNOWLEDGE GAPS

Recommended topics to be investigated over time to better support stewardship. A recommended direction of research is suggested where possible. Knowledge Gaps are directed at any of the following groups: Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the Government of Yukon, independent researchers, and other agencies.

5.3.1 WATER/CHU



- Water is a foundational value because it sustains ecosystems, wildlife, communities, and local livelihoods, while supporting activities such as transportation, harvesting, recreation, tourism, and mining. The Plan recognizes that healthy waters are essential to both community well-being and the long-term health of the land



- The Plan protects water through Special Management Area designations, sub-regional planning, and the management of other interacting values such as tourism, community resilience, and wetlands, and river-specific directions within LMU Directions.



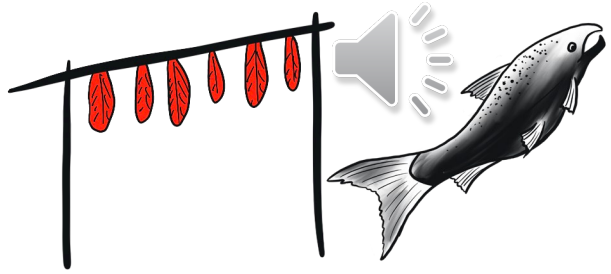
- Some Water Stewardship Directions include:
  - Treat all water with care and respect.
  - Minimize sediment runoff and erosion
  - Protect drinking water and access to it





5.3.3 SALMON/TR'OJÀ'

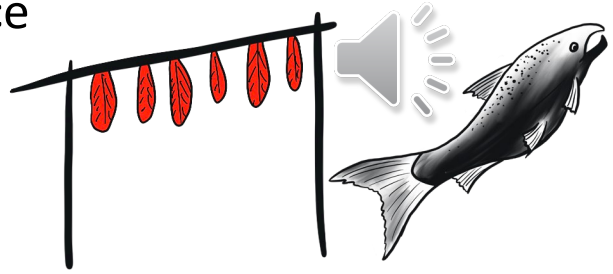
- Historically, salmon fishing season was a time of abundance for the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in.
- The Chinook population has been declining since the 1980s. Multiple factors have contributed to this decline including bycatch mortality, increased predation, and changing ocean conditions.
- The Plan falls within the jurisdiction of both Parties, and therefore, both Parties must take an active role in the next steps of addressing the salmon crisis.



5.3.3 SALMON/TR'OJÀ'

- There are many actors responsible for salmon and salmon habitat stewardship in the Region, and many more with mandates that affect salmon and salmon habitat indirectly. Overlapping authorities and gaps caused by insufficient or ineffective coordination between these actors, and between multiple management systems, can result in harm to salmon and their habitat.

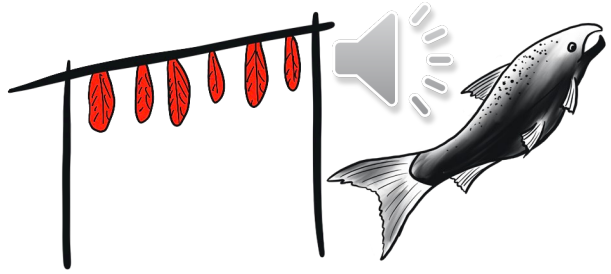
  - Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in
  - Government of Yukon
  - Yukon River Panel
  - Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)
  - Yukon Salmon Subcommittee
  - Dawson District Renewable Resources Council
  - Council of Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nations Salmon Stewardship Alliance
  - Yukon Water Board



5.3.3 SALMON/TR'OJÀ'

- Given the number of actors, overlapping jurisdictions, and gaps in stewardship or management, the Plan provides *A Framework for Land Stewardship in Support of Salmon,* that outlines how the Parties can collaborate to support salmon stewardship throughout the Region.

  - Governance Integration
  - Stakeholder Engagement
  - Habitat Protection
  - Cultural Stewardship
  - Implementation Strategy



5.3.4 CARIBOU/WËDZEY

- Caribou hold immense value from ecological and socio-cultural perspectives for the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in and the people of the Region at large.

- Reducing the impact of human-caused disturbances in caribou habitat will give them more space to adapt to climate change, thereby increasing their chances of survival. While caribou populations may never return to their historic levels, we can help support recovery and bring them closer to a sustainable population for future generations.



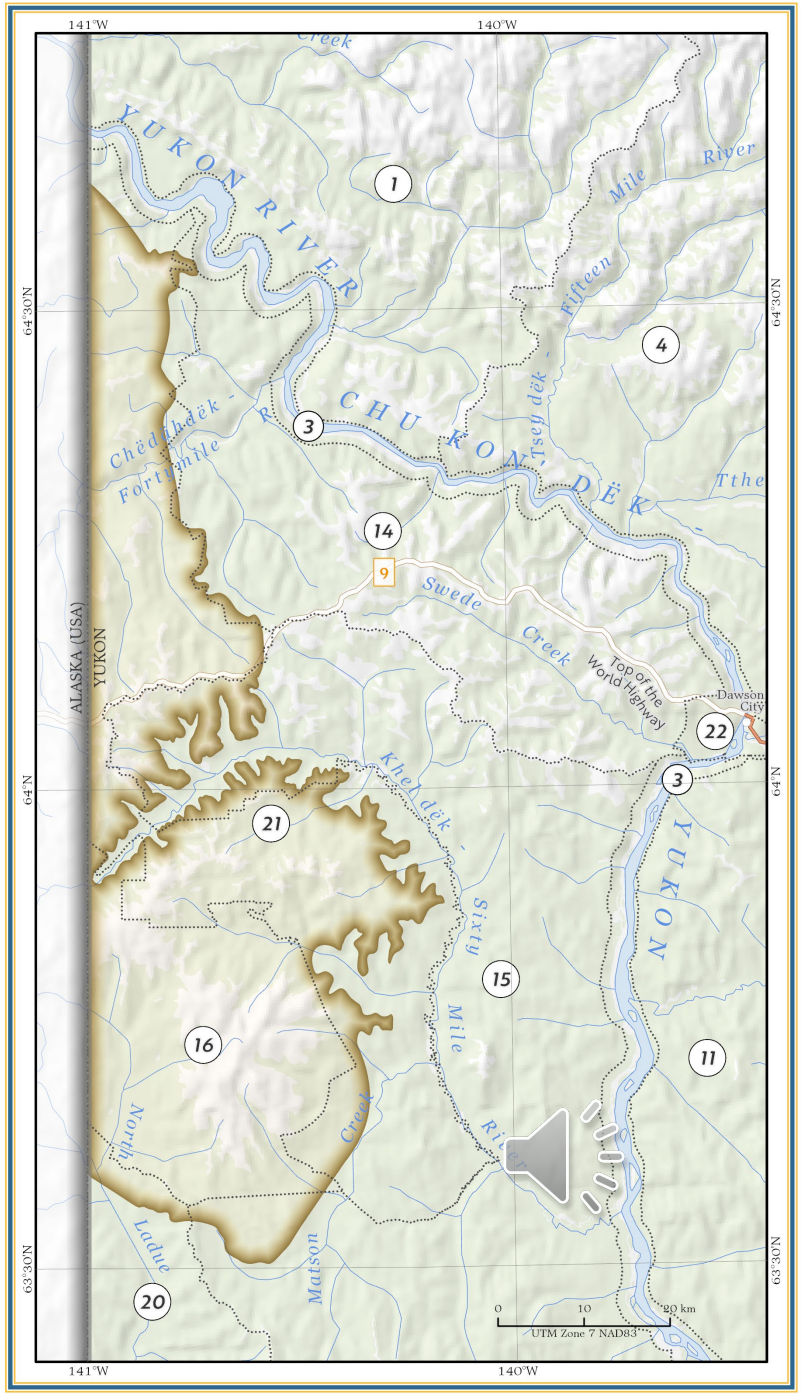
5.3.4 CARIBOU/WËDZEY

- Caribou herds need to be managed at scales that reflect their biological realities, such as their herd ranges and seasonal use areas, rather than boundaries created for other purposes, such as LMUs.
- There are four groups of stewardship and management directions for caribou in the Region that apply.
- Important caribou habitat and industrial activities often overlap. These overlays are not intended to stop industrial activities; they are designed to ensure that caribou habitat can be protected while generally allowing for industrial activity.
- Each overlay is specific to the caribou herd(s) and to the habitat type.



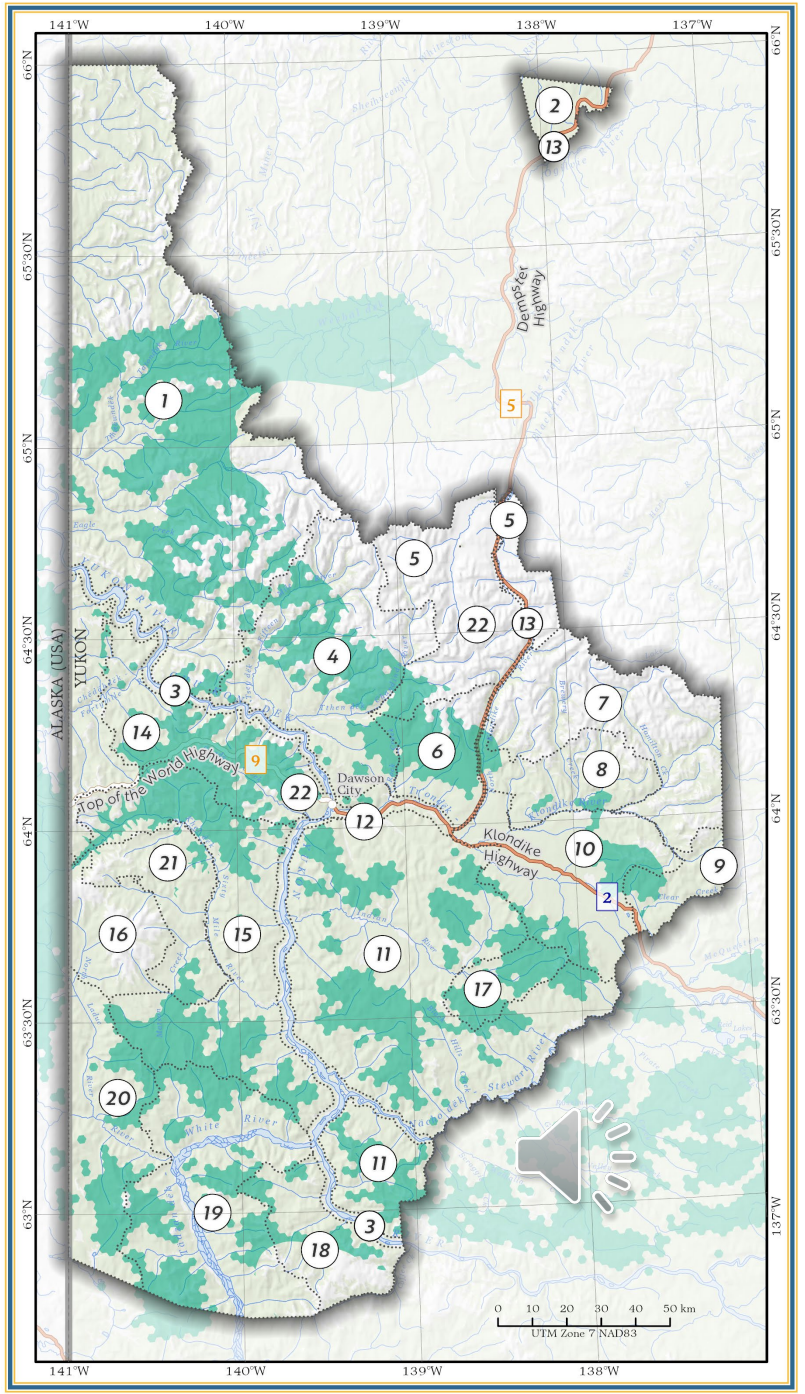
5.3.4 CARIBOU/WËDZEY

- Summer Habitat Overlay – Migratory Caribou
  - This overlay encompasses areas identified as critical for the Fortymile caribou herd's movement, summer foraging, and calf survival
  - Applies year-round, to protect summer habitat and migration routes even when caribou are not present.
  - Stewardship Directions for this overlay guide access, restoration, and land use with a strong emphasis on habitat protection.



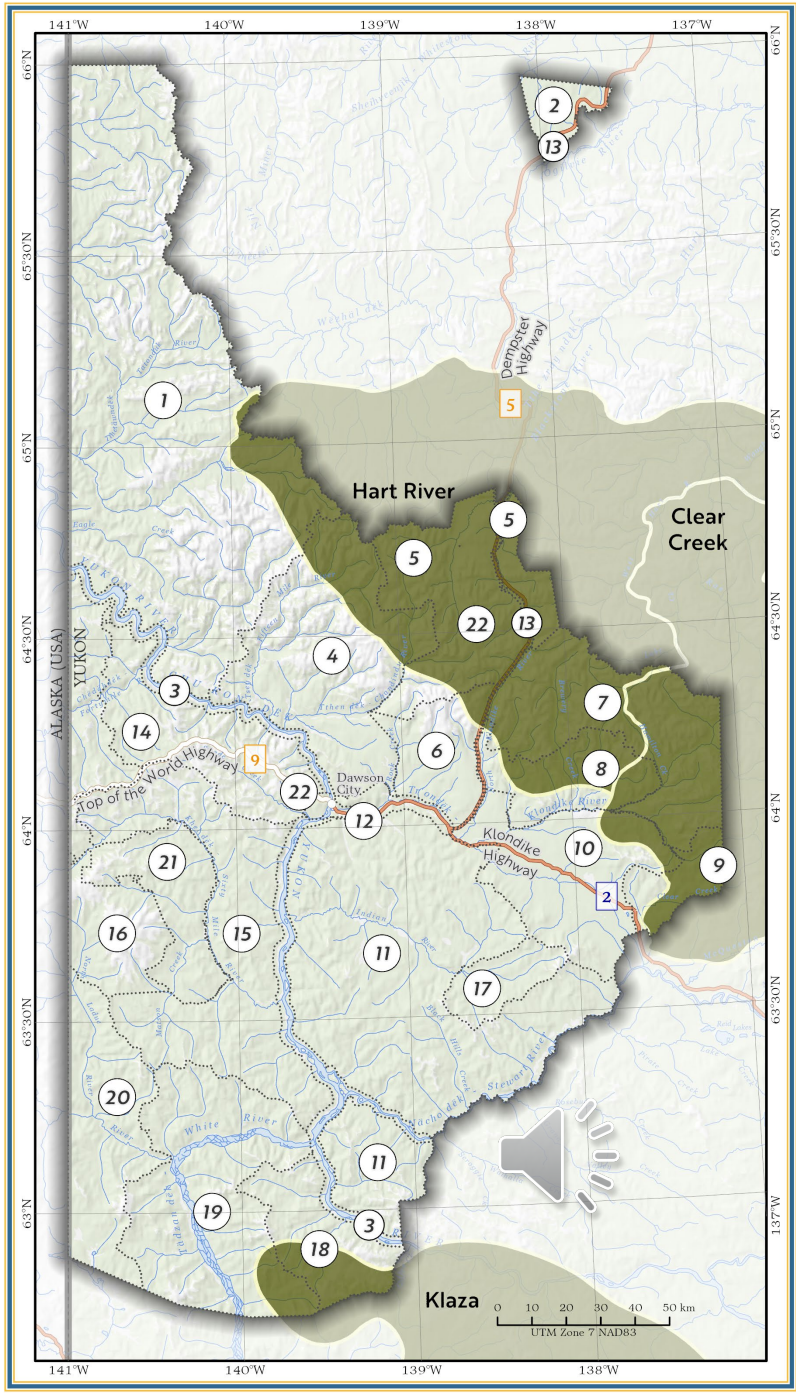
5.3.4 CARIBOU/WËDZEY

- Winter Habitat Overlay – Migratory Caribou
  - This overlay covers all mapped key winter habitat for the Fortymile caribou herd in the Region
  - Applies year-round to protect winter habitat even when caribou are not present
  - Stewardship Directions for this overlay focus on achieving no net loss of functional caribou habitat.



5.3.4 CARIBOU/WËDZEY

- Woodland Caribou Overlay
  - Encompasses the ranges of three distinct herds: Clear Creek, Klaza, and Hart River. While each herd occupies a unique landscape, they share similar ecological characteristics and vulnerabilities, allowing for a unified management framework.
  - Guides land use and restoration activities to support the long-term health of woodland caribou populations.



5.3.7 WETLANDS

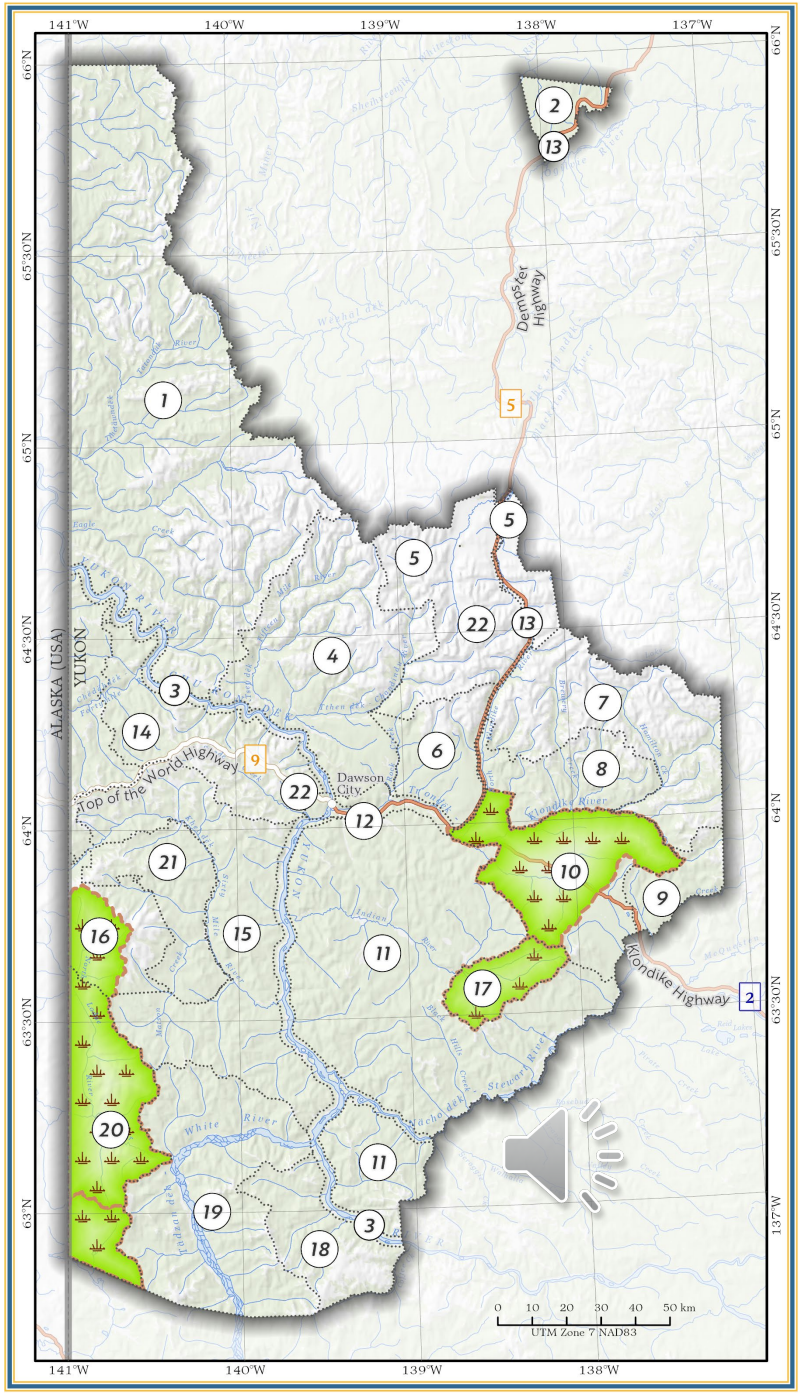
- Wetlands support wildlife and fish communities and, for the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in, are places of immense historic and cultural value where subsistence harvest and cultural connection can occur.
- The overlap between wetlands and mineral interests is largely a function of topography and geological history. Many wetlands are situated in valley bottoms, floodplains, and low-lying basins. These areas also tend to concentrate mineral deposits due to sedimentary processes and glacial activity.
- Because wetlands are ecologically sensitive and culturally significant, and because we know relatively little about how to restore them, the mitigation hierarchy must be applied rigorously to all development activities that intersect with wetlands. This approach provides a structured framework to reduce impacts and uphold stewardship responsibilities.

5.3.7 WETLANDS

- Mitigation Hierarchy for wetlands
  - **Avoidance** is the most effective way to protect wetland values and should be prioritized wherever possible. High-resolution imagery and detailed wetland mapping are essential tools for identifying wetlands and setting clear avoidance targets.
  - Land users should employ **minimization** strategies when avoidance is not feasible.
  - Land users must follow the values-based **reclamation** framework, which emphasizes values-based outcomes.
  - **Offsetting** is the final step when original wetland benefits cannot be fully restored. It may involve restoring historic mining disturbances elsewhere in the Region.

5.3.7 WETLANDS

- The Plan nominates four wetland complexes in the Region for *Wetlands of Special Importance* status, a Government of Yukon designation for a wetland with unique ecological characteristics, cultural significance, or important benefits.
- While the WSI designation will provide some protection to the listed wetlands, and the Wetlands Policy encourages protective best practices, together they still fall short of the level of protection wetlands warrant across the Region for their cultural and ecological significance. This Plan therefore requires additional measures to protect wetlands as well as recommendations to the Parties to strengthen their respective policies.



5.3.7 WETLANDS

- Stewardship Directions for wetlands include: All development proposals should state whether the project overlaps with wetlands.
  - While full wetland mapping data is not available publicly at this time, we note that YESAB provides wetland maps to proponents during the assessment process on a project-by-project basis.