

Scott Casselman
Dawson Regional Planning Commission
PO Box 8010
Dawson City
Yukon Y0B 1G0

Dear Mr. Casselman:

RE: Dawson Regional Planning Commission

I am a placer miner in the Dawson Region and want to provide you with my issues and concerns with the upcoming Dawson Regional Planning Commission. The most important issue for placer miners is access to new ground. Only a tiny percentage of the Dawson area's streams are affected by placer mining, but it is critical that a large amount of land available for placer mining and exploration remains open to us as an industry. We must be able to explore over large areas to find the small rare areas suitable for placer mining. We also require the ability to access these properties by road or water throughout the year.

Placer mining has been on-going in the Dawson area since the 1860's and has been a mainstay of our economy and culture. There are over 100 family based placer mines in the Yukon Territory and we are often referred to as the 'Family Farms of the North.' Every year there is over \$50 million worth of placer gold harvested from Yukon placer mines and we have a much bigger impact on the Yukon Economy.

The industry provides hundreds of direct jobs and supports a number of service and supply sectors such as fuel wholesalers, heavy equipment suppliers and grocery suppliers. Much of that economic benefit flows directly to businesses operating in Dawson City. Placer miners live in and/or frequently stay in the Yukon and Dawson City. We use many of the services including stores, hotels and restaurants. This helps support the local communities and other sectors such as tourism facilities

Placer mining is already heavily regulated including water license, placer land use, environmental act, public health and various other permits. Yukon placer mines use only water and gravity to recover gold. Harmful chemicals – such as mercury or cyanide – are not used in placer gold recovery. A comprehensive mining and reclamation plan must be approved before any license or permit is issued and reclamation is mandatory. All placer mines are inspected regularly for compliance.

Excavated areas must be smoothed and left in a condition amenable to natural re-vegetation. Silt is settled in ponds prior to release to the environment. Silt collected in ponds re-vegetates rapidly - usually with willow growth that provides valuable food for moose. Some ponds remain as wetlands and provide great habitat for migrating water fowl.

One of the most important issues for the industry is access to new ground that is economic for placer mining. Only a tiny percentage of the Dawson area's streams are affected by placer mining, but it is critical that a large amount of land available for placer mining and exploration remains open to us as an industry. We have to be able to explore over large areas to find the rare valuable areas suitable for placer mining.

In order for the projects to be sustainable we also require the ability to access these properties by road or water throughout the year. Transportation corridors are vitally important to allow access to these areas for exploration and mining. We want to be able continue to contribute to the economy and culture of the Dawson area and continue to provide employment for the next generation of Yukoners.

At the end of this submission you will find a brief survey that explains my personal connection to placer mining.