

Draft Land Use Plan Summary

2021

Image courtesy of KPMA



Dawson
Regional
Planning
Commission

On The Land We Walk Together
Nän käk ndä tr'ädäl

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Acronyms

CA	Community Area
DRLUP	Dawson Regional Land Use Plan
DRPC	Dawson Regional Planning Commission
FN	First Nations
ISA	Integrated Stewardship Area
LMU	Land Management Unit
NND	First Nation of Na-cho Nyak Dun
SMA	Special Management Area
TH	Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in
THFA	Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement
TOR	Terms of Reference
TT	Traditional Territory
UFA	Umbrella Final Agreement
VGFN	Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation
WRFN	White River First Nation
YG	Government of Yukon
YLUPC	Yukon Land Use Planning Council



Photo Credits: Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Heritage Department Photo

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Senior Liaison Committee

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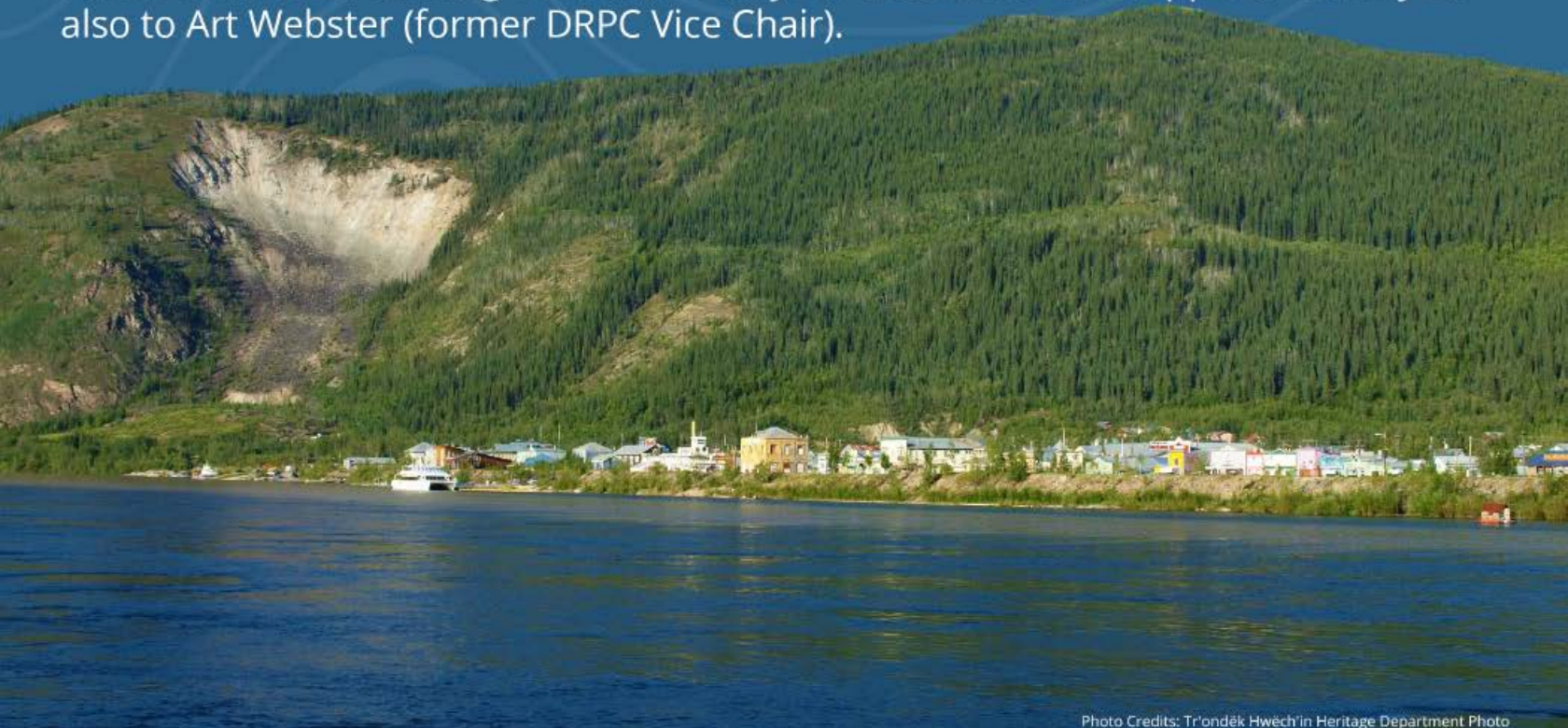


Photo Credits: Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Heritage Department Photo

Message From The Commission

We are very pleased to share with the public a Draft Land Use Plan for the Dawson region.

This Draft Plan is the result of the collaboration of many people and our planning partners over the past two years. It reflects our vision and planning philosophy, 'On the Land We Walk Together' / 'Nän kāk ndä tr'ädäl'.

We hope that it will help chart our collective future, prosperity, and our connection to the land we all love.

The Dawson Planning Region is truly a unique area of the Yukon. It is characterized by its distinctive landscape, deep-rooted cultural traditions, and healthy ecosystems. It is a region that has sustained generations of First Nations and non-First Nations people with its wealth of natural resources.

This Draft Plan is guided by the principles of sustainable development and stewardship and is intended to reflect the values and interests of the community. It is designed to enable the people of the planning region to build a diverse economy while maintaining rich cultural legacies and a thriving environment.

The vision of this Draft Plan is that people who live, work, and play in the Dawson Region are stewards with a shared responsibility of the land for future generations.

It is our hope that this Plan will form a blueprint for the stewardship of the Dawson region, and guide the management of land, water, and resources.

It is built within the context of a collaborative approach that we have undertaken with everyone who is interested in the Dawson Region.

The Draft Plan is the starting point for the next phase in our planning process, which will be to develop a Recommended Plan as set out in Chapter 11 of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement.

Over the summer and fall, we will gather feedback from the public and our Plan Partners that we will consider when we produce a Recommended Plan in 2022.

On behalf of the Commission members and staff, I would like to express our sincere thanks to community members, individuals, stakeholders, Plan Partners, and everyone who participated in our last public engagement phase for their participation and support. We look forward to hearing from you again as we move closer to completion of a Recommended Plan for the Dawson region.

We are confident that we can achieve our goal of balancing values and finding compromises that most people can live with. Doing this work together is not only in our best interests, but for our children and our children's children.

Thank you to everyone for being with us on this journey to date, and we look forward to walking together on the path ahead.

Regards

The Dawson Land Use Planning Commission



Understanding The Plan

This summary provides an overview of the first version of a Draft Plan for the Dawson Planning Region. The Plan was produced by an independent planning commission (Dawson Regional Planning Commission) as part of the implementation of Chapter 11 of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement (THFA). The Draft Plan is intended to reflect the vision, values, and interests of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Yukoners.

Where Are We In The Process?

The Draft Plan is by no means final and should not be read as such. It is meant to be a first attempt at developing land and resource use recommendations and will be used as a tool for meaningful engagement with the public, planning partners and the Parties as the planning process continues.

Why Is The Land Use Plan Important?

Creating a regional Land Use Plan is in the best interests of everyone in Yukon.

It is important not only for the present but for future generations.

Regional land use planning in Yukon is guided by the Final Agreements with Yukon First Nations. It is a tool that can achieve many objectives. Primarily, it helps minimize land use conflicts. Land use planning is a process that enables us to make educated judgments about how land should be shared and used. The process helps us to understand the land and its users, and to make decisions about how to manage that land.

In building this Land Use Plan for the Dawson region, we are considering all people of this region. We believe that this Plan will help us, our children, and our children's children to:



Minimize actual or potential conflict between land users. These conflicts will likely grow worse without planning.



Balance the important community values of healthy environments, sustainable economies, and vibrant cultures. Land Use Plans recognize and promote the cultural activities of Yukon First Nations people, which are closely linked to the land.



Ensure sustainable development occurs through coordinated and integrated social, cultural, economic, and environmental policies.



Benefit from predictability and certainty by clearly defining how and where land uses may or may not occur.

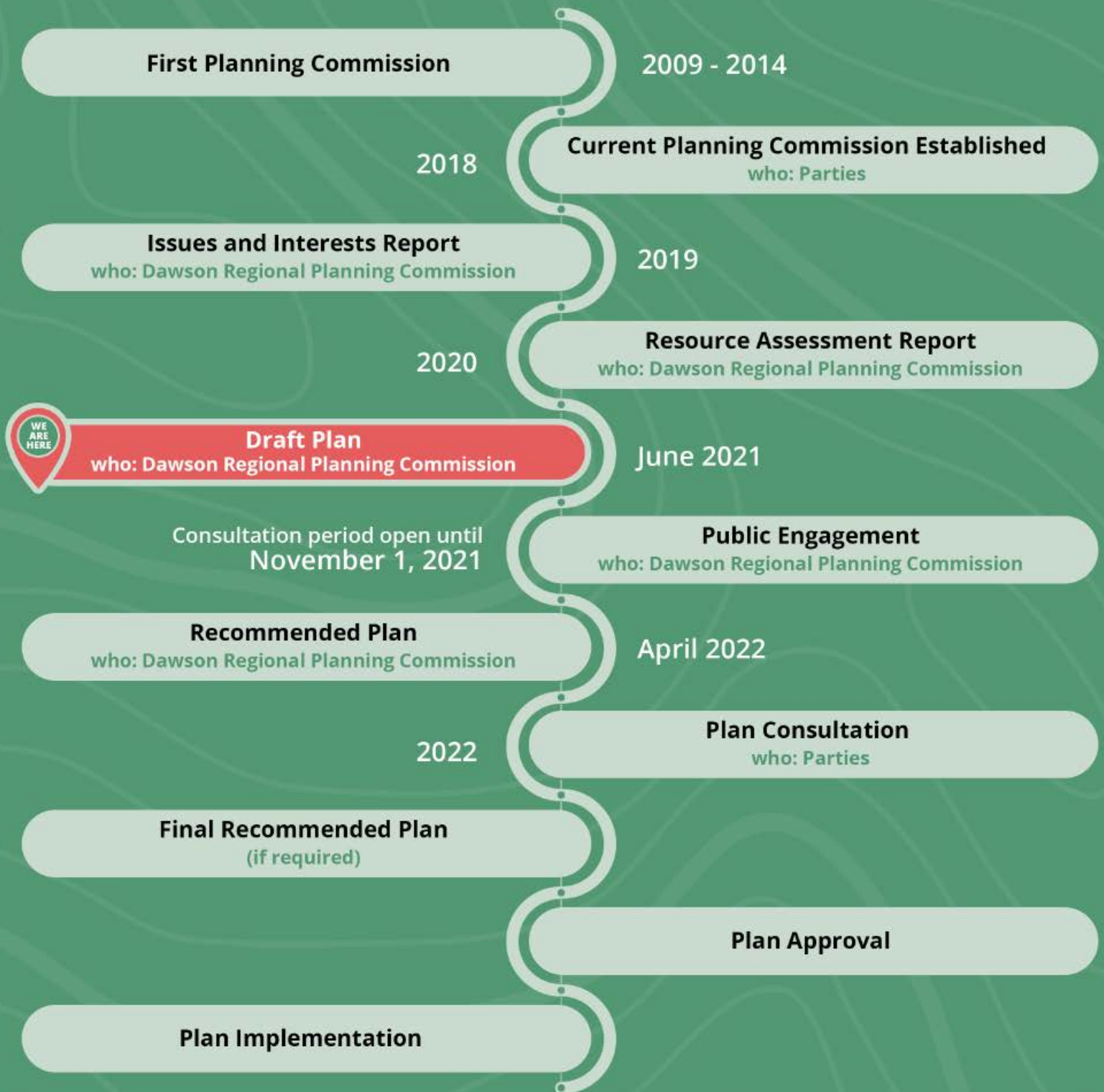
What's Next?

The Commission wants to hear your ideas/thoughts/reactions to the Draft Plan.

Throughout the summer, the Commission and staff will reach out to stakeholder groups and technical experts for their feedback. In the fall, the Commission will launch a public engagement process to hear directly from the community.

The Commission will consider all feedback it receives when it is writing the Recommended Plan that will be submitted to the Parties in early 2022.

Where We Are Now



What Happens Next?



As per Chapter 11 of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement, the next steps for the Commission are to consider all the feedback to this Draft Plan, and to create and submit the Recommended Plan to the Parties. The Parties (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Yukon governments) will then consult on it.

Key Recommendations



Access

A strong focus is put on transportation and access to ensure that development can occur carefully and responsibly to promote a healthy regional economy.



Caribou

The Commission recognizes the importance of caribou in the Region, including the Fortymile caribou herd whose range spans most of the planning Region. Recommendations for caribou habitat in the plan include the protection of critical habitat, limited development in a key migratory corridor, recommending timing windows and access management planning.



Conservation Priorities

Two areas have been proposed for protected area designations (SMA I) in the plan: Matson Uplands and Upper Klondike.



Mineral Development and Exploration

Recommendations that recognize the importance of mineral exploration and development in the Region, including support for the implementation of the Yukon Mineral Development Strategy, and the continued viability of existing claims in areas identified as SMA IIs.



Stewardship

The Draft plan introduces the concept of Integrated Stewardship Areas. These not only focus on the 'use' of the land but also the collective responsibility to be stewards of the land. Additionally, a Land Stewardship Trust has been recommended to promote the ongoing practice of stewardship by the community and industry.



Wetlands

The Draft Plan makes many recommendations for wetlands including: the recognition of wetlands of special importance (Scottie Creek and Upper Indian River Wetland complexes), and direction on limiting development in rare and sensitive wetland types.

We Want to Hear From You!

Please tell us what you think. All of the Draft Plan is up for discussion this summer and fall, and there are specific topics that the Commission would like to highlight for engagement during this time.

Feedback can be submitted via:

Web: engagedawson.planyukon.ca

Email: dawson@planyukon.ca

Phone: 867 993-4400 or 867 667-7397

Key Planning Issues

Key planning issues in the region reflect three main themes: sustainable economy; ecological integrity, conservation, and stewardship; and culture and heritage. These themes were informed by input from the Parties and the public. They reflect a desire to strike a balance within the planning region between sustainable economic development and ecological and socio-cultural preservation.

The key planning issues for each theme and value are:

Sustainable Economy

- ✓ Mineral Exploration and Development
- ✓ Access and Infrastructure
- ✓ Community Growth and Recreation
- ✓ Agriculture
- ✓ Tourism

Ecological Integrity, Conservation & Stewardship

- ✓ Fish and Wildlife Habitat
- ✓ Protected and Conserved Areas
- ✓ Climate Change
- ✓ Cumulative Effects

Culture & Heritage

- ✓ Heritage Resources and Sites
- ✓ Harvesting Rights and Activities



Photos courtesy of Chamber of Mines

Section One: Introduction

Mandate

Working with the Parties, and through public participation, the mandate of the Commission is to develop a regional land use plan for Settlement Land and Non-Settlement Land that is consistent with and achieves the objectives of Chapter 11 of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement (THFA).

The Commission created a Vision Statement and a set of Guiding Principles to guide its work.

Vision Statement

For the Region - The Dawson Region encompasses a unique landscape that enables our community to build a diverse economy while maintaining a rich cultural legacy and a healthy environment.

For the Process - Shared and respectful use of natural resources is guided by the principles of sustainable development, respect for heritage and culture, and conservation of fish and wildlife habitats. Ongoing community stewardship, based on consensus building, will achieve significant and lasting social, economic, and ecological benefits for all Yukoners.

For the Plan - Our regional plan will be crafted to reflect community values and will guide the integrated use and management of land, water, and resources

Guiding Principles

Sustainable Development

The Plan is guided by the principle of sustainable development as defined in the THFA: Beneficial socio-economic change that does not undermine the ecological and social systems upon which communities and societies are dependent.

Stewardship

Collective responsibility and actions are needed for the continued health and vitality of the region. Maintaining a strong community connection to the land is achievable through stewardship. For the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, stewardship is also an ancestral responsibility.

Precautionary Principle

Regional planning should consider potential impacts before making resource decisions. Our limited understanding of land use impacts on other resources in the north makes this especially important. The Precautionary Principle enables us to make sound decisions until such a time that more evidence of the potential impacts of these decisions is known.

Adaptive Management

The Dawson Planning Region, like all regions, is subject to environmental, economic, and social changes over time. Adaptive Management means responding to changing land use and/or environmental conditions as needed. This principle provides flexibility to ensure regional land use plans are living documents that are open to periodic change and revision.

Priority Criteria for Candidate Conservation Areas

Healthy air, water, vegetation, and wildlife are critical to sustaining life. Ensuring that ecological systems are maintained is central to the definition of sustainable development. Instead of establishing formal conservation targets, the Commission identified priority criteria to identify candidate conservation areas, such as fish and wildlife habitat, wetlands, and heritage, social and cultural values.

History and Scope

History

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in signed its Final Agreement with the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon in 1998. In 2006, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in requested the establishment of a regional land use planning commission based on Chapter 11 of the THFA.

A Dawson Regional Planning Commission (the Commission) was established in 2011, but in 2014 the planning process was suspended by the Parties until the legal proceedings around the Peel Watershed planning process were resolved.

The planning process resumed in early 2019 with a new Commission of six members jointly nominated by the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Government of Yukon.

Following a series of public engagement sessions in the fall of 2019 with Dawson and Yukon residents, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizens and many different interest groups, the Commission drafted the Draft Land Use Plan.

Scope

This Plan is the third of a network of regional land use plans to be produced through Chapter 11 of the Yukon First Nation land claim agreements.

This Plan provides guidance for land and resource decision-making within the Dawson Planning Region. It provides management direction for all Yukon public lands and all First Nations Settlement Lands within the planning region.

While providing guidance for decision-making, it is not a legal document. This Plan does not replace existing legislation, nor does it affect First Nations rights established by land claim agreements and constitutional law.

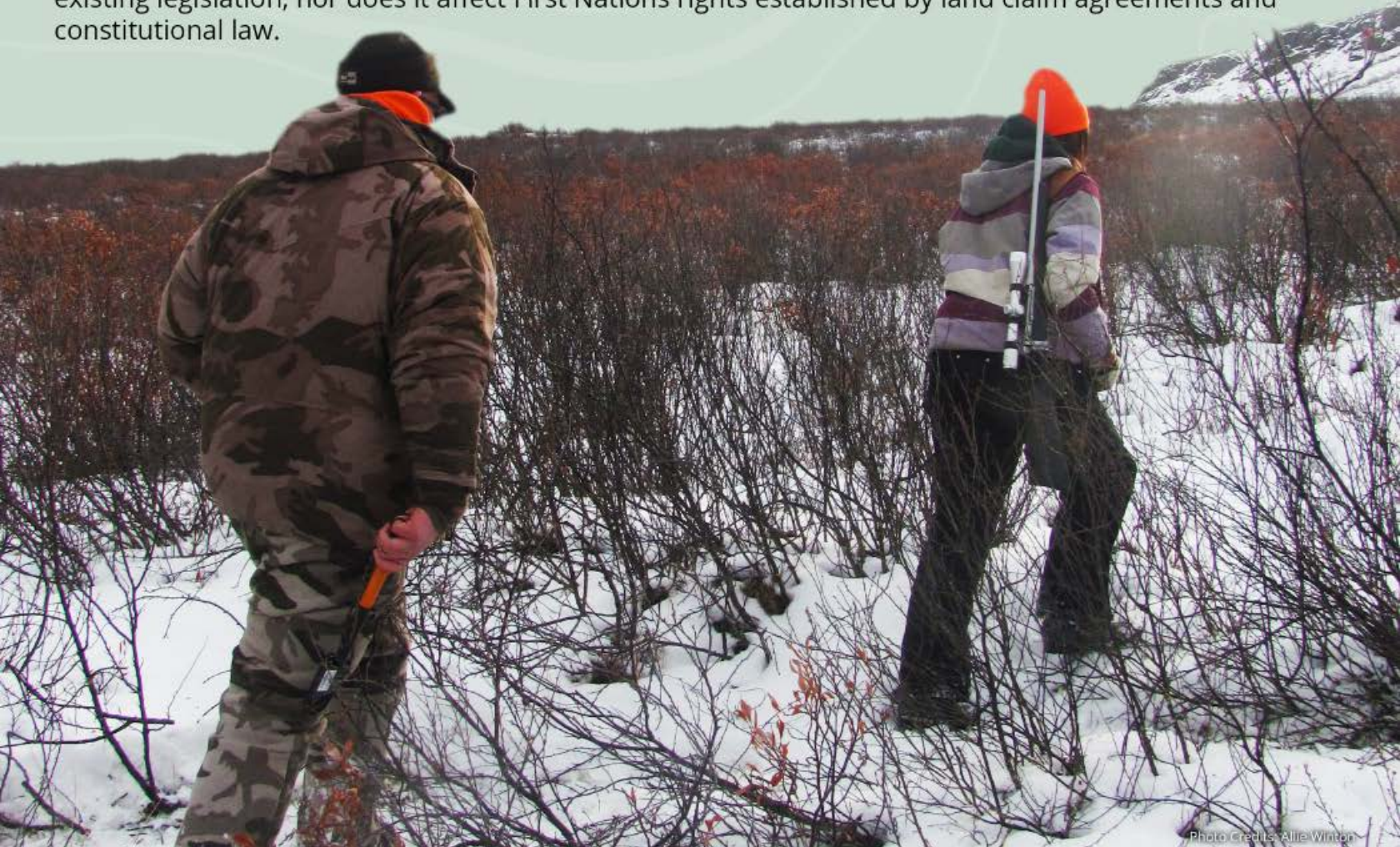


Photo Credits: Allie Winton

Plan Goals

Plan goals are statements that support the Commission's vision and describe what the Draft Plan hopes to accomplish. How do we want the future to look and does this plan help to achieve this? Management direction provided in the Plan is organized around these goals. There are 11 goals that guide the development of the Draft Plan.

Ecological Goals



Maintain healthy aquatic and terrestrial habitats to achieve sustainable fish and wildlife populations.



Support the natural integrity of the planning region by ensuring cumulative disturbances from human activities on the landscape are reclaimed or restored.



Preserve ecologically representative areas and important ecosystem services.



Maintain connectivity between areas of key wildlife habitat, while considering climate driven shifts in habitat.



Promote awareness of, and support mitigation and adaptation to, the effects of climate change on the landscape, fish and wildlife populations, and the people of the region.

Socio-cultural Goals



Promote land stewardship by upholding and enhancing cultural and heritage values of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, other First Nations, and other residents of the planning region.



Support land-based activities that strengthen connections to the land to promote Yukoners' health and well-being.



Ensure traditional harvesting rights and activities are respected and sustained.

Economic Goals



Facilitate existing and future sustainable economic development opportunities and activities (both monetary-based and traditional) that result in socio-economic benefits to First Nations, the community of Dawson, and Yukon as a whole.



Provide land use certainty and minimize land use conflicts throughout the planning region.



Manage access infrastructure to renewable and non-renewable resources.



Photo Credits: Allie Winton

Section Two: Dawson Planning Region Overview



Setting

The Dawson Planning Region is in the west central part of Yukon, encompassing 39,854 km² or about 10 % of the territory. It excludes land within the City of Dawson, areas subject to subdivision planning or local area planning (West Dawson and Sunnydale), Klondike National Historic Sites, and Tombstone Territorial Park.

The planning region is a unique area of the Yukon – its quality of life is attributed to opportunities and employment in mining and other economic sectors; a thriving cultural landscape; and healthy ecosystems that support a wide variety of fish and wildlife populations.

Water is very important value that underlies all aspects of the region, including environment, economy, and culture.

Environment

The Dawson planning region is bisected by the Taiga Cordillera Ecozone in the north and the Boreal Cordillera Ecozone in the south.

Most of the planning region was part of Beringia, a landscape spanning northwestern North America to eastern Siberia. This unglaciated area was a refuge for plants and animals, supporting many glacial species that are found nowhere else in the world.

Much of the region is forested but there are areas of alpine, subalpine, taiga shrub and wetlands.

The largest sub-watershed in the region is the Central Yukon, which includes tributaries of Sixty Mile River and the Indian River. The Yukon River is the largest river in the planning region. Significant tributaries to the Yukon River include the Klondike River, White River and the Stewart River.

The region is underlain by continuous and discontinuous permafrost. Permafrost is more widespread in the northern and higher elevation areas of the planning region.

The most distinct geological feature of the planning region is the Tintina Trench, a nearly one-thousand-kilometer fault line along the continental margin of ancient North America. South of the Tintina Trench lie sedimentary deposits, containing a variety of minerals including asbestos, copper, and gold. Gold eroding from quartz veins was concentrated by pre-ice age rivers into placer sand and gravel deposits.

The climate of the planning region is continental with long, cold winters and relatively warm summers, with most of the annual precipitation occurring from June to August.

People and Communities

The planning region falls within the Traditional Territory of three self-governing First Nations: Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation (VGFN), and Na-Cho Nyäk Dun (NND). However, only Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in has Settlement Land within the planning region. The planning region has a relatively small but stable population. Most residents reside in or immediately around Dawson City, with an area population of approximately 2,220.

For generations, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and other First Nations traditionally occupied, travelled or harvested in virtually every corner of the planning region. To this day, they maintain strong cultural connections to the region.

Land Status

The planning region includes Settlement Lands (administered by First Nations governments) and non-Settlement or public lands (administered by Government of Yukon). The planning region also contains lands that are already administered under existing plans (such as management plans, local area plans and municipal plans). These include land within the Dawson City municipal boundary, West Dawson and Sunnydale area, internationally designated lands, National Historic Sites, Yukon Historic Sites and Tombstone Territorial Park.

Economy

Economic development in the planning region has been closely linked to its mineral deposits. Hard rock (quartz) and placer mining are significant economic activities within the region. Nearly ten per cent of Dawson resident employment is in non-renewable resources, such as mining, quarrying, and oil and gas. Other economic activities include renewable resources such as agriculture, forestry, fishing, and wildlife harvesting. Tourism and recreation activities, particularly in the Dawson City area, also provide important economic opportunities. Heritage resources are an important attraction for the region and provide substantial economic benefits through heritage tourism.

Three major highways connect the region to southern Yukon, the Mackenzie Delta and Alaska. There are also numerous secondary roads and trails, as well as a traditional trail system. Regular scheduled air service at the Dawson community airport facilitates the transport of goods and people, and many small airstrips provide additional access throughout the region.

Ecological and Cultural Values

Ecosystems in the region host a diversity of vegetation communities and geological landscapes, supporting a wide range of values including wildlife habitat, ecological health, carbon sequestration, and a sustainable renewable resource economy.

Important wildlife values include key areas for caribou herds, as well as moose, sheep, fish, and their habitats. The region also includes numerous species at risk, including migratory birds, Barren-ground caribou, and the Spiked Saxifrage. The two most significant caribou populations in the region are the Fortymile herd in the west and Porcupine Caribou herd in the north. The Dawson region is rich in cultural heritage and unique landscapes. Heritage resources include historical, archeological, and paleontological records. Prehistoric and archeological sites date back to the end of the last Ice Age. The region holds the highest concentration of historic sites in the territory relating to gold mining, First Nations history and early fur trade in the region.

Section Three: Tools & Concepts

Plan Concepts

The Dawson Regional Land Use Plan broadly describes the future vision of the region as recommended by the Commission. As reflected in its Vision Statement, the Commission was guided by the principle of community stewardship, and an emphasis on shared responsibility and respect for the land. This Plan envisions that people who live, work, and play in the Dawson Region are stewards with a shared responsibility of the land for future generations. The Plan recognizes that collective responsibility and actions are needed for the continued health and vitality of the region.

The Plan uses the following five tools to communicate this vision and to guide land use management decisions in the Dawson Planning Region:

1 Landscape Management Units

The Dawson Region has been divided into smaller areas based on use, habitat types, settlement lands, etc. to help with their management direction. This will allow for varying levels of conservation and development. There are 23 LMUs in total.

2 Land Use Designation System

The Land Use Designation System describes the management intent of each LMU.

Integrated Stewardship Areas (ISAs): identify areas where varying levels (1-4) of industrial and other development can occur. Land management in these areas is based on the concepts of stewardship and cumulative effects management.

Special Management Areas (SMAs): are areas that need a higher conservation focus because of high cultural and ecological values. There are two SMA designations (SMA I & SMA II)

Highway Corridors: Transportation and access are a major focus of the plan.

Future Planning Areas: Such as the Yukon River Corridor and the Klondike Valley Corridor where additional planning should occur based on values such as water, residential development, and tourism etc.

3 Special Management Direction

Each LMU is unique and sometimes requires extra management instructions to protect specific things that are valuable in the area. The Special Management Directions offer guidance on things like Caribou migration, subsistence harvesting, reclamation and water use.

4 General Management Direction

General management directions guide land use decisions in the planning region. They are recommendations for all the different users of the land as well as regulators such as YESAB, TH and YG. They are intended be used in combination with other existing regulatory processes.

5

Cumulative Effects Management

Cumulative effects are net changes to the environment and/or society that result from a land-use activity in combination with other past, present, and future activities. It's important to think about how multiple activities in a landscape can affect its health and future use. Cumulative effects do this by looking at the sum of all activities, past, present and future. Thresholds have been identified for each Land Designation: precautionary, cautionary and critical. These will help to ensure current and future human activities do not overly disturb ecological or cultural resources.

Thresholds recommended in the Plan provide guidance on the acceptable limits of human-caused disturbance in every Landscape Management Unit. Indicators need to be tracked to evaluate them relative to an LMU's thresholds. If an indicator level in a zone is reached or exceeded, the result may be undesirable effects on ecological and cultural resources.

Measuring and tracking specific indicators is one tool for addressing cumulative effects. The plan includes a framework used to guide land-use decisions, and to link the concepts of indicators, levels, and designation system. An important aspect of this approach is to ensure that the indicators are similarly defined throughout the region to ensure plan conformity.

The Commission is interested in feedback on any of these indicators, thresholds, and cumulative effects framework.

Designation	Management Intent	Cumulative Effects Indicator	Precautionary Level*	Cautionary Level**	Critical Level
SMA I	No new disturbance		Tracking disturbance is unnecessary in the SMA I since no new disturbance is allowed.		
SMA II	Disturbance only in connection to existing surface and sub-surface rights		Thresholds align with ISA I or ISA II, depending on the LMU. These are defined in those LMU's Special Management Directions in Section 5.0.		
ISA Zone I	Lowest development	Surface disturbance	0.04%	0.19%	0.25%
		Linear density	0.04 km/km ²	0.19 km/km ²	0.25 km/km ²
ISA Zone II	Low development	Surface disturbance	0.15%	0.75%	1.0%
		Linear density	0.15 km/km ²	0.75 km/km ²	1.0 km/km ²
ISA Zone III	Moderate development	Surface disturbance	0.375%	1.875%	2.5%
		Linear density	0.375 km/km ²	1.875 km/km ²	2.5 km/km ²
ISA Zone IV	Highest development	Surface disturbance	0.75%	3.75%	5.0%
		Linear density	0.75 km/km ²	3.75 km/km ²	5.0 km/km ²

Section Four: General Management Direction Key Recommendations

Section Four of the Plan outlines the general management direction for the Dawson Planning Region. It identifies the specific recommendations, strategies, and conditions of development.

The Plan proposes numerous management strategies and recommendations for consideration. These should not be read in isolation or removed from context. For this reason, they are not summarized here.

**It is important to read and consider
Section Four of the Plan in its entirety.
You can read this section on our website engagedawson.planyukon.ca**

Planning Strategy

The Plan provides two general management directions: management practices, and recommendations to the parties. The differences between them are shown in the table below:

General Management Direction	Who are they for?	What are they?		
Recommended Management Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Land users▪ Regulators▪ Proponents▪ Project assessors	Consist of approaches or actions to be used by proponents, land users and project assessors to help achieve Plan objectives. While Plan objectives define “what” outcome is intended for a particular value, strategies describe “how” the desired outcome will be achieved.		
Recommendations to the Parties	The plan Parties (Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in and Government of Yukon)	Consist of broad guidance to the Parties on the use and conservation of land, water and other renewable and non-renewable resources in the planning region.	Policy Recommendations	Direction on land use issues and their management
			Research Recommendations	Topics to be investigated in more detail or information gaps to be filled.
			Recommended Actions	Work to be undertaken by the Parties in implementation.

Themes

The objectives and strategies described under each theme in this section help to achieve the Plan goals. These themes are described briefly below.

Theme One: Sustainable Economy

The Dawson planning region contains significant economic interests. One of the key guiding principles in the Plan is sustainable development. The Plan needs to balance economic interests with ecological, cultural, or social values to ensure that future generations benefit from the wealth and abundance that the land currently provides.

The Plan considers a range of renewable and non-renewable land uses and sectors, including mineral exploration and development, transportation and infrastructure, agriculture, tourism, outfitting, community growth and recreation, forestry, aggregate resources, and traditional economy.



Mineral Exploration and Development

The Dawson planning region has tremendous mineral potential and contains extensive opportunities for mineral exploration and development for both hard rock and placer mining.

The different perspectives of mineral exploration and mining, and conservation of ecological and socio-cultural values was a significant challenge in the planning process. Overwhelmingly, mineral exploration and development was identified through public engagement as a planning issue and an interest for the Dawson region.

Recommendations include support for the implementation of the Yukon Mineral Development Strategy to establish effective, efficient, and transparent environmental and regulatory processes, supporting industry-led programs that promote excellence in land reclamation and compliance, and working towards the viability of existing claims in SMA IIs.



Transportation and Access

Economic development in the Dawson planning region is intrinsically linked to resource access. Public feedback repeatedly indicated that access roads and trails are necessary for industrial prosperity.

Access development and its cumulative effects can also significantly impact the ecological or socio-cultural integrity of an area.

The importance of, and impacts from, access development and use in the Dawson planning region means all aspects of access must be carefully managed.

The objectives for access in the planning region ensure that access development can occur in the region in a responsible and sustainable way.

Recommendations focus on four different aspects of access, including existing access, new all-season surface access, air access, and water access.

Theme Two: Ecological Integrity, Conservation and Stewardship

Healthy air, water, vegetation, and wildlife are critical to sustaining life. Sustainable development ensures the continuation of healthy ecological systems.

Public engagement feedback emphasized the need for protected and conserved areas, and the importance of fish and wildlife.

Wetlands and climate change are additional areas of importance in the plan.

Wetlands

Wetlands are a difficult planning issue in the Region. It is challenging to find a balanced solution that both works for the community and respects the environment when making decisions about disturbance or activity in these areas.

Wetlands are important to the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and other First Nations. These are places of immense historic and cultural value where they can exercise their rights and traditional pursuits. Since wetlands cover only about 10% to 12% of the planning region, they are considered regionally scarce.

They are also known to be the site of competing land-use within the region due to the potential high mineral value that exists in some areas. The territory's most productive placer gold mining district (Indian River Valley) overlaps with a significant wetland complex. There are other known areas of overlap in the Region that have high potential mineral value as well as high ecological and cultural value.

The Commission acknowledges that it is at a crossroads when making recommendations on wetlands in the Region. It has developed some options for consideration and some Recommendations to the Parties. However, the Commission strongly feels that input from the community is needed to come to a decision.

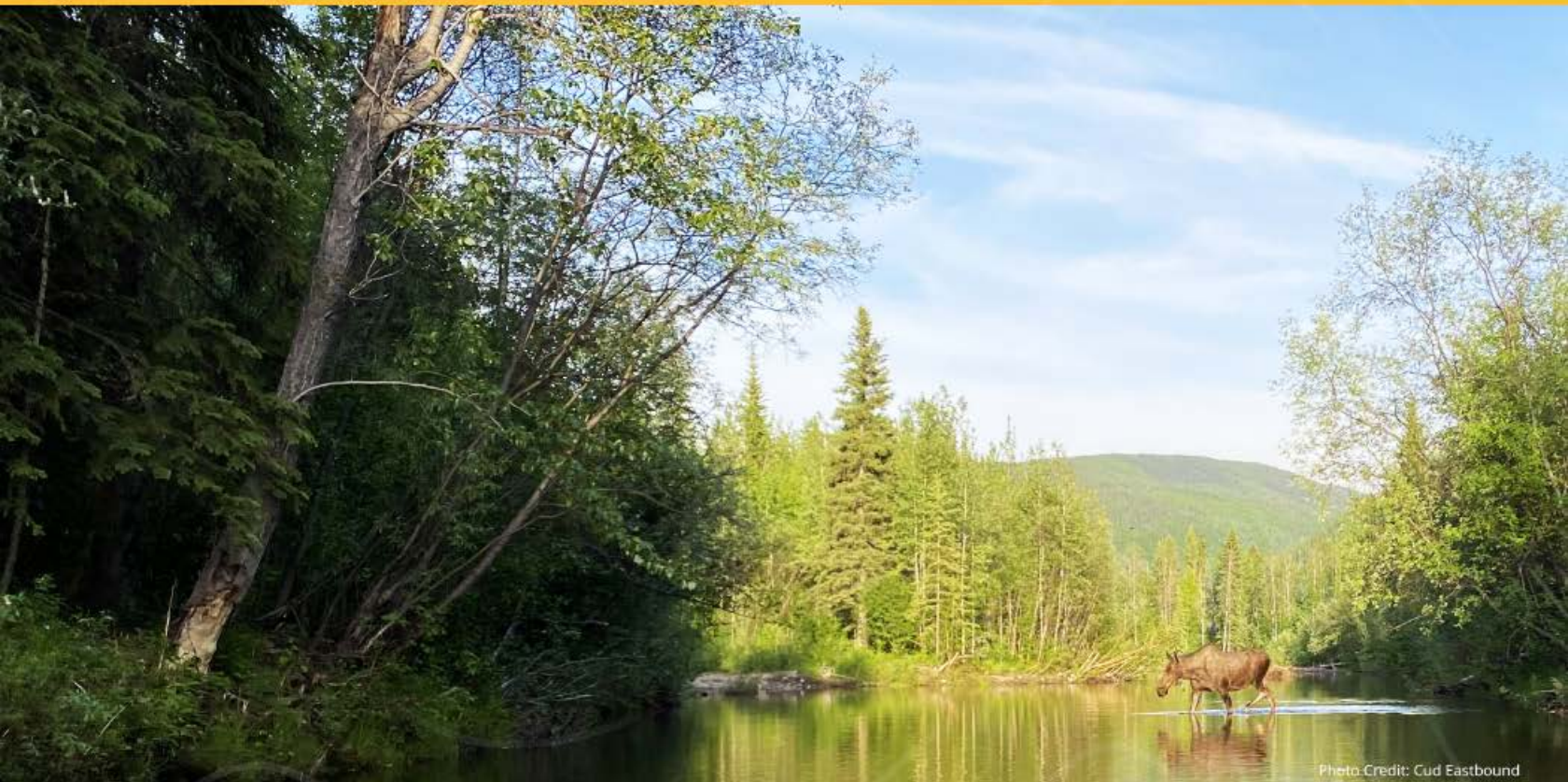


Photo Credit: Cud Eastbound

Theme Three: Culture and Heritage

The Dawson region has a rich cultural legacy that is closely tied to the history and stories of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, other First Nations, the Klondike Goldrush, and the unique contemporary socio-cultural setting of the area. A key part of sustainable development is maintaining and enhancing cultural and heritage values for all people of the region.

For the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, heritage is rooted in the landscape. Taking care of the land is critical as all the land's resources are a valuable part of this heritage. TH heritage is kept alive and protected when TH people hunt, fish and harvest. This stewardship protects the land and its resources (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government, 2012).

This section of the Plan considers these important heritage and cultural values including stewardship, heritage resources and sites, and harvesting rights and activities.



Photo Credits: Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Heritage Department Photo



Dawson Land Stewardship Trust

Stewardship has been identified as a guiding principle of this Plan. Industry partners, non-profits, the Parties, and members of the public all expressed the need for and the importance of community or land stewardship. Stewardship has been promoted throughout the Plan in a variety of ways.

One key recommendation is consideration for the creation of a Land Stewardship Trust for the Dawson Region. The mandate of the Trust would be to fund projects to promote the ongoing practice of stewardship of the land beyond Plan approval.

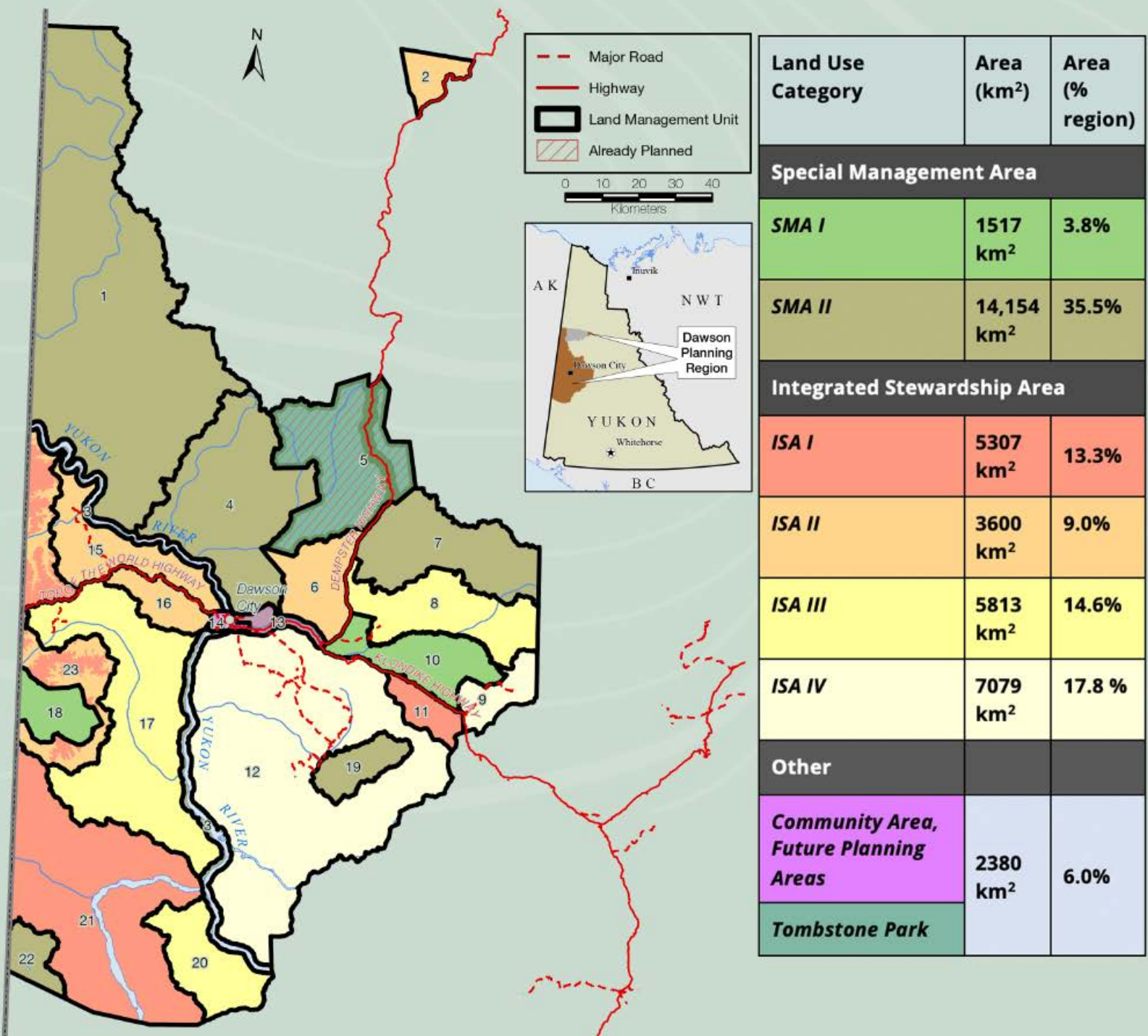
The Trust would be application-based and community-led. Project proposals would foster community and cultural connections to the land, encourage industry stewardship innovations, and/or provide educational and research opportunities.

Section Five: Landscape Management Units

23 Landscape Management Units

The Plan recommends 23 Landscape Management Units (LMUs). Section Five of the Draft Plan provides detailed information on each of the LMUs, including the management intent, the recommended land use designation, and any special management directions. Land designations are shown on the map below.

As much as possible, the boundaries of each LMU follow an existing natural (e.g., watershed or major river), or man-made (e.g., highway or TH land selections) boundary. LMU boundaries have also been created to be consistent with neighbouring regional land use plans.



ISA: Integrated Stewardship Areas			
Category	Sub-category	Management Intent	Description
Integrated Stewardship Area <i>Areas where development can occur, subject to special and general management direction and monitoring of cumulative effects indicators.</i>	I	Lowest Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very high ecological or heritage/cultural value within a sensitive biophysical setting The priority in this area is to maintain ecological integrity and cultural resources Lowest threshold for development
	II	Low Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High ecological and cultural values within a moderately sensitive biophysical setting The priority in this area is to maintain ecological integrity and cultural resources and minimize land use impacts Low threshold for development
	III	Moderate Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate ecological and cultural values within a moderately sensitive biophysical setting Conservative threshold for development
	IV	Highest Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower ecological or heritage/cultural value within a moderately sensitive biophysical setting Higher threshold for development
	FPA	Future Planning Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher development pressure in the periphery of Dawson City Highest levels of land use – no cumulative effects thresholds
SMA: Special Management Areas			
Category	Sub-category	Management Intent	Description
Special Management Areas <i>Areas managed for conservation of ecological and cultural resources, and long-term maintenance of wilderness characteristics.</i>	SMA I:	Maximum conservation <i>Maintain ecological integrity and cultural values with no industrial land use allowed</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended for permanent withdrawal from any new industrial land use and surface access Requires a legal designation Requires the development of a management plan
	SMA II:	High conservation <i>Maintain ecological integrity and cultural values while allowing for low levels of carefully managed land use activities.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing surface and sub-surface rights (e.g. mineral, oil/gas, forestry) rights recognized Recommended for permanent or interim withdrawal from staking in all other areas (specific to LMU) Recommended that lapsed tenure should not be renewed, and no new mineral staking or dispositions allowed Surface access restrictions (e.g. thresholds) Very low development threshold allowed under strict special management conditions
Overlay Zones: Corridor Areas (Overlay Zones overlap the above categories.)			
<i>Corridor areas are for features where adjacent land requires special consideration and additional management direction beyond the designation.</i>	Major Highway Corridors	Lands within the Dempster, Klondike, and the Top of the World Highway Corridors require special management	



LMU 20 Coffee - Tthatryän & LMU 23 Fortymile Caribou Corridor

These two Land Management Units are examples of areas where there many different and at times conflicting interests. The proposed management approaches attempt to reach balance between sustainable development and the environmental and cultural values of each area.

Landscape Management Unit 20 (Coffee – Tthatryän) is an important area for mineral interests. It also hosts considerable habitat for the Fortymile and Nelchina caribou herds. Special Management Directions for this LMU recommend ways to maintain key caribou migration pathways while ensuring an adequate land base to allow placer and quartz mining activities to continue.

Landscape Management Unit 23 (Fortymile Caribou Corridor) hosts critical habitat for the Fortymile caribou herd, which is facing major issues of barriers to movement and cumulative impacts from development. Recommendations for this LMU include strong Special Management Directions for development in the area, which should minimize disturbance to the caribou, their habitat, and migration routes while still allowing limited sustainable development.



Photos courtesy of Yukon Government

Section Six: Implementing & Revising The Plan

Implementing the Plan

The Parties to the Plan are the Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in governments. Once a plan is approved, they will have the primary responsibility for implementation.

This Plan provides a framework and tools that enable the Parties to make well-informed land and resource management decisions.

Implementation responsibilities also involve other groups, including the following:

Land, resource, and water users

Government of Canada

Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB)

Yukon Land Use Planning Council (YLUPC)

Other UFA boards and committees

Revising the Plan

Planning cannot foresee all future land use circumstances or issues. From time to time, the Plan may require minor changes (variances) or more substantial changes (amendments).

1

Plan Variance

when minor changes to the Plan are necessary

2

Plan Amendment

when the Plan needs revisions to its management strategies

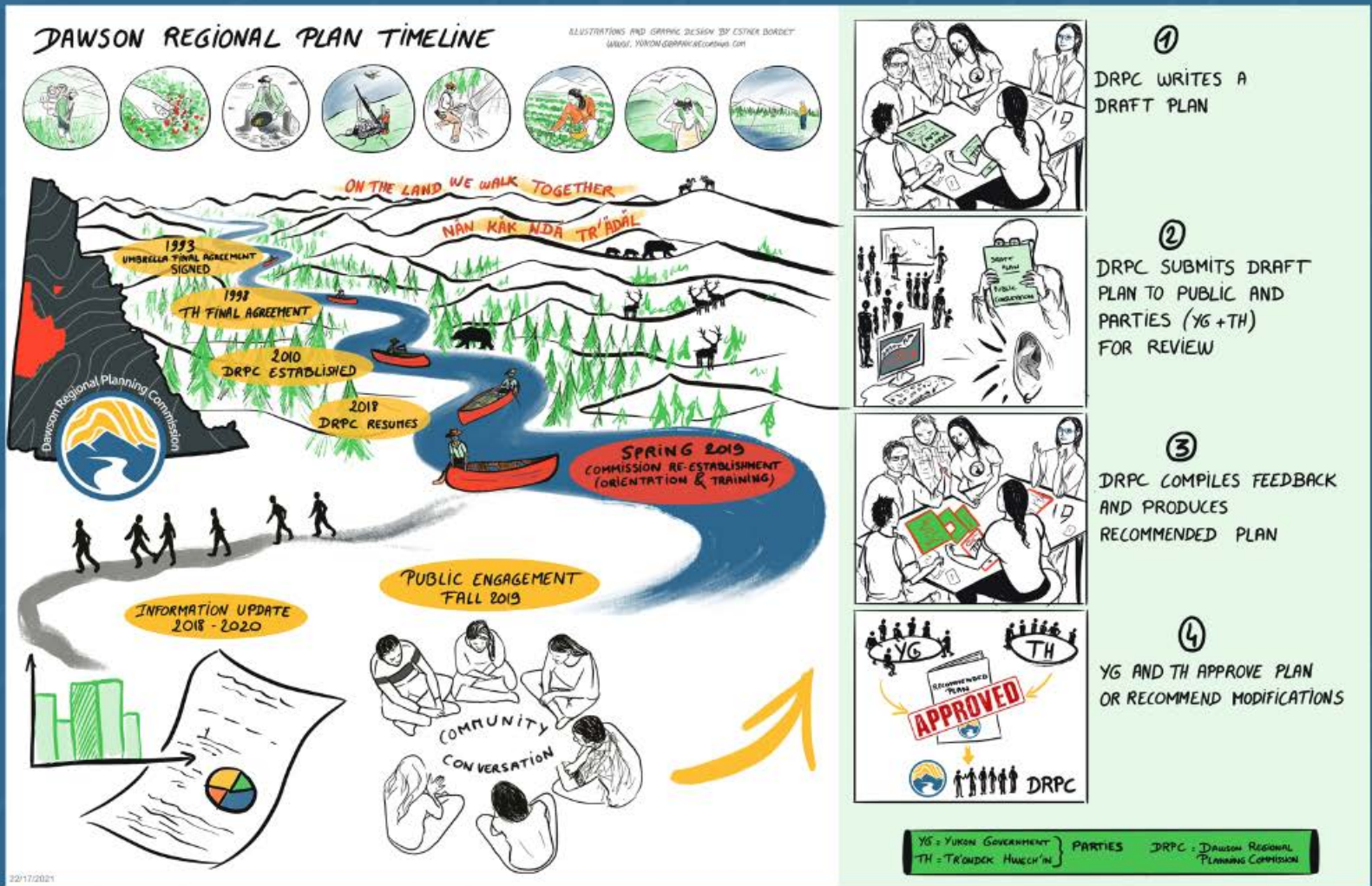
3

Plan Review

when the entire Plan is re-evaluated, usually when it needs major changes and revisions

The Draft Plan outlines a recommended process for accepting, reviewing, and making decisions on Plan Variances and Amendments to this Plan. It also recommends that the Parties should jointly develop a framework for the periodic review and ongoing monitoring of the Plan.

Next Steps



Public engagement on the Draft Plan will take place in the summer and fall of 2021. This process will gather the perspectives of the public, First Nations citizens, non-government organizations, businesses, governments, technical experts, and anyone interested in the planning region



The Dawson Regional Planning Commission will then consider all feedback received during the Draft Plan public review period when it is ready to rewrite the Draft Plan as a Recommended Plan.



The Recommended Land Use Plan will then be considered by the Yukon and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Governments as well as Affected First Nations.



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Notes

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On The Land We Walk Together
Nän kāk ndä tr'ädäl