



## First Nation Participation in Assessments

**The Act guarantees opportunities for the participation of Yukon First Nations persons and will make use of traditional knowledge and experience in the assessment process.**

The *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* was established, in part, to protect, promote and where possible enhance the well-being and traditional economies of Yukon First Nation persons and their special relationship with the land. The Act guarantees opportunities for the participation of Yukon First Nations persons and will make use of traditional knowledge and experience in the assessment process. The Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB) and its Designated Offices are mandated to fulfill this purpose in assessments.

The Act is a requirement of Chapter 12 - Development Assessment Process - of the Umbrella Final Agreement. The Act was developed by a partnership of the federal government, territorial government, and the Council of Yukon First Nations.

The Act guarantees that the views and information of Yukon First Nations and their citizens will be sought during assessments. Notification will be sent to any First Nation on whose territory the project will be located or where the project might have significant environmental or socio-economic effects. First Nations may also request to be notified of any type of project that they are interested in. For clarity, the Gwich'in Tribal Council is included in the definition of Yukon First Nation.



The Act provides opportunities for the incorporation of traditional knowledge in the assessment process. Traditional knowledge is expressly listed as a factor that must be considered and incorporated in an assessment.

### Yukon First Nation Decision Bodies

Yukon First Nations are Decision Bodies for projects that occur on their settlement land. As Decision Bodies, First Nations will receive recommendations from the assessor with all relevant project information. The First Nation will then decide whether to accept, reject or vary with reasons the recommendations of the assessor and will issue a decision document.



## First Nation Participation Prior to an Assessment

Under the Act proponents of a project must consider the environmental and socio-economic effects of a project and list alternatives to the project.

Before submitting a proposal to the Executive Committee for a screening, a proponent must also consider the need to protect the rights of Yukon First Nations citizens under their final agreements as well as protect their culture, traditions, health and lifestyles. For Executive Committee submissions the proponent of a project must consult with any First Nation on whose territory the project will be located or where the project might have significant environmental or socio-economic effects.



## Participation of First Nations and UFA Boards and Committees During Assessments

When an assessment begins, notification will be sent to any First Nation on whose territory the project will be located or where the project might have significant environmental or socio-economic effects. Renewable Resources Councils, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the Salmon Sub-Committee will be notified of all projects that may have environmental or socio-economic effects on areas and/or wildlife that are within the mandate of those boards, councils and committees. The notification list will also include any person having an interest in the outcome of a project and who has written to be added to the notification list. Organizations and persons can be added to the notification list throughout the assessment.

First Nations, boards, councils and committees will have opportunities to participate and share their views and information during the comment period of the assessment. First Nations as Decision Bodies may request assessors to consider additional matters in an assessment. In some cases and at the discretion of the assessor, First Nations, boards, councils and committees may be a part of advisory committees for particular assessments.

## Considering Traditional Knowledge in Assessments

Any traditional knowledge shared by a First Nation, individual, or committee will be given full and fair consideration in an assessment. The Act directs assessors to give traditional knowledge, scientific information and other information full and fair consideration in all assessments.

Any information shared during an assessment will be posted to the YESAB Public Registry. Any follow-up correspondence from the assessor, proponent, or other participant will also be posted to the public registry. The public registry can be accessed at any Designated Office or by the Internet at the YESAB Online Registry.

In some cases traditional knowledge may be considered confidential in an assessment. Except for Panel reviews, the Executive Committee will determine if traditional knowledge will be considered confidential. In the case of a review, the Panel established will make that determination. Procedures have been developed to manage and protect confidential information in an assessment. For more information contact your local Designated Office or the main YESAB office.

