

The VOICE

YUKON ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT BOARD NEWSLETTER - issue #04

FALL 2011

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The Voice is a seasonal newsletter for the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB). YESAB conducts assessments on development project proposals and makes a recommendation to government decision bodies on whether a project should proceed, not proceed, or proceed with specific terms and conditions.

Introduction

In this edition of The Voice we take a closer look at Traditional Knowledge and highlight examples of how it is being applied to environmental and socio-economic assessment in Yukon. We will introduce the most recent appointment to the Executive Committee and update you on the Eagle Gold Project screening. The latest numbers and stats are also provided in stunning colour! Enjoy.

HERITAGE POLICY RELEASED

In the last edition (http://www.yesab.ca/news_events/newsletters.html) we told you about the guidance and operational policy we have been working on. We are happy to announce that the Heritage Resource Information Requirements for Land Application Proposals Policy is now complete and available on our website. The policy contains detailed information on the potential effects projects may have on heritage resources, outlines the specific objectives of a heritage assessment, and describes the level of detail required for an overview assessment versus a site assessment. Significance determination and information sensitivity is discussed and mitigation approaches are explained. Thanks to all the participants who helped us create this policy. You can find the complete policy on our website at www.yesab.ca/publications/guides.html.

YUKON GOVERNMENT, YUKON WATER BOARD AND YESAB COMBINE FORCES

Yukon Government, Yukon Water Board and YESAB have combined forces to create a document on water control structures and dams for Yukon. Development projects are often required to divert, store and manage water with the use of berms and conveyance ditches. Ensuring these structures are properly built and maintained is imperative for all proponents. The guide will help support and inform direct discussions between proponents, regulators and assessors. Stay tuned for a final version to be released in the next quarter.

DAVE KEENAN Appointed to the Executive Committee

The Honourable John Duncan, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development announced the appointment of Dave Keenan to the Executive Committee of the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB). Mr. Keenan has been a Board member for YESAB since 2005 and will now play a larger role as an Executive Committee member. Dave was born and raised in Yukon and has been involved extensively in the land claims negotiation process. He is a former Yukon Government cabinet minister.

The Executive Committee is made up of the Chair and two board members and has a number of responsibilities under YESAA. Dave Keenan will join current members Stephen Mills and Ken McKinnon. The Executive Committee is responsible for conducting environmental and socio-economic screenings that are submitted directly or referred by the Designated Offices.



Dave Keenan, Executive Committee Member



Traditional Knowledge in Assessment

The proposed project was a 2 ha residential land application at the east end of Little Salmon Lake. Some cottage lots currently exist along Little Salmon Lake but not in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project. The proponents were planning on building their house atop a knoll that overlooks the lake and the Magundy River Valley. Comments submitted by Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) indicated that the project location was a family use area. To follow-up on those comments, YESAB assessors visited the project site and met with RRDC members in Ross River. As it turned out, the importance of the knoll as a lookout, an excellent place to view moose in the river valley for hunting, is well known among RRDC and the Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation (LSCFN) members. The knowledge of the site has been passed down through generations.

YESAA directs assessors to give traditional knowledge and scientific information full and fair consideration in all assessments. The Designated Office considered the input of the RRDC and the LSCFN and incorporated the comments into the assessment.

Upon completing the assessment the Designated Office concluded that permanent loss of the knoll as a traditional use site represented a significant effect that could not be mitigated. The assessment also concluded that the project would result in significant adverse cumulative effects to First Nation's "sense of place", a finding which stemmed from issues that have arisen between First Nations who have lived along Little Salmon Lake for many years and relative newcomers to the area. The Decision Body (Energy Mines and Resources) accepted YESAB's recommendation that the project not proceed.

Under YESAA Traditional Knowledge is defined as *"the accumulated body of knowledge, observations, and understandings about the environment, and about the relationships of living things with one another and the environment, that is rooted in the traditional way of life of first nations"*.



- A First Nation is notified of any projects located within their traditional territory or that may have significant effects within its territory.
- Every assessment includes mandatory time frames for the collection and consideration of information from First Nations and the public.
- Relevance and weight of scientific or traditional knowledge will be determined by the assessor.
- Upon application, traditional knowledge maybe designated confidential by the Executive Committee.

TK PROTOCOL ESTABLISHED BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND ROSS RIVER DENE COUNCIL

In August the exploration company Golden Predator and the Ross River Dena Council announced that they had signed a Traditional Knowledge Protocol for the Grew Creek Project. The protocol confirms that traditional knowledge will be incorporated into all phases of the Grew Creek project. This is a good example of a company and a First Nation working together to collect and incorporate knowledge and understanding of the landscape, the wildlife and first nation's heritage resources. The Protocol will help guide the compilation of Traditional Knowledge relevant to the Grew Creek Project and will extend to the Company's other projects within the traditional lands of the Ross River Dena people.

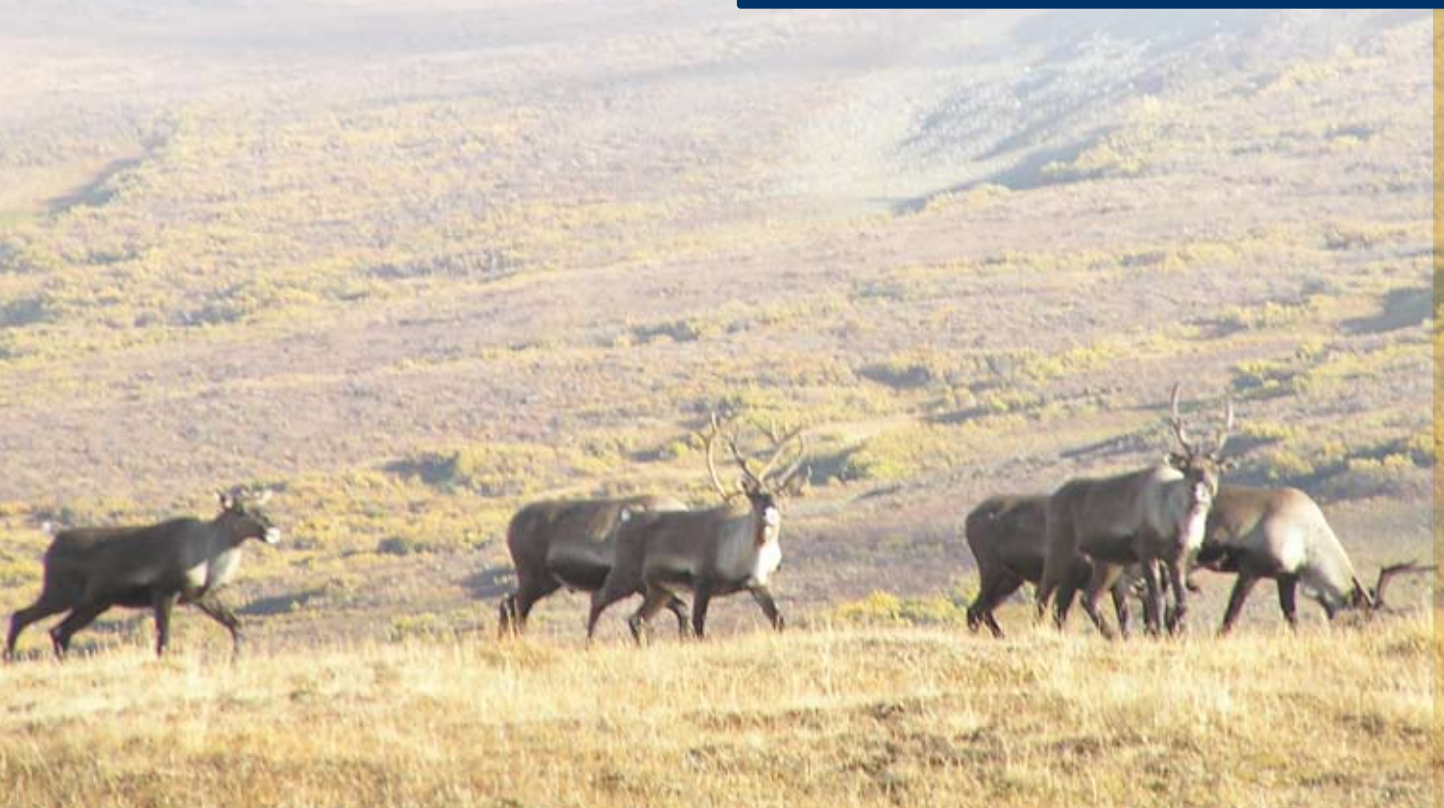
The collection and use of this information will be valuable as activities move into the environmental and socio-economic assessment phase. Under YESAA, traditional knowledge is given full and fair

consideration along with scientific information. The incorporation of traditional knowledge into project phases will help build better project proposals for potential submissions to YESAB. The early collection of traditional knowledge by the First Nation will also make participation and comment submissions to the YESAA process more efficient and thorough.

YESAB considers traditional knowledge as an integral part of the environmental and socio-economic assessment process and encourages industry and First Nations to collect and incorporate this vital information into project planning and development.

QUICK FACT

Over 6300 people have "Made Their Voice Count" by submitting comments to YESAB since November 2005.



YESAB participates in the Caring for the Land Initiative

The Caring for the Land Initiative is a 14-week training program that prepares Aboriginal people (from Northern BC and Yukon) for employment in the assessment, remediation and long-term monitoring of northern contaminated sites. Each intake accepts up to 20 students, includes on-site training and teaches students the skills needed for environmental management relating to remediation of contaminated sites. The program represents a formalized partnership between the Yukon Mine Training Association, representatives from Aboriginal organizations and communities, industry, educational institutions and governments. YESAB is keen to participate and see the value and importance of the curriculum.

YESAB staff and Board came out to support the delivery of the initiative. Stephen Mills, Chair, Bengt Pettersson, Executive Director and Jennifer Clark, the Designated Office Manager for the Teslin Office participated in the first intake and provided a YESAB 101 presentation to the group. The Teslin Designated Office returned a few weeks later to work through a project scenario with students and discuss how the YESAA process would apply. YESAB plans to continue to participate and support this important and successful initiative.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE UPDATE

Eagle Gold Project - Update

The proponent is proposing the design, construction, operation, closure, and reclamation of a gold mine. The property is situated in the Dublin Gulch watershed about 85 km northeast of Mayo within the Traditional Territory of the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyak Dun. Gold extraction will utilize sodium cyanide heap leaching technology. The proposed Project is planned to include a 20-month construction phase, a 7-year active mining phase, and a 10-year closure and reclamation phase, followed by a post-closure monitoring phase.

Update: The Executive Committee held a public meeting in Mayo on August 24 and extended the Public Comment Period until August 31st in order to provide an opportunity for those at the meeting to submit comments. Since the public meeting in August, an information request has been sent to the proponent, based on the information collected from the public comments on the project proposal. The Executive Committee is now waiting for a response.

QUICK FACT

YESAB does not issue or enforce any permits or authorizations. That is the role of governments.

WHAT THE NUMBERS SAY

Annual Project Statistics 2010-2011

Projects Submitted in the 2010-2011 fiscal year

DO	255
ExCom	2
TOTAL PROJECTS SUBMITTED	257

Projects Submitted to Designated Office

DO	Submitted	Cancelled or Withdrawn	Active or Assessed
Dawson	74	14	60
Haines Junction	47	8	39
Mayo	52	7	45
Teslin	18	3	15
Watson Lake	25	3	22
Whitehorse	39	3	36
TOTAL	255	38	217

Number of days to complete a Designated Office Evaluation

(proposal adequate to recommendation sent)

Average Number of Days	40
Max Number of Days	215
Min Number of Days	16

Designated Office Projects Submitted by Sector

(April 1, 2010 - March 31, 2011)

PRIMARY SECTOR	TOTALS
Agriculture and Aquaculture	10
Camps	1
Energy - Petroleum	0
Energy - Power Generation	3
Energy Transmission (Gas, Electricity)	14
Forestry	6
Military	0
Mining - Other (Coal, Aggregate etc.)	0
Mining - Placer	50
Mining - Quartz	42
Other Industrial Activities	17
Recreation and Tourism	21
Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Land Development	47
Scientific Research/ Wildlife Management	1
Transportation - Rail, Marine, Air	0
Transportation - Roads, Access Roads and Trails	28
Utilities - Telecommunications	0
Utilities - Water and Wastewater	8
Waste Management - Contaminated Sites	5
Waste Management - Solid Waste	2
Waste Management - Special & Hazardous Waste	0
TOTAL EVALUATIONS	255

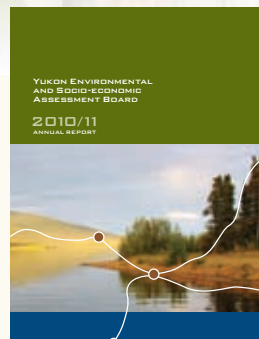


UBER URBAN GARDEN

A group of YESAB employees took on two garden plots in the south garden of the Downtown Urban Garden Society this summer. Employees tilled the soil, planted a variety of vegetables, watered and weeded the plots on a regular basis. Monique Chatterton, Assessment Officer for the Whitehorse Designated Office and Katrine Frese, Assessment Officer for the Executive Committee helped organize the initiative. The garden was a tremendous success and produced some of the finest broccoli, cauliflower, beets, carrots and potatoes this side of Carmacks. The multiple harvests were donated to the Whitehorse food bank throughout the season.

QUICK FACT

YESAB has over thirty-five employees in seven offices located throughout the territory. There are seven Board members who are appointed by the Federal Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development.



2010/11 Annual Report Released and Distributed

YESAB's 2010-2011 Annual Report has been published and is available on our web site or in paper form at any YESAB office. The YESAB

Annual Report is a brief synopsis of the past fiscal year. It highlights project assessments and the initiatives that we worked on throughout the year. If you want to learn about YESAB, the assessment process, the people involved, the projects assessed or the financial details of our operations; the Annual Report is that and more.

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