



Army Beach Land Use Study

prepared by:
Inukshuk Planning & Development

prepared for:
**Community Services Branch
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Army Beach Land Use Study

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to deal with 7 lot enlargement applications that have been made for portions of public accesses at Army Beach. The goal of this study is to provide recommendations for the disposition of the public accesses.

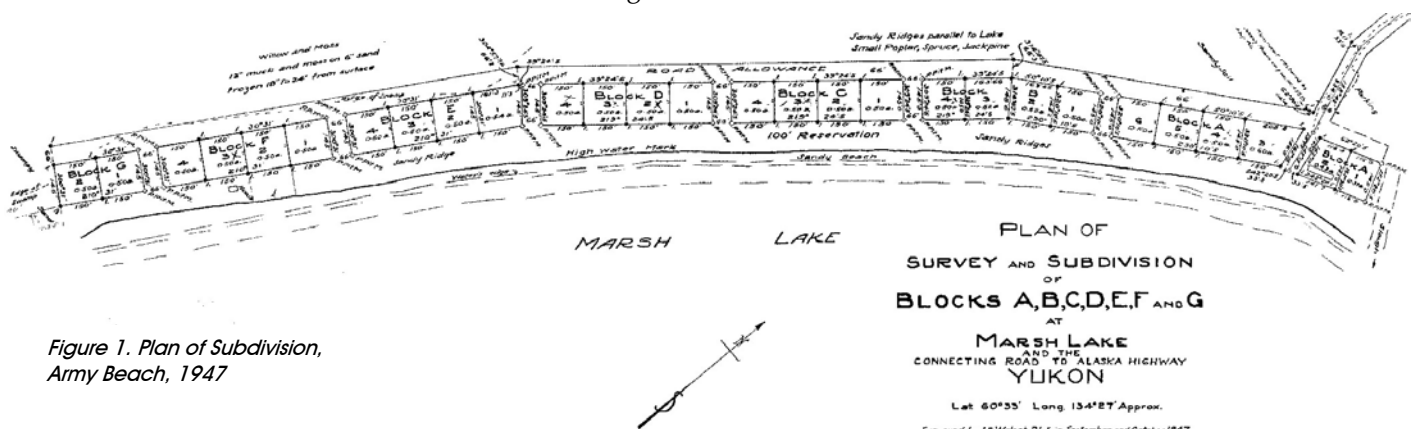
In this introductory section, Army Beach is introduced via its historical context and a summary of the sequence of events to date relating to the lot enlargement applications is given. The steering committee that was formed to deal with them and provide recommendations is then introduced.

To provide the basis for these recommendations, details are given regarding the access characteristics, land uses at Army Beach, details of the lot enlargement applications and other notable issues (sections 2 and 3). The steering committee's main task was public consultation, and this is summarized in section 4. With context, issues, and the results of consultation in mind, potential solutions were generated, and these are given in section 5.

1.1 Historical Context

Use of the sandy beach ridge along the western shore of Marsh Lake intensified when the U.S. Army turned it into a temporary staging area along the Alaska Highway circa World War II. This use lent the area its name, and when troops left, several military buildings were left behind. So began the occupancy of Army Beach with temporary residents. The popularity of the area has since steadily increased because of its proximity to the increasingly large centre of Whitehorse and its high recreational value.

To keep control over the development, a formal plan of survey was established in 1947 that specified clusters of 4 square 150 foot (45m) lots, separated by 6 66-foot (20m) rights-of-way for beach access, extending along the beach ridge away from the highway (see **Figure 1**). Originally there were few cabins, and a specification of 28 lots must have seemed generous.



Although this original plan also called a 100 foot (30.48 metre) setback from the lake, many of the new residents of the area situated their houses within this setback zone. As a result, when the plan was later re-surveyed lot boundaries were adjusted so that these residences would be encompassed by their lots. The requirement of a setback from the Ordinary High Water Mark (O.H.W.M.) was waived.

Many other adjustments of property lines occurred, with many lots being subdivided, and extended away from the lake as well. The access road, Army Beach Road, extended further along the shore, and lots were created on its western side as well. The 6 public accesses mostly remained as is, although some took on new functions as shared driveways, and the access furthest from the highway was developed into a road in the 1980s. The six accesses and all presently existing lots are shown in **Figure 2**, below. For ease of reference, the accesses have been labelled as A through F, moving away from the Alaska Highway.

Details on the current situation and related issues can be found in sections 2 and 3.

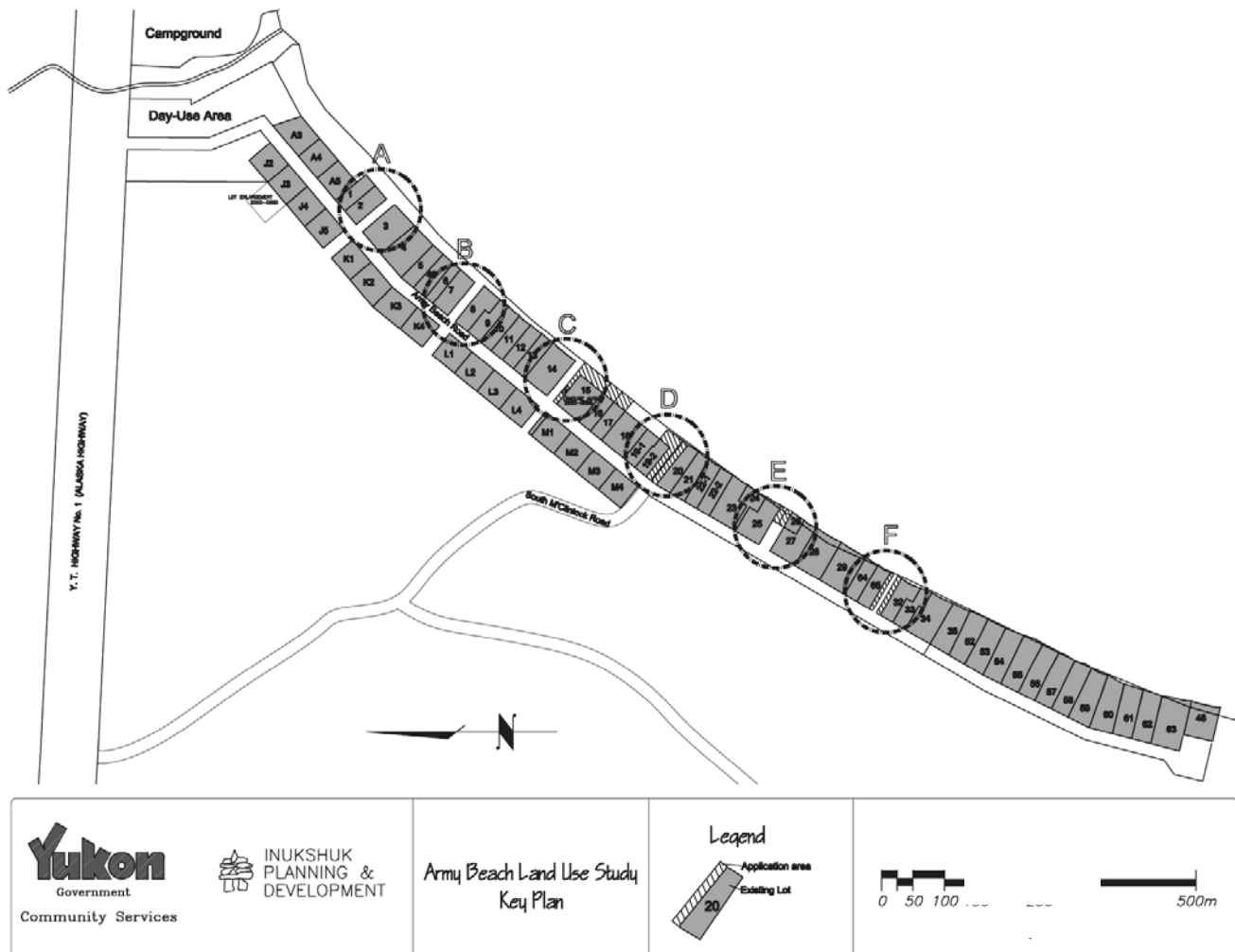


Figure 2. Army Beach today

1.2 Lot Enlargement Applications

Since April of 2000 a total of 9 land use applications have been received for lot enlargements by property owners on the east side of Army Beach Road. All of them were deferred until the completion of this study.

In preparation for the review of the applications, a site inspection was carried out in September of 2000. The results of that inspection are summarized in section 2.1 below.

Army Beach owners and residents were informed of the applications and the site inspection, and a meeting with the Land Application Review Committee (LARC) was held in April 2001. At that meeting 7 of the applicants made formal presentations of their applications and several other comments were heard. LARC decided to defer decision on the applications until January 2002, in order to allow "a local planning scheme to address access issues and future development (management) of the area" to be undertaken. It was felt that there were too many issues to be dealt with because Army Beach is a major recreation area.

Once a recommendation from this land use study has been received by LARC, it will consider all the information, then make its recommendation to the Director of Lands, who will make the final decision.

1.3 The Origins of this Study

Inukshuk Planning & Development (IPD) were retained by the Community Services branch of the Yukon Government to act as planning consultants. A terms of reference was drafted that focused upon achieving a recommendation coming from the collective Army Beach community. It was decided that this could best be achieved by working with a steering committee composed of Army Beach residents.

Marsh Lake Local Advisory Council appointed the members of the Army Beach Land Use Study Steering Committee in December 2001. The Steering Committee held its first meeting and site inspection in February 2002. The Committee's mandate was to come up with potential solutions for each of the public accesses in question, not only for recommendation for LARC's decision, but in the interest of setting precedent for future decisions. To accomplish this, a set of principles were developed to guide their decisions, and the Committee engaged in public consultation in the form of a questionnaire, website and a public meeting.

In addition, the Army Beach Land Use Study involved the documentation of information for inclusion in a future Local Area Plan to be conducted for the area.

The Steering Committee members were:

- Pam Blackburn, Marsh Lake resident and Advisory Council representative
- Dianne Gau, Member at large
- Dianne Green, Army Beach resident
- Roberta Kotylak, Army Beach resident
- Betty Schiffkorn, Army Beach resident

The Steering Committee's principles were as follows:

- Each access must be judged on its own merit;
- An access may be closed as long as this decision is made with all accesses in mind;
- The public has a right to lake access;
- Public land must be well-managed and controlled by the public;
- Property owners have a right to protect their property from erosion;
- The privacy and safety of adjacent property owners must be respected;
- Erosion of the dune ecosystem will continue and we must look to the future when making decisions;
- Varying water levels need to be considered when determining the need for public accesses; and
- The Marsh Lake Plan that will be done in the future must be considered when making decisions.

2. Existing Situation

2.1 The Public Accesses

The site inspection of September 2000 provided most of the information for this section. A sample picture of each access is given to the left.



Access A is the smallest of the accesses, at 15 metres wide by approximately 67 metres long. It is also the most difficult to pass, as it is tree-covered with undulating dunes with up to 8 metres of undulation (see picture). There is an approximate 3 metre drop-off at the shore. Passage is easiest by skirting the border of Lot 2, the owners of which have constructed a small bridge within the access boundaries.



Access B is also 15 metres wide and slightly longer than Access A at approximately 70 metres. It is also less difficult to traverse, although it also features undulating dunes, fairly dense tree cover, and a steep drop-off at the shore. A rough and natural trail winds its way through the trees, and it has been marked with a hand-made sign at the road (see picture).



Access C is similar to Access B in that it contains dunes, tree cover, and a drop at the beach. However, it is 20 metres wide and a clearing has been made at the mid-way point (see picture), where a neighbouring lot has acquired a temporary land use authorization for part of their septic system. Access C is as difficult to perceive from the road as Access A.



Access D is also 20 metres wide but from the road it looks like a private driveway, and in fact is used as such. The driveway continues for about two-thirds of the access' 80 metres, where a fairly level treed area begins (see picture), that continues until the approximate 2 metre drop to the beach. Overall, it provides the second-easiest access to the beach, after Access F. It starts at the intersection of South M'clintock Road and Army Beach Road. In addition, it should be noted that when walking along the beach from the public area near the highway, Access D is the furthest point that is still accessible when water levels are at their highest.



Access E is thus not accessible at that time of the year. It is approximately 20 metres by 70 metres, and like D, also starts at the road as a shared driveway, then becomes a fairly level treed area (see picture), but with a higher (approximately 3 metre) drop at the beach. There are no west-side lots across from either accesses E or F.



Access F is quite different from the others – it is also 20 metres wide and about 70 metres long, but it has been converted into an approximate 8 metre wide road that slopes gently down towards the shore (see picture). It is used as a walkway as well as for equipment access to the beach and launching shallow boats. There is a neighbouring fence that is located within the access.

2.2 Existing Land Uses

2.2.1 Residential and Cottage Uses

There are 70 residential lots along Army Beach Road – 52 on the east (waterfront) side, and 18 on the west side. The steering committee reports that approximately 25% are occupied year-round. The average lot size is about 0.5 acres (about 2000 m²), while larger lots are about 0.8 acres (about 3200 m²). Depending on ground conditions, septic systems typically require at least 1 acre (4050 m²), making them not possible for most lots in the area. They have been installed on some of the larger lots along the beachfront, but a large deterrent in keeping people from using their homes on a full-time basis is the lack of a septic system.

The chief limiting factor in developing more residential lots is the ability of the ground to accommodate them. Fragile conditions at the shore and marshy conditions further back seem to indicate that there is no more land in this area that accommodate residential development.

2.2.2 Public, Community, and Recreational Uses

Public-use and community facilities: The beach and campground are popular amongst Whitehorse-area residents. High levels of use occur on any hot day throughout the summer season.

Recreational, open space, greenbelt and buffer areas: The trail networks are used by residents and visitors alike throughout the year. The trails in the adjacent parkland are put to good use throughout the summer by hikers and ATV'ers; snowmobiling and cross-country skiing are popular in winter. Developed public accesses could potentially serve further open-space uses than just as right-of-ways (e.g. as parks), were they to be developed as such.

Services: Services are limited to phone and electricity. Most residents use water delivery or pump their own water. Septic systems are used but pump-outs are more common than full septic fields, as mentioned above.

2.2.3 Traditional Uses

There are Kwanlin Dun and Carcross Tagish land claims in the general area. The closest claims are by Kwanlin Dun, along the Alaska Highway. There are no claims within the study area.

2.2.4 Areas subject to flooding and erosion



Figure 3. The potential for rapid erosion at Army Beach is demonstrated at lot 24 during a 1981 storm. (photo: Bruce Chambers)

The beach-dune ecosystem has experienced significant erosion, mostly due to wind and wave action (see **Figure 3**). However, the presence of human activity has exacerbated the problem. Although this land is not entirely suitable for residential use, its presence and the fact that erosion will continue means that action must be taken if homeowners want to preserve their properties. Barriers such as walls have been constructed, and other structures such as breakwaters need to be considered.

2.2.5 Other Land Uses

Land leases: The owner of Lot 15 has obtained a permit to use part of Access C for use for a septic field. The long-term viability of this solution needs to be investigated who need lot extensions for septic fields.

Land use permits: The area is not zoned, so land uses are lenient. There are several home-based businesses at Army Beach and in the general area.

Mining Claims: Prior mining claims in this area have lapsed. There seems to be little future potential for mining claims.

2.3 Current Lot Enlargement Applications

7 of the 9 applications presently under consideration are for portions of the public accesses. The remaining 2 applications were submitted by property owners whose property does not border a public access – they have applied for the foreshore between their lot and the lake. In addition, 2 of the 7 applicants who have applied for portions of the public accesses have also applied for the foreshore, making 4 foreshore applications in total. It was decided that consideration of the foreshore applications was beyond the scope of the Steering Committee and so would not be included in this study. For future reference, some foreshore-related issues are noted in section 2.4.

Reasons given by each applicant for each of the 7 applications for the public accesses are noted below, with some further explanation where warranted. **Figure 4** shows the location of the applications (in hatching) as well as the accesses and lots.

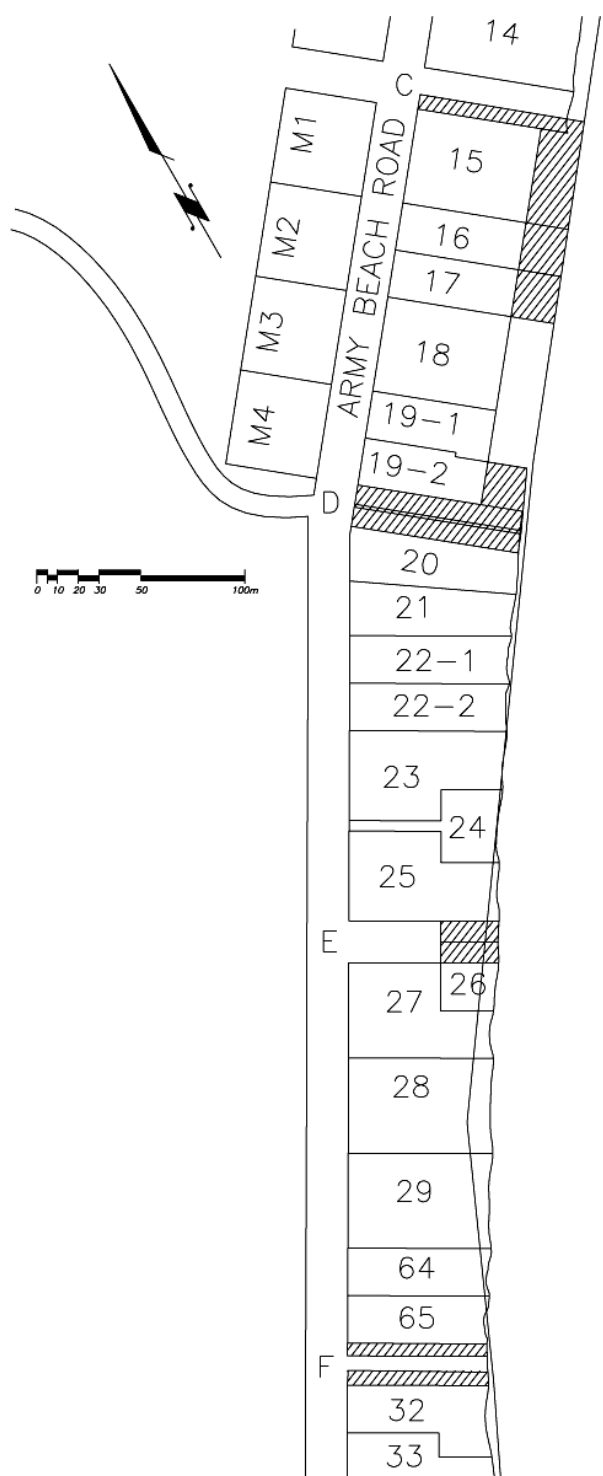


Figure 4. Lot Enlargement Applications

Lot 15

- Applications states that the applicants want the area alongside their lot to install a septic system.
- The septic system has in fact already been installed and encroaches onto the area of the access. This encroachment has been made legal with a temporary land use authorization. However, septic systems are required to be set back 5 metres from property lines, and so their application would allow for this.

Lot 19-2

- Applicants wish to legitimize present use of the access as a driveway/parking lot.
- It was noted by the Steering Committee on their site inspection that not much privacy is currently afforded to this lot. The applicants' house is located in the south-east corner of the lot, very close to the access property line.

Lot 20

- Applicants want land to guarantee access to their lot for fuel delivery truck and septic pump-out vehicle which now use neighbour's land (lot 21).
- They presently use the access as a driveway but it is too narrow for larger vehicles, and so wish to create a new wider driveway.

Lot 25

- Applicants want to build a barrier to prevent erosion to protect their remaining land and so need extra land.
- Already lost 7 to 15 feet (2 to 4 m) off the front of their lot

Lot 26

- Applicants want to enlarge currently very small lot (600 square metres in size – the smallest lot in the entire area).
- They need more land for parking.
- They want enhanced ability to build a breakwater.
- Have also had a serious problem with erosion in the past.

Lot 65

- Applicants currently use the access to get to their property.
- They support public use of the access.
- They could possibly use the land for a future septic system.

Lot 32

- Applicants want to make legal the fence that is located in the access
- They support public use of the access
- They could possibly use the land for a future septic system.

In addition, the owners of Lot 14 submitted a lot enlargement application at about the same time as the other applications, but gave no justification for nor indication of the area that were actually applying for. It was thus rejected.

2.4 Applications for the Foreshore

As mentioned above this issue is not within the realm of this study. Were such applications to be granted, amendments to regulation and negotiation with the federal government would be required.

Concerns were raised about the foreshore applications at the public meeting, as the issue at hand is not easy to resolve. An obvious schism exists between those who feel that the accepted planning principle of leaving the reserve should apply and those who feel that if a waiver has been granted at a location in the past, the same waiver should apply today. A judgement call will need to be made. A brief summary of the applications follows:

Lot 15

- Applicants submitted an application for a portion of the adjacent public access (because of their septic system – see above) and then added the foreshore on to their applications
- No further justification was given for this portion of their application.

Lot 16

- Applicants presently use this land and so want to legitimize this use.
- They think that the land is too close for public use at any rate.

Lot 17

- Applicants state that they wish to increase their property size.

Lot 19-2

- These applicants also applied for a portion of the public access (see above) for privacy issues.
- They indicate that since they currently maintain the beachfront, they feel that they should own it as well.

3. Issues and Opportunities

There are several other issues that arose during the course of examining the lot enlargement applications and accesses. These have been addressed in a separate section because they cross a broad range of land uses and accesses. All have contributed to the complexity of reaching recommendations in this study. They are:

- Government lot enlargement policy;
- The ongoing erosion of beachfront,
- Septic systems,
- The day-use area,
- Further subdivision of lots,
- The west side accesses, and
- Future lot enlargement applications.

3.1 Government Policy

The Yukon Government has established a residential lot enlargement policy to act as a guideline in the review of applications. In its statement of objectives, the policy states that "Yukon Government lands may be made available in support of legitimate land use needs, provided that the applicant has demonstrated sound justification for the request and technical land management reviews are completed."

The policy recognizes that there are many factors to be considered when recommendations are made on lot enlargement applications. Notably, it specifies that specific individual requirements for land use can be met as long as community interests are protected.

There are many areas in the Yukon, such as Army Beach, that have been developed for recreational purposes according to a variety of federal recreation development criteria. The situation of permanent residences within former recreation areas has now become common. The policy recognizes that prior subdivision criteria should be considered when making decisions affecting these lots. It also recognizes that established and well-supported principles of land management exist that can also be used, such as "maintaining public access and r-o-w corridors", and the 30.48-meter O.H.W.M. reserve. It specifies that these principles should be considered when applications are received from communities in generally low-populated areas where no existing planning exists – i.e. communities such as Army Beach.

3.2 Erosion

As noted above, the erosion of the beachfront is a serious issue that affects Army Beach and all of its residents. Although no specific rate of erosion could be determined, empirical data gathering suggested that it was enough of a concern that action needs to be taken.

No recommendations to deal with the erosion will be made within this study due to the complexity of the issues involved. However, its importance as a criteria for granting lot enlargements was noted.

3.3 Septic Systems

As Army Beach transforms from an area of seasonal residence to year-round use, an increasing number of lot owners have installed full septic systems (i.e. that use a septic field instead of a holding tank). There is increasing demand from property owners to be allowed to do so, and several of the lot enlargement applications mentioned septic systems, for one of the requirements of a septic field is an area of adequate size. Other requirements include a low water table and soil absorption rates above a certain level (depending upon water table and lot size).

As mentioned, the mean lot size is about 2000 m², with none as large as 4050 m², the generally recommended size for a full septic system. In addition, it is suspected that Army Beach has very high water table levels, especially at the south end. Despite the fact that these factors all point towards the use of holding tanks, it is not possible to make blanket recommendations regarding septic fields at Army Beach because any individual lot would require soil testing to be sure.

One additional factor that has been noted by Environmental Health is the tendency of holding-tank owners to illegally puncture their tanks.

3.4 The Day-Use Area

The day-use area at Army Beach measures approximately 3 hectares in size. It is generally believed to be the most popular public beach in the Territory. Parks and Recreation does not keep accurate user statistics for its use but the Steering Committee reports that it gets heavy use on any hot day of the year. It is worthy of consideration in this study because like the public accesses it provides for access to Marsh Lake, for both residents and visitors alike.

The parking lot at the day-use area is a constant source of concern to Army Beach residents, most of whom have made it clear that they do not wish to see parking anywhere else (i.e., not in any of the accesses nor on Army Beach Road). On busy days, there is currently not enough parking at the day-use area to supply the demand. Many residents believe that rebuilding the bridge that used to connect the day-use area and the campground would alleviate some of the parking problems.

Ray Ooten of Parks and Recreation in Carcross is currently in charge of the day-use area's maintenance. He reports that "aside from being in a dangerous state of repair, the bridge was removed to help stop parties which started in the day-use from expanding to the campground or the opposite." However, the current general sentiment is that these parties are a thing of the past.

The Steering Committee decided to make a recommendation on this bridge due to its relationship to access issues at Army Beach.

3.5 Further Subdivisions

A concern was raised that were lot enlargements to be granted, the newly enlarged lots might then be subdivided. Some of the issues to consider are the high water table and the continued erosion of the beach ridge. This issue will be dealt with in the Local Area Plan process.

3.6 West-Side Accesses



Figure 5. The west-side access across from Access B.

There are 3 accesses that connect Army Beach Road to the parkland behind the west-side lots (see an example of one in **Figure 5**). These accesses are located across the road from east-side accesses A, B, and C (see **Figure 2**). Although there were no pending lot enlargement applications on these, and thus they were not part of the Steering Committee's mandate, it was recognized that the west-side accesses form an integral part of access issues at Army Beach. Thus, when future consideration is given to the overall transportation needs in the community, they will need to be considered. Also note that one questionnaire respondent indicated his intention to make an application for a portion of one of these accesses.

3.7 Future Applications

Principles held by the Steering Committee stated that each access was being dealt with on a case-by-case basis, and yet at the same time, an overall recommendation for the area was being formulated. This led to the question of potential future lot enlargement applications and if they would be dealt in a similar fashion.

The Steering Committee was informed of the immediate intentions of one Army Beach resident to apply for a portion of Access B. To date no application for a lot enlargement has been received from either adjacent property owner. If an application is received it needs to be reviewed in the light of the recommendations being made by the Committee, but the current recommendations will need to continue as-is. However, it was decided that the concept of phasing, as discussed in section 5.2, could be used to deal with the issue of which accesses are left natural and when.

4. Consultation

In order to effectively represent the viewpoint of Army Beach residents, the Steering Committee engaged in a number of forms of public consultation. The results of this consultation is summarized throughout the rest of this section.

The main opportunities for public input were a questionnaire and a public meeting. The public was also kept informed through numerous mail-outs including an introductory letter, two newsletters, and a notice of the public meeting. The newsletters gave an introduction to the project and issues at hand and summarized the results of the questionnaire. Finally, a website was created to distribute information such as the newsletters, questionnaire and ideas for solutions.

Copies of the questionnaire and newsletters are included in the Appendix. As of time of writing, the website is still available online at:
www.inukshukplanning.ca/armybeach

4.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was distributed to all Army Beach property owners and residents in mid-March 2002. It was also made available online. Responses were received until April 2, 2002. Responses to questions are detailed in the sections below.

4.1.1 Questions 1-4: Preliminary Information

These preliminary questions don't offer much insight on their own, but can help in the interpretation of future questions.

- All respondents are Army Beach owners or residents.
- Overall, we got a higher response rate from those with the highest stake in this issue. So, almost all people that live adjacent to accesses responded, and many of the people that live at Army Beach year-round responded (33% of total responses). The result of this is that the results will be skewed towards their views: year-round residents use the accesses more heavily and see a greater need for them. On the other hand, those that live adjacent use the accesses less and see less need for them.
- The high proportion of people who live adjacent to the accesses who responded meant that overall, 84% of respondents live on the East side, so again, the results will be 'skewed' towards their views – i.e. we can expect that the importance of retaining accesses A, B, and C will be under-reported, and this needs to be taken into account.

4.1.2 Question 5: Access Usage

Overall, the **current usage of the accesses is fairly low**. Even the fully developed access, F, is only used by about half of the population. The others range from about 10 to 25%.

The higher proportion of use by year-round residents for every access is a strong indication that **they are used in the winter as well** – about 50% more use in 5 of 6 cases.

The west-side respondents use the accesses much more than east-side, especially A, B, C, and D. West-side respondents and east-side respondents who don't live adjacent to an access, i.e. those without a stake in the access disposition, reported that **aside from F, C and D are the most used**.

Many comments were received regarding access use. Respondents fall into 3 groups:

- Group 1: **"Use all but 1 or 2"** – these respondents were very few, but some people did report using all or nearly all of them (most of these were west-side respondents).
- Group 2: **"Only use 2 or 3"** – about one quarter of all respondents reported using several accesses, for several different reasons. Some typical responses include:
 - "We only use the ones nearest my own lot"
 - "C and D are across from my cabin"
 - Don't use because "E too steep/high water", "A close to day-use area", "D privacy of adjacent owners"
 - "The reason for not using is because some are not cleared of trees"
- Group 3: **"Only 1 or none at all"** – the response of close to **three quarters** of respondents. Many of them use only F, with the following typical responses:
 - "no reason to use any other"
 - "use as a walkway in early spring occasionally"
 - "use for repairs to retaining wall/boat launch/etc"
- The responses of those that use none at all are perhaps the most instructive to us. These include:
 - "cabin adjacent to beach"
 - "embankments are too high"
 - "may use them if better signed"
 - "we try to avoid walking over the dunes to prevent erosion"
 - "access F is too shallow for our boat"

4.1.3 Question 6: Access Need

Again, analysis reveals that there were 3 schools of thought in response to the question, "which accesses are still needed today and should be protected for the future?":

- Group 1: **"All (or almost all) are needed"**. Nearly half of respondents fall into group 1. This group tended to make a lot of comments, and these fall into 5 groups:
 - "Maintain the original plan"
 - "Think about the future"
 - "This is public land and should remain as such"
 - "There is a pent-up demand for their use because they are not upgraded"
 - "We use them as is, so please leave them (as-is)"

- Group 2: **"2 or 3 are needed"**. Only 9 out of 39 respondents fall into this group, but they almost all gave specific reasons for their views. Respondents from Group 2 were generally in favour of keeping access F and 1 or 2 other accesses as footpaths for beach access. These were generally A, B, or C, although some also had reasons to keep D.
- Group 3: **"None or only 1 (generally access F) needed"**. Most from this group felt that only F was necessary, to fulfill its current function as a boat-launch/equipment access, etc. Only 2 people felt that even F was unnecessary.
- Note the difference between usage and need: three quarters use none or only 1, but only one third of respondents think that none or only 1 are needed. This lends strong support to making changes to the accesses.

Conclusions by access

- **F**, as would be expected, found the strongest support of all, with about 80% of all residents finding it necessary. Many people noted its importance as a boat launch.
- **E** had very few comments about it and the least amount of use and foreseen need. One person feels that accesses should be cleared and singled E and D out for retention because they are already partially cleared, but they are in the minority. All of the respondents who said E was necessary come from "Group 1" (with the exception of 1 person who lives adjacent to access C and has made an application for it and so called for A, B, and C to be closed because 'they are too close to the day-use area').
- **D** received good support for its retention, especially among those who are not adjacent to an access (60%). Not many D-specific comments were received, although one person did not its importance as the last access before high water.
- **C** has less support for retention than D, although most non-beach (west) side residents found it to be important. Comments received include "allows access to the beach where one exists with least amount of damage to the environment", and "midway down the road".
- **B** had stronger support than C and A, similar to D. Both seasonal residents and residents who live adjacent to accesses had it second in importance only to Access F. A number of people made comments, such as to retain it as a walking trail, that it is needed for west-side residents, etc.
- **A** is the most difficult access to cross, but it still received a notable amount support, again, with about 50% of respondents saying that it is necessary. Its high shores were viewed by some as a reason to open it, because they were less susceptible to erosion (although others viewed them as more susceptible...!) Its proximity to the day-use area led some to suggest that it could fulfill a similar function.

4.1.4 Question 7: Agree or disagree with the following statements...

This question allowed us to determine a) the importance of some issues, and b) provide us with an idea of how the Army Beach public would accept some of our ideas:

4.1.4.1 Issues:

- **Erosion:** more than 80% weighed in with 'agree' or 'strongly agree' for the immediate need for an erosion plan. This confirms our ideas about its severity in this area.

Perhaps more importantly, this shows that people recognize that a coordinated plan would be acceptable (as opposed to each individual home-owner taking action as necessary). Our recommendations can take this into account, and we can recommend this for the future Marsh Lake Area Plan.

- **Keeping Uses Controlled:** Almost everybody (92%) indicated that controlling access usage was important. We will need to make sure that if we develop accesses and thus encourage their use, these uses can be informally supervised. Also, this question served as a way for people to express that certain uses (i.e. car, 4x4, etc.) are not appropriate in the accesses (aside from F).
- **Maintenance:** The issue here is not current maintenance, but future maintenance should features such as garbage cans be installed. Many comments were received in other sections on this issue, although with only half of respondents agreeing that maintenance is an issue (and one quarter not sure, one quarter disagreeing), it is not as much of a concern as the two issues above.

4.1.4.2 Public Acceptance of Ideas:

- **Keep Accesses Natural:** Next to no disagreement on this issue means that major changes to the accesses are out of the question.
- **Year-round access:** Two-thirds of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the notion that we are not just dealing with summer issues here. This lends support to ideas such as clearing trails and demonstrates the importance of retaining the accesses.
- **Campground and Day-Use Area Connection:** With only 6% of people disagreeing on this issue, it looks like near-total community support would be had for a replacement bridge. Also, comments were received indicating that use of the campground parking lot could then be encouraged.
- **Access Width:** One-third of people disagreed with the idea that the accesses were wider than necessary, thus indicating that if any lot applications are granted, no matter how sensible they may be, there will be opposition. About half of the respondents agreed with the idea, so we can still consider it.
- **Marking and Fencing:** This was the most contentious issue: split nearly half-way between the agrees and the disagrees. It would seem, though, that if fencing is justifiable, it will not be a concern. On the other hand few comments raised about keeping the accesses unmarked seem to indicate that proposed signage will have its detractors, no matter how appropriate it may seem.

4.1.5 Question 8: Improvements

This question was fairly straightforward and allows us to know what would be necessary if improvements were made to accesses.

- **Not Needed:** Receiving strong 'not needed' responses were the ideas of a park/play area, and parking. Many people indicated that these were already found at the day-use area (although 30% of people said that parking was needed, they also tended to indicate that it would be better at the day-use area). Just over 50% of respondents said that a cleared trail was not needed, which is somewhat surprising given the number of comments that footpaths were needed – leading to the indication that objection was to the 'cleared' aspect of it (which would fit with the strong response to keeping the accesses natural).

The idea of a fence along the property line of accesses also received a near-50% response of not needed, likely for the same reason.

- **Needed/Not Sure:** Other issues were not so clear, and showed greater polarization. The ideas of a garbage can, a sign at the road, and stairs to the beach all received support from about 50% of respondents, although this obviously means that 50% felt that they were not needed or were not sure. This can be taken as indication that these improvements may be needed in some locations but not all, and should be discussed at the public meeting. Also needing further discussion is the idea of an outhouse, which received a split of opinion between needed, not needed, and not sure categories.

Other ideas:

A few suggestions of other things that are needed or not needed were given, however, for the most part, people used this space for general comments, which fit in better in question 9 below. So, most of the suggestions were moved there, but we can consider the following three ideas:

- Signs at the beach,
- Signage along the trail, and
- A bridge between the day-use area and the campground.

4.1.6 Question 9: Other comments and ideas

About half of the concerns expressed in this section related to the day-use area. People see the issues of access disposition and the day-use area as being linked. Indicative comments include:

- There is no need to develop "day-use-type" features in the accesses, e.g. park, play area, parking.
- The day-use area does not have enough parking.
- That need for beach beyond the day-use area is rare. "In the 30+ years our family has owned Lot 2, we have rarely seen any demand to access the beach beyond the day-use area. On very hot weekend days, people will park at the day-use area and walk down the beach until they find a spot. They will rarely walk as far as Lot 1."
- The day-use area needs to be reconnected with the campground – especially to alleviate parking problems.

Other issues raised were:

- That **private ownership** of the beach is not acceptable. "99% of beachfront owners maintain the beach and don't own it".
- That **maintenance** had better be done if accesses are improved, etc. "If accesses sold to adjoining lots they will be properly maintained". "There should be an unsightly premise bylaw".
- That property owners should be able to take action against **erosion**.
- That **holding tanks** should be the standard, and land should not be granted for in-ground septic systems
- A few extra comments were received with general comments about what to do with the accesses, "keep them completely natural", "allow a footpath only".

- Two east-side residents noted that they recognized the need by **west-side residents** for accesses. "But beach people from Whitehorse should be discouraged".
- A few more concrete suggestions for Access A were received, paraphrased they are: "erosion damage needs to be avoided, so if a sign was erected, then stairs and a pathway would as well, but overall the need for this is questionable."

4.2 Public Meeting

The public meeting took place on Wednesday May 1st at the Marsh Lake Fire Hall. Approximately 33 people were present, as well as the Steering Committee.

The meeting consisted of a description of the process that this project entails (described in Sections 1.2 and 1.3, above), a presentation of the different options (described in Section 5, below), and a question period. A summary of questions and responses follows.

- **West-side lots:** comments were received that these accesses should have been included as part of the study because they also impact beach access. People also wanted to know about prior lot enlargements granted to owners on the west-side.
- **The Territorial Lands Act Section 13 Waiver that has been placed on the foreshore:** residents were concerned that the waiver be applied to their property and application, and were informed that the 30.48 m setback requirement is still in effect, but the matter will be dealt with later.
- **Parking at the day-use area:** There was agreement on the idea of using the campground parking for excess parking, but also a suggestion that improvements be made at the day-use area (e.g. fill in swampy area), which will be noted.
- **Garbage cans/improvements:** One facet of the recommendations included the idea of garbage cans or potentially other maintenance-intensive improvements. Concerns were raised about who will empty the garbage cans, and that they will only create a problem for those next to the accesses. People will abuse them and dump household trash there, and so it was agreed that they should not be included.
- **Attracting unwanted usage:** Concern was raised that increased development of accesses will lead to excessive use by non-residents. A suggestion was made that a cleared trail be included at each access. However, other people commented that there were too many proposed trails.
- **Stairs:** People wondered how they would withstand wave action. It was explained that stairs are needed to protect the dunes, and that the stairs will be placed where they wouldn't normally be reached by waves.
- **Erosion:** There was general agreement that an overall erosion plan is essential. People noted that if one person does it out of step, everyone else will lose, and that without a plan, neighbours will be hurting neighbours.

Issues relating to specific accesses were also raised:

- **Access B:** The owner of an adjacent lot said that she intended to apply for a lot enlargement but was told by YTG to wait for the outcome of the study. "If I have to do it in order to force the issue, I'll do it tomorrow," she stated. She requested that the study specify a maximum width for the public access to ensure that there is land available for future lot enlargement applications.

- **Access D:** One owner felt that if you want to protect the accesses, then public access should not be given, and strongly was opposed to the possibility of people parking near his property.
- **Access F:** Concern was expressed that lot enlargements would make the road too narrow for large service vehicles, but this is untrue. Several people noted that the lake is too shallow at this point for larger boats, and so an agreement was reached that any proposals that the boat launch be upgraded should be scrapped.
- **Accesses D and F:** A concern was raised that the amount of downsizing for accesses D and F is excessive, since apparently both are used for getting equipment to the beach to correct erosion. Concerns about access along the beach being blocked by docks was also expressed, and the Steering Committee responded by saying that this will be addressed in the erosion plan.

5. Potential Solutions

In addition to consideration of all of the principles, history, issues, and consultation summarized above, other criteria used in determining solutions included:

- Prior exclusive use of the land,
- If it could enhance the lot owner's ability to protect their lot,
- If the portion applied for is unusable to anyone else,
- Ease of passage (ground conditions), and
- Maintenance.

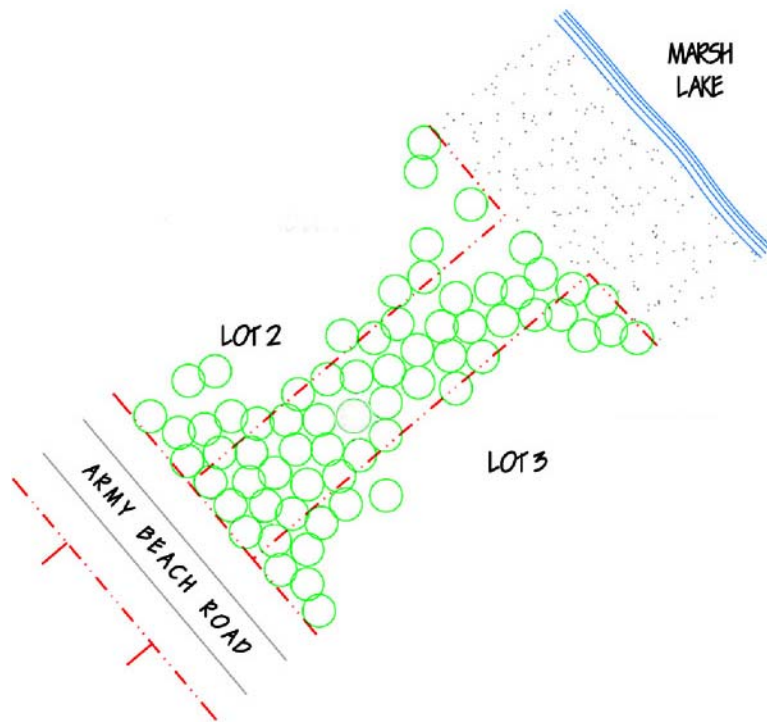
5.1 Recommendations

The overall recommendations were thus as follows:

- **Access A:** Keep in natural state. This access is close to the day-use area and there is no need to develop it at present.
- **Access B:** Proposed simple natural trail, new sign at the road (such as in **Figure 6**) but no other significant upgrades.
- **Access C:** Similar to B but with a more upgraded trail with stairs at the beach. Request for enlargement to lot 15 should be granted to provide the required 5 metre setback and protection for septic field which extends slightly into the access.
- **Access D:** Cleared trail (more accessible in winter) is needed here. Privacy of adjacent owners is a concern, therefore lot enlargements should be granted. Proposed stairs at beach to prevent erosion.
- **Access E:** Not needed except to provide access to property for adjacent owners. Lot enlargements should be granted.
- **Access F:** Road to shore should remain open to serve as a service road to the beach and as a boat launch, which could be upgraded. Lot enlargements should be granted to adjacent property owners to ensure privacy and to accommodate a fence and shed that had been built previously on the access.
- One centrally located trail is more important than multiple small trails. At least one trail was needed for winter use (D), and because C is presently cleared, it is more appropriate for a more significant trail than B.
- There was strong community support to restore the bridge linking the campground to the day-use area and the committee will recommend that this be done. This should help alleviate the parking problem in the day-use area. Also, no trees should be cut down to improve parking.
- No further subdivision of lots should occur, as they are already too small for country living. In fact, lot consolidations should be encouraged for the following reasons: the water table, erosion, and the currently small sizes.
- Applications to extend waterfront lots into the 30 metre setback are not within the realm of this study. YTG must make application to the federal government on behalf of property owners who have requested Section 13 exemptions.
- Future lot enlargement applications shall be dealt with as they arrive, although Access B is better in a natural state if Accesses D and C provide trails to the beach.
- There was strong support for an over-all plan to protect property from erosion, an overall erosion plan should be considered.

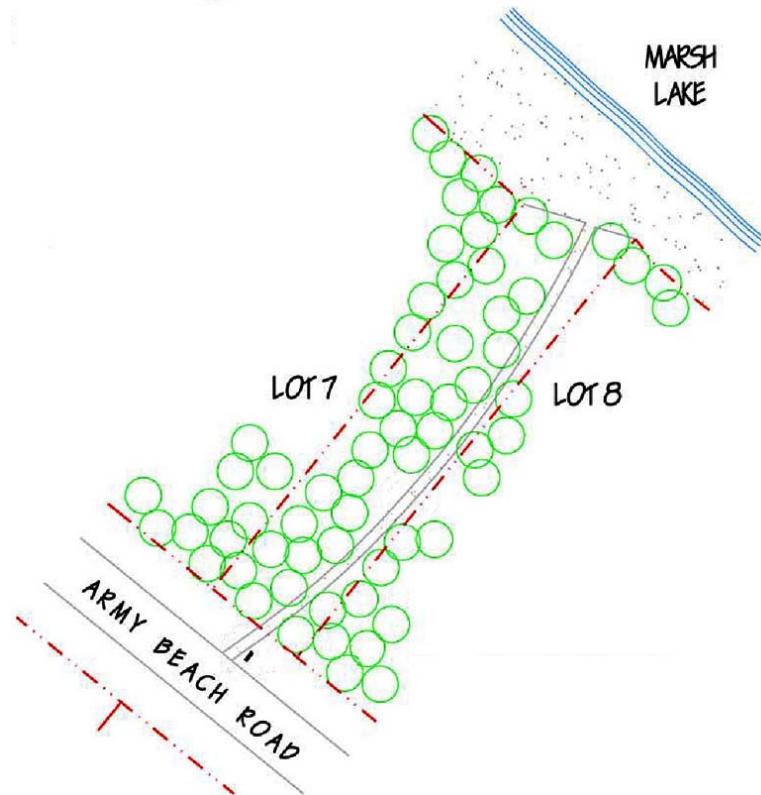


Figure 6. Signs at the road and shore should reflect the character of the area.



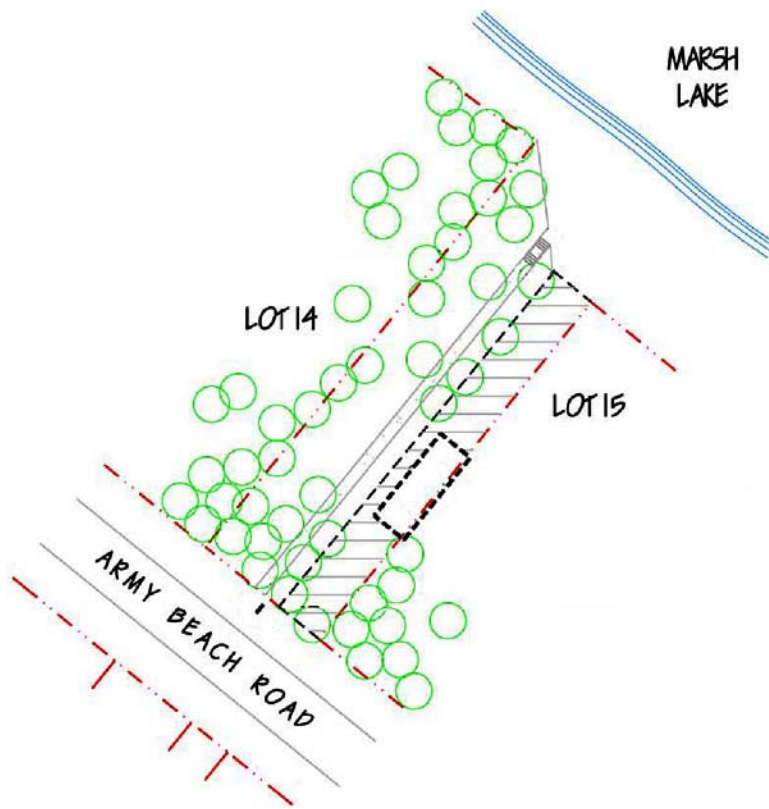
A

- Access to be retained, not closed.
- No improvements are proposed – it is to be left in a natural state in accordance with wishes of residents.
- Steep slopes, the proximity of the day-use area and trails at accesses C and B make a formal trail at this point unnecessary.
- The existing topography and vegetation to be retained.
- No trail identification sign is to be installed.



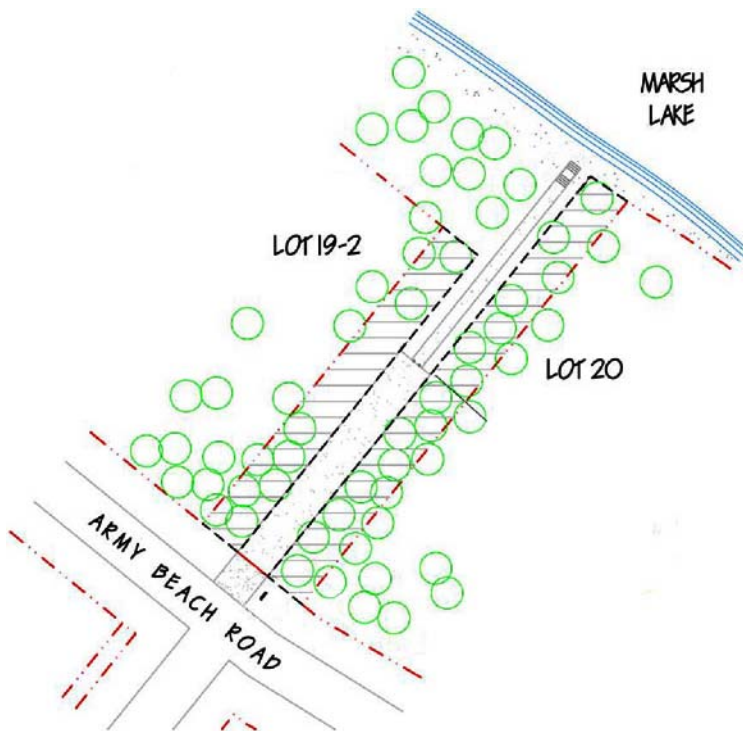
B

- An informal trail will provide a centrally-located lake access point for west-side residents.
- Trails at Accesses C & D make lake access at this point not as crucial; however, the current natural trail will be made easier to use and usage will be informally monitored.
- The trail will be very simple, without stairs or surface smoothing.
- The existing earthen trail surface is to be left as-is but a small amount of clearing needs to be done in order to make passage easier.
- A trail identification sign is to be installed at the roadway and beach.



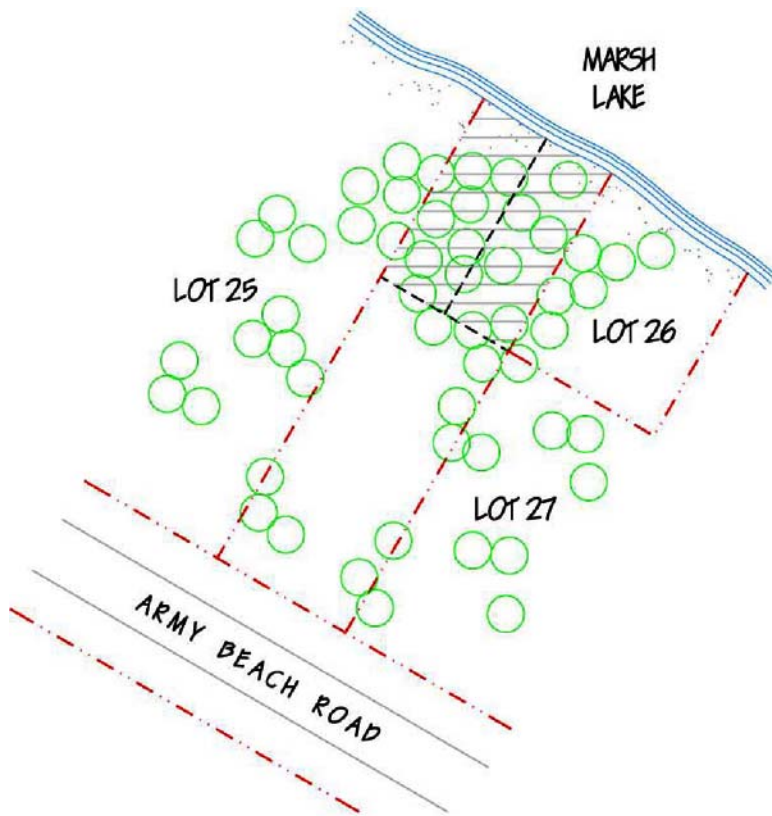
C

- The access is to be retained but a 7 metre lot enlargement is to be granted for the existing septic system on Lot 15.
- The access is already partially cleared so a natural trail with stairs can easily be built.
- The trail will provide summer-time lake access for west-side residents and reduce trespassing on neighbouring lots.
- Developing this trail is of higher priority than upgrading the trail at Access B, but lower priority than developing the trail at Access D.
- The existing land use authorization 2000-0586 (noted in thick dashed line on the diagram) is to be incorporated into the new lot enlargement.
- A trail identification sign and bollards (large rocks) to be installed at the roadway and beach.



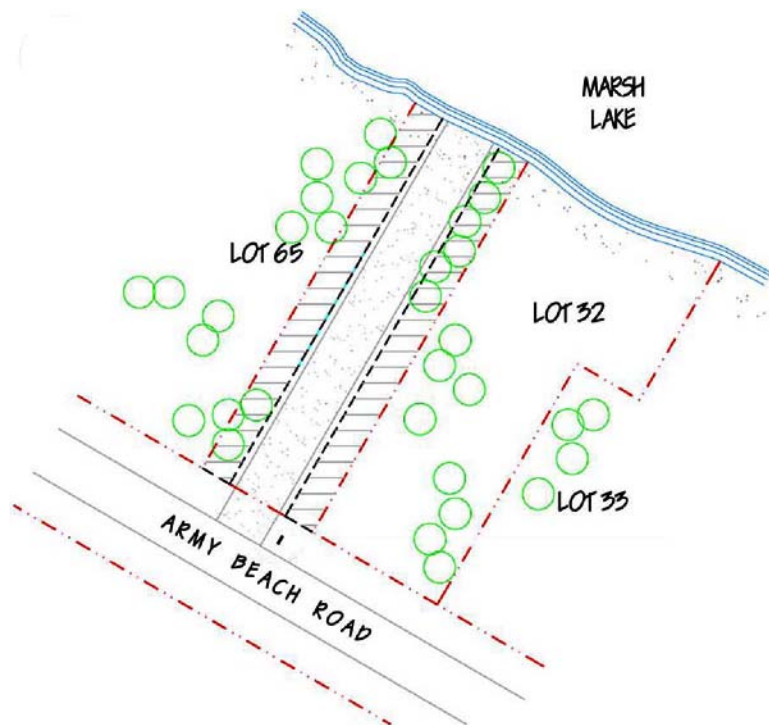
D

- The lot enlargements will be partially granted; lot 19-2 will get increased privacy, lot 20 will be able to build a driveway.
- The public access will be reduced from 20 metres to 6 metres in width.
- The portion of the access that is currently a cleared driveway to remain as-is while a 2 metre footpath is to be cleared from the end of the driveway to the beach, with stairs required due to the slope.
- Upgrading this portion of the trail is of higher priority than the trails at accesses B & C.
- A trail identification sign is to be installed at the roadway and beach and bollards are to be installed where the trail narrows.



E

- Lakeshore access is to be closed at this point & the lot enlargements are to be granted in full to lots 25 & 26.
- The steep slope at the shore & lack of west-side lots at this point means that the level of public use is very low.
- This access was judged by residents to be the least necessary for future use.
- Granting lot enlargements to lots 25 & 26 helps to equalize uneven lot sizes and provides a short-term solution to property loss due to erosion.



F

- The approximately 8 metre wide road presently used by the public for vehicle and equipment access to lakeshore is to remain as-is.
- The lot enlargement applications submitted by lots 32 and 65 are to be only partially granted. 5 metre wide lot enlargements are called for, leaving the 8 metre wide road as-is.
- A road identification sign is required at the roadway.

5.2 Implementation Priorities and Timing

All lot enlargements should be granted at the same time. As mentioned above, trail development should occur in the following order: Access D, then B, and then C.

It is safe to say that funding for access improvements will not be readily available, but the trails and other improvements are only to be installed on a piecemeal basis at any rate. The community could potentially apply for funding for trail development through a program such as the Yukon Youth Conservation Corps (Y2C2).

No specific dates for the completion of improvements were decided upon, but these should be set soon after LARC has made its decisions.

6. Conclusions

Army Beach is not the only Yukon community that faces current planning challenges because of decisions that were made in the past. Many of the Yukon's communities that are presently lived in year-round were intended as recreational developments when first laid out. Ideas that seemed sound at first are now questionable, and planners are left with the difficult job of sorting through the multitude of issues involved.

Not all of the issues raised in this report were dealt with, but hopefully some steps were made towards improving access and land disposition issues at Army Beach. Other issues have been documented for further studies. The Steering Committee finished their work happy with the amount of material they were able to cover.

The recommendations contained in this report by no means represent the unanimous vision of the Army Beach community, but the best approximation thereof. The final proposals from the Steering Committee were accepted by most and not too offensive to the rest. It is hoped that these ideas can be retained throughout the next phases that the lot enlargement applications in question will go through.

The use of a Steering Committee to deal with a contentious issue in a proactive community appears to have succeeded in this case. This is not really a surprise, as a key to effective planning is to involve local residents in the process. The principal benefit of this process is that in the end the biggest detractors often turn into the biggest supporters, for it is their ideas that have been incorporated. Army Beach, in particular, seems like an example where the community appreciated the opportunities for public consultation that were extended to them, and took advantage of them.

Appendix

- Questionnaire
- Newsletter Number 1
- Newsletter Number 2

Army Beach Land Use Study Questionnaire

The Government (YTG) is reviewing 9 lot enlargement applications at Army Beach. Most are for portions of the 6 public accesses described on the map in the accompanying newsletter. Access 'F' (located between lots 65 and 32) is the best-known because it is used as a boat launch. There are 5 other public accesses, spaced at roughly equal intervals between Access F and the day-use area. Most are difficult to find because they are not marked and haven't been developed for public use. **Please review their locations and characteristics before responding to this questionnaire.**

Your feedback will update information we have on hand from discussions last year and help the Steering Committee put forward recommendations on the 9 applications and the future.

- | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|------|
| 1 | Do you own or rent property at Army Beach? (circle one) <i>(If no, skip to #5)</i> | Yes | No | | | | | |
| 2 | Which side of Army Beach Road are you on? <i>(If west, skip to #4)</i> | East (beach side) | West (non-beach side) | | | | | |
| 3 | If you live on the East side, do you live immediately adjacent to an access? | Yes | No | | | | | |
| 4 | Do you live at Army Beach year-round? | Yes | No | | | | | |
| 5 | Which accesses do you not use ? Please circle as many as apply and explain below. | A | B | C | D | E | F | None |
-

- | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|
| 6 | The intent of the original subdivision plan was to ensure public access to the beach at regular intervals. Which accesses are still needed today and should be protected for the future ? Please circle as many as apply and explain below. | A | B | C | D | E | F | None |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|
-

7	On a scale of 1 to 5, tell us if you agree or disagree with the following statements:	Strongly Agree	Not Sure	Strongly Disagree
	• Keep the public accesses as natural as possible.	1	2	5
	• The types of uses allowed in the accesses need to be controlled.	1	2	5
	• Public accesses should be marked and fenced.	1	2	5
	• Year-round access to the lakeshore is important.	1	2	5
	• An overall strategy to resolve beachfront erosion is needed now.	1	2	5
	• The public accesses are wider than necessary.	1	2	5
	• Maintenance is an issue.	1	2	5
	• The connection between the campground and the day-use area should be improved.	1	2	5

8	The following is a list of some possible improvements that have been suggested. Which improvements do you think are necessary?	Needed	Not Needed	Not Sure
	• cleared trail			
	• fence along property line			
	• garbage can			
	• outhouse			
	• park/play area			
	• parking			
	• sign at road			
	• stairs to the beach			
	• other _____			

9 Other comments and ideas are welcome. Please use this space or the back of this page to let us know.

Thank you for your time! Please send us your response by **April 2nd**, 2002.

by mail:	by fax:
Inukshuk Planning & Development	(867) 667-4020
207 Elliott Street	
Whitehorse YT Y1A 2A1	

If you have any questions, feel free to contact us:
 phone: (867) 667-4759
 email: mike@inukshukplanning.ca

Army Beach News

Land Use Study



A Walkabout

Wondering where those foot prints came from?

Well, on February 19, the Army Beach Land Use Study Steering Committee went on a walkabout to view Army Beach's public



The Steering Committee inspects 'Access E'. (l to r: Betty Schiffkorn, Judy Linton, Dianne Green, Roberta Kotylak)

accesses. Most of us did not know where they were or how big public accesses are. We did know they were going to be covered in a lot of snow, and despite this we still managed to gather needed information and look at the areas of concern.

We are doing this study for several reasons. The main issue is that Army Beach property owners have made applications for lot enlargements into the public accesses. The fact that the accesses are not well marked is another issue. And perhaps the biggest concern is the ongoing erosion of beachfront. Whether used mostly by residents or the general public, some accesses are necessary, but greater use of them will speed up the erosion process.

In order to deal with these issues, we all have agreed on a number of guidelines that we will use to make recommendations. These are:

- each access must be judged on its own merit;
- an access may be closed as long as this decision is made with all accesses in mind;
- the public has a right to lake access;
- public land must be well-managed and controlled by the public;
- property owners have a right to protect their property from erosion;
- the privacy and safety of adjacent property owners must be respected;
- erosion of the dune ecosystem will continue and we must look to the future when making decisions;

- varying water levels need to be considered when determining the need for public accesses; and
- the Marsh Lake Plan that will be done in the future must be considered when making decisions.

We hope we did not invade your privacy too much that day, but this is in the hopes of resolving this problem once and for all!

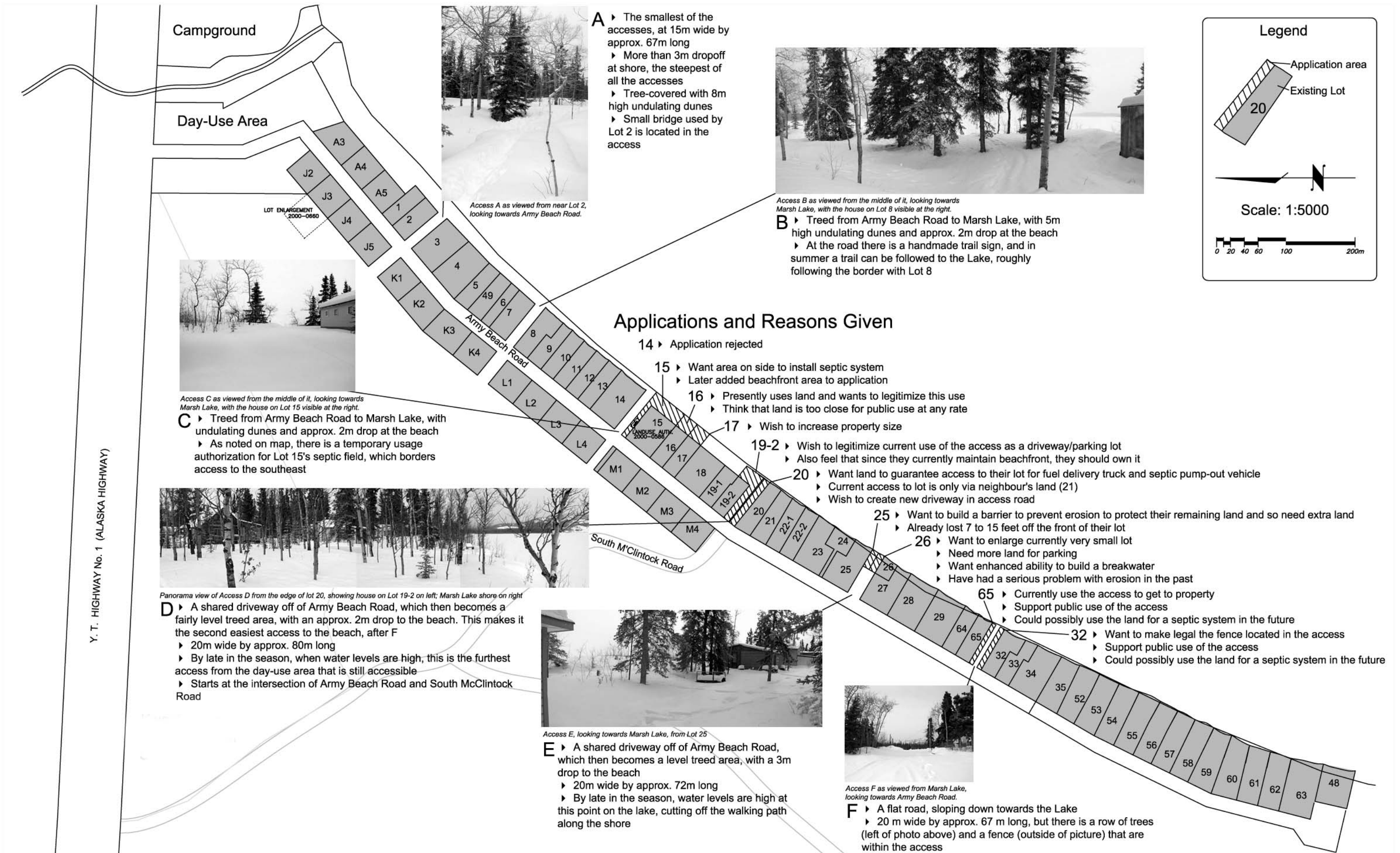
The Army Beach Land Use Steering Committee

Who is on the Steering Committee?

The community members on the Steering Committee were appointed by the Marsh Lake Local Advisory Council and are as follows:

Pam Blackburn (Chair) – Marsh Lake Local Advisory Council representative, phone 660-5959
 Dianne Gau – Member at large, phone 660-5107
 Dianne Green – Army Beach, phone 660-5030
 Roberta Kotylak – Army Beach, phone 660-5973
 Betty Schiffkorn – Army Beach, phone 660-5935

If you have any questions about the study please contact Judy Linton, Land Use Planner at the Community Services Branch at 667-3531, Mike Ellis of Inukshuk Planning and Development at 667-4759, or any of the Steering Committee members.



Army Beach At A Glance

Residential and Cottage Uses

There are 70 lots along Army Beach Road – 52 on the east (waterfront) side, and 18 on the west side. Approximately 25% are occupied year-round. The average lot size is about 0.5 acres (about 2000 m²), while larger lots are about 0.8 acres. Depending on ground conditions, septic systems typically require at least 1 acre, making them not possible for most lots in the area. They have been installed on some of the larger lots along the beachfront, but most people do not use their homes on a full-time basis because they cannot have a septic system.

The chief limiting factor in developing more residential lots is the ability of the ground to accommodate them. Fragile conditions at the shore and marshy conditions further back lead to the conclusion that there should be no more lots developed.

Public, Community, and Recreational Uses

Public Use and Community Facilities:

The beach and campground are popular amongst Whitehorse and area residents. High levels of use occur on any hot day throughout the summer season.

Recreational, open space, greenbelt and buffer areas:

The trail networks are used by residents and visitors alike throughout the year. The trails behind are put to good use throughout the summer by hikers and ATV'ers, although cross-country skiing is popular in winter. Developed public accesses could potentially serve further open-space uses than just as right-of-ways (e.g. as parks), were they to be developed as such.

Roads:

Army Beach Road has been recently been upgraded and no other roads are planned.

Services:

Services are limited to phone and electricity. Most residents use water delivery or pump their own water. Septic systems are used but not common, as mentioned above.

Traditional Uses

There are Kwanlin Dun and Carcross Tagish land claims in the general area. The closest claims are by Kwanlin Dun, along the Alaska Highway.



The potential for rapid erosion at Army Beach is demonstrated at lot 24 during a 1981 storm. (photo: Bruce Chambers)

Areas subject to flooding and erosion

The beach-dune ecosystem has experienced significant erosion, mostly due to wind and wave action. However, the presence of human activity has exacerbated the problem. Although this land is not entirely suitable for residential use, its presence and the fact that erosion will continue means that action must be taken if homeowners want to preserve their properties. Barriers such as walls have been constructed, and other structures such as breakwaters need to be considered.

Other Land Uses

Land leases

The owner of Lot 15 has obtained a permit to use part of Access C (see map on previous page) for use for a septic field. This is perhaps a viable solution for other owners who need lot extensions for septic fields.

Land use permits

The area is not zoned, so land uses are lenient. There are 2 home-based businesses – the Yukoner Magazine, and a grading operation. The Local Area Plan for Marsh Lake is currently scheduled for 2002 and it will likely deal with this issue.

Land Applications

There are 9 applications for lot enlargements currently pending, which are the focus of this study. These are discussed in greater detail on the map on pages 2 and 3 of this newsletter.

Mining Claims

Prior mining claims in this area have lapsed. There seems to be little future potential for mining claims.

Army Beach News

Land Use Study

Questionnaire Results

The Army Beach Land Use Study Steering Committee sent out a questionnaire to all Army Beach owners and residents in March. 70 questionnaires were sent out and 39 returned – a very good response rate! Here are some of the key results (more detailed results are on page 2):

- Access F is the most-used access and should continue to fulfil the same function.
- Access E is the least used. C and D are better used than A and B.
- Year-round residents use the accesses twice as much as seasonal residents; accesses are moderately well-used in winter.
- Twice as many respondents reported a need for each access, as compared to current use.
- Half of respondents said that all or nearly all accesses are still needed.
- Several respondents called for walkways to be built on all accesses except E but for motorized vehicles to be discouraged everywhere but at F.
- Nearly all respondents felt that accesses should be left as natural as possible and that an overall erosion protection plan is needed now.
- Almost no-one opposed a better connection between the day-use area and the campground.
- There was strong opposition to building a park/play area or parking anywhere but at the day use area.
- Some improvements were called for – trails, fencing, signs at the road, garbage cans, stairs to the beach, and outhouses – but not at every location.
- Some accesses can be reduced in width but not all of them.
- Some consideration of maintenance needs to be included in the overall plan.

Public Meeting Coming Soon!

The topic of discussion at the May 1st Public Meeting will be the proposed access options developed by the Steering Committee. The meeting will take place at Marsh Lake Fire Hall. Be there at 7 pm sharp!

View the Proposed Access Options

Make sure you check out the Steering Committee's proposals before the public meeting. Go to the Army Beach website (www.inukshukplanning.ca/armybeach) or view the display at the Community Services Branch at the main YTG Building on 2nd Avenue. Enter by the main doors and go up the staircase. Once you get to the second floor, turn left and head towards the end of the hall, then turn right into the Community Services Branch. For more information, call Mike Ellis of Inukshuk Planning & Development at 667-4759 or Judy Linton of Community Services at 667-3531.



*A group of beachgoers relax on the sand near Access E.
(photo circa 1975, courtesy Betty Schiffkorn)*

Are You Online?

If so, make sure you check out the latest information on this project. Our website is:

- www.inukshukplanning.ca/armybeach

Also, get information on Marsh Lake goings-on at:

- www.geocities.com/ccofml

The latest info from the Marsh Lake Local Advisory Council is available here:

- www.angelfire.com/yt2/marshlakelac

Detailed Questionnaire Results

Questions 1 to 4 – Preliminary Information

- All respondents own or rent property at Army Beach.
- The highest response rate came from those with the highest stake in this issue. So, almost all people that live adjacent to accesses responded, and many of the people that live at Army Beach year-round responded (33% of total responses).

Question 5 – Access Usage

- Only a few people use all of the accesses; one fifth use 2 or 3; close to three quarters of respondents use only 1 or none at all.
- Some of the responses of those that use none at all are: "embankments are too high", "may use them if better signed", "we try to avoid walking over the dunes to prevent erosion", and "access F is too shallow for our boat".
- Half of respondents use access F but only 10 to 25% of respondents use the other accesses.
- Year-round residents use accesses twice as much, indicating strongly that they are used in winter as well.
- West-side respondents use the accesses much more than east-side, especially A, B, C, and D. West-side respondents and east-side respondents who don't live adjacent to an access, i.e. those with less of a stake in access disposition, use C and D more.

Question 6 - Which accesses are still needed today and should be protected for the future?

There were three general groups of responses:

- *"All (or almost all) are needed"* - nearly half of respondents. Comments include: "Maintain the original plan", "Think about the future", "We use them as is, so please leave them as-is."
- *"2 or 3 are needed"* - 9 out of 39 respondents, most of whom favour keeping access F as well as 1 or 2 other accesses as footpaths.
- *"None or only 1 are needed"* - one third of respondents, of which most felt that only F was necessary, to fulfil its current function as a boat-launch/equipment access, etc. Only 2 people felt that even F was unnecessary.

Note the difference between usage and need: three quarters use none or only 1, but only one third of respondents think that none or only 1 are needed – this means that some changes to accesses are necessary.

Question 7 – Agree or Disagree...

This question measured the importance of certain issues:

- More than 80% weighed in with 'agree' or 'strongly agree' on the immediate need for an erosion plan.

- Almost everybody indicated that keeping control of access usage was important.

- Half of respondents said that maintenance is an issue (with one quarter not sure, one quarter disagreeing).

This question also will help the Steering Committee determine what sorts of recommendations to make:

- Next to no disagreement on the issue of keeping accesses natural means that major changes to the accesses are out of the question.
- On the other hand, two-thirds of respondents thought that year-round access is important. So, for example, clearing trails is still an idea worth considering.
- Better connection between the day-use area and the campground received near-total support, and many felt that this would help alleviate parking problems.
- One-third of people disagreed with the idea that the accesses were wider than necessary, so discussion will need to occur before any lot enlargements are granted.
- Fencing and signing accesses had an even split of opinion and so will also be contentious.

Question 8 – Improvements

Most respondents said that a park/play area and parking were not needed. just under 50% said that fences along the property line were not needed and just over 50% found cleared trails not needed – both indicating the desire to keep accesses as natural as possible. Because footpaths were found to be necessary, natural trails are preferable to cleared ones.

About 50% of respondents said that a garbage can, a sign at the road, and stairs to the beach were needed. These improvements will be considered in some locations but not all, and need to be discussed at the public meeting. The idea of an outhouse received a split of opinion between the needed, not needed and not sure categories.

Question 9 - Other comments and ideas

Nearly half of the comments received address the day-use area, including: "The day-use area does not have enough parking", and "In the 30+ years our family has owned (Army Beach property), we have rarely seen any demand to access the beach beyond the day-use area."

Other comments included: "99% of beachfront owners maintain the beach and don't own it", "Allow footpaths only", "If people don't have the room for septic systems, maybe they should look at installing holding tanks", "Property owners should definitely be allowed to protect their land from erosion", "There should be an unsightly premise bylaw", "We don't need a city-like subdivision", and "Beach people from Whitehorse should be discouraged".