

Yukon Wilderness Tourism Status Report

SUMMARY



YUKON
LARGER THAN LIFE



Yukon Wilderness Tourism Status Report

SUMMARY

2008



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Copies of the summary and technical report are available for download from the Yukon Department of Tourism and Culture's website at www.tc.gov.yk.ca.

Front cover photos, clockwise from top: Falcon at the Bonnet Plume (YG, Jannick Schoe); Kathleen Lake (YG); Dempster Highway (YG)

INTRODUCTION

Yukon is one of the world's pre-eminent wilderness destinations. Known for expansive landscapes, stunning scenery and vast open spaces, Yukon provides visitors with opportunities for adventure, challenge and the freedom to relax and unwind surrounded by wilderness.

Wilderness tourism has a century-long history in Yukon, and over the past 40 years it has developed into one of the most organized and progressive sectors of the tourism industry. In 2004, more than 80 licensed operators delivered a wide range of summer, winter and shoulder-season products to international markets.

Yukon has a solid reputation in the competitive wilderness tourism marketplace as an environmentally responsible destination where skilled guides deliver high quality wilderness products. The territory also attracts self-guided wilderness travellers who rent equipment and purchase trip supplies, souvenirs, restaurant meals and accommodation. Visitors who stay close to the road can readily enjoy Yukon

landscapes, wildlife and wilderness activities by joining day tours or exploring on their own.

Over the past decade, industry and government partners worked together to develop Yukon's *Wilderness Tourism Licensing Act*, conduct research, pursue product development and marketing opportunities, and support business development. The wilderness tourism sector regularly faces challenges and opportunities, and this is unlikely to change. Industry and governments must be prepared to address issues and explore new opportunities.

REPORT FORMAT

The *Wilderness Tourism Status Report* is presented in two documents: a detailed technical report and this summary report.

The summary report highlights key Yukon-wide and regional wilderness tourism information. The technical report provides detailed information on Yukon's wilderness tourism sector, including its history, Yukon-wide wilderness tourism resources, markets, operators and activities and detailed



Asters (YG)

descriptions of wilderness tourism resources and activities in each of Yukon's nine tourism regions and the Yukon River watershed.

Both reports are available as pdf files for download from the Yukon Department of Tourism and Culture's website at www.tc.gov.yk.ca.

The Wilderness Tourism Status Report will be used to support wilderness tourism initiatives, provide information to help businesses develop wilderness tourism products, and provide information to participate in planning processes.

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The Yukon *Wilderness Tourism Status Report* focuses on non-Yukon visitors who participate in wilderness tourism activities. (The wilderness activities of Yukon residents are outside the scope of the report.) It does not include guided hunting but does include wilderness tourism activities offered by hunting outfitters licensed under the *Wilderness Tourism Licensing Act*.

The report compiles and summarizes a considerable amount of recent wilderness tourism-related research and will help industry and governments plan, develop and manage Yukon's wilderness tourism sector. A project working group comprised of representatives from the Department of Tourism and Culture, Tourism Branch; Department of Environment, Parks Branch; and the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon assisted with the research and writing.

KEY DATA SOURCES

Most statistics in this status report come from two key information sources: trip and rental report data from the *Wilderness Tourism Licensing Act*, and the 2004 Yukon Visitor Exit Survey. Parks Canada provided information on visitor activities in Kluane National Park and Reserve, Vuntut National Park and Ivvavik National Park (Firth River.)

Most data on commercially guided wilderness tourism operators and activities in Yukon – outside national parks – comes from the *Wilderness Tourism Licensing Act*, enacted by the Yukon government in 1999. This report presents data collected under the act from 1999, the first year data was collected, to 2004, the most recent year for which compiled data is available.

The 2004 Yukon Visitor Exit Survey collected information from non-Yukon visitors during the summer of 2004. The *Wilderness Tourism Status Report* includes wilderness tourism-related data and information from the survey for all visitors, visitors who participated in a wilderness or outdoor activity and visitors who said they took a wilderness trip.

The *Wilderness Tourism Status Report* has been formatted so that data can be updated as it becomes available.

HISTORY

Wilderness tourism in Yukon began more than 100 years ago in adventure travel, mountaineering and big game hunting. Mountaineering may be the earliest form of Yukon wilderness adventure travel, with exploratory climbs in the St. Elias Range in the 1890s. Following the gold bonanza of 1897-1898, tourist parties were recorded on the Chilkoot Trail, canoeing or rafting the Yukon River, and venturing further afield in the Peel and Porcupine river basins.

During the post-war years, infrastructure like roads (Campbell, Dempster, Nahanni Range) and float plane bases that were built to support resource development also boosted wilderness tourism.

Through the 1960s and 1970s, a few Yukon-based guides offered commercial services in canoeing, river rafting, horseback riding, mountaineering and the occasional ski or dogsled trip. During this period, guided trips emphasized adventure, wilderness experience, nature study, skills, and reliving the era of explorers and fur traders. Self-guided wilderness tourists became more common, most of whom hiked or canoed the gold rush route between Skagway, Alaska and Dawson City.

In the 1970s, a North American boom in wilderness pursuits was accompanied by widespread advances in equipment, techniques and information about



Montana stonehouses (YG)

wilderness destinations. Efforts of the Department of Tourism and Culture, industry and Parks Canada sent a message that Yukon was open for business to wilderness tourists.

River travel was the main guided activity, while backpacking and horseback riding developed as strong secondary products.

Mainly Whitehorse-based wilderness travel companies focused on economical, road-accessible rivers, while specialized companies featured fly-in trips. Rafting was established on whitewater rivers that were too difficult for canoes.

River travel was the mainstay of commercial wilderness travel during the early years, and remains so today.

Although most wilderness companies were mobile, remote wilderness and sport fishing lodges gained visibility and market share. Most lodges were established in the 1970s—growth of this sector has been limited since the mid-1980s when the federal government stopped considering new applications for remote lodge sites.

In the early 1990s, operators began to respond to market demand for “softer,” shorter and learning-enriched experiences. Some companies developed multi-day “ecotours” and cultural tours while others developed day trips. Mountain biking, dog mushing, and off-road vehicle and snowmobile tours were developed, but the most popular proved to be day or half-day motorboat tours on the Yukon River.

Marketing skills and connections became a critical factor for wilderness companies throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. Wilderness companies formed the first partnerships and soon partnered with travel agencies, wholesalers and specialty agents. Communication and cooperation between businesses

and governments became more important, and strong relationships with the Yukon departments of Tourism and Culture, and Environment, and Parks Canada were key to growth.

The industry soon saw the need for an effective association of guiding businesses. Formed in 1993, the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon (WTAY) is the collective voice for wilderness tourism operators on issues affecting their industry. The association provides a broad-based unified voice in marketing, regulatory matters, conservation, training and industry development.

Now in its fourth decade, wilderness tourism retains many characteristics of its early period. The same landscapes and trips are still valued. Canoes, rafts, backpacks, skis and horses have been joined by motorboats, mountain bikes, dog teams, off-road vehicles and snowmobiles. Guides still come mainly from backgrounds in outdoor pursuits, and about 60% of Yukon-based wilderness companies operate out of Whitehorse. Guided activities are now regulated, and the sector is strong and stable with opportunities for growth and a keen interest in improving quality and standards.

YUKON WILDERNESS TOURISM LICENSING ACT

In the mid-1990s, the Yukon government worked with the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon to examine various ways to regulate the sector. The *Wilderness Tourism Licensing Act* (WTLA) set minimum standards for guided travel in Yukon outside of national parks. This important legislation required every wilderness tourism business that was guiding clients in Yukon to:

- obtain a license;
- carry public liability insurance;
- carry workers compensation coverage, when applicable;
- obtain Yukon business registration;
- meet minimum first aid standards for guides;
- adhere to minimum impact camping standards; and
- report statistics about commercial trips and rentals each season.

The licensing and trip reporting provisions provided the first reliable statistics and information on the wilderness tourism sector. Other provisions in the act enabled the government to establish regulations to address safety and resource management issues.

Yukon's wilderness tourism licensing regime is progressive and well-planned. The WTLA is a conservation management and public safety tool, and it is also responsive to the demands of a discerning market seeking pristine, high-quality wilderness experiences. Few other jurisdictions in North America have such a comprehensive licensing system for wilderness tourism operators.

WILDERNESS TOURISM TODAY

Yukon’s wilderness tourism sector is growing, product choice is expanding and the season is becoming year-round. Coming mostly from the United States, Canada and Europe, guided and self-guided travellers visit Yukon for many reasons. They come here to canoe, raft and fish on our lakes and rivers, hike and bike along historic routes and wilderness trails, photograph and experience Yukon’s wildlife, cultural history and natural phenomena, and ski, snowmobile and mush through sparkling winter landscapes.

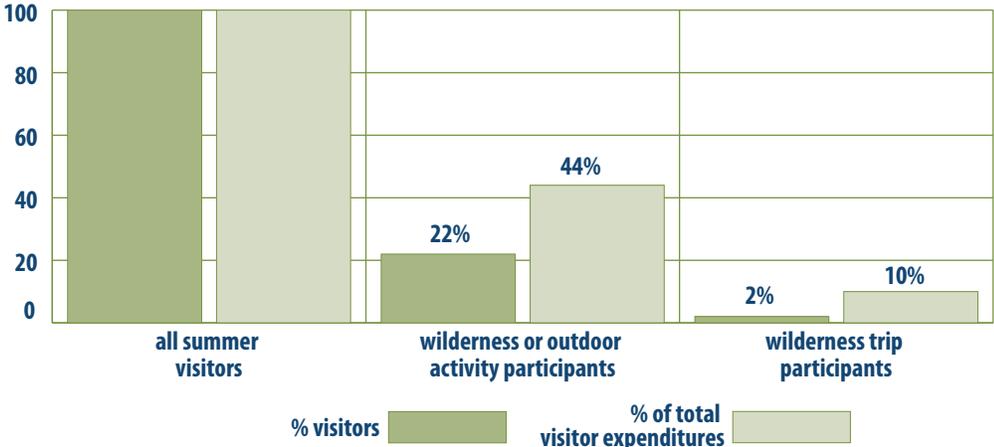
The wilderness tourism sector is a strong contributor to Yukon’s economy. Visitors who included wilderness or outdoor activities during their Yukon visit stayed longer, spent more and were very satisfied with the value they received for their money (2004 Yukon

Visitor Exit Survey). That summer, about 57,000 of Yukon’s 251,704 visitors participated in a wilderness or outdoor activity and spent almost \$34 million in total while in Yukon (Figure 1).

In 2004, 81 licensed wilderness tourism operators guided 35,000 clients (year-round) on day and multi-day trips throughout the territory (*Wilderness Tourism Licensing Act* data). Sixty-five operators (80%) were Yukon-based.

Though they represented 22 per cent of all visitation, tourists who sought wilderness experiences while in Yukon accounted for 44 per cent (\$34 million) of all visitor spending (2004 VES).

FIGURE 1: SPENDING BY WILDERNESS/OUTDOOR ACTIVITY PARTICIPANTS



Source: 2004 Yukon Visitor Exit Survey

WORLD-CLASS WILDERNESS

Wilderness landscapes are the foundation of Yukon's wilderness tourism sector, and the quality of Yukon's wilderness is an important factor for travellers choosing the territory as a destination. With healthy, intact ecosystems and few roads, Yukon's wilderness provides visitors with less tangible but important qualities such as the freedom to relax, find solitude and reconnect with nature.

Yukon's wilderness has a reputation for supporting outstanding adventure activities. Yukon rivers provide some of the longest canoe trips in North America. The territory's rafting trips have exciting whitewater and exotic features like glaciers, caribou herds or tundra. Hikers and horseback riders look forward to uncrowded trails and campsites, and horizons without signs of development. Most wilderness travellers expect to see wildlife and are rarely disappointed.

The romance of the Klondike Gold Rush is also associated with Yukon, and wilderness tourists identify with gold rush-era qualities of challenge, ruggedness, determination and adventure. Many wilderness travellers are interested in First Nation cultural experiences and want to learn more about Yukon's natural, cultural and ancient history.

Iconic natural features also draw visitors to experience Yukon wilderness. Travellers come to view the jagged ridges of Tombstone Park and colourful fall tundra along the Dempster Highway. In Yukon, visitors find unparalleled wilderness in the Peel River watershed, the deep blue waterways of the Southern Lakes, and spectacular winter landscapes. Deep in Kluane National Park and Reserve, Mount Logan, Canada's highest peak, is surrounded by the world's largest non-polar ice fields and dozens of lesser mountain giants.



Kluane and three adjacent parks in B.C. and Alaska together form the largest international protected area in the world.

Wilderness tourism activities are built around features such as wilderness landscapes, parks, wildlife and wilderness-based historic sites and events. Wilderness tourism operators use these features to create products and services to sell to tourists. Yukon has unique market advantages over other remaining wilderness regions in the world. The territory is readily accessible by air and road, yet few places offer so many adventurous landscapes.

Wilderness

Compared to the rest of North America or the densely populated continents of Europe or Asia, Yukon is the kind of destination most people only dream about visiting. With one of the world's lowest population densities and a collection of wild and natural features found nowhere else in the world, Yukon's lakes, rivers and mountain ranges offer visitors a unique wilderness experience.

Parks

Parks are important to wilderness tourism for several reasons. Formal park protection provides operators with certainty that a high-quality wilderness landscape will be sustained. Designated park areas often increase the marketability of wilderness tourism products because visitors expect parks to contain lands and resources that are unusual or special.

The Yukon has species of international significance including major predators like wolves and grizzly bears, the Porcupine caribou herd and migratory birds.

National parks rank among Canada's top five tourism attractions. In addition to three national parks, Yukon has four territorial parks, one national wildlife area, two ecological reserves and one wilderness preserve. Fully protected areas total approximately 10.3 per cent of the territory. More territorial parks will be designated as First Nation final agreements are implemented.

Significant wildlife features

Wildlife is intrinsic to Yukon's way of life, and wildlife viewing is a valued and sought-after experience for visitors. On guided trips, skilled field interpretation can increase the chances of seeing wildlife and enhance the value of wildlife encounters. Guidebooks, brochures and signs that interpret stops of interest can enliven wildlife viewing for highway travellers.



Porcupine caribou (YG)

Wilderness-based historical attractions and events

Historical features and events complement the natural attributes of wilderness. Many historic sites have been significant to First Nations, while physical structures and stories associated with them are often shared with Euro-Canadian history. Fort Selkirk, Rampart House,

Hootalinqua, Herschel Island and Dalton Post are examples of this dual legacy.

Wilderness-based events such as the Yukon Quest and the Yukon River Quest draw major media attention that raises awareness of Yukon and markets it as a destination for tourism.



On Lake Laberge (YG)

YUKON'S WILDERNESS TOURISM SECTOR

Yukon's wilderness attracts year-round visitors seeking a wide variety of day and multi-day wilderness experiences. Self-guided visitors conduct their own activities and trips, purchasing goods, services and transport, and often rent equipment in Yukon. Licensed tour operators provide guided wilderness trips. Yukon operators have an international reputation for high-quality wilderness experiences delivered by skilled and knowledgeable guides.

In 2004, motorboat day tours on the Yukon River out of Whitehorse and Dawson City provided about half of the sector's 35,000 guided clients. Canoeing, rafting, horseback riding, dogsled and hiking trips remained the backbone of the wilderness tourism sector. Sport fishing, wilderness lodges, off-road vehicle touring, mountain biking, ski touring, whitewater kayaking and nature photography rounded out the product line.

For the most part, built infrastructure supporting Yukon wilderness tourism is good, with a well-maintained road system, trail networks, international or regional airports, and daily scheduled flights year-round into Whitehorse.

The wilderness tourism sector includes business operators, guides, support staff, rental outfits and travel professionals. In addition to Yukoners, the sector includes companies from elsewhere in Canada and other countries and serves an international clientele. A strong contributor to the Yukon economy, wilderness tourism involves and benefits a wide range of businesses, from hotels and restaurants, to media and advertising, to supermarkets, artists and retail stores.

Wilderness travellers comprised less than one quarter of all Yukon tourists, yet represented almost half of all tourism spending in the territory. Wilderness travellers stayed longer and spent more, and reported a very high level of value-for-money satisfaction (2004 Yukon Visitor Exit Survey).

WILDERNESS TOURISM MARKETS

Almost 57,000 (22%) of Yukon's 251,700 summer visitors in 2004, participated in a wilderness or outdoor activity. About 5,100 of these wilderness participants said they took a wilderness trip. Wilderness participants were a significant market for Yukon, enjoying guided and self-guided, day and multi-day wilderness activities and experiences (2004 Yukon Visitor Exit Survey).

The most popular outdoor activities for wilderness

participants were walking, hiking, wildlife and bird viewing, and fishing. Scenery was the most highly sought experience, followed by wildlife viewing, birdwatching and outdoor activity. Ninety-three per cent felt they received value for their money, and 80 per cent rated their trip as eight or higher out of 10.

The wilderness tourism sector's target markets are visitors who have the interest, time, disposable income and motivation to choose Yukon as a destination. Recent Tourism Yukon brand research identified two priority tourism market segments for Yukon: Adventure Challengers and Scenic Outdoor Travellers.

Adventure Challengers include active visitors who want to travel to places that offer a range of wilderness and adventure travel activities. Their primary motivation is to escape and have a physically demanding experience in the wilderness. Scenic Outdoor Travellers are visitors who seek a beautiful outdoor destination where they can relax. They are interested in local history, traditions and real, down-to-earth experiences and are more comfortable with

Yukon has a growing reputation as an environmentally responsible destination with opportunities for high-quality wilderness adventure, ecotourism and learning trips.

leisurely wilderness experiences. Both priority target markets include highway and backcountry travellers.

Yukon's three primary geographic markets for wilderness tourism are the U.S., Canada and Europe (Germany and U.K.).

Features that appeal most to Yukon's key market segments—scenic beauty, natural phenomena, vast pristine wilderness—are critically important to wilderness tourism.

Emerging markets include Australia and Japan. U.S. markets are increasingly interested in outdoor activities, nature and self-improvement,

and Yukon's "unspoiled wilderness" appeals to environmentally aware travellers. Growth in travel within Canada is strong, building on awareness generated through the 2007 Canada Winter Games in Whitehorse.

MARKETING

Yukon Tourism and Culture, Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon, other tourism organizations and individual operators promote wilderness tourism products and experiences and provide information to potential visitors from around the globe. A variety of government agencies, businesses and organizations deliver information and interpretive material to wilderness travellers once they arrive in Yukon.

The wilderness tourism marketplace is highly competitive, and Yukon must compete with high profile wilderness destinations around the world. Yukon's wilderness tourism sector continues to find ways to increase awareness of Yukon as a wilderness destination in new markets, and to motivate target market segments which are already aware of Yukon. Good research continues to be an essential tool to determine how and where to focus marketing campaigns.

WILDERNESS TOURISM OPERATORS AND CLIENTS

Licensed wilderness tourism operators guide and accommodate tourists year-round, relying on Yukon's wilderness to maintain their livelihood (Figure 2). Of the 81 operators licensed in 2004, over three-quarters were Yukon-based and directly employed about 400 people. About six Yukon companies rented equipment—mostly canoes and kayaks—to self-guided travelers (*Wilderness Tourism Licensing Act* data).

Companies range from small owner- and family-run businesses to large international companies. They develop, market and deliver their own products, guide tours for local and foreign companies, and tailor trips for conventions and special events. A number of Yukon companies deliver tours that include neighbouring jurisdictions as well as product elsewhere in North America and the world.

Between 1999 and 2004, the Yukon government issued 167 wilderness tourism licenses. Renewing operators keep the same license, and not all operators run trips every year. Approximately 80 to 100 operators delivered Yukon wilderness adventure products each year from 1999 to 2004. In 2004, 65 of the 81 licensed operators were Yukon-based, of which 39 were based in Whitehorse and 26 in other communities. Sixteen non-Yukon companies guided trips in 2004.

The most popular activity was Yukon River motorboat tours; in 2004, 46 per cent of all clients took a motorized boat tour. Between 2000 and 2004, the number of motorboat tour clients ranged between 14,396 and 19,568 clients per year. During that same period, 1,100 to 1,700 multi-day trip clients spent 9,700 to 17,000 user days each year on wilderness trips.

Day trip clients spent about \$100 per person for day tours, and an average of \$1,700 to an upper range of \$5,000 per person for multi-day tours.

Summer is the high season for wilderness tourism in Yukon, though shoulder season and winter activities are growing steadily. The availability of winter products has increased in the past five years, particularly dog mushing.

Operators note several ways of growing their businesses, including adding new activities, new locations, and winter or shoulder season products.

Yukon operators are interested in expanding their businesses, and the sector has room to accommodate growth.

In 2002, seasonal tourism businesses operated at 59 per cent capacity, while year-round businesses operated at 39 per cent capacity. Eighty per cent of licensed businesses had plans to grow; almost half planned to grow in the next two years, and just 20 per cent had no plans to grow (Wilderness Tourism Capacity Study, 2003).

YUKON WILDERNESS TOURISM ACTIVITIES AND LOCATIONS

While people are on a wilderness excursion, they participate in different activities and learn about Yukon's nature, cultures and history. Canoeing, rafting or horseback riding may be the primary reason why a visitor takes a wilderness tour, but these activities may also be the means to obtain benefits such as knowledge, solitude, stimulation, exercise or spiritual awareness. While guided motorboat day tours on the Yukon River are the most popular activity in terms of client numbers, day and multi-day canoeing, river rafting, horseback riding, sport fishing, dog mushing and hiking are the backbone of the wilderness tourism sector.

Table 1 summarizes wilderness tourism features and activities in Yukon's nine tourism regions and the Yukon River Watershed.

FIGURE 2: OPERATORS, CLIENTS AND USER DAYS



Table 1: Regional wilderness tourism features and activities

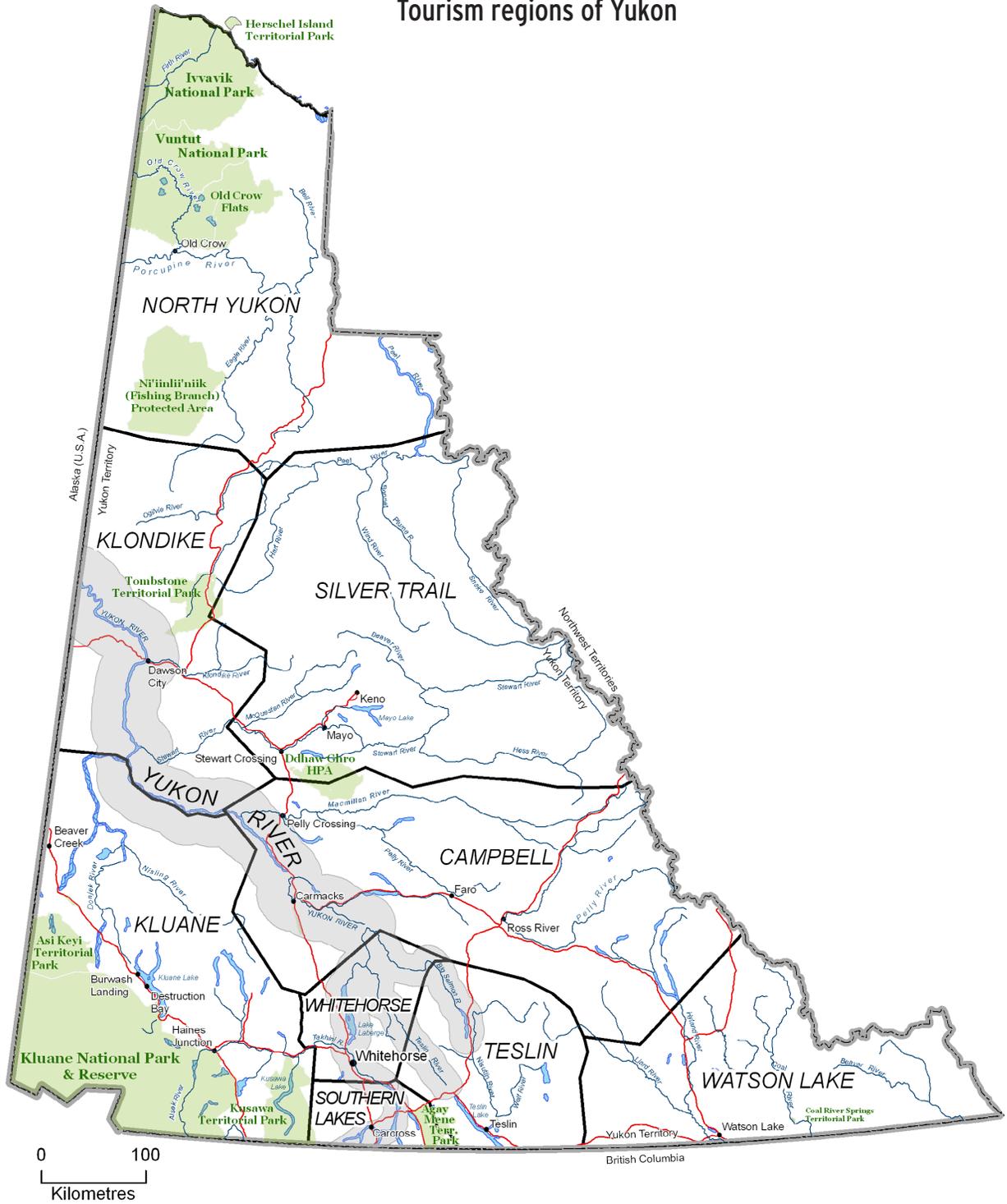
TOURISM REGION	CORE WILDERNESS TOURISM ACTIVITIES	PARKS, RESERVES, HERITAGE RIVERS	KEY FEATURES	WILDERNESS-BASED EVENTS & HISTORIC FEATURES	SIGNIFICANT WILDLIFE FEATURES
Watson Lake	Canoeing, horseback riding, hiking, sport fishing	Coal River Springs Territorial Park	Liard River and rapids Coal River and canyon Beaver, Hyland and Frances rivers Upper Rancheria River Nahanni Range Road		Bird life at Wye Lake
Teslin	Hiking, canoeing, dog mushing, sport fishing	Nisutlin Delta National Wildlife Area	Teslin, Nisutlin and Big Salmon rivers Quiet Lake Wolf Lake and River Teslin Lake	South Canol Road	Waterfowl nesting and staging in Nisutlin Bay
Southern Lakes	Photo safaris, horseback riding, canoeing, dog mushing, sport fishing, hiking, off-road vehicle riding	Chilkoot Trail National Historic Site – B.C. and Alaska Agay Mene Territorial Park	Large Yukon River headwater lakes Yukon River Montana Mountain Watson and Wheaton rivers Tutshi River rapids – B.C.	Trail of '98 route White Pass & Yukon Railway Mining, river and rail transport history	Waterfowl staging and migration at Swan Haven and M'Clintock Bay
Whitehorse	Motorboat tours, horseback riding, canoeing, hiking, sport fishing, dog mushing	Thirty Mile Canadian Heritage River Kusawa Territorial Park	Yukon River Lake Laberge Fish Lake	Hootalinqua Historic Site Old Dawson Road (Trans Canada Trail) Yukon Quest start/finish Yukon River Quest canoe race start	Salmon migration at Whitehorse Fish Ladder
Kluane	Horseback riding, canoeing, river rafting, hiking, sport fishing, dog mushing, mountaineering, boating	Kluane National Park & Reserve UNESCO World Heritage Site Tatshenshini and Alsek Canadian Heritage Rivers Asi Keyi Territorial Park Kusawa Territorial Park	Kluane and Icefield ranges (Mount Logan) Kusawa, Kluane and Dezadeash lakes Tatshenshini, Alsek rivers	Klukshu Village Silver Sled Dog Race	Salmon runs Grizzly bear viewing in Kluane National Park Dall sheep at Sheep Mountain Waterfowl staging

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TOURISM REGION	CORE WILDERNESS TOURISM ACTIVITIES	PARKS, RESERVES, HERITAGE RIVERS	KEY FEATURES	WILDERNESS-BASED EVENTS & HISTORIC FEATURES	SIGNIFICANT WILDLIFE FEATURES
Campbell	Hiking, canoeing, sport fishing, wildlife viewing		Yukon River Pelly, Ross, Yukon and South Macmillan rivers Macmillan Pass and Itsi Range Frances and other large lakes	Yukon Quest Route Fort Selkirk Five Finger Rapids Dena Cho Trail North and South Canol roads	Bird migrations along the Tintina flyway Fannin sheep
Silver Trail	Canoeing, hiking, horseback riding, sport fishing, photo safaris, wildlife viewing	Bonnet Plume Canadian Heritage River	Peel River basin (Snake, Bonnet Plume, Wind, Hart and Ogilvie rivers) McQuesten River Stewart River	Historic mining artifacts Silver Trail historic route Trans Canada Trail	Mountain caribou Dall sheep Alpine butterflies
Klondike	Motorboat tours, snowmobiling, hiking, backpacking, canoeing	Tombstone Territorial Park	Yukon River North Fork Pass and Tombstone peaks Klondike River Dempster Highway	Klondike/Dawson Historical Complex Moosehide Forty Mile Historic Site Yukon Quest Route Yukon River Quest canoe race	Porcupine caribou herd migration Dempster Highway bird life Bird migrations along the Tintina flyway
Yukon River Watershed Region	Motorboat tours, canoe trips with associated hiking, fishing and wildlife viewing	Thirty Mile Canadian Heritage Rivers	Yukon, Teslin and Big Salmon rivers Scenic and historic waterways	Numerous historic sites Fort Selkirk, Hootalinqua, Forty Mile Yukon Quest and Yukon River Quest routes	Salmon migration Bird migration along Tintina Trench flyway
North Yukon	River rafting, canoeing, wildlife viewing, hiking, dog mushing	Herschel Island Territorial Park Ivvavik National Park Vuntut National Park Old Crow Flats Special Management Area Ní'inliinjik Fishing Branch	Bell-Eagle-Porcupine River system Firth River British and Richardson mountains Arctic Ocean & Coastal Plain	LaPierre and Rampart House historic sites Dempster Highway	Porcupine caribou herd migration Bear Cave Mountain (grizzly bear, salmon) Waterfowl nesting and migration

Tourism regions of Yukon



REGIONAL SUMMARIES

Watson Lake Tourism Region

The Watson Lake Tourism Region includes Rancheria to the west, Nahanni Range Road to the north, and the remote southeast corner of Yukon. Southeast Yukon rivers offer high-quality remote wilderness valleys, many of which have road access. Popular rivers include the Hyland and Coal, as well as the Beaver, which traverses the largest roadless watershed in southeast Yukon, and the Liard, which drops through extreme rapids.

Multi-day canoe journeys account for about half of all guided activity in the region, mostly on the



Coal River Springs (YG)

Liard and the Beaver. Operators also take clients rafting and kayaking and on day and multi-day horseback riding, dog mushing and snowmobiling excursions. A commercial sport fishing lodge is located on Stewart Lake. Popular self-guided activities included fishing, canoeing,

hiking, wildlife viewing and birdwatching along the Alaska Highway corridor. The Watson Lake area is also known for superior viewing of the northern lights in winter.

Teslin Tourism Region

The Teslin Tourism Region features popular road-accessible canoeing rivers, sport fishing and the scenic South Canol Road. The Teslin and Big Salmon rivers flow north and connect with the Yukon River, and the Wolf and Nisutlin rivers flow into Teslin Lake. The

region is also adjacent to the headwater lakes of the Yukon River. The South Canol Road provides access to high-quality wilderness areas for hiking, horseback riding, off-road vehicle tours, skiing, dog mushing and snowmobiling.

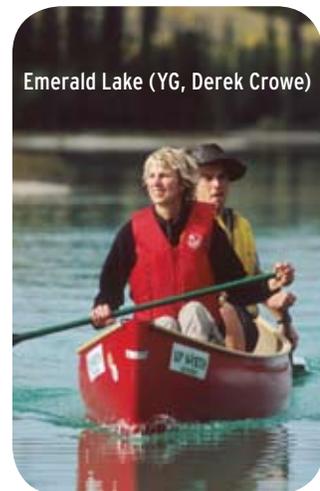
Most guided clients in the Teslin area participate in hiking, canoeing and sport fishing day trips. A fly-in sport fishing lodge is on Wolf Lake, nearby Caribou Lakes is the start of a five-day canoe trip on the Upper Liard, and some operators lead dog mushing trips in the region. Teslin is a popular destination for self-guided canoeing, wildlife viewing and sport fishing on large lakes in the region.



Teslin Lake (YG)

Southern Lakes Tourism Region

The Southern Lakes Tourism Region centres on Carcross, a historic town about an hour's drive from both Whitehorse and the cruise ship port of Skagway, Alaska. The Chilkoot Trail, White Pass and Yukon Railroad, and the legacy of boat transport on the big southern lakes add romance to



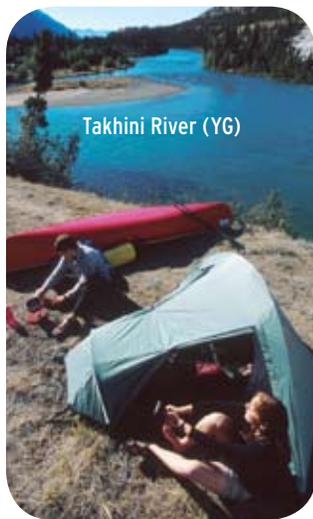
Emerald Lake (YG, Derek Crowe)

a spectacular landscape of mountains and waterways. Key wilderness tourism features include Carcross Desert, Montana Mountain, Ibex Valley, Tutshi and Wheaton rivers, and the region's large interconnected lakes.

Visitors enjoy a wide range of guided and self-guided wilderness adventure activities in the region. Old mining roads and trails offer routes into alpine uplands for hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, skiing, dog mushing, snowmobiling and all-terrain vehicle tours. Most Southern Lakes operators are local, and the majority of clients are day-trippers from cruise ships participating in photo safaris, horseback riding and canoeing. The region is popular among self-guided travellers who enjoy canoeing, boating, fishing, hiking, wildlife viewing and mountain biking.

Whitehorse Tourism Region

Whitehorse is the staging, starting or finishing point for most wilderness trips in Yukon, and over half of Yukon-resident operators and rental companies are based in the city. Whitehorse offers a wide range of activities to commercial and self-guided wilderness



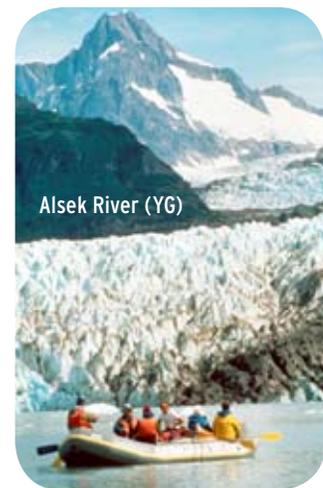
travellers. Key wilderness tourism features include the Yukon River, Lake Laberge, Miles Canyon, Old Dawson Road, Thirty Mile Canadian Heritage River and Hootalinqua Historic Site.

Yukon River motorboat tours are the most popular wilderness tourism activity in

the region, and most multi-day Yukon River canoe trips start from Whitehorse. Other popular guided activities include horseback riding and dog mushing. Hiking trails and horse trails provide easy access to mountains around Whitehorse. Self-guided activities include hiking, canoeing, skiing, mountain biking, fishing and wildlife viewing. Several road-accessible, year-round facilities offer accommodations and guided and self-guided wilderness tourism activities. Rental companies offer canoes, boats, camping equipment and transport.

Kluane Tourism Region

Dominated by Kluane National Park and Reserve, the Kluane Tourism Region is characterized by scenic vistas of broad valleys, large lakes, mountain ranges, icefields and Mount Logan, Canada's highest peak. Visitors pursue a range of wilderness tourism activities made possible by the wide variety of features and landscapes.



The region has excellent infrastructure including trails, boat ramps and groomed ski trails as well as several wilderness and fishing lodges. Guided clients enjoy canoeing, dog mushing, horseback riding, river rafting, sport fishing, First Nation interpretive tours and photo safaris. Self-guided activities outside the national park include hiking, fishing, boating, canoeing and wildlife viewing. Important recreation and tourism assets include Kusawa Territorial Park, Kluane, Aishihik

and Kusawa lakes and the Tatshenshini, Takhini, Dezadeash, Donjek and White rivers.

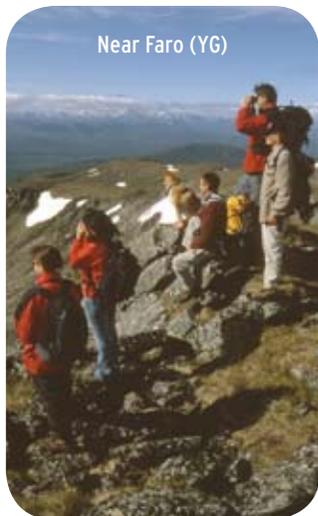
Kluane National Park

Kluane National Park is a world-class destination that attracts visitors for accessible and remote wilderness tourism activities. The Asek Canadian Heritage River is internationally acclaimed for wilderness rafting trips. Other key features include Mount Logan, the St. Elias icefields and glaciers, Sheep Mountain, Kathleen Lake, hiking trails and significant wildlife populations.

Kluane National Park, along with Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, Glacier Bay National Park and Tatshenshini-Asek Provincial Park, are recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. Kluane National Park is a living laboratory for co-management, with collaboration between Parks Canada and the Champagne and Aishihik First Nation and Kluane First Nation.

Campbell Tourism Region

The Campbell Tourism Region stretches across central Yukon from the Northwest Territories border in



the east to the Yukon River in the west. Key wilderness tourism activities include canoeing, fishing, hiking and wildlife viewing of migrating birds and unusual Fanin's sheep. Rivers including the South Macmillan, Pelly and Yukon offer lengthy wilderness journeys with road access at both

ends, rewarding wildlife viewing, moderate whitewater and fine scenery.

Popular guided activities in the Campbell region include hiking, canoeing and sport fishing. Visitors come to wilderness lodges for guided sport fishing, canoeing and alpine hiking excursions. Self-guided activities include wildlife viewing and more adventurous pursuits like mountaineering and whitewater paddling. Special features in the Campbell region include scenic Lapie Canyon, the Dena Cho Trail and historic sites at Five Finger Rapids and Fort Selkirk.

Silver Trail Tourism Region

For this report, the Silver Trail Tourism Region is divided into two sub-regions: Mayo-Keno-Elsa and Peel Watershed.

Mayo-Keno-Elsa Sub-region

The communities of the Mayo-Keno-Elsa mining district are linked by the historic Silver Trail Highway and surrounded by trails, historic sites and interesting destinations for hikers, canoeists, mountain bikers and wildlife viewing enthusiasts. An extensive network of rough roads and scenic trails provides access to alpine areas and excellent wilderness canoeing rivers like the South Macmillan, McQuesten and Stewart.

Visitors include highway travellers looking for soft adventure day trips in the front country, and backcountry travellers seeking multi-day wilderness canoe trips. Guided activities include canoeing, hiking, horseback riding, sport fishing, dog mushing and photo safaris. Self-guided travellers also enjoy wildlife viewing, mountain biking and boating.



density of features attractive to paddlers from around the world. These features include pristine wilderness, easy access to ridge hiking, canyons, rapids, alpine lakes, hoodoos, rock towers, hot springs, wildlife viewing, birdwatching, camping, fishing and historic sites. Twelve to 20-day trips on these remote rivers incorporate adventure, challenge, learning and a variety of wilderness activities.

Peel Watershed Sub-region

The Peel River watershed is Yukon's largest intact remote wilderness area and a world-class wilderness canoeing and ridge hiking destination. The region offers remote, scenic mountain rivers (Peel, Blackstone, Hart, Wind, Bonnet Plume and Snake) with a high

Park on the Dempster Highway. The region stretches up the Tintina Trench from the Klondike Goldfields to Tombstone Territorial Park and the taiga uplands of the Dempster Highway. A special regional feature is the opportunity to see subarctic landscapes and birdlife after only a short drive up the highway.

Outside the park, the most popular guided activity in the Klondike region is motorboat tours on the Yukon River. Other guided activities include Jeep tours of the Klondike goldfields, Klondike River rafting, and Dempster Highway and Tombstone Park tours. Popular self-guided activities include mountain biking, hiking, backpacking, canoeing and fishing.

Tombstone Territorial Park

Tombstone Territorial Park encompasses over 2,113 square kilometres of subarctic wilderness. The Dempster Highway runs through the park, providing access to spectacular views and tundra environments like nowhere else in Canada. The Tombstone area is a popular destination for guided hikes as well as for self-guided visitors seeking roadside experiences and multi-day backpacking adventures. Guided trips in the Tombstones are almost exclusively hiking or backpacking and occasionally horseback riding, photo safaris and winter trips.

Yukon River Watershed

Fed by its many tributaries, the Yukon River drains more than half of the territory. The river flows northwest for 1,140 kilometres through the boreal forest to the Alaska border, then west for another 2,060 kilometres to the Bering Sea. The Yukon River's enticing blend of scenery, wildlife and history, ease of access and easy paddling makes it the most popular canoe route in Canada's North. One of the longest



Klondike Tourism Region

The Klondike Tourism Region centres on the historic gold mining town of Dawson City, a popular destination for many Yukon and Alaska visitors, including Yukon River travellers, and a staging point for visitors venturing into Tombstone Territorial



rivers in the world, the Yukon River has many campsites, showcases First Nations and Klondike Gold Rush history and offers opportunities for wildlife viewing, photography, hiking and fishing.

The Teslin and Big Salmon are the most popular Yukon River tributaries. The Big

Salmon is a very popular wilderness canoe route with abundant hikes, fishing and good wildlife viewing potential. The Teslin River is easier than the Big Salmon and is used by entry-level canoeists and some motorboat parties. Three categories of river travellers use this region: guided motorboat tour clients, guided multi-day canoe clients and self-guided multi-day canoe parties, most of whom rent equipment.

North Yukon Tourism Region

The North Yukon Tourism Region boasts five large protected areas, all of which overlap the range of the Porcupine caribou herd. The Dempster Highway crosses the Arctic Circle and leads travellers across the region's spectacular subarctic landscape.

Current wilderness tourism activity in North Yukon is low, consisting mainly of summer river paddlers, Dempster Highway

travellers and the occasional winter dog mushing trip. Guided and self-guided activities in the region's parks include river rafting, canoeing, wildlife viewing, hiking and photography. The Firth River in Ivvavik National Park is a pre-eminent northern rafting trip, and tour groups visit Herschel Island Territorial Park. The migration of the Porcupine caribou herd is one of the best wildlife viewing spectacles in the territory.



