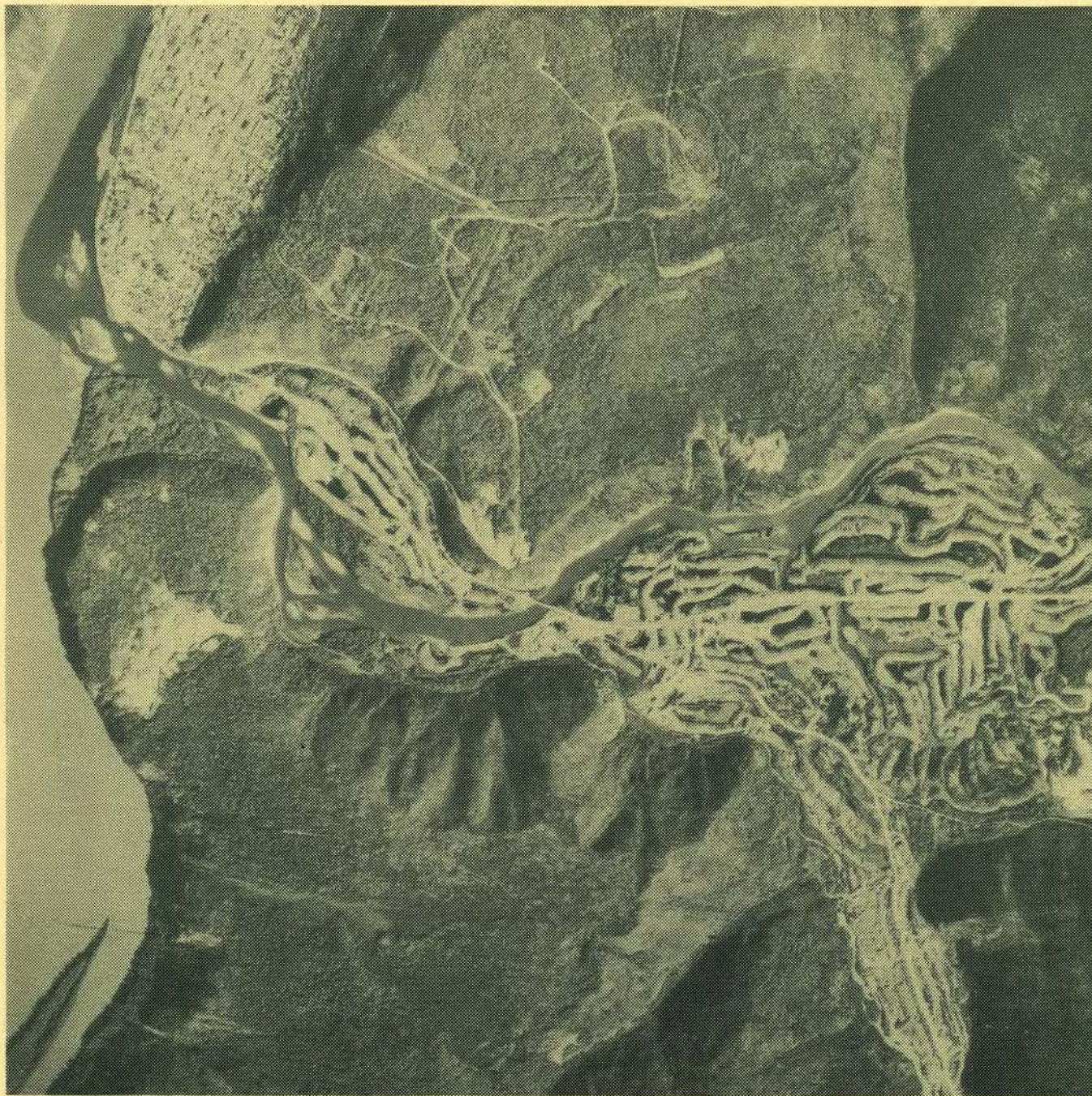


# **KLONDIKE VALLEY DISTRICT**

**• LAND USE PLAN •**





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**• LAND USE PLAN •**

**September 1988**



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# 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE PLAN

The Klondike Valley Land Use Plan was initiated in November 1986 by the Government of the Yukon Lands Branch, Department of Transportation and Community Services. The purpose of the Plan is to establish a framework for the use and disposition of public or Crown lands in the Klondike Valley to meet the short and long-term social, economic and environmental needs of the region. The complete terms of reference for the Klondike Valley Land Use Plan are located in Appendix 1.

A Steering Committee was established by the Yukon Minister of Community and Transportation Services, Piers McDonald, in December 1986, to provide public and governmental guidance to the planning process. The preparation of the Plan was coordinated by the Yukon Land Use Planning Office of the Federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

The boundaries of the planning region include Sunnydale and West Dawson, the Klondike Valley from the Yukon River to the beginning of the abandoned North Fork power system diversion ditch east of the Dempster Highway. The north and south boundaries of the planning area are the hill

crests adjacent to the valley floor (see Figure I: Klondike Valley Land Use Planning Area, on page 2). The City of Dawson is included in the planning area because of the close inter-relationship between Dawson and the surrounding areas. However, the recommendations in the Plan have no binding effect on the City of Dawson.

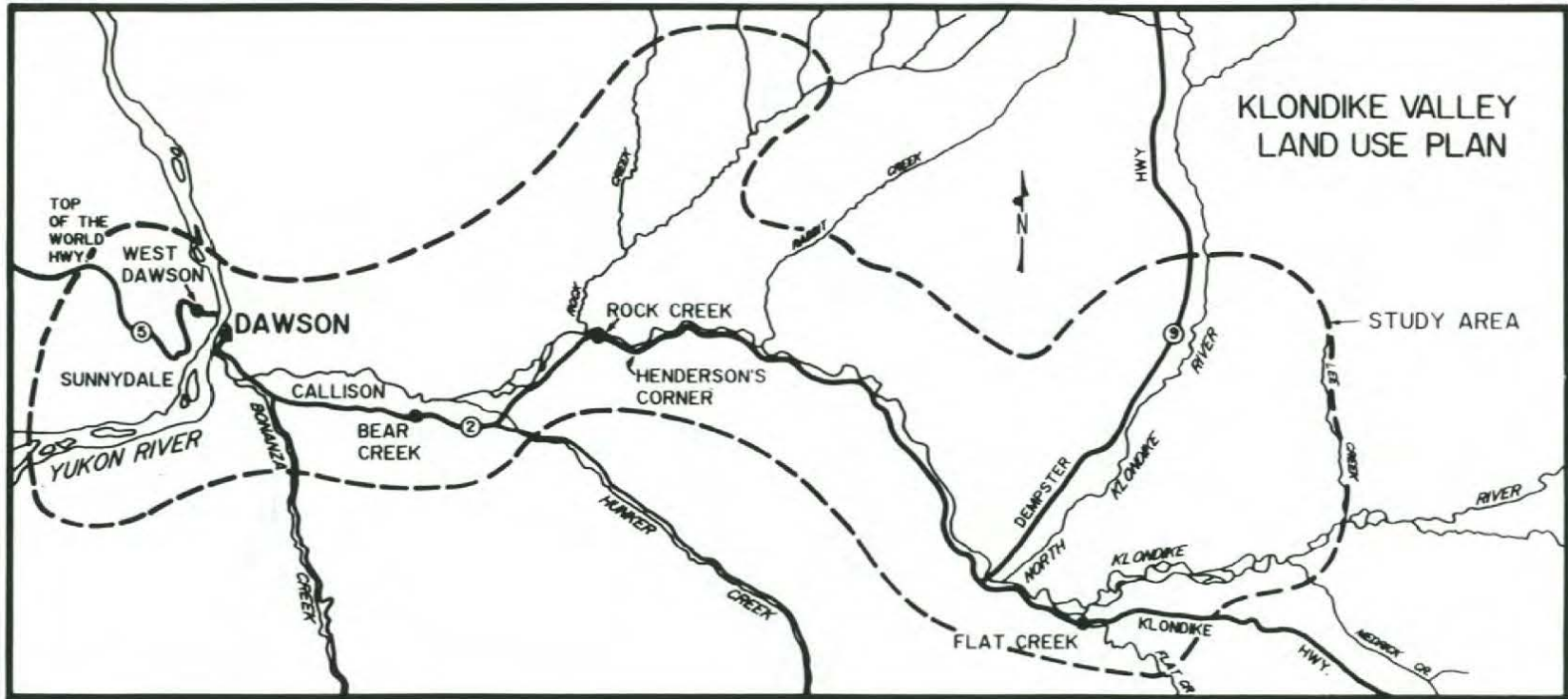
As noted above, this Plan only applies to Crown land. The Plan does not apply to land use on private land. The Plan is also without prejudice to Land Claim negotiations. As well, the Plan does not affect existing land use legislation, or rights that people hold under this legislation. However, the Plan is intended to be used as a basis for jurisdictional changes in the Klondike Valley (See Section 5: Implementation, for a discussion of these changes).

The time horizon for the Plan is five years. However, because the Klondike area is experiencing rapid changes, monitoring of these changes could result in revisions to the Plan within the five year period. The Plan, therefore should be viewed as an over-all framework for land use decisions, not as a rigid blueprint chiseled in stone. However, changes to the Plan should be made with full public review and involvement.

## 1.2 OBJECTIVES

One of the first steps in developing the Klondike Valley Land Use Plan was the identification of issues affecting the planning area. The identification of issues was done by the Klondike Valley Steering Committee. A complete list of these issues can be found in Appendix B. From this process, specific objectives were defined. In no particular order of importance, the Steering Committee identified the following issues and objectives for the planning area.

# KLONDIKE VALLEY LAND USE PLAN



## **REFUSE DISPOSAL SITES**

### **Issue:**

There is a lack of suitable land for refuse disposal sites in the Klondike Valley. Land use conflicts further restrict the location of disposal sites in the Valley.

### **Objectives:**

Designation of land for a new refuse disposal site for the Klondike Valley and the City of Dawson, and provision for ensuring compatible adjacent uses are major objectives of the Plan.

## **AIRPORT RELOCATION**

### **Issue:**

Local interest in a new airport that is capable of handling larger aircraft than can presently be handled by the existing airport has resulted in several studies being done to find a new airport site.

### **Objective:**

Although choosing a new airport site is the mandate of the Government of Yukon, Airports Branch, an objective of the Plan is to ensure that land uses in the vicinity of a new site are compatible, and that corridors for access roads are protected.

## **OUTDOOR RECREATION**

### **Issue:**

The availability of various sites for interpretation, campgrounds, ski trails, ATV/snowmobile trails, and downhill skiing was identified as a recreational use issue by the Steering Committee.

### **Objective:**

The objective of the Plan is to ensure the identification, provision and protection of suitable land and water features for outdoor recreation.

## **AGRICULTURE**

### **Issue:**

Land available for agriculture is needed in the Klondike area for the establishment of

a viable industry. The Klondike area has some of the best conditions for agriculture in the Yukon, although a lack of markets, lack of support infrastructure, and resource conflicts are major constraints to agriculture.

### **Objective:**

The identification of suitable and sufficient land for agricultural development is an objective of the Plan.

## **FORESTRY**

### **Issues:**

Land is needed for wood harvesting on a sustainable basis for timber and fuelwood. Also, a forest management plan is needed for the Klondike region for the purposes of timber harvesting, wildlife management, and environmental protection.

### **Objective:**

The identification of land suitable for forestry is an objective of the Plan.

## **MINING AND MINE WASTE DISPOSAL AREAS**

### **Issue:**

Gold mining activities along the valley sides and on the tributary creeks of the Klondike River (e.g. Hunker, Bonanza), combined with increasing demands for other land uses, such as residential, agricultural, and heritage preservation, are resulting in increasing land use conflicts between mining and these uses. Compounding these conflicts is the Yukon Placer Mining Act, which has allowed most of the valley floor from Dawson to Hunker Creek to be staked for placer mining, thereby constraining the use of this area for other purposes.

### **Objective:**

An objective of the Plan is to minimize conflicts between placer mining and other uses, by identifying areas necessary for legitimate mining activities, and by identifying and documenting areas needed for settlement and settlement related purposes.

## **RURAL RESIDENTIAL USES**

### **Issue:**

A major problem in the Klondike area is the shortage of housing and residential land.

### **Objective:**

The identification of suitable and sufficient land for residential purposes is a major objective of the Plan.

## **INDUSTRIAL USES**

### **Issue:**

There is a shortage of land for industrial uses in the Klondike Valley.

### **Objective:**

A major objective of the Plan is the identification of suitable and sufficient land for industrial purposes.

## **HERITAGE FEATURES**

The Klondike has a rich heritage, and it is this heritage which is the foundation of the tourist industry in the area. The value of the heritage features in the Klondike Valley will undoubtedly increase with the approach of the centenaries for the discovery of gold in 1896 and for the Gold Rush in 1898. Many individuals and government agencies are concerned about the continual loss of heritage resources that are not adequately protected.

### **Objective:**

An objective of the Plan is to protect important heritage features from incompatible uses.

## **TOURIST COMMERCIAL USES**

### **Issue:**

Land is needed for tourist commercial activities in the Klondike Valley.

### **Objective:**

An objective of the Plan is to identify suitable and sufficient land for this purpose.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITY SITES AND CORRIDORS**

### **Issue:**

Present and future transportation infrastructure requirements need to be identified and co-ordinated with other land uses.

### **Objective:**

Identification and protection of future transportation infrastructure is a major objective of the Plan.

## **WATER QUALITY**

### **Issue:**

Maintenance of existing water quality for the Klondike Valley and the City of Dawson is a major concern.

### **Objective:**

An objective of the Plan is to locate particular land uses taking into account the maintenance of existing water quality.

## **WILDLIFE**

### **Issue:**

Residential, agricultural, road, and other developments can have major impacts on wildlife, wildlife habitat, and wildlife users (e.g., trappers).

### **Objective:**

Preservation of key and important wildlife habitat is a major objective of the Plan.

## 2: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### 2.1 IMPLEMENTATION

The Steering Committee recommends:

1. The recommendations in this Report, when accepted by the Government of the Yukon and received by the Federal Government, shall act as guidelines to those responsible for making resource management decisions;

2. The jurisdiction over surface rights in Sunnydale, West Dawson, and from the mouth of the Klondike River to Henderson's Corner, excluding the City of Dawson and land claims selections, be transferred to the Government of the Yukon immediately.

3. A Planning Advisory Body be established immediately by the Government of the Yukon, to be composed of Klondike Valley residents, and a representative each from the City of Dawson and the Dawson Indian Band. The responsibilities of this Advisory Body would be to:

- a. provide advisory and review functions for all land disposition and land use permit applications for the Klondike Valley received by the Government of the Yukon;
- b. review and monitor the implementation of the Klondike Valley Land Use Plan;
- c. develop more detailed Area Development Plans for the Klondike Valley.

### 2.2 MINING AND MINE WASTE DISPOSAL AREAS

1. The Klondike Valley Steering Committee (henceforth to be referred to as the Steering Committee) recommends that:

- (a) the Klondike Valley floor, from the City of Dawson boundary to Rock Creek be removed from claim staking under the provision of the Yukon Placer Mining Act. In

making this recommendation, the Steering Committee notes that a withdrawal order from claim staking would not affect existing claims, but would prohibit restaking when non-bona fide operations are debarred, or lapse.

- (b) a more detailed plan be prepared for the Dawson to Callison area that would recognize existing mining operations and their requirements, other existing land uses, and other proposed uses for the area; and,
- (c) this work would be done in consultation with residents of this area, claim holders, mining operators, land owners, and the City of Dawson.

2. In the area from the Callison Industrial Subdivision to the Hunker Creek Road, a working group be established to examine the options for settling ponds, the protection of the dredge tailings piles for their historic and visual values, and the opportunities provided in this area for other land uses.

### 2.3 RESIDENTIAL USE

1. Given existing settlement patterns and services, limitations to residential development due to poor access, and conflicts with other resource uses, the Steering Committee recommends that in the immediate future residential development should be located within and between the City of Dawson and Henderson's Corner. Currently, land is needed for another 60 residences, after taking into account residential development in the Dome Road area and at Henderson's Corner. Detailed studies for residential development should be made of the following areas:

- a. City of Dawson
- b. Rock Creek
- c. Klondike Valley Dredge Tailings
- d. West Dawson

- e. Bench Above Lousetown
- f. Henderson's Corner.

2. If the above areas cannot satisfy the requirements for residential land in the Klondike Valley, the Steering Committee recommends that Sunnydale, and the area east of Henderson's Corner be considered for residential development, but only after cost of development and environmental impact studies are done.

## 2.4 AGRICULTURE

The Steering Committee recommends that:

1. Further agricultural development should take place in:
  - a. Sunnydale
  - b. West Dawson
  - c. The south side of the Klondike Valley from Dawson to Henderson's Corner.

2. The Steering Committee further recommends that market and agro-climatic studies be done to determine the most feasible types of agriculture in the Klondike Valley. From these studies, the amount of land that should be allocated to agriculture can be determined. Market studies can be done either by the Government of the Yukon, by groups (e.g., Yukon Livestock and Agriculture Association) or by individuals involved in agriculture. Agro-climatic studies should be done by the Government of Yukon and Agriculture Canada.

## 2.5 FORESTRY

Due to the relative scarcity of the productive forest base in the Klondike Valley and to its economic importance to the area, the Steering Committee recommends that:

1. The Federal and Yukon governments protect and manage land with Class 4 and 5 forest capability primarily for forestry purposes.
2. Exceptions to this policy are those areas where there is a need to accommodate

other, competing, uses of higher importance.

3. Those areas where the Steering Committee recommends that forestry be considered secondary to other uses are the Sunnydale and West Dawson areas, and the south side of the Klondike Valley from Dawson to Henderson's Corner.

4. The Steering Committee also recommends that for those areas designated for forestry, the Yukon Forest Service undertake a forest management plan by 1992.

## 2.6 COMMERCIAL LAND USE

1. The Steering Committee recommends that the Government of the Yukon monitor commercial (industrial, highway and tourist commercial) land demand by monitoring the value of commercial land transactions, and by monitoring the rate at which new commercial land is acquired and developed.

2. The Steering Committee recommends that the Government of the Yukon maintain a slight surplus of commercial land over commercial land requirements. This would maintain reasonable land prices, and help reduce pressure on other land for commercial use.

3. The Steering Committee recommends that industrial land use should be concentrated at Callison. It is impossible to predict future industrial land requirements, but the Steering Committee recommends that land adjacent to the present Callison Subdivision be designated for future industrial use, and developed in phases as demand warrants.

4. The Steering Committee recommends that a detailed land use plan be developed for the Klondike Highway area from Dawson to the Quigley Road which would involve design and site planning for highway tourist and commercial, and industrial land uses.

5. The Steering Committee recommends that:

- a. the Federal/Territorial Lands Advisory Committee (FTLAC) re-examine its policy

- of granting surface leases to holders of placer rights in the Klondike Valley;
- b. the issuance of surface leases on existing placer claims in the Klondike Valley occur only when lease applications have been reviewed by a local land use planning board (see Implementation section for further details on a planning board);
  - c. when surface rights are being considered for disposition, adequate public notice and/or public auction or lottery of the lands should occur.
  - d. the placer claim holder should have no advantage in acquiring surface rights to the claim because of ownership of that claim.

## 2.7 REFUSE DISPOSAL SITES

1. The Steering Committee recommends that only one refuse disposal site, rather than two sites, be maintained for both the City of Dawson and outlying areas because of the shortage of good development land in the Klondike Valley, and because too much of this scarce land is needed for buffer zones around disposal sites.

2. The Steering Committee recommends that the Yukon Municipal Engineering Branch accelerate its efforts in locating a new refuse disposal site for the Klondike Valley.

3. The Steering Committee recommends that the south facing slope of Lovett Hill be considered as a refuse disposal site.

4. The Steering Committee recommends that a waste management plan for the Klondike Valley be developed, and that this plan involve the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Branch to minimize wildlife/refuse conflicts.

## 2.8 WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

1. The Steering Committee recommends that areas of significant and critical wildlife and fisheries habitat be protected from land

use activities that would have irreversible or long range impacts on species and habitat. The areas that are designated as significant and critical are:

- a. Yukon River Bluffs
  - b. Floodplains of the Yukon and Klondike Rivers
  - c. Klondike Valley east of Henderson's Corner
2. The Klondike Valley Steering Committee recommends that further wildlife studies be done in the Klondike Valley east of Henderson's Corner, and that these studies be commenced in 1988 and completed prior to 1992.

## 2.9 TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES

The Steering Committee recommends that:

1. Land disposition in the Klondike Valley not block potential access routes to the airport sites;

2. Improvements to the Klondike Highway between the Klondike River Bridge and Callison be undertaken by the Highways Branch, Government of Yukon, that would incorporate left-turn lanes, and the development of a bicycle route.

3. If increased agricultural and residential development in the Sunnydale area occurs, a new access road to Sunnydale should be constructed.

## 2.10 HERITAGE

1. The Steering Committee recommends that a representative part of the dredge tailings in the Klondike Valley be designated as a Territorial Park, for the purposes of heritage protection and recreation. Specifically, the Steering Committee recommends that the easterly boundary of this Park be the Bear Creek Subdivision Road; the westerly

boundary be the Quigley Road; the southerly boundary be a line 1,500 feet from and parallel to the Klondike Highway; and the northerly boundary be the Klondike River. Excluded from this proposal are the Canadian Parks Service Bear Creek Heritage Site, and private property.

2. The Steering Committee recommends that the Steamboat Graveyard site be retained as public land in order to protect the heritage value of this site.

## 2.11 RECREATION

1. The Steering Committee recommends that the Government of the Yukon, Parks and Recreation Outdoor Section continue its systematic planning efforts to identify candidate parks, and recreation sites and corridors within the Klondike Valley.

2. The Steering Committee recommends that the Government of the Yukon consider developing outdoor recreation opportunities as part of the proposed Klondike Valley heritage park.

# 3: ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 3.1 MINING AND MINE WASTE DISPOSAL AREAS

### 3.1.1 Objective

To designate land for mining and mine waste disposal areas in the Klondike Valley.

### 3.1.2 Analysis

The Klondike Valley is synonymous with gold mining. Within the planning area, the valley floor from Dawson to Hunker Creek was extensively mined by dredges until the 1950's. Gold mining is still occurring in the Hunker and Bonanza Creek watersheds, and at several locations on the lower slopes surrounding the valley between Hunker Creek and the Yukon River. In addition, exploration is occurring throughout the Klondike Hills to the south of the valley.

There are several resource use conflicts related to mining in the Klondike Valley. A long standing conflict exists between the settlement of Bear Creek and mine wastes from mining operations in the Hunker Valley. Further, a strong local economy is resulting in a high demand for residential, agricultural, and commercial/industrial land in the Klondike Valley, particularly from Dawson to the Quigley Road. The demand for land for non-mining purposes is directly conflicting with the placer claims that are extensively staked in the Klondike Valley from Dawson to Hunker Creek. In brief, the need for land for surface uses in this area is being constrained by placer staking, which allows stake holders to hold the land only for placer mining purposes. Many claims in the Klondike Valley are being held for placer mining purposes. However, many other claims are being held for surface uses, or as a form of land holding for speculative purposes.

From a land use planning perspective, the challenge is to provide land for a range of different uses while ensuring that incompatible uses are separated. However, the presence of placer claims complicates the disposing of this land for other purposes.

Historic records show that the highest gold values in the Klondike Valley floor were found at the mouths of Hunker, Bear, and Bonanza Creeks. Opinion is divided regarding remaining values. Some suggest that depth to bedrock, volume of material to be reworked, environmental requirements, and remaining values of gold are such to preclude re-mining. Others suggest that a substantial rise in gold values would make it economic to re-mine. A test pit west of the Callison waste metal dump, dug in 1986 in new ground, produced no gold at all. This year, 1988, a major placer mining operation is occurring a few hundred metres south of the Klondike Highway/Bonanza Road junction. The success of this operation will undoubtedly influence future placer mining prospects on the Klondike Valley floor.

Whatever happens, the Klondike Valley floor is blanketed by both quartz and placer claims. Their presence, particularly placer claims, tends to restrict the disposition of surface rights to third party interests for other uses – even though the claims are not being actively mined. Therein lies the dilemma facing the Klondike Valley.

1. How long can land be held in claim status, but unworked when there is an ex-

pressed demand for this land for other uses?

2. At what point is an area considered to be "mined out"?

It is recognized, however, that land must be made available for tailing sites and settling ponds for active mining operations adjacent to the Klondike Valley floor. Suitable parts of the valley floor must be designated for this use. Of course, the deposition of mine wastes decreases the feasibility of future mining of these sites.

### 3.1.3 Recommendations

The economic forces (mainly mining activities and tourism) that are occurring in the Klondike region are increasing the demand for land for a wide range of land uses, such as agriculture, residential, heritage preservation, industrial and commercial, and recreation. Many of these uses cannot be accommodated within the City of Dawson; the preferred alternative location is in close proximity to the City.

The Klondike Valley Land Use Planning Steering Committee (henceforth referred to as the Steering Committee) recommends:

1. (a) the Klondike Valley floor, from the City of Dawson boundary to Rock Creek be removed from claim staking under the provisions of the Yukon Placer Mining Act. In making this recommendation, the Steering Committee notes that a withdrawal order from claim staking would not affect existing claims, but would prohibit restaking when non-bona fide operations are debarred, or lapse.

(b) a more detailed plan be prepared for the Dawson to Callison area that would recognize existing mining operations and their requirements, other existing land uses, and other proposed uses for the area; and,  
(c) this work would be done in consultation with residents of this area, claim holders, mining operators, land owners, and the City of Dawson.

2. In the area from the Callison Industrial Subdivision to the Hunker Creek Road, a working group be established to examine the options for settling ponds, the protection of the dredge tailings piles for their historic and visual values, and the opportunities provided in this area for other land uses.

## 3.2 RESIDENTIAL USE

### 3.2.1 Objectives

An objective of the Klondike Land Use Plan is to designate suitable and sufficient land to satisfy several different residential options; including intensive rural settlement, small holdings, and homesteading. Implicit in this objective is the recognition that a variety of residential options are desired by Klondike Valley residents.

#### Definitions

1. Intensive Rural Settlement:

A designed rural subdivision with lot sizes ranging from a minimum of 0.4 hectare (1 acre) to 2 hectares (5 acres).

2. Small Holdings:

A designed rural subdivision with lot sizes ranging from 2 hectares (5 acres) to 16 hectares (40 acres), or lots as per the Yukon Government Homesteader Policy.

### 3.2.2 Analysis

No comprehensive housing study has been done for the Klondike area. Discussions with area residents point however, to some serious housing problems, such as:

- a lack of residential land;
- a poor quality stock of existing housing;
- a poor range of housing options; and,
- housing that's located in unsuitable site conditions.

Also, the lack of suitable residential land in the Klondike Valley is probably restricting the area's economic growth. If more residential land is made available, this would stimulate building, and possibly encourage more people to stay on a year round basis. Moreover, a reserve of residential land would put the Dawson area in a better position to accommodate population growth if a major new mine were to be developed in the region.

According to tax assessment records, approximately 80% of the permanent residents of the Klondike Valley live in the City of Dawson. Those residents living outside of Dawson reside primarily in the Klondike Valley in the communities of Bear Creek, Rock Creek and Henderson's Corner. Outside of these areas, there are a few residences in the Callison area, Sunnydale and West Dawson, and in the Dempster Highway area.

In recent years, a growing, and rela-

tively young population has put increasing pressure on the housing market. Since 1982, the permanent population in the Klondike has increased from 1,273 to an estimated 1,611 by the end of March 1988, for an increase of 338 people, or 26.5% (Source: Yukon Statistical Review, First Quarter, 1988) A similar population increase in the next five years would result in a population of 1,949 by 1993. A similar percentage increase of 26.5% would result in a 1992 population of 2,037.

Converting these population changes to the number of residences, based on an average of 3.1 people per household, 110 new homes would have to have been constructed in the past five years to accommodate the increase in population. If present growth rates continue, a similar number of new homes will have to be constructed in the next five years. These population changes and the subsequent demand for housing are reflected in the number and value of Dawson and area residential building permits for the past six years for both new homes and improvements to existing homes (see Table 3.2.2.1 below).

In addition, there have been a number of residences constructed by squatters and by placer claim holders in the Klondike Valley, without the issuance of building permits. Since this ad hoc development is not reflected in the building permit statistics, residential development in the Klondike Valley is even higher than these statistics indicate.

**TABLE 3.2.2.1 DAWSON AREA RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS**

Year	No.	Value (\$000)
1987	34	857
1986	26	507
1985	35	487
1984	41	736
1983	35	309
1982	28	401
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>3,297</b>

Source: Yukon Statistical Review, Fourth Quarter, 1987

Note: In comparison, for the same period, the Watson Lake area has had 144 residential building permits, worth a total of \$2,604,000.

**TABLE 3.2.2.2 KLONDIKE VALLEY POPULATION PROFILE**  
(estimate)

Age	Population
0-4	155
5-9	121
10-14	84
15-24	203
25-34	431
35-44	321
45-54	140
55-64	94
65+	62
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,611</b>

Source: Yukon Statistical Review, First Quarter, 1988

Another characteristic of the area population is its youthful age structure, as indicated in Table 3.2.2.2 (above). Nearly 40% of the population is between the ages of 15 and 34, the prime residence forming and child bearing ages. Not surprisingly, there are a large number of children in the Dawson area. Consequently, a substantial amount of home up-grading is expected in the next few years in the Klondike area.

While the demand for housing has increased in recent years, land for housing and the availability of housing options hasn't kept pace. In the City of Dawson, there are only about 15 vacant lots potentially available for residential use within the area served by the existing utilities system. In addition, a \$4,000 service hook-up fee and facade design regulations in Dawson may discourage some people from living in Dawson, although it is noted that on-site sewage disposal fields or holding tanks with sewage pumpout may exceed this fee. Expansion of the existing serviced area would be costly, because potential expansion areas have drainage and slope problems.

Another element to the housing demand is the rural residential lifestyle preferred by many Yukoners. There is probably enough land within the City of Dawson to house most inhabitants in the Klondike Valley, albeit at a higher population density. However, many people don't want to live in an urban setting, preferring instead to have some "elbow

room" for privacy, for keeping animals (dogs and horses) or for equipment storage and maintenance.

An additional complication to the housing supply/demand equation is the tremendous population increase in the summer months. Every summer, Dawson experiences a serious housing shortage as people working in mining and the tourist industry seek accommodation. In response, some people simply pitch a tent outside of Dawson – a situation which is not a serious problem at this time, but could become one if housing opportunities don't improve.

### **DEMAND FOR HOUSING**

The housing situation in the Klondike Valley underscores the need to identify suitable and sufficient land for residential expansion simply to meet the housing needs of the present population. Based on the existing population and available residential land, it is estimated that about 60 additional building lots are required. This figure is based on the following assumptions:

1. To provide for choice and reasonable land prices, there should be about a 10% supply of vacant residential building sites above the present number of residences (505) in the Klondike Valley. Based on this assumption, enough land to provide for 50 additional residences in the Klondike Valley is required.

2. There are about 30-35 residences that are either squatter residences, or residences owned by placer holders on their placer claims. Neither situation affords any long-term tenure for residential use. Subsequently, there must be sufficient and suitable alternative residential land made available, particularly if government is going to resolve this housing situation.

3. Many residences, perhaps as many as 30, in Bear Creek and Rock Creek are affected by a high water table, flooding, or excessive winter shading. There should be enough alternative residential land with fewer constraints made available so that residents in these areas have the choice of moving to a better location.

Based on these assumptions it is estimated that land sufficient for about 100 residences is needed in the Klondike Valley. However, this figure is reduced to 60 when the following is taken into account:

1. About 25 lots are still available in the Henderson's Corner area;

2. About 15 residential lots are available in the City of Dawson.

In summary, enough land for about 60 residences is needed to improve the existing housing situation in the Klondike Valley. If Dawson experiences rapid population growth (e.g., a major new mine in the region), substantially more residential land would have to be developed.

## **THE SUPPLY OF RESIDENTIAL LAND**

The housing problems in the Klondike Valley point to the need for the Government of Yukon to take a more systematic approach to the provision of residential land in the area. Basically, this approach involves the following steps:

1. Frequently monitoring the residential land supply and demand situation to determine the need for developing additional residential land;

2. Planning residential development to provide for a range of residential options, and for a phasing of development.

In the Klondike Valley, the need for the development of more residential land is clearly established. The questions that must be tackled include the range of residential options required, and the phasing of residential land development. In general, the residential options that are sought by area residents include urban and high density country residential lots (e.g., one-half to one acre lots) within the City of Dawson, and country residential and low-density homestead opportunities in areas outside of Dawson.

With regard to the phasing of land, as stated previously, there is an immediate need for about 60 lots. Beyond this figure, areas for future residential development should be identified and developed as demand warrants.

To identify what land should be used for residential purposes, at what density, and where this should occur, the following factors have been examined:

1. physical suitability;
2. land status;
3. conflicts with other resource uses;
4. provision of services.

As part of the planning process, a 1:20,000 scale soil survey of the study area was done in 1987. Based on this soil survey (e.g., soil type, slope, drainage, permafrost), residential suitability mapping was done. This mapping identified approximately 1,100 hectares of land which have no physical limitations for residential use, and 3,247.6 hectares of land which have moderate limitations for residential use. However, most of this land is not located within easy access or close proximity to Dawson. From Dawson to Rock Creek, which is where most people live, only 313 hectares of land were identified as suitable for residential development (i.e., areas which are suitable for contiguous, moderate to high density development, as opposed to scattered low density development). Most of the land that is identified as

suitable for residential development is located across the Yukon River at West Dawson and Sunnydale, and east of Henderson's Corner, particularly in the Dempster Highway area. Finally, it must be noted that this residential suitability mapping is based only on surficial material interpretations. No subsurface information, which might affect the interpretation ratings, was interpreted. Also, the residential suitability mapping was based entirely on physical characteristics, and did not consider factors such as existing settlement patterns, resource conflicts, cost of development, etc.

In summary, land that is physically suitable for residential development in the Klondike Valley is generally not located within the existing settled and serviced area. Of the 313 hectares of physically suitable residential land that is located within the existing settled and serviced area, only 74 hectares is not subject to existing tenures, land claims, or mineral claims. However, most of these 74 hectares are probably not suitable for residential use because of:

1. proximity to the Dawson airport;
2. nearby mining activities;
3. excessive winter shading; and/or,
4. existing and proposed refuse disposal sites.

For physically suitable residential land elsewhere in the Klondike Valley, major limitations to residential use are:

1. poor access;
2. lack of existing services;
3. the high cost of providing new services; and/or;
4. conflicts with other resource uses (particularly wildlife and forestry).

For the Sunnydale and West Dawson areas, poor access and the high cost of providing services are major limitations. Water quality in these areas may also be a limiting factor. Otherwise, the Sunnydale and West Dawson areas would be suitable for residential use because conflicts with other resource uses appear to be minimal.

For those areas east of Henderson's Corner, the major limitations to residential

use are lack of existing services, and conflicts with other resource uses. School busing presently ends at Henderson's Corner, and electricity and telephone service extend only as far as Rock Creek. Extension of these services to Henderson's Corner is being sought by local residents. However, the cost of doing so will be expensive. Re-development of the North Fork power plant could possibly change the servicing situation east of Henderson's Corner in that power may be available to local users.

Another major problem with residential development east of Henderson's Corner is the potential impact on wildlife in this area. According to a Yukon Government wildlife report (Klondike Valley Land Use Plan, Fish and Wildlife Branch Sector Report), this area has critical and significant wildlife habitat and populations, particularly for lynx. The healthy lynx population in this area suggests that it may be a lynx refugium for the much larger surrounding region. The lynx population also is the economic mainstay of the local trapping industry. Consequently, any increase in human populations and related domestic animal populations could have a serious impact on lynx and other animal species.

### **3.2.3 Recommendations**

#### **1. CITY OF DAWSON**

Higher density residential development should be encouraged in the existing serviced area in the City. In the Dome Road bench area, residential density should be as high as physical conditions permit. It is further recommended that the City of Dawson boundary be extended to include the remainder of the Dome Road bench to the boundary of Bill Olson's placer claims, and that the land recommended for inclusion also be developed for residential use.

## **2. ROCK CREEK**

The Steering Committee recommends that the area between the Klondike River campground and the settlement of Rock Creek be subject to detailed study for residential development. Possible limitations include:

1. ice-jam flooding;
2. proximity to the airport; and,
3. long-term plans for a refuse disposal site east of the present airport if the airport is relocated.

The Steering Committee recommends that the Government of Yukon do elevation mapping of this area to determine the risk of flooding before any residential development proceeds in this area.

## **3. KLONDIKE VALLEY DREDGE TAILINGS**

Small pockets of unmined ground throughout the dredge tailings may be suitable for scattered residential use. Also, existing dwellings in the dredge tailings area that are now owned by squatters or by placer claim holders could be converted to some form of surface tenure if suitable waste disposal systems, such as above ground septic holding tanks, are used.

Before any residential development is approved in this area, the Steering Committee recommends that the Yukon Government in conjunction with Environmental Health Engineering determine the standards for waste disposal that would be appropriate for this area.

## **4. WEST DAWSON**

The Steering Committee recommends that a small residential subdivision (e.g., less than 10 lots) be developed in West Dawson. This subdivision would be primarily for summer accommodation in order to ease the summer housing shortage in Dawson. It could be used secondarily as year-round accommodation for those willing to cope with break-up

and freeze-up on the Yukon River, but the only services that should be provided are a road, and possibly a common water source. Detailed site investigations are needed to determine a suitable location for this subdivision. The Steering Committee further recommends that this residential area be located on land that has been identified by the soil survey as having moderate limitations for residential use.

## **5. BENCH ABOVE LOUSETOWN**

Only the northern portion of this bench was included in the 1987 soil survey. The Steering Committee recommends that the entire bench be investigated for residential use. As this bench appears to be a similar landform to the Dome Road bench, similar soil conditions may be present. If so, it would be a suitable area for residential use. Other positive features of this area are:

- good exposure to the sun;
- a higher elevation than Dawson, so it may have warmer winter temperatures.

Possible development limitations of this area are:

- the cost of constructing a suitable road access;
- water supply; and,
- placer deposits potential.

## **6. HENDERSON'S CORNER**

There are presently about 15 residences in the Henderson's Corner area. Residential development in this area has been entirely a private initiative. There are virtually no services in the area. Given that settlement already exists in this area, that the soil survey indicates suitable soils for residential development, that a housing shortage exists in the Klondike Valley, the Steering Committee recommends that additional residential development be examined in this area. Such development would provide a larger financial base for providing services such as roads, electricity, and telephone to this area.

## **7. LONG TERM RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

If the above areas cannot satisfy the requirements for residential land in the Klondike Valley, the Steering Committee recom-

mends that Sunnydale, West Dawson, and the area east of Henderson's Corner be considered for residential development, but only after design, cost of service, and environmental impact studies are done.

## **3.3 AGRICULTURE**

### **3.3.1 Objective**

Identifying suitable and sufficient land for agricultural use (including grazing) is a major objective of the Klondike Land Use Plan.

### **3.3.2 Analysis**

The development of agriculture in the Klondike Valley planning area is not unduly constrained by soil capability, or by the amount of potential agricultural land. According to the 1987 soil survey, there are 5,600 hectares of land with Class 4 agricultural capability, and 6,900 hectares of land with Class 5 agricultural capability in the soil survey area. It is assumed that there is land of similar capability in adjacent unsurveyed areas; therefore these figures likely represent a conservative total for potential agricultural land in the Klondike area. The presence in the Klondike area of soils with Class 4 agricultural capability gives this area an advantage over the Whitehorse region, for example, where no significant amount of Class 4 agricultural land exists.

In spite of a large potential base of agricultural land, there are several major constraints to developing a large-scale, export-oriented, agricultural industry in the Klondike area. These constraints are discussed below.

### **CLIMATE**

The simple fact that the Klondike is 64 degrees north limits the growing season, which in turn limits the range of crops that can be successfully grown. The average frost free period for the City of Dawson is 91 days, based on 29 years of weather records. For the

Dawson Airport, the average frost free period is 64 days, although this is based on only five years of weather records. In comparison, the average frost free period for the Fort St. John Airport is 115 days, and for the Edmonton Municipal Airport, 140 days. Similarly, the degree days above 0 C. for Dawson is 1800, 2271 for Fort St. John, and 2600 for the Edmonton Municipal Airport.

Also, permafrost underlies much of the area, which increases farm development costs. The western part of the planning area along the Yukon River has a longer growing season than other areas, with the growing season declining eastwards up the Klondike River Valley.

### **ACCESS**

Good access to land increases the viability of farming. In the Klondike, land readily accessible to highways and maintained roads is more valuable for farming than land that isn't. Thus, while Sunnydale and West Dawson have extensive areas of potential agricultural land, the lack of a bridge across the Yukon River reduces the ease of access to these areas. In comparison, land on the south side of the Klondike Valley which is readily accessible to the Klondike Highway, and land in the Dempster Highway area, have the advantage of access. On the north side of the Klondike River agricultural development is limited by poor access.

## **MARKETS**

The small size of the local market, and the distance to other, generally small, markets are two problems facing the Klondike area. Also, lack of storage facilities and a distribution system, and the necessity for strict quality control if produce is to be sold to stores and restaurants, are major problems to overcome.

Paradoxically, however, distance can be an advantage to remote regions like the Klondike, in that the high cost of importing goods gives local producers a competitive advantage. Also, the Klondike area is one of the most favorable areas in the Yukon to attempt agriculture. Not only has it got one of the best growing climates in the Yukon, but the summer influx of tourists, miners, and seasonal workers create an available market that coincides with the growing season for many vegetables. (Bringing in topsoil to the dredge tailings to develop market gardens, in order to take advantage of the warm microclimate created by the tailings, is one idea that merits further study.)

From a land use planning perspective, uncertainty about the economic feasibility of large-scale and land extensive agriculture in the Klondike Valley raises the question of how much land should be designated for such types of agriculture. Without proven markets, or studies indicating a real chance of success for agriculture, it would be inefficient to allocate more land than is required to meet local markets. Not only would this situation

be detrimental to the agricultural industry itself (because of over-production and hence lower returns), but also it may harm wildlife, and other, established, resource uses, such as forestry, hunting, or trapping.

Until markets are established or studies done to identify potential markets, one approach to agricultural land allocation is to release land for agriculture as markets warrant, and in situations where agriculture offers benefits to the community greater than other resource uses. This approach raises the question of whether the amount of land that is available now for agriculture in the Klondike Valley is sufficient for the development of the industry. Presently, Class 4 and 5 land that is available for agriculture, either under title, lease, or Native Land claim, totals 2,092 hectares (see below).

In addition, some land is being farmed, and there is potential for more farming, along the Yukon River outside the planning area. Also, there is a small farm within the City of Dawson which was not included in Table 3.3.1. Finally, 680 hectares is under application for agriculture within the planning area, although not all of this land is likely to be disposed of for agriculture.

Other agricultural development issues of importance are:

1. Can additional land be made available to agriculture without affecting other resource uses; and,
2. If these uses are affected, would the benefits of agriculture offset the losses inherent in the impairment of these uses?

**TABLE 3.3.1: LAND AVAILABLE FOR AGRICULTURE (Class 4 and 5 Agricultural Capability)**

Tenure Class	Capability Class (hectares)	
	4	5
Title/Lease	468	191
Native Land Claim	250	321
Agricultural Designation	332	530
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>1,042</b>

**Note: The amount of potential agricultural land under Native Land Claim may increase after present Land Claim negotiations are concluded. Also, not all potential agricultural land on Native lands will probably be used for agriculture.**

These questions will be addressed in the next section.

### **COMPETING RESOURCE USES**

The need to provide land for other resource uses further reduces the amount of land that could be used for agriculture. In the Klondike Valley, land is needed for forestry, wildlife, residential use, mining, recreation and general infrastructure purposes (e.g. refuse disposal sites, airports). Criteria for determining where additional land in the Klondike Valley can be provided for agriculture are presented below.

1. Agricultural development should occur on Class 4 Land

Given the large amount of Class 4 agricultural land in the Klondike Valley, soil-based agriculture should occur on this land. Non soil-based agriculture and grazing should occur on Class 5 and 6 land.

2. Prime forest land (Class 4 forest capability) should take precedence over prime agricultural land (Class 4 agricultural capability)

The reasons for this criterion are:

- There is much less Class 4 forest land than Class 4 agricultural land in the Klondike Valley;
- There is an existing forest industry in the area;
- There is uncertainty as to the amount of prime forest land outside the planning area; therefore the identified forest base within the planning area should be protected for forestry.

Consequently, where prime forest land and prime agricultural land coincide, the use of the area should be for forestry. An exception to this policy is the south side of the Klondike River between Dawson and Rock Creek, where agriculture and settlement should take precedence over forestry because of existing settlement in this area.

3. Important wildlife habitat should take precedence over agriculture

Agriculture should occur in areas where

the impact to wildlife would be relatively minimal. In the Klondike Valley, significant wildlife values east of Henderson's Corner suggest that no further agricultural development should occur in this area. Conversely, further agricultural development on the south side of the Klondike River between Henderson's Corner and Dawson, and in the Sunndale and West Dawson areas, likely would have fewer impacts on wildlife.

Agriculture can have detrimental effects on indigenous wildlife, particularly if domestic animal husbandry is involved. Diseases and parasites can be transmitted from imported domestic stock to local wildlife often with devastating effects. Another threat is possible genetic contamination by cross breeding of certain domestic animals with indigenous wildlife. Certain operations such as pig and poultry farms generate a smell which will attract grizzly bears, black bears and wolves over great distances. Certain crops and fields may attract migrant waterfowl. Agricultural parcels can divide wildlife habitat, and interfere with certain travel corridors used by many species.

4. Rural residential development should occur on Class 5 and 6 lands

To preserve prime agricultural land, rural residential development should occur on those Class 5 and 6 agricultural lands that have also been identified as suitable for residential development. An exception to this policy would be in the Dawson to Henderson's Corner area. Due to this area's proximity to Dawson and the area's critical housing shortage, residential use of land suitable for this purpose should take precedence over prime agricultural land.

### **3.3.3 Recommendations**

Based on the analysis and criteria in the previous section, the Steering Committee makes the following recommendations:

1. Further agricultural development should take place in:
  - a. Sunndale;

b. West Dawson; and,  
c. The south side of the Klondike Valley from Dawson to Henderson's Corner.

2. The Steering Committee further recommends that market and agro-climatic studies be done to determine the most feasible types of agriculture in the Klondike Valley. From these studies, the amount of land

that should be allocated to agriculture can be determined. Market studies can be done either by the Government of the Yukon or by groups (e.g., Yukon Livestock and Agriculture Association) or individuals involved in agriculture. Agro-climatic studies should be done by the Government of the Yukon and Agriculture Canada.

## 3.4 FORESTRY

### 3.4.1 Objective

To designate forest lands in the Klondike Valley planning area to be managed primarily for wood harvesting, wildlife habitat, and watershed protection.

### 3.4.2 Analysis

Much of the planning area is covered in forest. However, most of the Valley is not very productive in terms of tree growth because of the short growing season, permafrost, dredge tailings, and poor drainage. There is very little information on the productivity and dynamics of forest growth in the Klondike Valley because no comprehensive vegetation cover and forestry studies have been done. Forest capability mapping was done as part of the 1987 Klondike Valley soil survey. This survey indicates that the most productive land for tree growth is located on the better drained alluvial sites in the Klondike and Yukon River Valleys. However, these sites are relatively scarce.

The soil survey that was done for the Klondike Valley in 1987 classified these sites according to the Canada Land Inventory classification for Forestry. A total of 2,240 hectares of land was classified as Class 4, which indicates productivity of wood growth ranging from 3.6 to 4.9 cubic metres per hectare per year (based on total tree growth over 100-120 years). A further 2,316 hectares of land was given a Class 5 rating, which indicates productivity of 2.2 to 3.5 cubic metres per hectare per year. No land in the Klondike Valley was given a higher rating

than Class 4. Both Class 4 and 5 lands have value for commercial timber harvesting, while land lower than Class 5 values has no commercial harvesting potential, except possibly for fuel wood harvesting.

In summary, a total of 5,556 hectares of land in the Klondike Valley soil survey area has been identified as having potential for commercial forestry. There is also land outside of the planning area in the Klondike and Yukon River Valleys that have commercial forest potential. But until a major forest inventory is done, the extent of this potential is unknown.

### **EXISTING COMMERCIAL FORESTRY USE**

Timber harvesting and fuel wood cutting are the two commercial uses of the forest stands in the Klondike Valley. Arctic Inland Resources, which has a sawmill at Callison, does most of the timber harvesting in the Klondike, with an annual harvest of about 4,000 cubic metres (Personal Communication: Bill Bowie, Arctic Inland Resources). Arctic Inland Resources is concerned about the lack of forest management and about the future supply of sawlog timber in the Klondike region. Most of the commercial timber harvesting is on Crown Land, and

## APPENDIX B

# KLONDIKE VALLEY SUB-REGIONAL PLAN ISSUES

(not in order of priority)

1. Relocation of waste metal dump at Callison
2. Airport relocation; use of old airport after relocation
3. Subdivision of study area into sub-areas for study purposes
4. Recreational uses: Interpretive site, campgrounds, parks, ski trails, ATV/skidoo trails, downhill skiing
5. Agriculture, grazing
6. Trapping
7. Logging, fuelwood cutting
8. Wildlife habitat
9. Domestic land uses; rural and country residential development; unauthorized residential uses
10. Fisheries – Commercial, recreational
11. Impact of residential or other uses on wildlife production habitat and trapping.
12. Historic resources; inventory of historic, cultural facilities; loss of cultural history in the area; Yukon Ditch, Lousetown 40 mile, Moosehide
13. Visual values/impact
14. Power generation, utility corridors
15. Transportation corridors, bridge across Yukon River
16. Commercial uses, development
17. Industrial land uses, development; need for land at Callison
18. Natural History – slides at airport, City of Dawson
19. Water use, water quality
20. Mining – quartz, placer. Re-mining, future mining
21. Environmental standards
22. Cemeteries
23. Garbage Dumps

it is also this land base from which areas could be designated primarily for forest management to provide a reliable long-term supply of timber for the Klondike region. Subsequently, it is noted that 586 of the 5,556 hectares of land identified as Class 4 and 5 in the soil survey area is already alienated by title, lease, and Native claim, and a further 360 hectares could be alienated by existing agricultural applications. In addition, further reductions in the Crown Land commercial forest base could be expected from further agricultural and residential development, and by the need to preserve forest for a range of environmental purposes such as critical wildlife habitat, riverbank protection, and watershed management.

Another use of the forest is for fuel wood. It is estimated by Dawson residents that about 300 dwellings and businesses heat with wood. Assuming that a minimum of 7 cords per year are used per dwelling, fuel wood consumption in the Klondike is estimated to be at least 2,100 cords per annum. The dollar value of fuel wood used in the Klondike, based on an average price of \$110 for a cord of stove-length wood, is \$231,000.

### 3.4.3 Recommendations

Due to the relative scarcity of the productive forest base in the Klondike Valley and to its economic importance to the area, the Steering Committee recommends that:

1. The Federal and Yukon governments protect and manage land with Class 4 and 5 forest capability primarily for forestry purposes.
2. Exceptions to this policy are those areas where there is a need to accommodate other, competing, uses of higher importance.
3. Those areas where the Steering Committee recommends that forestry be considered secondary to other uses are the Sunnydale and West Dawson areas, and the south side of the Klondike Valley from Dawson to Henderson's Corner. The reasons that other uses should take precedence over forestry in these areas are as follows:
  - (i) Relative to other areas in the Klondike planning area, land in the Sunnydale and West Dawson areas has good suitability for agricultural and residential development. At the same time, forest capability in these areas does not exceed Class 5.
  - (ii) Between Dawson and Henderson's Corner, there is a need to provide land for residential, agricultural, mining, industrial, and commercial purposes near Dawson. Therefore, these land uses should take precedence over forestry in this area.
4. The Steering Committee also recommends that for those areas designated for forestry, the Yukon Forest Service undertake a forest management plan by 1992. Some of the components of a forest management plan should be:
  - requirements for applicants to provide and adhere to cutting plans;
  - size and location of clearcuts;
  - cutting standards;
  - road standards;
  - setbacks;
  - cutting timing and cycle;
  - distance between adjacent cutblocks;
  - season of operation; and,
  - silviculture.

## 3.5 INDUSTRIAL USES

### 3.5.1 Objective

To provide land for commercial uses (i.e. industrial, highway and tourist commercial) in the Klondike Valley.

### 3.5.2 Analysis

Commercial land use in the Klondike Valley is largely located within the City of Dawson and in the Callison Industrial Subdivision. Economic growth in the past decade has resulted in a demand for industrial land that presently exceeds supply. The Callison Industrial Subdivision is fully occupied, and to meet this demand it is being expanded, with lots to be available this year (1988).

Another trend is the relocation of several industrial uses from Dawson to Callison. The White Pass freight and fuel depot is being relocated from Dawson to Callison. The Highways Maintenance Yard and the NCPC plant are potential candidates for relocation to Callison. This will free up land within Dawson for residential and commercial purposes, but increase pressure for industrial land in the Klondike Valley.

A further trend is demand for highway and tourist commercial sites along the Klondike Highway between the City of Dawson and the Callison Road.

### 3.5.3 Recommendations

1. The question has been raised regarding how much commercial land is needed in the Klondike Valley. Rather than do a study into this matter, the Steering Committee recommends that the Government of the Yukon monitor commercial land demand by monitoring the value of commercial land transactions, and by monitoring the rate at which new commercial land is acquired and developed.

2. The Steering Committee recommends that the Government of Yukon maintain a

slight surplus of commercial land above the amount required for such use. This would maintain reasonable land prices, and help reduce pressure on other land for commercial use.

3. The Steering Committee recommends that industrial land use should be concentrated at Callison. It is impossible to predict future industrial land requirements, but the Steering Committee recommends that land adjacent to the present Callison Subdivision be designated for future industrial use, and developed in phases as demand warrants. Given the large tailings area near Callison that, without rehabilitation, is not suitable for many other uses, additional land is potentially available for industrial use, provided that it is cost effective to level and fill the tailings area.

4. The Steering Committee recommends that a detailed land use plan be developed for the Klondike Highway area from Dawson to the Quigley Road. This plan would involve design and site planning for highway tourist and commercial, and industrial land uses.

5. The Steering Committee recommends that:

a. the Federal/Territorial Lands Advisory Committee (FTLAC) re-examine its policy of granting service leases to holders of placer rights in the Klondike Valley;

b. the issuance of surface leases on existing placer claims in the Klondike Valley occur only when lease applications have been reviewed by a local land use planning board (see the Implementation section for further details on a planning board);

c. when surface rights are being considered for disposition, adequate public notice and/or public auction or lottery of the lands

should occur.

d. the placer claim holder should have

no advantage in acquiring surface rights to the claim because of ownership of that claim.

## 3.6 REFUSE DISPOSAL SITES

### 3.6.1 Objective

To avoid and minimize conflicts between a refuse disposal site in the Klondike Valley and other land uses.

### 3.6.2 Analysis

There are two refuse disposal sites in the Klondike Valley. The City of Dawson has a refuse disposal site in the Dome Road area, and the Yukon Government has developed a disposal site at Quigley this year.

The Dawson refuse disposal site is just outside the new City boundary. The boundary will be revised to include this site within the City. Ground conditions in this area are suitable for a refuse site. However, the suitability of this area for residential use suggests that alternative disposal sites should be considered.

The Quigley site was developed as an alternative to the former refuse dump at Callison, which was intended only as a waste metal dump. The Quigley site is regarded as a short-term alternative, due to its potential for groundwater contamination.

Alternatives to both refuse sites exist, according to Government of the Yukon Municipal Engineering Branch, which has identified several potential sites in the Klondike Valley. But locating a new site is a difficult task because it often involves conflicts with other uses. For example, Transport Canada strongly recommends that refuse disposal sites be located at least eight kilometres from an airport boundary. This means that in the Klondike Valley, no disposal site should be located from the Quigley Road east and west of Germaine Creek. (A similar provision would apply for a relocated airport as well.)

Another problem is soil conditions.

Generally, soils that are suitable for refuse sites are also suitable for residential purposes. However, refuse disposal sites "sterilize" land suitable for residential use. This means that in the Dawson to Rock Creek corridor, land designated for refuse sites (which includes both the site itself and a buffer zone around the site) should not be used for residential purposes. For the City of Dawson refuse site on the Dome Road bench, this means that a large part of this area is "sterilized" for residential purposes.

Wildlife concerns also must be taken into account. Improper refuse management results in predator and scavenger problems by attracting wildlife (e.g. bears, wolverine, etc.), often leading to their destruction. Under the Yukon Wildlife Act, it is unlawful to create nuisance wildlife through poor refuse management.

### 3.6.3 Recommendations

1. The Steering Committee recommends that only one refuse disposal site, rather than two sites, be maintained for both the City of Dawson and outlying areas because of the shortage of good development land in the Klondike Valley, and because too much of this scarce land is needed for buffer zones around disposal sites.

2. The Steering Committee recommends that the Yukon Municipal Engineering Branch accelerate its efforts in locating a new, long-term, refuse disposal site for the Klondike Valley.

3. A site that the Steering Committee recommends be considered for refuse disposal is the south facing slope of Lovett Hill.

4. The Steering Committee recommends that a waste management plan for the Klondike

Valley be developed, and that this plan involve the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Branch to minimize wildlife/refuse conflicts.

## 3.7 WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

### 3.7.1 Objective

To protect key (or important) wildlife areas in the Klondike Valley.

### 3.7.2 Analysis

Many human activities affect wildlife species directly through impacts on population, or indirectly through changes in habitat. For example, road development can increase hunting pressure in areas that were previously difficult to access. Land clearing for agriculture, forestry, or settlement can drastically alter habitat, benefiting some species and adversely affecting others. Also, pets such as dogs, if allowed to roam freely, can reduce large mammal and furbearer populations for a considerable area.

For land use planning, the challenge is to guide or direct those activities that have negative impacts on wildlife to areas where these impacts are less severe or non-existent. But it is a difficult task, because human ignorance of other species, and of our interactions with these species, is considerable. It is for this reason that when possible, human activities should be constrained when existing information indicates the potential for serious impacts on other species.

The Government of the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Branch compiled a background report for the plan on existing information of wildlife in the Klondike Valley. This information is supplemented by information received from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans on salmon populations and habitat in the planning area. Together, this information was a major factor in developing a land use plan for the Klondike Valley.

Based on a review of the wildlife information, the Klondike Valley east of Rock Creek is identified as a significant wildlife area, of both local and regional importance. Undoubtedly, the fact that this part of the valley is relatively undisturbed and unsettled in comparison to the Klondike Valley west of Rock Creek accounts for this situation. Of particular importance is the lynx habitat in this area. This area is considered to be a regionally important lynx refugium. That is, when lynx populations in the surrounding region decline, lynx populations in this part of the Klondike Valley do not decline to the same extent. The lynx population therefore acts as a significant seed source for regional lynx habitats.

Habitat for other species in the Klondike Valley east of Rock Creek is also considered important. Moose use the area as a late winter range and for calving, and several important salt licks are located in this area. The area is also part of the traditional habitat of the 40 Mile Caribou herd, and if the herd continues to increase, it could begin to re-occupy this area.

Black bear, marten, fox, mink, beaver, snowshoe hare, and red squirrel are prevalent throughout the study area, while grizzly bear, muskrat, wolverine, wolf, coyote, ermine, and river otter occur to a lesser degree.

Other species found in the planning area include raptors, waterfowl and upland game birds. The cliffs along the Yukon River offer

suitable habitat for raptor species, and the many watercourses and ponds support a variety of waterfowl including swans, cranes, ducks, geese and shorebirds. Upland game birds are common throughout the planning area, with important sharp-tailed grouse habitat in the eastern part of the Klondike Valley.

## **FISHERIES**

The major streams in the Klondike Valley offer spawning habitat for chinook and chum salmon, and rearing habitat for chinook. Four streams: Bonanza, Bear, Hunker, and Allgold, have been designated as Placer Streams, and are not included in the management of fish habitat. No substantive information is available for freshwater fish in the planning area. However, freshwater fish, particularly Arctic Grayling, are ubiquitous throughout the area.

## **HUMAN USE OF WILDLIFE AND FISH**

Human use of wildlife and fish in the planning area includes: viewing and appreciation of wildlife; hunting; fishing; and trapping. The value of wildlife, indeed of Nature itself, can be expressed in different ways (e.g., spiritual, educational, economic). For many Yukoners, an important yet almost indescribable spiritual connection exists with wildlife. This connection is an underlying reason why many people have chosen to live and stay in the Klondike. Although no comprehensive study was done to determine the economic value of hunting, fishing, and trapping, it is recognized that such value is also important to Klondike residents. There is data on the value of trapping, however, and it is found in Table 3.7.2.1.

### **3.7.3 Recommendations**

Wildlife and fisheries values are major components of the Klondike Valley Land Use Plan. As a principle, land use designations

and recommendations have been made on the basis of directing land uses that are incompatible with wildlife to those areas where wildlife and fisheries values are considered to be less critical or important.

The Steering Committee recommends that areas of key wildlife and fisheries habitat be protected from land use activities that would have irreversible or long range impacts on species and habitat. The areas that are designated as key are:

### **1. YUKON RIVER BLUFFS**

These bluffs are critical habitat for peregrine falcons, an endangered species. Development possibilities are somewhat limited for these bluffs, but land use proposals on land adjacent to these bluffs could affect peregrine habitat. The Steering committee recommends that development near these bluffs be considered on a site specific basis in consultation with the Senior Small Game Biologist, Department of Renewable Resources, Government of Yukon.

### **2. FLOODPLAINS OF THE YUKON AND KLONDIKE RIVERS**

The Steering Committee recommends that the undeveloped floodplains of the Yukon and Klondike Rivers be designated as environmental protection areas, to be managed predominantly for wilderness values.

The Steering Committee also recommends that the Government of Yukon pursue a Flood Damage Reduction Agreement with the federal Departments of Environment and Indian and Northern Affairs, that would provide funding to map the 1:100 year flood contour in the Klondike Valley, in order to accurately delineate the floodplains.

### **3. KLONDIKE VALLEY EAST OF HENDERSON'S CORNER**

The Steering Committee recommends that no further development be allowed in this area at this time. The Steering Committee

Table 3.7.2.1 Greater Klondike Valley fur harvest from 9 traplines from seasons 1981-82 to 1986-87

	1981-82		1982-83		1983-84		1984-85		1985-86		1986-87	
	HARVEST	VALUE	HARVEST	VALUE	HARVEST	VALUE	HARVEST	VALUE	HARVEST	VALUE	HARVEST	VALUE
BLACK BEAR .....	1	44.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
POLAR BEAR .....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BEAVER .....	4	80.00	19	342.00	17	442.00	2	60.00	16	560.00	18	846.00
COYOTE .....	5	350.00	4	240.00	1	31.00	0	0	0	0	0	0
FISHER .....	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FOX-COLOUR .....	86	6,880.00	54	3,240.00	16	1,024.00	25	1,200.00	16	688.00	14	714.00
FOX-ARCTIC .....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LYNX .....	205	66,010.00	81	24,786.00	79	31,916.00	51	36,669.00	35	22,470.00	53	31,906.00
MARTEN .....	146	6,570.00	125	7,125.00	113	6,893.00	387	25,542.00	265	16,960.00	141	15,933.00
MINK .....	19	646.00	8	184.00	4	104.00	16	528.00	6	240.00	5	205.00
MUSKRAT .....	1	2.80	0	0.00	1	2.80	0	0	2	5.60	2	9.60
OTTER .....	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SQUIRREL .....	176	299.20	10	17.00	324	291.60	126.00	172	137.60	107	96.30	
WEASEL .....	2	3.60	2	4.60	20	46.00	73	219.00	28	84.00	27	40.50
WOLF .....	6	714.00	6	522.00	5	405.00	1	133.00	1	99.00	2	258.00
WOLVERINE .....	2	424.00	2	416.00	6	1,326.00	9	2,367.00	6	1,290.00	2	420.00

also recommends that further wildlife studies be done in this area. The Steering Committee further recommends that these studies be commenced in 1988 and completed prior to 1992.

There are two reasons why these studies should be done.

1. There is a need to better understand the wildlife values in this part of the Klondike Valley. The Yukon Fish and Wildlife Branch is planning to do studies of the snowshoe hare/lynx relationship, sharp-tailed

grouse, and moose in this area. The snowshoe hare/lynx study is intended to better understand what makes this area so valuable for furbearers.

2. After further wildlife studies are done in this area, the recommendation of no further development in this area should be re-evaluated, with the additional wildlife information being one of the major considerations in determining whether, where, and how much development should occur in this area.

## 3.8 TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES

### 3.8.1 Objectives

An objective of the Klondike Valley Land Use Plan is to provide land for future transportation and communication facilities such as: airports, highways and roads, electricity facilities, telephone service, bridgeheads and ferry landings, and telecommunication towers.

### 3.8.2. Analysis

#### AIRPORT

The Government of the Yukon currently is examining the feasibility of developing a new airport for the Klondike region. Whether a new airport is needed or can be economically justified are questions beyond the scope of this plan. Airport related questions that are within the scope of the land use plan are:

1. What are the effects on land use in the Klondike Valley if the airport remains in its present location?
2. What are the effects on land use if the airport is relocated?

If the airport remains in its present location, land use limitations due to the airport remain in effect. Land uses that can have a detrimental effect on the safe and efficient airport operation are restricted by Department of Transport airport regulations. For example, land use restrictions apply to the flight path of an airport. Another restriction is on the location of refuse disposal sites (see Section 4).

If the airport is relocated, the Dawson Indian Band may receive the existing airport site, for which it is currently negotiating as part of the land claims settlement. Regardless of who ultimately controls this site, its development potential is high. In addition, restrictions that apply to land elsewhere in the valley because of the existing airport would cease to exist, thus increasing land development options in the Klondike Valley.

The location of the new airport also might affect land use in the Klondike Valley. Two sites are under investigation for the airport. One site is on the ridge east of the Midnight Dome. Another site is on a ridge in the Klondike Hills several miles south of Bear Creek.

#### HIGHWAYS AND ROADS

The highway and road infrastructure in the Klondike Valley planning area is gradually becoming less adequate as the area population grows. Improvements to this infrastructure would allow access to land for

development. Several infrastructure improvements are possible. For example, if a new airport is developed, the road to this airport would provide good access to potential settlement areas.

Similarly, the Highways and Transportation Branch, Government of Yukon, has long-term plans to build a bridge across the Yukon. If and when it becomes economically feasible to do so, a bridge would greatly improve access and servicing for the Sunndale and West Dawson areas, thereby easing the land shortage problem in the Klondike Valley. No potential crossing sites have been identified to date.

A bridge across the Klondike River or an extension of the North Fork powerhouse road would provide better access to land on the north side of the Klondike River. There are presently no plans for this road and bridge development.

The Transportation Division, Government of Yukon, is concerned about the frequency and location of access points to major highways, such as the Klondike and Dempster. The Transportation Division prefers to have one or two access points to a subdivision as opposed to one access for each lot fronting on the highway. The latter, known as strip development, results in traffic congestion and safety problems, and in unsatisfactory residential and commercial areas. This type of development is beginning to occur between the Klondike River Bridge and Callison, along with increased highway congestion.

### **TELEPHONE AND ELECTRICITY SERVICES**

Telephone and electricity services are a strong influence on development patterns and property values. Presently, the service area for these utilities is from Dawson to Rock Creek (The Dempster Junction has telephone service but the line is incapable of handling more users.) Extension of services to other areas such as Henderson's Corner depends on

the cost of service extension, and the number of existing and potential users. Henderson's Corner residents are presently negotiating with Yukon Electric and NorthwesTel to have these services extended but it is costly for the existing number of residents.

### **NORTH FORK POWER PLANT REDEVELOPMENT**

Studies are underway by the Yukon Development Corporation and Yukon Electric to determine the feasibility of redeveloping the North Fork Power Plant on the North Klondike River. Redevelopment of this plant could provide power to the eastern end of the Klondike Valley, which would increase pressure for residential and agricultural development in this area.

### **SCHOOL BUSING**

The presence or absence of school busing is an important livability factor in rural areas. In the Klondike Valley, school bus service extends to Henderson's Corner. Further extension of this service would generally tend to increase costs without any increase in revenue because school busing is not a user pay service (as are electricity and telephone services).

## **3.8.3 Recommendations**

The Steering Committee recommends that:

1. Land disposition in the Klondike Valley not block potential access routes to the airport sites;
2. Improvements to the Klondike Highway between the Klondike River Bridge and Callison be undertaken by the Highways Branch, Government of Yukon, that would incorporate left-turn lanes, and the development of a bicycle route;
3. If increased agricultural and residential development in the Sunndale area occurs, that a new access road to Sunndale be constructed.

## 3.9 HERITAGE

### 3.9.1 Objective

To preserve important heritage features in the Klondike Valley.

### 3.9.2 Analysis

Heritage preservation is important for cultural, educational, scientific, historical, and economic reasons. An appreciation and understanding of our past helps explain who we are as a society today, and it provides a basis for future societal change. Knowledge of our past is linked with artifacts and heritage features, and value is therefore placed on their preservation. The economic dimension of heritage preservation is well illustrated by the prosperous tourist industry in the Klondike. If nothing visible remained from the Gold Rush era, Dawson would not be the tourist centre that it is today. The visual presence of remnants of the Klondike's mining history is therefore an extremely valuable "capital investment" for the tourist industry.

Of course the past cannot be preserved in its entirety. What should be preserved, therefore, becomes the question. In the Klondike, an appreciation of what should be preserved is strongly rooted, not only in the community, but at the Territorial and National levels as well. Locally, the Klondike Visitors Association, the City of Dawson, the Chamber of Commerce, the Dawson Indian Band, the Dawson Museum Society, and many individuals are seeking to preserve the Klondike's rich history. Territorially, the Government of Yukon, the Yukon Visitors Association, and many businesses and individuals are interested in preserving the Klondike's past. And federally, the Canadian Parks Service's role in preserving Klondike history is a manifestation of the national interest in such preservation.

Many artifacts and heritage features in the Klondike Valley have been deemed

worthy of preservation and protection.

During this planning study, many people have expressed the idea that more protection and archaeological work is needed in the Klondike Valley. Specific areas of further research and preservation work that were cited are:

1. Palaeontology studies of the Klondike area, particularly because the Klondike region was not glaciated in the last ice age;
2. Archaeology studies of the Native culture;
3. Archaeological studies of the gold rush and gold dredging eras in the Klondike;
4. Further preservation of historic sites and artifacts in the outlying areas of Dawson.

Land use planning can play an important role in addressing the latter concern by geographically defining the features to be protected, and by recommending legal changes to land status to help achieve this protection. The heritage maps that were done for the planning study delineate important heritage features in the Klondike Valley, and the type of protection given these features. Apart from numerous sites in the City of Dawson, the only heritage site in the planning area that presently has status for heritage protection is the Canada Parks Service Bear Creek Historic Site. This site encompasses the former Yukon Consolidated Gold Company mining camp.

### **KLONDIKE VALLEY DREDGE TAILINGS**

Other heritage features in the Klondike Valley have varying degrees of priority for preservation based on their heritage value and on the probability of damage or destruction. Based on comments from the public and gov-

ernment agencies, the feature that needs protection in the immediate term is the dredge tailings, or a representative part of these tailings. Many people feel that these tailings represent an excellent visual gateway to the Klondike region. Hence there is growing concern that the flattening of tailings piles and the construction of buildings is destroying their historic value.

### **STEAMBOAT GRAVEYARD**

Another heritage feature of high significance which is not protected from land status changes is the Steamboat Graveyard. Some of the boats still retain a semblance of their collapsing structure and it will probably be several more decades until they will be totally unrecognizable. There is presently no immediate danger from land development to this heritage feature.

### **OTHER HERITAGE FEATURES**

Other heritage features of note in the Klondike Valley planning area are:

1. The Yukon, Rock Creek, and North Fork power plant ditches;
2. Gold Rush era building sites in West Dawson and Sunnydale.

None of these features are considered particularly significant to warrant full protection. However, any proposed development that would affect these sites should be preceded by a screening of these sites to determine the heritage significance of these features.

### **3.9.3 Recommendations**

1. The Steering Committee recommends that a representative part of the dredge tailings in the Klondike Valley be designated as a Territorial Park, for the purposes of heritage protection and recreational development. Specifically, the Steering Committee recommends that the easterly boundary of this Park be the Bear Creek Subdivision Road, the westerly boundary be the Quigley Road, the southerly boundary be 1,500 feet parallel to the Klondike Highway, and the northerly boundary be the Klondike River. Excluded from this proposal are the Canadian Parks Service Bear Creek Heritage Site, and private property.

2. The Steering Committee recommends that a Government Reserve be created for the Steamboat Graveyard site to protect the heritage value of this site.

## **3.10 OUTDOOR RECREATION**

### **3.10.1 Objective**

The objective of the Plan is to ensure the identification, provision and protection of suitable land and water features for outdoor recreation.

### **3.10.2 Analysis**

Incorporating outdoor recreation values into the Klondike Valley Land Use Plan is hampered by the lack of a recreation plan for the area, and by an incomplete knowledge of recreation use in the area. A recreation features inventory for the Klondike Valley was done as part of the Plan, and this inven-

tory has been considered during the development of the Klondike Plan.

The inventory report concluded that the most significant natural feature in the study area that is of Territorial significance and has a very high ability to attract outside use is the Yukon River. Locally, both the Yukon and Klondike Rivers are the most important biophysical features in the planning area.

Both rivers provide canoeing, camping, fishing, and wildlife and landscape viewing opportunities.

Many trails and old roads in the planning area are used for hunting, hiking, motorized use, horse riding, dog mushing, and skiing. The only trail of Territorial significance is the Ridge Road, which is the old route to Whitehorse, and which is currently used by the Yukon Quest race. No protection for recreation use exists for this trail, and in 1986 part of the trail was damaged by a bulldozer. All other trails are of local importance, and none have been mentioned as particularly significant or as being threatened by development or land status changes at this time. The City of Dawson also offers some outdoor recreation features, such as the Midnight Dome and the downhill ski area.

There is local interest in the establishment of a trail in the Klondike Valley for hiking, cycling, and dog mushing, between Dawson and Rock Creek, using parts of the old Klondike Highway. The current status of this project is unknown, but there is a group of local citizens pursuing this objective.

Presently, the only land with recreation value in the Planning area that is under some

form of protection from development are the two Territorial campgrounds: the Klondike River Campground near Rock Creek, and the Yukon River Campground in West Dawson. Both of these campgrounds have not been withdrawn from mineral staking, but at this time no claims are staked within the campgrounds.

Some protection for the recreation features along the Yukon, Klondike and North Klondike Rivers would be achieved if the active floodplain and the islands in these rivers are designated as wildland, and not subject to surface or sub-surface disposition.

### **3.10.3 Recommendations**

1. The Steering Committee recommends that the Government of the Yukon, Parks and Recreation Outdoor Section continue its systematic planning efforts to identify candidate parks, and recreation sites and corridors within the Klondike Valley.

2. The Steering Committee recommends that the Government of the Yukon consider developing outdoor recreation opportunities as part of the proposed Klondike Valley heritage park.

## 4: AREA ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 SUNNYDALE

1. The Steering Committee recommends continued agricultural development and homestead development in the Sunnydale area, pursuant to the Government of the Yukon Homestead Policy.

2. The Steering Committee recommends that agricultural development in Sunnydale take place on soils with Class 4 and 5 agricultural capability, as designated in the land use plan map.

3. The Steering Committee recommends that homestead staking not be allowed on land with Class 4 agricultural capability rating, and that it be restricted to land identified as suitable for rural residential development as designated in the land use plan map.

4. The Steering Committee recommends that if additional agricultural and rural residential development in the Sunnydale area occurs, road access to Sunnydale should be improved. One option would be to construct a road from the Top of the World Highway, at a point farther west than the existing Sunnydale Road. Other developable land on the higher Sunnydale benches would be accessed, and the area would be served by two access routes.

5. The Steering Committee recommends that development near or along the bluffs between Sunnydale and West Dawson not be allowed in order to protect perigrine falcon habitat.

6. If a bridge is built across the Yukon River, the Steering Committee recommends that the Sunnydale area be examined in greater detail to determine its suitability for higher density rural residential development.

### 4.2 WEST DAWSON

1. For the West Dawson area, the

Steering Committee recommends agricultural development, homestead lots, and a small, clustered, rural subdivision.

2. The Steering Committee recommends that land with Class 4 agricultural capability be restricted to agricultural uses.

3. The Steering Committee recommends that Homestead lots be developed on land that is identified as suitable for residential use, and on land with Class 5 or 6 agricultural capability ratings.

4. The Steering Committee recommends a small intensive cottage style subdivision, maximum ten lots, for the West Dawson area, primarily to provide additional residences for the summer. This subdivision should be serviced only with a road, and possibly a common potable water source. No specific location is recommended as this depends on further study to determine whether suitable sites are available.

5. The Steering Committee recommends that development in West Dawson be carefully reviewed to avoid conflicts with the Territorial campground.

6. The Steering Committee recommends that the Steamboat Graveyard site be retained as public land in order to protect the heritage value of this site.

### 4.3 THE CITY OF DAWSON

The Klondike Valley Land Use Plan does not apply to the City of Dawson. However, to ensure comprehensiveness in the Plan, the role of Dawson has been a central consideration. In many ways, Dawson's future is tied closely to what happens in the outlying areas. For example, development in the Klondike Valley could have detrimental effects on Dawson's water supply. Dawson's

tax base could be eroded or remain stagnant if businesses relocate outside of the City. As well, constraints on development in the outlying areas could dampen economic growth for Dawson.

The Klondike Valley Land Use Plan assumes that Dawson will continue to provide most of the retail and recreational facilities, tourist, professional and government services, and housing opportunities in the Klondike Valley. However, the City of Dawson's role as a provider of industrial land will, and should, continue to decline. White Pass Petroleum may relocate to the Callison Industrial Area, and the Department of Highways plans to relocate its maintenance yard to Callison. These moves will provide more land for residential and commercial uses, which in turn will provide opportunities for redevelopment of the downtown area.

#### 4.4 BARRINGTON HEIGHTS TO QUIGLEY ROAD

This area is bounded by the City of Dawson on the west, the Klondike River to the north, the Quigley road to the east, and the toe of the Klondike Hills to the south. The area includes Barrington Heights, Guggieville, the Callison Industrial Subdivision, the Dawson Indian Band C-3 and C-5 claims, and the proposed Quigley refuse disposal site.

1. The Steering Committee strongly recommends that this area be subject to a Block Land Transfer to the Government of Yukon, and that the area be withdrawn from staking under the provisions of the Yukon Placer Mining Act. The reasons for these recommendations are:

i. Economic and population growth in the Dawson area is resulting in considerable pressure on the area for land for commercial, industrial and residential purposes, as witnessed by existing development already in the area;

ii. Land in this area offers the only development opportunities close to Dawson for land-extensive industrial and commercial uses;

iii. the proximity of the area to Dawson means that it is physically possible to extend City of Dawson services to this area;

iv. If current growth trends persist, this area will inevitably be intensively developed. This raises the possibility of a further City of Dawson boundary extension to include this area. A block land transfer and withdrawal from placer staking are inevitable components in this boundary extension;

v. There is a need for one central planning and land management authority (i.e., the Government of Yukon) to ensure that the area is developed in a consistent and orderly fashion;

vi. Detailed and orderly planning is needed in the area to reduce the possibility of water contamination in the Klondike River from poorly controlled land uses.

vii. Large portions of this area are already withdrawn, or are being withdrawn, from placer claim staking (e.g. Callison Industrial Subdivision, the C-3 and C-5 land claims);

viii. Leases for permanent surface uses have been issued in parts of the area.

2. The Steering Committee recommends that as part of the process for the Block Land Transfer and claim withdrawal, the placer mining interests in the adjacent areas to the east and the south be involved in determining the exact eastern and southern boundaries of the BLT.

3. In addition to transferring control of these areas to the Government of the Yukon, and withdrawing these areas from placer staking, the Steering Committee recommends that the following detailed studies be done for these areas:

i. Geotechnical and engineering studies to determine terrain limitations (including risk of flooding), servicing and development costs, and road network;

ii. Visual Landscape studies to establish development guidelines to protect visual and land values that are critical to the tourist industry.

4. The Steering Committee recommends that water polluting activities be closely monitored in the Klondike Valley to determine whether existing water quality standards are being maintained. Ultimately, preserving water quality in the Klondike Valley may result in the need to restrict land uses, and/or the need to implement pollution control, collection, or reduction systems.

## 4.5 BENCHES AND UPLANDS NEAR DAWSON CITY

The following three upland areas near Dawson City may have potential for residential development:

1. uplands east of the Midnight Dome;
2. the bench above Lousetown;
3. the Ridge Road area near Lovett Hill.

1. If settlement in the Klondike Valley is restricted by other resource uses (e.g. mining, forestry, wildlife), the Steering Committee recommends that these upland areas should be investigated for settlement purposes. This investigation should include:

- a preliminary soil survey and geo-technical examination to determine suitable locations for residential and agricultural development;

- a cost of service analysis;
- evaluation of placer deposit potential.

3. Some local residents have mentioned that the south facing slope of Lovett Hill may be suitable for a refuse disposal site. The Steering Committee recommends that the Municipal Engineering Branch, Government of the Yukon, include this area in their search for a suitable disposal site in the Klondike area. Of course, development of an airport in the Klondike Hills may preclude this area for a disposal site. Similarly, residential develop-

ment is also an incompatible use with disposal sites.

## 4.6 QUIGLEY ROAD TO BEAR CREEK

1. The Steering Committee recommends that a Territorial Park be established in this area to protect the heritage value of the dredge tailings, and to protect and develop the outdoor recreation opportunities in this area. The recommended boundaries of this Park are: the Bear Creek Subdivision Road to the east; the Quigley Road to the west, a southerly boundary parallel to and 1,500 feet from the Klondike Highway; and the Klondike River to the north.

2. For the remainder of this area, the Steering Committee recommends that a working group be established to examine options for settling ponds, further placer mining, mine waste areas, and residential and agricultural development. This working group should consist of mining interests, local residents, and government agency representatives.

Note: The Steering Committee has recommended that this area be withdrawn from claim staking under the provisions of the Yukon Placer Mining Act.

## 4.7 BEAR CREEK

The Bear Creek National Historic Site and the community of Bear Creek are located in this area. The Historic Site is the former Yukon Consolidated Gold Company camp, and it represents one of the most significant historic sites in the Klondike region.

With regard to the community of Bear Creek, this subdivision was created in 1980 to provide additional residential land in the Klondike Valley. However, site conditions are not very suitable for high density residential use. A combination of a high water table and siltation from mining activities in the

Hunker Creek watershed have resulted in water supply and sewage disposal problems. Much of the problem with the settlement stems from the fact that before the valley was dredged, the Bear Creek slough was one of the main channels of the Klondike River. Thus, the Bear Creek settlement is in a low part of the Valley, and groundwater from the Klondike River and runoff from Hunker Creek flow towards this area. This means that as long as mining activities continue in the Hunker Creek watershed, the Bear Creek settlement likely will be affected by siltation.

Note: The Steering Committee has recommended that this area be withdrawn from claim staking under the provisions of the Yukon Placer Mining Act.

## 4.8 THE HUNKER CREEK AREA

The Hunker Creek area extends from the Bear Creek Subdivision Road to the western boundary of the Dawson airport. Unmined parts of this area have good potential for agricultural development based on agricultural capability ratings. However, development in this area is constrained by two existing land uses: mining activities and the Dawson airport.

The Hunker Creek area is extensively staked with placer claims, either for mining or for waste disposal areas or settling ponds. Even if part of this area is not needed for mining purposes, and could be used for residential or agricultural purposes, the presence of the airport constrains these uses. The Hunker Creek area is directly under the flight path of the most commonly used approach to the Dawson airport. In addition, a non-directional beacon tower is located in the middle of this area. Furthermore, the Air Navigation Systems Requirements Branch of Transport Canada, recommends against many forms of agriculture within a 3.2 kilometre distance of an airport boundary.

Consequently, the Steering Committee recommends against any residential or agricultural uses in the Hunker Creek area at the present time. This recommendation should be reconsidered if the Dawson airport is relocated, and if placer mining activities in the Hunker Creek area decline.

Note: The Steering Committee has recommended that this area be withdrawn from claim staking under the provisions of the Yukon Placer Mining Act.

## 4.9 THE DAWSON AIRPORT

The Dawson Indian Band is negotiating to receive the Dawson Airport land as part of a land claims settlement, if the airport is relocated. This land is suitable for a variety of purposes, including agriculture, housing, highway commercial use, and possibly placer mining.

Note: The Steering Committee has recommended that this area be withdrawn from claim staking under the provisions of the Yukon Placer Mining Act.

## 4.10 THE ROCK CREEK SETTLEMENT

The Rock Creek settlement is another residential area in the Klondike Valley that has several problems: ice-jam flooding in the Spring; water quality/sewage disposal problems; and a lack of sunshine in the winter due to the Rock Creek bluffs. Nevertheless, the area between Rock Creek and the Klondike River campground and the Klondike Highway, has been identified as having some potential for residential development. This area does not have high agricultural capabilities, important wildlife habitat, or active mining.

1. The Steering Committee therefore recommends that the Government of the Yukon, Lands Branch, undertake detailed site

investigations as soon as possible to determine the feasibility and type of residential development in this area.

Note: The Steering Committee has recommended that this area be withdrawn from claim staking under the provisions of the Yukon Placer Mining Act.

#### 4.11 HENDERSON'S CORNER

Henderson's Corner is developing as a major residential area in the Klondike Valley. In terms of site conditions, this use is appropriate. The Klondike Valley Soil survey identified a large area that is being used now for settlement as being moderately suitable for residential use. Water quality and sewage conflicts should not be a problem as long as densities remain low. However, rationalizing the internal road system, and conflicts between agricultural use and residential use could become serious problems in the future.

The Henderson's Corner area has only minimal services at present (i.e., school bus). Telephone and electricity may be extended to this area, as the residents are currently negotiating with the utility companies to receive these services. However, according to Yukon Electric, it is very costly to extend services past the Rock Creek bluffs for the number of potential customers at Henderson's Corner.

Henderson's Corner may be able to accommodate additional residential growth because of favorable site conditions, particularly closer to the Klondike Highway due to the absence of permafrost. Two other reasons for considering additional residential development are:

1. the shortage of suitable residential land elsewhere in the Klondike Valley; and
2. the increased likelihood of extending services to Henderson's Corner because of additional potential customers.

Development in this area is beginning to encroach on the critical wildlife area east of Rock Creek – particularly the lynx refugium.

1. The Steering Committee recommends that further residential settlement at this time should not be permitted east of the already developed area.

#### 4.12 HENDERSON'S CORNER TO FLAT CREEK

1. The Klondike Valley Steering Committee recommends that no agricultural or residential development be allowed in this area at this time because of the need to protect key wildlife habitat and valuable forest lands. The most important wildlife feature in this area is the lynx refugium, which is described in more detail in the previous section.

2. The Steering Committee recommends that wildlife studies should be commenced in 1988 and completed prior to 1992 to determine the importance and value of wildlife in this area before any permanent habitat altering development takes place.

2. The Steering Committee recommends that a forest management plan for the entire region be done to determine forest values and forest management practices, and to provide information useful for designating resource uses in the Klondike Valley. This recommendation is made on the basis that some of the most productive of this regionally scarce resource is located in this area.

3. The Steering Committee recommends that agricultural and residential development in this area should be considered only after land suitable for such activities west of Henderson's Corner, and south of the Klondike River, is not available, and only after a proven need exists for residential and agricultural development.

### 4.13 NORTH SIDE OF KLONDIKE RIVER: DAWSON TO GILCHER CREEK

1. The Steering Committee recommends no residential or agricultural development in this area at this time, except for the provision of land for existing uses (e.g., Agricultural Lease to Purchase Agreements for existing residents). The reasons for this recommendation are as follows:

(i) Wildlife values must be protected in this area for purposes of species preservation (e.g., lynx), and to maintain the trapping industry in the Klondike Valley;

(ii) Productive forest lands must be protected to sustain the existing forest industry in the Klondike;

(iii) Wildlife and forest management studies and plans should be done first before any/further land development is permitted;

(iv) There is presently very poor or non-

existent access into this area, and development, particularly scattered development, could result in pressure for a costly upgrading of access.

### 4.14 DEMPSTER HIGHWAY/NORTH KLONDIKE

The Steering Committee does not recommend any residential or agricultural development in the Dempster Highway/North Klondike area at this time because of its distance from Dawson, its lack of services and its important wildlife values.

### 4.15 RIVER FLOODPLAINS

The Steering Committee recommends that no development be permitted within the active floodplains of the Yukon and Klondike Rivers, except those developments necessary for public works (e.g., bridges, roads)

# 5. IMPLEMENTATION

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The recommendations contained in this Report require a strategy for their implementation, if this report is to have any long-term value. The jurisdictional responsibilities within the Study Area are threefold:

1. The City of Dawson;
2. The Government of Yukon (Callison Subdivision, campgrounds, Highways);
3. The Government of Canada (all other unencumbered lands).

There are other "rights" in land (surface, subsurface, lease, titled and reserved lands, "lands set aside"), but these lands do not constitute jurisdictional authority.

## 5.2 OPTIONS

The following options exist for implementing the recommendations within the Study Area:

1. Status quo;
2. City of Dawson boundary extension;
3. Block Land Transfer (BLT) to Government of the Yukon;
4. A form of county government;
5. A combination of the above.

These options are discussed below.

### 5.2.1 Status Quo

In essence, this option would leave jurisdictions unchanged and, concomitantly, processes for land acquisition unchanged. That is, decision-making would be on a reactive basis, at the Federal Level (in conjunction with the Government of the Yukon), without certainty of approval.

### 5.2.2 City of Dawson Boundary Extension

This option would allow for the expansion of the boundaries of the City of Dawson

to include specific areas (e.g. Callison Subdivision, bench above Lousetown). Prior to this occurring, the Government of the Yukon should request a transfer of these lands from the Federal Government.

### 5.2.3 Block Land Transfer to Government of the Yukon

By transferring lands from Federal jurisdiction to Territorial jurisdiction, local area decisions can be made by those persons who are more familiar with local needs and demands. A BLT can range in size from several hectares to many square kilometres.

### 5.2.4 County Government

Presently, the Government of Yukon is reviewing alternative forms of delivery of government services to people living beyond municipal boundaries.

### 5.2.5 A Combination of the Above

Given the size of the Study Area, and the range of resource interests that exist, it is obvious that a combination of any of the above options would be possible.

## 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Many of the problems within the Study Area are of a local nature – the resolution of which is best done at the local level. In addition, there are interests of a Territorial nature, and the legacy of Federal legislation will exist for many years to come. The recommendations that follow are based on short-term requirements for immediate problems, and on longer-term realities of the devolution of present jurisdictional responsibilities.

The Steering Committee recommends that:

1. The recommendations in this Report, when accepted by the Government of the Yukon and received by the Federal Government, shall act as guidelines to those responsible for making resource management decisions;

2. The jurisdiction over surface rights in Sunnydale, West Dawson, and from the mouth of the Klondike River to Henderson's Corner, excluding the City of Dawson and land claims selections, be transferred to the Government of the Yukon immediately.

Transfer of these lands would allow the Government of Yukon to proceed with the detailed land use strategy as recommended in various sections throughout this report. This is a local demand that will require implementation by Government of the Yukon agencies.

3. A Planning Advisory Body be established immediately by the Government of Yukon, to be composed of Klondike Valley residents, and a representative each from the City of Dawson and the Dawson Indian Band. The responsibilities of this Advisory Body would be to:

- a. provide advisory and review functions for all land disposition and land use permit applications for the Klondike Valley that are received by the Government of the Yukon;

- b. review and monitor the implementation of the Klondike Valley Land Use Plan; and,

- c. develop more detailed Area Development Plans for the Klondike Valley.

## **6: PLAN DESIGNATION GLOSSARY**

### **6.1 Hinterland**

This designation applies to land for which the recommended uses are: small-scale wood harvesting; wildlife management; mining and mineral exploration; environmental protection; outdoor recreation; and subsistence activities. Agricultural and residential development are not recommended for this designation at this time.

### **6.2 Residential Holdings**

This designation applies to land which is under title or lease and is currently used for residential purposes.

### **6.3 Potential Residential Areas**

This designation applies to land that is recommended for further study for residential development.

### **6.4 Government and Institutional Land**

This designation applies to land that is used for such purposes as parks, airports, gravel pits, campgrounds, etc.

### **6.5 Land Claim**

This designation applies to land that has been "set aside" or withdrawn under Federal Order-In-Council for the impending Yukon Land Claims Agreement.

### **6.6 Industrial**

This designation is for industrial land uses.

### **6.7 Proposed Quigly Refuse Site**

This designation is for land that should be reserved for a refuse disposal site at Quigley, if the Government of Yukon decides to develop a disposal site in this area.

### **6.8 Commercial/Limited Residential**

This designation applies to land between Callison and the City of Dawson, on the south side of the Klondike River that is recommended for commercial and residential use, provided health regulations regarding waste disposal can be met.

### **6.9 Floodplains**

This designation applies to land that is within the floodplains of the Klondike and Yukon Rivers.

### **6.10 Agricultural Holdings**

This designation applies to titled or leased land which is either being used for agriculture or has good capability ratings (i.e., Class 4 or 5) for agriculture.

### **6.11 Agricultural Expansion Areas**

This designation applies to land that is recommended for agricultural development.

### **6.12 Agricultural or Residential**

This designation applies to land that is recommended for either agricultural or low-density rural residential development.

### **6.13. Potential Grazing**

This designation applies to land that is recommended for grazing lease.

### **6.14. Tailings Study Area**

This designation applies to land that is recommended for further study to determine its future use.

### **6.15 Klondike Valley Heritage Park**

This designation refers to land that is recommended as a Territorial Park in order to preserve dredge tailings and to provide for outdoor recreation opportunities in the Klondike Valley.

### **6.16 Recommended Withdrawal From Placer Staking**

This designation refers to land that the Steering Committee recommends for withdrawal from placer staking under the provision of the Yukon Placer Mining Act.

# 7 THE KLONDIKE VALLEY PLANNING PROCESS

## 7.1 Background

The Klondike Valley Land Use Plan is the culmination of a two year process which began in the summer of 1986, when Dawson area residents requested that the Government of the Yukon prepare a land use plan to begin resolving existing and emerging land use conflicts in the area.

Gerry Bruce, of G. Bruce Holdings Ltd. was contracted by the Lands Branch, Government of Yukon, to prepare a Preliminary Terms of Reference for a land use plan by interviewing local residents and government agencies to determine issues, problems, goals, and priorities. The Terms of Reference were completed in October 1986 in a meeting with representatives from area organization and Federal and Territorial government representatives.

In November, 1986, the Yukon Land Use Planning Office of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development agreed to undertake the technical preparation of the Land Use Plan. In December, 1986, a Steering Committee for the Plan was formally appointed. Members of this Steering Committee include:

**Fred Berger** – Chair, Klondike Valley Land Use Plan Steering Committee, and representative of Bear Creek Community Association

**Marion Schmidt** – Klondike Placer Miners' Association

**Chuck Holloway** – Klondike Visitors' Association

**Jack Fraser** – Yukon Trappers' Association, Klondike Chapter

**Frank Bunyan** – Yukon Livestock and Agricultural Association

**Steve Taylor** – Dawson Indian Band

**Joel Jacobs** – Council for Yukon Indians (from January, 1988)

**Roger Ellis** – Council for Yukon Indians (to January, 1988)

**Peter Dunbar** – City of Dawson (to January, 1987)

**Allanah Tunnicliffe** – City of Dawson (from May, 1988)

**Gerry McCully** – Dawson City Chamber of Commerce

**Al Fiske** – Parks Canada

**John Lenart** – Rock Creek Community Assn

**Chris Cuddy** – Director of Lands; Government of the Yukon (from May, 1987)

**Rick Butler** – Acting Director of Lands; Government of the Yukon (to April, 1987)

**Dave Reynolds** – Director, Lands, Parks and Resources, Government of the Yukon

**Robert Durham** – Klondike Rural Residents Association (from April, 1988)

## 7.2 Activities of the Steering Committee

During the preparation of the Plan, the Steering Committee met nine times to provide over-all guidance to the Plan. This was accomplished by means of defining issues and objectives, representing area residents, determining Plan priorities and finalizing recommendations.

## 7.3 Activities of the Yukon Land Use Planning Office

The Yukon Land Use Planning Office prepared the report and maps for the Plan, undertook background research projects for the Plan, and co-ordinated research projects and studies by other government agencies. The Office also organized three public meetings and open houses for Klondike area residents, and it met with individuals and interest groups throughout the development of the Plan.

Specific responsibilities for the Plan were carried out by the following staff:

**Bruce Chambers** – Project Manager

**Don Barz** – Principal author of the Plan report; research and analysis

**Kathleen Warren** – research and analysis (to December 1987)

**Sonya Hansen** – map drafting and graphics

**Denis Berthelot** – analysis and map graphics

**Jean Gratham** – typing and report preparation

**Grace Snider** – research (from May 1988)

#### **7.4 Public Involvement**

Public involvement in the development of the Plan was achieved by having a cross-section of Klondike area interests on the Steering Committee, by the holding of open house meetings, and by staff from the Yukon Land Use Planning Office meeting with Klondike area individuals and interest groups. Throughout the development of the Plan, Klondike area residents were encouraged to meet with their elected representatives if they felt their interests weren't being adequately considered in the Plan. The open house meetings were held on the following dates:

July 27-28, 1987

March 14-15, 1988

June 12-13, 1988

In addition, a public meeting was held June 14, 1988 to receive public submissions.

#### **7.5 Government Agency Involvement**

Many Federal and Territorial government agencies assisted in the development of the Plan by providing research information, assisting in the management of consulting contracts, and by providing policy input during the planning process.

#### **7.6 Major Research Reports and Studies**

The following research reports and studies provided significant information for the Plan:

1. Klondike Valley Soil Survey and Resource Interpretation Mapping, by Westland Resources Group, Victoria, B.C., 1987.

This study involved soil survey mapping, residential suitability interpretation, and agricultural capability interpretation by Mark Walmsley, Deny Maynard, and Karen McKenna; and forest capability mapping by Jay Standish.

2. Fish and Wildlife Branch Sector Report on the Klondike Valley. Prepared by Jennifer Staniforth and Beth Hawkins, Habitat and Research Section, Fish and Wildlife Branch, Government of Yukon Renewable Resources, March, 1988.

3. Klondike Valley Recreation Inventory, by J.S. Peepre and Associates, Whitehorse, Yukon, 1988.

## APPENDIX A

# TERMS OF REFERENCE/WORK PROGRAM

## Introduction

Competing demands for land for a wide range of uses in the Klondike Valley – agricultural holdings, rural residential, industrial, waste disposal, airport, etc., have resulted in the need to develop a land use plan for the Valley. Such a plan will attempt to determine the most appropriate land use options based upon inherent capabilities of the land. The plan will reflect the short and long term needs of the Klondike Valley residents.

## Principles

There are three major principles upon which the planning process is based:

- a) that the process will involve the general public and various interest groups to the fullest extent possible;
- b) that the process will not prejudice ongoing land claim negotiations or agreements and that it will attempt to abide by the general principles of the draft Northern Land Use Planning agreement;
- c) that, wherever possible, decisions of the Steering Committee will be by consensus.

## Goal

To develop a land use plan for the Klondike Valley (Sunnydale/West Dawson to Dempster Highway) that addresses the demands for land in order to meet the short and long term social, economic and environmental needs of the residents.

## Objectives

- a) to identify the major issues and concerns in the Klondike Valley that can be resolved by a land use planning process;
- b) to develop a process that will include public discussions of the issues and the options available to resolve them;
- c) to identify the most appropriate mechanism to implement the plan.

## Study Area

The study area will extend from Sunnydale/West Dawson to the Dempster Highway and include the Klondike River Valley from crest to crest.

## Statement of Work

It is intended to approach the preparation of the Klondike Valley Land Use Plan in two distinct stages.

Stage 1 would include:

- a) Identification of issues. Tentatively these are cited as being:
  - 1) need for land for rural residential, agricultural, industrial waste management and airport purposes;
  - 2) historic/visual values in the Valley and their preservation;
  - 3) water quality – surface and groundwater.
- b) Determination of the role of the City of Dawson in providing Land for a range of uses.
- c) Preparing an Existing Land Use Map (1:50,000 scale) for overview purposes.
- d) Preparing resource capability and tenure maps at 1:50,000 scale.
- e) Preparation of a bibliography of resource information relevant to the Klondike Valley.
- f) Identification of important data gaps.

### Stage 1

Work at this scale, is considered important as it will establish the context within which the land pressures exist. It will also assist in the preparation of options (Stage 2) by identifying the most likely alternatives available. The completion date for Stage 1 would be 1 April, 1987.

### Stage 2

Would include:

- a) Confirmation of data gaps and how they will be filled;
- b) Preparation of 1:20,000 maps with large scale resource information by sub-area planning unit (i.e. Sunnysdale/West Dawson; Dawson to Rock Creek; Henderson Corner to Dempster Cutoff);
- c) Preparation of options;
- d) Implementation Strategy.

Stage 2 work would occur during the period April – September 1987. It is foreseen that the discussions of options would occur during October/November 1987. This does not preclude discussion of options at an earlier time but it does indicate that such discussions would be more organized in the way of formal meetings.

## Public Participation

The process is committed to ensuring that there is adequate provision made for consulting the public regarding the progress of the work and, more importantly, their concerns. In addition, the Steering Committee will act as both a formal as well as informal sounding board. While a detailed schedule of dates to involve the public has not been developed an early one will be required to determine the issues within the Klondike Valley. Once the process of consultation occurs, the Steering Committee and NLUP staff will determine the most appropriate times for public meetings.

Similarly, meetings between the NLUP staff and Steering Committee have not been established but these would occur when milestones in data assembly have been reached.

It is expected that the initial search for, and review of, existing data will take approximately 6 weeks – particularly if it is to be synthesized and mapped. During this time progress reports could be submitted to the Committee so they could be aware of what work is being undertaken.

## **Products**

The products would be reports and maps as cited in the work activities for Stage 1 and Stage 2.

## **Project Management**

The project will be supervised by the Chairperson of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee members include representatives from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Government of the Yukon, Department of Community and Transportation Services and Renewable Resources, Dawson Indian Band, Yukon Livestock and Agriculture Association – Klondike Chapter, Bear Creek Community Association, Klondike Visitors Association, Dawson City Chamber of Commerce, Klondike Placer Miners Association, Parks Canada. Representation from Rock Creek, Henderson Corner and local Economic Development has yet to be determined.

The Chairperson is responsible directly to the Minister of Community and Transportation Services.

Under direction of the Chairperson of the Steering Committee and in liaison with the Director of Lands, the Northern Land Use Planning office will have overall responsibility for the preparation of the land use plan, but strong consultation will occur with the Steering Committee, throughout the process. While much of the technical information will be researched by NLUP staff, the Steering Committee will play an important role in identifying data sources and interest groups to be contacted.

Responsibilities of the Steering Committee will include:

- 1) Public involvement process
- 2) Project monitoring
- 3) Review of consultant's draft report
- 4) Assist consultant in information collection and liaison with government agencies and other interested parties.



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