

Beaver River Land Use Planning Process

What We Heard
Stakeholder Meetings Fall 2020



Report Prepared by Yukon Government

February 23, 2021

THE MEETINGS

The Beaver River Land Use Planning Committee invited stakeholders from various industries and organizations to participate in a series of stakeholder meetings that were conducted remotely over zoom in the fall of 2020. The meetings were held to provide an update of the Beaver River planning process, share information and hear stakeholders' thoughts and views moving forward. The presentation given to the stakeholders is attached.

WHAT WE HEARD THEMES

The following bullet points reflect interpretations from discussions with stakeholders. These comments have been grouped into both broad and specific themes and do not represent an implied order of importance. Please refer to the participants section for a list of organizations that participated in the stakeholder meetings of the Beaver River Land Use Planning process.

Theme 1: Land Use Planning Process

The following comments summarize what we heard:

- Ensure meaningful opportunities available for implementation measures.
- Participants expressed confusion as to where the Beaver River Land Use Plan gets its authority as the process is not under Chapter 11.
- Plan should explain that under the Final Agreement, a Regional Land Use Plan is more important than other land use plans and that the ATAC Agreement with NND states the opposite.
- Participants want to ensure there will be an opportunity to have public engagement on the plan once it is drafted.
- Participants wanted clarity as to how the approval process will work for both YG and FNNND.
- The Agreement does not give enough time to adequately complete the plan.
- There should be a Northern Tutchone Regional Land Use Plan before the Beaver River Land Use Plan. This plan should be incorporated into the Northern Tutchone planning process.
- Concern that the Plan will be focused on YG values and not on the values of FNNND.
- Concern that not all affected First Nations are being considered and consulted.
- Concern about NGOs influencing the plan.

Theme 2: Access Management

The following comments summarize what we heard:

- There are 32 heritage sites along the road.

- It is better to have a few roads with multiple users than roads continually being built and then reclaimed.
- Best practices for road, construction, use and reclamation should be used.
- The proposed ATAC Tote road should not occur;
- The proposed road needs to be fully reclaimed which would be good for wildlife and non-mineral industries such as outfitting and tourism.
- Companies that have mineral claims in the area may want to use the proposed ATAC road.
- Using the existing roads would have the lowest impact on the environment.
- The road should eventually be removed and fully reclaimed.
- Wind River trail up to the Blend trail is a good road for about 12km. There are multiple entrances on and off the Wind River trail.
- Question about why there are two gates on the proposed ATAC road.
- The Plan should state the ATAC road is a private road (as per the Agreement).
- More thought should be given to using existing roads instead of building new ones.
- Responsible practice says use existing roads and leave minimal trace.
- Consideration should be given to maintaining roads for different users into the future.
- Concern for how access restrictions will be put in place and who will be able to access and use the proposed ATAC road.

Theme 3: Wildlife & Wildlife Habitat

The following comments summarize what we heard:

- The Goal, “Wildlife species populations in the Beaver River watershed are healthy”, needs to be defined.
- The planning area is important habitat for salmon and other species in the area.
- Questions about salmon spawning locations.
- Plan should note that both Salmon and Dolly Varden were found in the area.
- More data should be collected for other fish species, such as Grayling, Burbout, Northern Pike, and King Salmon, two species of White Fish, Lampray, and Least Cisco.
- Concern over wildlife being affected due to an increase in air traffic as mineral programs use air transportation if there are no roads.
- Participants expressed interest in contributing ideas to the developing YG wetlands policy as the Plan must follow this policy.
- Concern that the road will affect wildlife and the environment in the area, even with the YESAB decision.
- If the YESAB Decision Document states the project can go forward, the Plan needs to prepare for the possibility of a road, therefore focus should be on mitigating affects to wildlife and fish habitat.
- If culverts are needed, use best practices for installation and maintenance so fish are protected.
- Caution using “pristine”; the area has been developed for years.
- Incorporate any wildlife studies currently underway (i.e. Grizzly bear study in Mayo).
- Plan should consider water quality, including rivers, creeks and wetlands.

- Ensure NND citizens are aware of what the Plan says regarding hunting rights.

Theme 4: Exploration/Mining Activities

The following comments summarize what we heard:

- Concern the data and maps provided do not reflect the monetary value of the mineral industry in the planning area. There should be a map that states the economic value of mining in the region.
- Exploration projects are occurring in the area and need to be considered during plan development. For example, the Blend property started in 2006 and work has continued even last summer.
- For the mineral industry to be successful, the amount of land protected for conservation should be minimal to ensure the mining industry can still explore the area to see if there are more opportunities in the future (increase confidence, reduce uncertainty).
- Concern investment and money will leave the territory if there are more areas withdrawn from mineral exploration/development.
- Mining supports the local economy in Mayo and the Yukon.

Theme 6: Data

- Include data on economic values for tourism and outfitting.
- The Plan should outline the information and data that is needed.
- Make it clear that all the information and data is public (except if from FNNND).

Theme 7: Plan Content

- Traditional and local knowledge is important in this Plan.
- The Plan needs to consider the Peel region as it is adjacent.
- The principles outlined in the Plan need to be more specific.
- Background information on the ATAC road should be explained in the Plan.
- The vision is a great balanced approach. One of the policy recommendations should be not to permit roads for exploration, only for mine development.
- Concern with the vision statement that states, "Any road development, will be managed, and reclaimed using the highest level of care and best practices". This might not be accurate as roads may be used by other users and not reclaimed right away.
- There should be a policy recommendation about researching Dolly Varden and other fish species.
- Ensure the Plan has clear recommendations for what zones prospecting will be allowed to occur in.

PARTICIPANTS

Alexo Resource Corp.
Archer, Cathro & Associates Ltd.
ATAC Resources
Klondike Placer Miners Association
Blind Creek Resources Ltd.
Bonnet Plume Outfitters
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Cantex
Mine Development
First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun
Mayo Renewable Resource Council

Metallic Minerals
Midnight Sun Outfitting
Strategic Metals Ltd.
Wilderness Tourism Association Yukon
Yukon Outfitters Association
Yukon Chamber of Mines
Yukon Prospectors Association
Yukon Fish and Game Association
Yukon Conservation Society
Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board