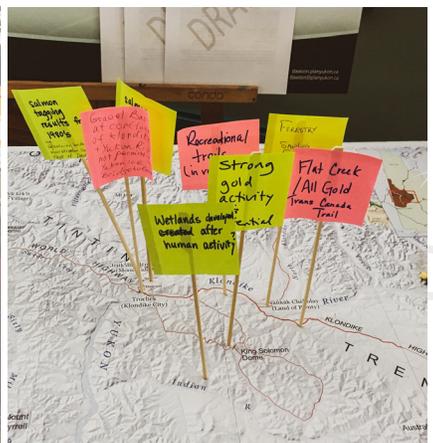




In Your Words:

Summary Report of Public Engagement
October 2019 - June 2020



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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

In Yukon, the regional land use planning process is outlined under Chapter 11 of the Umbrella Final Agreement. The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Yukon Governments (the Parties) established the Dawson Regional Planning Commission (the Commission) to recommend a regional land use plan for the Dawson Planning Region. The regional land use plan includes recommendations for the use of land, water and other renewable and non-renewable resources in the planning region.

Public engagement is an essential part of developing a regional land use plan, and requires dedicated commitment from the Commission and residents of the Region. The Commission approved an engagement strategy in 2019 to help guide public participation throughout the planning process. Below is an illustration of where the Commission is in their planning process. The objective of public engagement in Phase 2 of the planning process is to understand public perspectives on information that has been collected to date, and the key planning issues in the Region.



1.2 Engagement Strategy

The Commission launched their first major public engagement campaign during the period of October 25, 2019 – January 6, 2020. This report includes the results from the engagement campaign from that period and additional feedback and surveys received up

to and including June 2020. In addition, in July 2020 the Commission received an audio file from Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizens with their perspectives on land stewardship for the Commission to consider. Due to the timing of this report, a synopsis of the audio file is not included here, however, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in staff will be providing a video submission that will be available on the DRPC website in summer 2020.

1.2.1 Objectives of Engagement Strategy

The objective of the strategy was to host face-to-face and online engagement activities in order to understand experiences, values and needs that will inform the development of the Draft Plan. Key objectives included:

1. To raise awareness and understanding of:
 - Planning in the Dawson Region
 - Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
 - Connections between individual and community economic, environmental and sociocultural values.
2. To seek feedback, ideas, and validation from the public on the Commission's Draft Issues and Interests Report and Draft Resource Assessment Report (RAR).

1.2.2 How We Reached Out – Targeted Engagement Methods

The Commission used a variety of methods to ensure that they could accommodate as many members of the public and plan partners as possible. These methods included:

1. **Community Meetings:**

The purpose of the community meetings was to hear directly from the public on the planning issues that matter most in the Dawson Region. Members of the Commission and staff were present at the meetings. The format of the community meetings included the following:

- Open House: learn about the planning process, the Commission's Vision, and background planning work on resources and issues in the Region (poster series).
- Community Conversations: three opportunities for facilitated discussions on key planning issues.

Community Meetings		
Date	Location	Format
November 13, 2019	Dawson City Klondike Institute of Art & Culture (KIAC)	Open House 12:00pm-8:00pm
November 20, 2019	Whitehorse Yukon Inn – Fireside Room	Community conversations at 12:30-2:00, 3:30-5:00, 6:30-8:00

2. **Engagement website:** A hub for all of the Commission’s engagement efforts
 - Online survey
 - Other online tools: poll, and idea generating tool *All Our Ideas*;
 - Links to Commission website and materials
3. **Plan partner presentations:** Plan partners (Section 1.2.3) were invited to present their ideas and concerns to the Commission at the December 4, 2019 meeting.
4. **Public submissions:** Encouraged the public and stakeholders to connect via letter, email, phone, or in person at the Dawson or Whitehorse offices.
5. **Formal written submissions:** Submitted by plan partners.
6. **Targeted survey (TH Citizens):** TH administered an amended survey both online and in person in May 2020 to address an identified gap in TH Citizen survey respondents (See section 1.3.2).
7. **Targeted survey (Youth):** Commission staff in partnership with local teachers and youth workers administered a survey to address an identified gap in youth engagement (See section 1.3.2) in April 2020.
8. **Advertising:** Events and website were advertised on Facebook, local news (print and radio), posters around Whitehorse and Dawson, local media outlets, and targeted emails to stakeholder organizations.

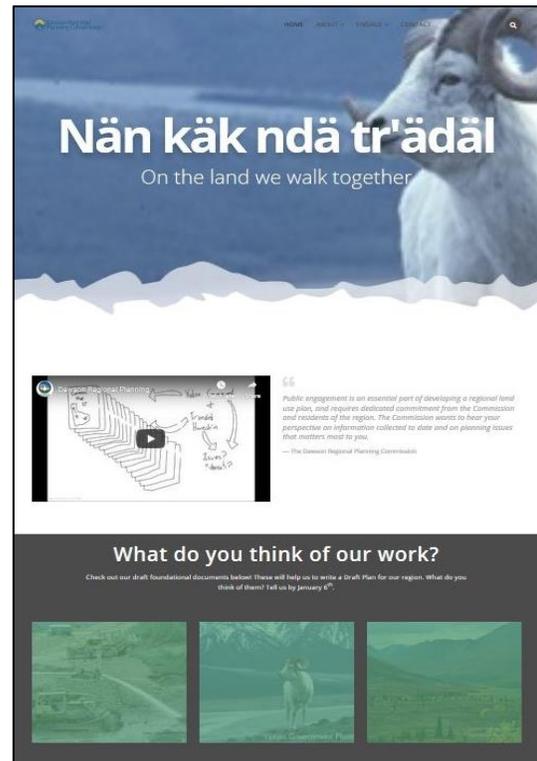


Figure 1-1 Screen shot of Engagedawson.planyukon.ca website



1.2.3 Who We Heard From – Plan Partners

Plan partners for the Dawson planning process are organizations who have a vested interest in the planning region. Plan partners include governments (other than the 'Parties'), non-government organizations, industry groups, citizen groups, industry, and others. At every phase of the planning process Commission staff has communicated with plan partners to keep them informed of meetings and opportunities for engagement. Formal submissions and presentations from plan partners are summarized in *Section 2.2* of this report.

1.3 Notes on Engagement Process

1.3.1 Potential for Duplication of Input

There was an opportunity for people to contribute to this process multiple times through different methods (e.g. submit an online survey, participate in a community conversation,

and send a written submission). There were also no restrictions on how many online surveys could be submitted from a single IP address.

1.3.2 Gaps in respondent demographics

Although the Commission endeavored to create an inclusive and accommodating process, they identified gaps in participation from some sectors of the community during the initial fall engagement period:

- Elders / Seniors and Youth;
- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Citizens; and
- Tourism industry

Recognizing that a more concerted effort will need to be made to ensure that the feedback they receive is well-rounded and reflects, as much as possible, the needs and concerns of the community as a whole, the Commission worked to reach these groups individually through further targeted engagement in the spring of 2020.

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Citizens

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Land Stewardship Framework Program (LSF Program) engaged with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizens via online surveys, phone and video interviews in the spring of 2020. Commission staff worked with the LSF Program to ensure that survey questions remained consistent with the fall engagement survey. Under Chapter 11 of the TH Final Agreement, the Commission is required to “recognize and promote the cultural values of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in people”. As co-managers of the Traditional Territory the respondents overwhelmingly felt that it was ‘extremely’ or ‘very important’ that the knowledge and experience of TH citizens is heard and a part of the process. The results of the targeted TH Citizen survey and the original online survey are integrated in **Section 2.3** of this report.

Youth

Efforts to reach a younger demographic (under the age of 25) were made in the winter and spring of 2020. Staff provided a presentation to a Grade 12 First Nations Studies Class in February 2020. The focus of the presentation was to provide a high-level overview of land use planning, the process, and also to ask students what their priority issues and/or interests are for the region. In addition to this in-person initiative, staff also developed a survey targeted to youth that was distributed to students through Robert Service School as well as through youth program facilitators within the community. The results of these engagement efforts are discussed in **Section 2.4**.

Tourism

The Commission requested specific feedback from our tourism related planning partners. Commission staff sent letters to tourism associations in the early spring of 2020.

At the time of writing, no responses have been received; however the Commission remains active in their efforts to reach this important sector of the community.

2 Results of Targeted Engagement Methods

2.1 Community Meetings

Some of the opportunities identified by the public at the community meetings were in line with the goals of the Commission. For example, some people suggested to use this process to ***"bring people together to listen and understand perspectives"*** and to look at ***"planning as building relationships, sharing, and conflict resolution"*** (Community Conversation members of the public, Nov 20, 2019).

Dawson City

November 13, 2019

30+ attendees

The sense of community was strong in Dawson and a desire to maintain a way of life that people are accustomed to was expressed during the conversations.

There was concern surrounding the possibility of land being withdrawn from mineral staking, and what that would mean for a community where mining continues to be a major part of its identity and economy. There was also concern about the environmental impacts of mining on the land and the implications for fish and wildlife in the Region. The Commission was asked to be proactive, not reactive, when developing their plan.

Some participants at the meeting expressed a feeling of distrust in the process and many times emphasized the importance of the plan being rooted in decisions made by local residents. Transparency in the process was also important for (re)building trust. Overwhelmingly there was an emphasis on the future, and a desire to ensure that the Region will continue to be a place where people can be gainfully employed in the mining industry, and to be able to continue traditional pursuits like hunting.



Figure 2-1 Community conversation Dawson City, November 13, 2019

There were also discussions concerning the importance of open communication and working collaboratively. The attendees spoke about inclusivity in decision making, partnerships, compatible land uses, and stewardship in plan implementation.

Whitehorse

November 20, 2019

60+ Attendees

During the three community conversations at the meeting in Whitehorse, the issue of land availability for exploration and mining activities was prevalent. Some people mentioned that the area has world-class mineral potential, and that the industry has nothing to gain from the land use plan. The point was raised that there is already a large portion of the Yukon that is closed off from exploration (influenced by the recent approval of the Peel Regional Land Use Plan).

When the facilitator asked the group a question about what opportunities the plan can provide, one of the answers that sparked conversation was regarding the Final Agreements and how they allow for meaningful participation in land use planning. The Final Agreements speak to enabling a way of life, including economic opportunities for First Nations people. The importance of respecting First Nations world views, the role of Traditional Knowledge and honoring the Final Agreements were also discussed by the group.



Figure 2-2 Community conversation Whitehorse, November 20, 2019

Other topics discussed at both community meetings included:

- The uniqueness, beauty and importance of areas in the vicinity of the Dempster Highway and the northern part of the Region;
- The Dawson Planning Region is different than the Peel Region – it will require a more creative and flexible type of land use plan;
- The impact that increased tourism activity is having / will have on the Region
- Concern for the current and future state of some of the Region’s wildlife, namely salmon, moose and caribou. Some issues of concern included “outside” pressure from hunting and fishing and environmental degradation from industry and access (roads and trails).

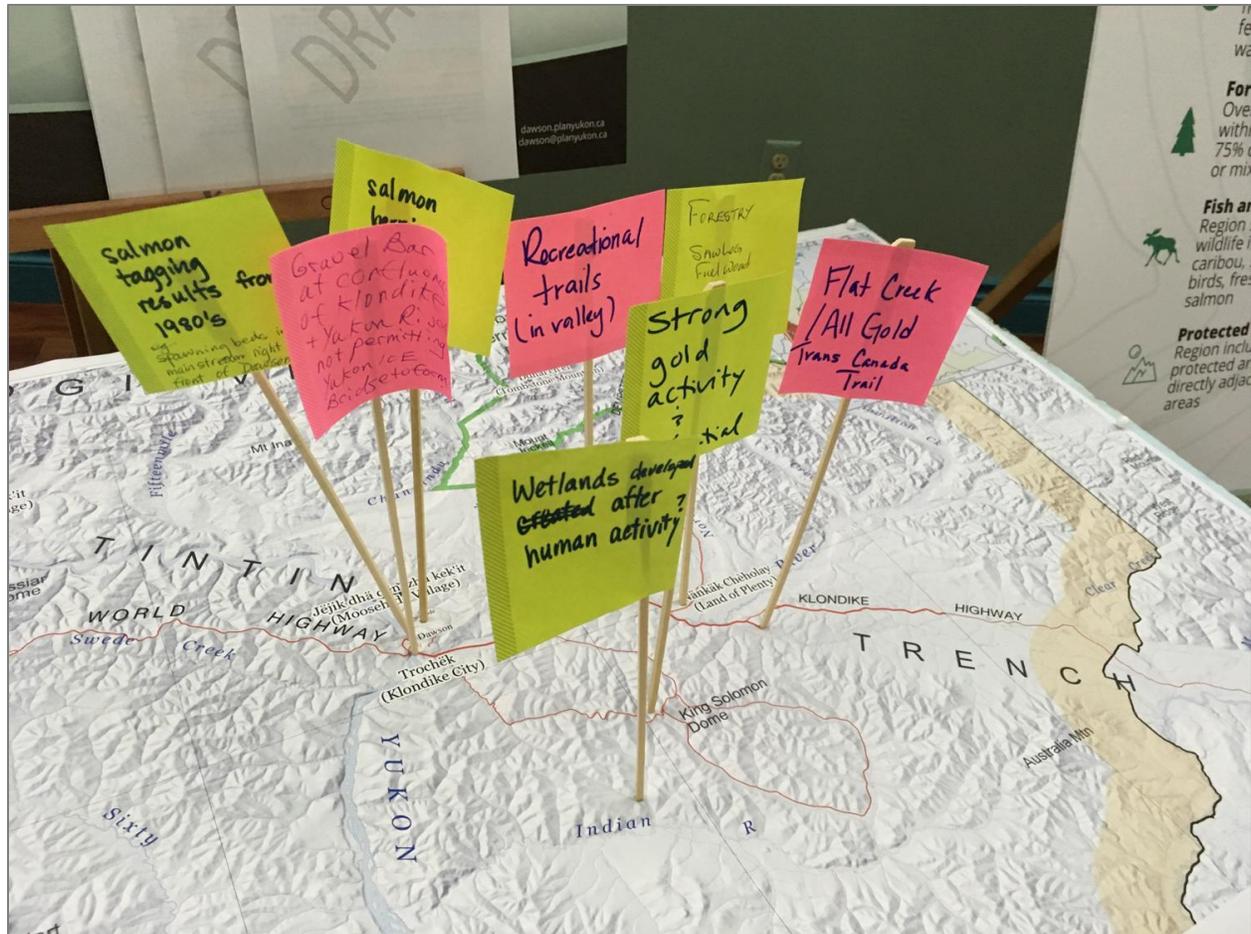


Figure 2-3 Interactive mapping activity at community meetings

2.2 Formal Written Submissions and Presentations

In November 2019 the Commission sent an invitation to 50+ plan partners for asking them to present to the Commission at their public meeting on December 4th, 2019. The following section provides a brief synopsis of formal written submissions and/or content from presentations by plan partners to the Commission. Written submissions are available as an appendix (**Appendix B**) to this report and presentations can be found on the Commission website (dawson.planyukon.ca).

Plan Partners

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - CPAWS

“The Dawson Region is home to many ecologically and culturally valuable areas and features that are deserving of protection.”

CPAWS made four recommendations for the Commission's consideration:

1. Place a moratorium on mineral staking while the plan is being developed
2. Protect large, interconnected areas to sustain the Region's ecological integrity and cultural heritage.
3. In areas where development is allowed, set thresholds on disturbance to ensure development remains sustainable.
4. Protect wetlands, especially bogs and fens that take thousands of years to form.

Ducks Unlimited Canada – DUC

"[There are] numerous references [in the RAR] that wetlands in the [Region] are relatively scarce, and as such should be considered valuable...DUC would anecdotally flag from our field work that wetlands [may be] more abundant than we had anticipated in this area."

They are currently conducting a wetland inventory for the planning region in partnership with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in with an estimated completion date of March 2020.

Friends of Dempster Country - FoDC

"In Hammerstones, A History of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the author suggests that at the time of the Klondike Gold Rush there were two opposing views of the land: 'a commodity to be exploited' versus 'a resource to be cherished'. A hundred years have passed but these two views still hold and it is the Commission's task to come up with a plan for the region that has room for both."

FoDC supports a hold on mineral staking in the region until final plan is approved, and provided rationale to support that the Region north of the Tintina Trench be designated as a Conservation Area.

Independent Researcher – Kiri Staples

"Cumulative effects require us to think about how past activities continue to impact what we think is important today."

Kiri highlighted some take-away points for the Commission to consider when thinking about cumulative effects including; that cumulative effects can be positive OR negative and that they are not just determined by science (they are also socially or culturally determined).

Anonymous Industry Partner

"...the process should contribute to clear guidance on how to steward the land, as well as contribute to straightforward assessment processes."

"[we] anticipate that the resulting DRLUP will provide clarity on where certain activities are and are not acceptable in the Dawson Region, and do this by balancing the values and priorities for all parties involved and in consideration of the resources present in the region."

Comments were also provided to update sections of the RAR.

Klondike Active Transport and Trails Society - KATTS

"The Dawson Plan should promote and safeguard the long-term interests of the people who live here, and our children and grandchildren. In our view that means that all potential uses of land have to be given fair consideration. Dawson regional land use should not be pre-ordained by antiquated laws and policies."

KATTS lists specific trails and areas that they have interest in and they also expressed support for an immediate moratorium on mining claim staking until approval of final plan.

Klondike Farmers Forum – KFF

"KFF is interested in innovative land use partnerships within the Klondike Valley."

Some ideas for consideration by the Commission are; subdividing of agricultural land - allowing varied levels of investment ability and to protect agricultural lands for future development; land partnerships (mining and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in); and expanding agricultural infrastructure.

Klondike Placer Miners Association – KPMA

"The Yukon has the highest land withdrawal of its overall land mass than any other jurisdiction in Canada – at 51%. Placer staking is extremely low impact, low footprint work. Miners only want to operate where there is gold, but to find this gold they must explore."

KMPA highlighted the work that has been done in the area of placer reclamation and they want placer mining to continue to be a part of the Klondike region in a responsible and progressive manner.

New Democrat Party Yukon – NDP

“The bogs, wetlands, and watersheds of the Dawson region have taken countless generations to fully develop, and as such, require careful consideration and caution in planning for their use and protection.”

NDP also expressed their support of a staking withdrawal during the planning process and advocate for 50% protection within the Region (specifically concerning wetlands and Beringia land).

Wildlife Conservation Society Yukon - WCS

WCS provided the Commission with information on their climate modeling work. The work highly technical and highlights key areas and concepts that will be important for the Commission to consider in this time of climate change and resulting shifting habitats. Large river corridors and landscape connectivity were identified as areas and concepts of particular importance.

Yukon Chamber of Mines

“In 2015 mining was the largest private sector driver in the territory. 1 of every 6 jobs in the territory was in the mining sector...Consider the consequences of other jurisdictions who may have planned their land withdrawals better and the socio-economic outcomes of these actions.”

The Yukon Chamber of Mines is advocating for a dynamic plan for the Region and is concerned about the withdrawal of land from exploration, access, and mining.

Yukon Conservation Society - YCS

“...it is difficult to foresee what activities will need to be managed in the future. Therefore, a precautionary approach to development is warranted. Mineral resources will not vanish while less disruptive methods of extraction are being developed.”

YCS outlined key areas that should receive a high level of protection in the plan, along with other recommendations that included (but are not limited to) 50% protection of the Region, maintain wilderness character of Region, protection of all salmon species, and a withdrawal from staking during the planning process.

Yukon Order of Pioneers – YOOP

“As this planning process proceeds, the land should all remain open for exploration of all types including mineral exploration by prospectors and exploration companies...Unexpected

restrictions and changes in rules and enforcements create uncertainty and discourage investments and positive economic activities that do benefit many.”

YOOP is in support of a process and plan that is built on consensus and does not support a temporary withdrawal of staking in the Region.

Yukon Prospectors Association – YPA

“Responsible mineral exploration and mine development should be strongly encouraged, as they provide a healthy economy, as well as revenue for socio-economic activities such as education and community development, and jobs for citizens and families in the Yukon.”

YPA advocates for access to land for responsible exploration and mineral development. The plan should be built with consensus and supported by evidence, especially when concerning wetland ecosystems.

Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board – YESAB

YESAB reviewed sections of the RAR that pertained to their organization and provided a list of suggested updates and corrections for consideration.

Yukon Wood Products Association - YWPA

“Industry needs to have access to the land to carry out timber harvesting...Uncertainty is the enemy of good investment decisions.”

The Yukon has a rich commercial forest industrial history and there are new opportunities in the Region in the areas of biomass production and silviculture.

Other Government

City of Dawson

The Commission and Staff met with the City of Dawson in November 2019 to discuss planning priorities for the region. Key topics discussed included:

- Planning for complimentary land uses near municipal boundaries, including in the Klondike Valley;
- Protection and safety of the City's water supply;
- Use of municipal services by unincorporated communities; and
- Forest fire prevention.

Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada - DFO

The Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Program of Fisheries and Oceans Canada reviewed the RAR focusing on the relevant sections to the DFO mandate. They provided a table outlining suggested updates and corrections.

Canadian Wildlife Service – CWS

“We would like the DRPC to consider ‘other effective area-based conservation measures’ (OECMs) as you develop land use categories for conservation where a land management unit may not be zoned as a Protected Area such as a park.”

This is in order to contribute to the Canada Target 1 goal of conserving 25% of terrestrial areas and inland water by 2025. In addition CWS provided updates to sections of the RAR.

First Nations

White River First Nation – WRFN

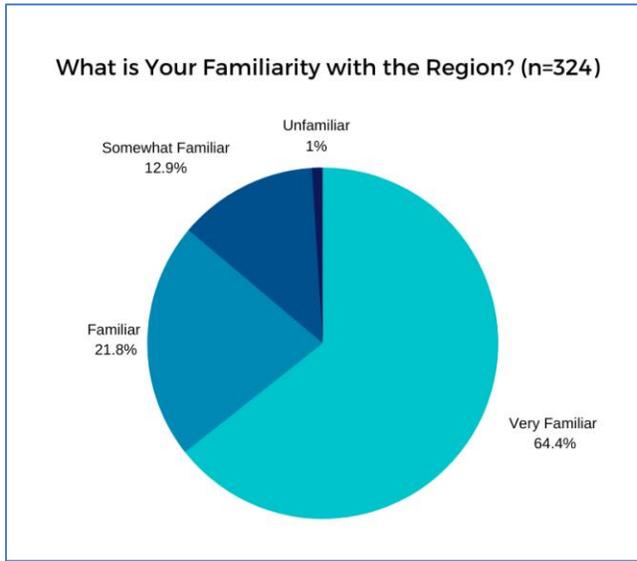
“Overall, WRFN is concerned with having one nation plan solely for an area that encompasses overlapping First Nations Traditional Territories...WRFN continues to remain opposed to this process until we can have equal representation and meaningful decision-making ability within this process that stands to impact our Traditional Territory.”

2.3 Survey

Based on the Commission’s Engagement Strategy, the survey sought to collect information in four key areas:

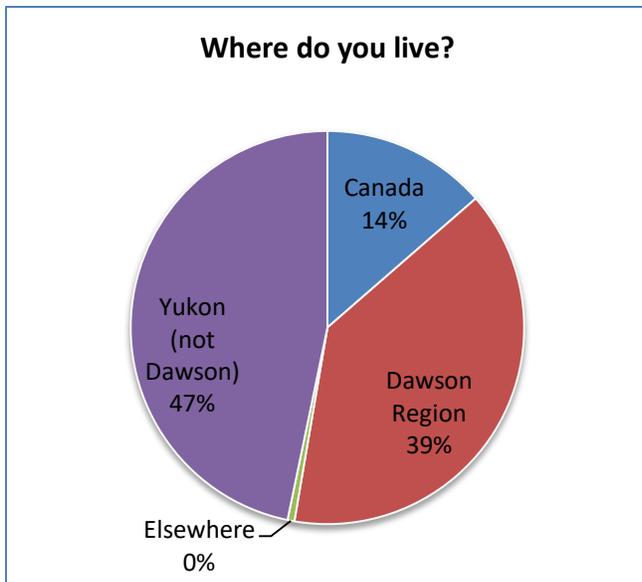
1. **“Our Collective Story”** - To gain insight into the community and to understand different perspectives and experiences (affiliations, organizations, personal experience in Region, etc.)
2. **“Strengths, Issues, and Key Considerations”** – Understanding the Region’s strengths, areas for improvement, and key considerations for the Commission.
3. **“Checking our Foundation”** – Seeking input and validation on the Commission’s Draft Issues and Interests Report and the Draft Resource Assessment Report.
4. **“My Best Advice”** – Seeking advice from the community on the process and the best platform to use to reach the community for future engagement.

2.3.1 Our Collective Story



The majority of people who responded to this question answered ‘*very familiar*’, in that they have lived or worked in the Region for multiple years. Only 1% of respondents had never visited the Region.

Figure 2-4 Survey Question: Familiarity with Region (n=324)



86% of respondents reside in the Yukon.

***In your words:* Here is what people had to say about their Dawson Experience...**

“I have lived and worked in the Dawson region since 2011. I came to the Yukon to work in a placer mine and have lived and worked at one ever since. My husband is a fourth generation placer miner and we are raising our children in this wonderful lifestyle”

Figure 2-5 Survey Question: Respondents place of residence (n= 353)

“The Dawson area is my home and the wilderness surrounding it means the world to me!”

“My experience started in the late 1896. My Great Grandma and Grandpa walked into this country on snowshoes. I’m a 4th generation placer miner in the Klondike.”

“Dawson City and the surrounding area are amazing! I have worked and relaxed in Dawson for the last fifteen years and being a born and raised Yukoner, it is dear to my heart.”

Table 2-1 Online survey question: Respondents' affiliation (n=162)

Percentage of Respondents*	Affiliation	Description
67%	Individual / None	Not identifying with any organization. Identified as member of community, family, etc.
50%	Mining	Mining mentioned in affiliation including exploration, placer, supply etc.
41%	Business	Self-employed, small business, or business not explicitly identified to be affiliated as 'mining'
2%	NGO	Non-government organization
2%	Government	Identified as affiliated with government

Table 2-2 Survey Question: What sector is your organization in? (n=121)

Sector (from Dropdown Menu)	# of respondents*
Placer Mining	37
Other	37
Hard Rock Mining	27
Government	7
Environmental	7
Tourism	3
Trapping	2
Agriculture	1

* TH Citizen targeted survey did not include questions about affiliation / organization

Most survey respondents were affiliated with a mining organization (placer or hard rock).

When asked if their organization had interests in the region **100 of 124** people responded **YES**.

2.3.2 Strengths, Issues and Key Considerations

Survey Question: When thinking about land use activities in the Region, what is working well? (n=152)



The graphic to the left depicts the responses that were captured by this open answer survey question.

Respondents mostly thought that the following activities are working well in the Region:

Mining (including regulations and enforcement and mining reclamation)

Recreation (opportunities for recreation, and access to wilderness)

Tourism (including mining related tourism)

Heritage sites (areas set aside for TH citizen use)

***In YOUR words:* Here is what some people had to say about what is working well...**

“The Region’s biggest asset is its landscapes and wildlife.”

“Despite significant present and historic mining activity, due to the short summer seasons and vast area of the region, it is still possible to access unspoiled wilderness”

“Dawson currently has a balance of

industry, First Nations history and modern culture, tourism, agriculture and is surrounded by remote landscapes.”

"The relatively new requirements for good reclamation after mining are working well."

"Many of the industries in the region work together, having mining in the area helps tourism as people come to see the current mining and the historic mining town, tourism brings people and businesses to town, tourists buy gold nuggets..."

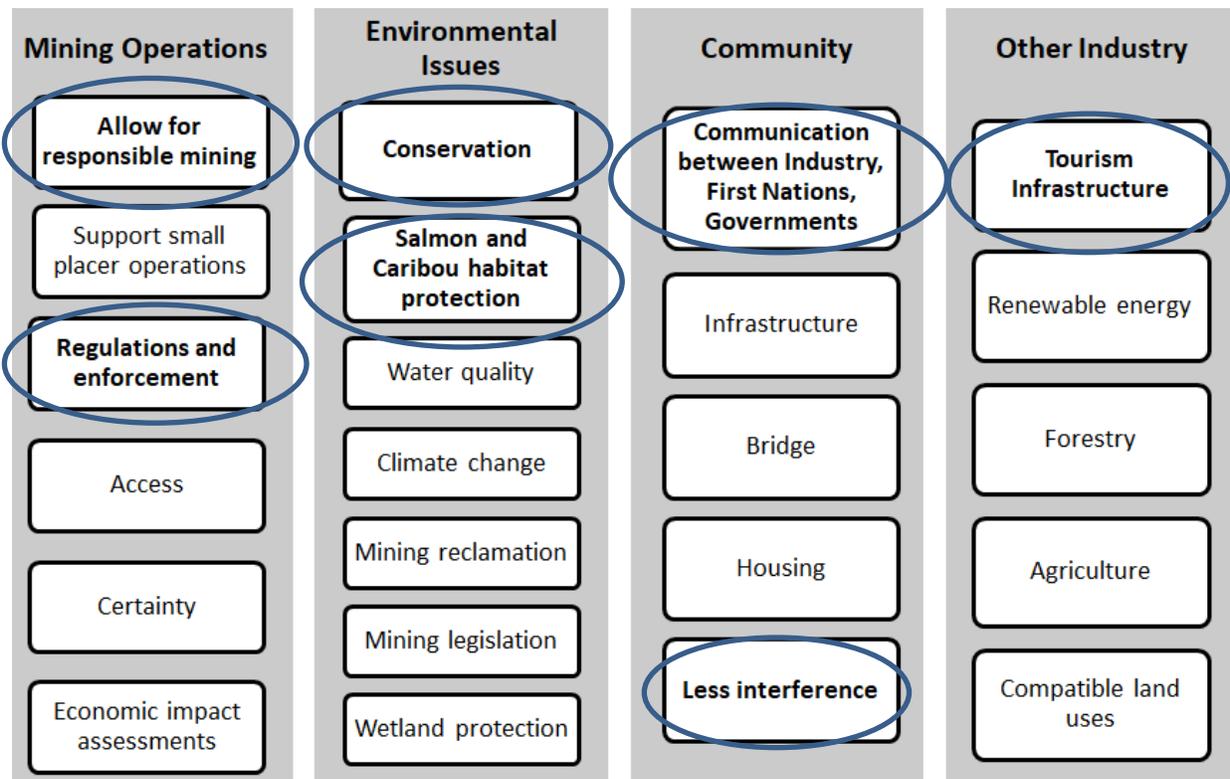
"I like that we have set aside Heritage Sites that can be utilized by TH citizens for times of harvest ie. Cache Creek, 40 Mile, 60 Mile"

"Better documentation is happening today in mapping, ground truthing, partnerships, etc. On the ground work with many agencies has been functioning better, and the recognition of TH's involvement in these processes."

"Agriculture is about the only area that is working well!"

Survey Question: When thinking about land use activities in the Region, what can we improve on?

Below is a chart depicting the responses to the question of "What can we improve on?". The issues that were most commonly cited are circled.



In YOUR Words - Here is what you had to say about what can be improved on...

1. **Mining:**

"Protect the economy by not withdrawing any more land from staking and exploration"

"Provide access to the land in a timely manner, and stop putting up road blocks to access."

"Support placer mining to a greater extent...provide greater certainty"

"Managing placer mining to have less impact"

"Can't stress it enough to be utilizing every part of the land that is being mined out."

2. **Environmental Issues:**

"Salmon management remains a problem"

"More renewable resource utilization, creating more self-reliance rather than on southern...resources"

"More protected areas..."

"I want to know if there will be water monitors on the land watching the water and the land and protecting all living things on the land"

"More stewards and enforcements, and strong penalties [to protect against] damages to land and waterways..."

3. **Tourism:**

"Tourism infrastructure to encourage low-impact eco-tourism"

"Tourism has room to grow particularly with the involvement of First Nations"

"Tourism towards mining and exploration..."

4. **Communication:**

"Communicate with land users and respect the knowledge and history of use"

"Communication between all interested Parties"

"...we need to have a stronger voice so that the Yukon government and their selected individuals hear us, we are not here to stop mining, but it needs to slow down, it needs to take a break to let the land heal..."

"...Placing our Elders knowledge at the forefront, and abide by our indigenous laws and protocols."

Survey Question: What changes in land use have you seen over time in the Region?

An Increase of Regulations: Overwhelmingly respondents felt that the biggest change in the Region has been an increase in regulations. While it was not always explicitly stated, this increase in regulations is likely related to mining and industry (e.g. permitting).

Mining: Respondents felt that the region has seen an **increase** in mining, exploration, and staking over time. Interestingly, an equal number of responses indicated that there is **notably less** commercial activity and less area available to conduct mining and exploration.

Landscape Alteration: Respondents cited observed examples of the land and water being irreversibly changed through development which has impacted the health and abundance of animals and fish.

Other noted changes in land use in the Region over time included:

- Increased hunting pressure
- More people in the region and subsequent housing issues, and a change in community composition
- Less consideration for wildlife and an increase in environmental destruction
- Increase in tourism (specifically in the Tombstone area)
- Increase in agricultural activities
- Increased access (e.g. motorized vehicle use in back country)
- Improvements in mining reclamation
- Loss of traditional culture
- Reduction in wildlife populations (specifically salmon, caribou, moose)
- Issues with water (quality, levels, etc.)

***In YOUR words* - what you said about the changes over time in the Region...**

"Much more tourism traffic on the Dempster"

"Increased habitat fragmentation"

"Placer mining has started to see growth into new areas, which is showing that there is further potential outside of our usual mining areas, meanwhile placer mining methods and reclamation standards have only continued to improve"

"More rules and regulations make some people have a harder time to make a living and live how they want to live."

"More people, more industry, less salmon"

"There has been an insane amount of permanent damage to the Land, Culture, and Animals in Tr'ondëk Territory. Everything has changed from how many animals we get...even the language"

spoken on the land and some hills are completely gone, some rivers and creeks go in different directions and have little to no fish. Everything has changed or disappeared.”

2.3.3 Checking our Foundation: Feedback on the Draft Issues and Interest Report and Draft Resource Assessment Report

The Draft Issues and Interests and Draft Resource Assessment Report (RAR) were made available on the engagedawson.planyukon.ca website for public review during the engagement period. There was a series of questions in the online survey asking respondents for their input on these two reports.

2.3.3.1 Draft Issues and Interests Report

When asked if they ‘checked out’ the Draft Issues and Interests Report, 68% of respondents (n=169) read all or part of it or had heard about the issues and interests while attending a Commission event.

The Commission identified nine key planning issues and interests in the draft report and respondents were asked to provide thoughts and guidance on the issues that were most important to them. (n=195)*

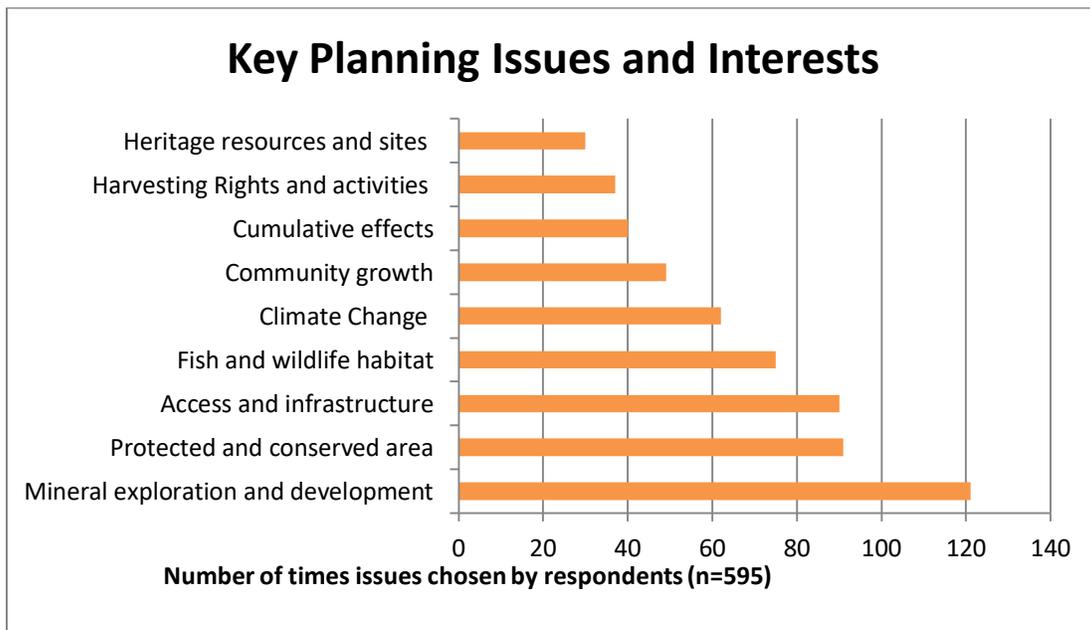


Figure 2-6 Chart depicting the number of times issues were chosen by survey respondents

The **top three** Issues and Interests in the Region according to the survey are:

1. Mineral and Exploration Development
2. Protected and Conserved Area
3. Access and Infrastructure

A few items of note regarding this question:

- The format of the Issues and Interests questions in the online survey and the TH Citizen focused survey were slightly different (See Appendix D). *For example: mineral development was not explicitly included as an option in the TH citizen survey but it was discussed in the answers provided and therefore counted in this section.* The chart above represents the count of times that these issues were written about in the Issues and Interests portion of the surveys.
- It is important to note that there were no qualifiers attached to this question. In other words, if mineral exploration and development was identified as an issue, it does not indicate that mineral exploration and development is 'good' or 'bad' it simply means that it is an issue or an interest in the Region.
- The ranking of the issues and interests does not necessarily indicate their importance, rather, it simply tells the Commission that these items are (or are not) issues in the Region at this time.

***In YOUR words* – this is what you said about the issues and interests in the Region...**

Mineral Exploration and Development

"The geology of the Klondike has sustained the Yukon through thick and thin for generations and every effort needs to be made to ensure a continuation of a robust mineral and exploration economy which is the heart of the Yukon culture"

"Mining provides jobs. It must be encouraged but it must be done responsibly."

"There are some areas that need to set a side due to their ecosystem or cultural importance. These areas need to be identified prior to industry spending money on exploration."

"...This land should not be ripped up and contaminated anymore"

Protected and Conserved Areas

"Wild land and pristine habitat for plants and animals is becoming increasingly rare and therefore more valuable. I think this is the main potential of this area going forward."

"Burial sites and hunting and fishing ground, animal migrating routes and fish spawning grounds, landmarks and / or undisturbed views."

"Although I accept mining as being in the region as an important industry, I think conservation comes first."

"Specifically, the plan should protect wetland and valley bottom habitats for salmon, moose and migratory waterfowl. The plan should also ensure large and connected areas set aside to support the movement of caribou, wolves"

"It has been a part of the culture not to take more than you need, when it comes to an area that is rich in resources, such as protected areas, those areas have always been a place to rely on in hard times. So, those areas are only used when you really are struggling to live your life."

Access and Infrastructure

"From a mineral exploration perspective, access to land is fundamental, as deposits occur where geological processes put them, not where we want them to be."

"There are many historical sites, places of interest that are not accessible via road or trail, many only by river. This limits the potential for programming visitor experiences...No clear vision of how development can proceed along the highway is prohibitive at this time"

"The Fortymile Caribou Herd is rebounding...Caribou herds are prone to boom-bust population cycles and need habitat free from roads and other fragmentation."

In order to accomplish anything from tourism, big game outfitting, day to day enjoyment of the country to mining (be it placer, quartz or grass root exploration) access is a must.

"No more roads for now. Use and manage what we have"

"Re-use as much as you can when it comes to roads in areas deemed adequate"

Fish and Wildlife Habitat

"To protect the fish and wildlife large tracks of land must be set aside for conservation. Particularly land that provides food and shelter for fish and wildlife. Northern land is not high-yielding so each species requires a large area of diverse habitat."

"This region has long been important to the mining industry. But long before that it was important to the fish and animals that live there, and to the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in people whose lives are interconnected with those animals and their habitats. The Dawson region in particular is so rich in healthy wetlands - which are quickly becoming endangered in our world. While I recognize that mining and those work are part of that industry are now a significant stakeholder

in the Dawson region - I believe that this land use plan has an important role in addressing the need for some habitats to remain undisturbed."

"...keep the best interests of the future Trondëk citizens in mind. The land is changing...the salmon is affected, which in turn affects us."

Community Growth

"We need a broad range of economic activities for our community to be healthy and prosperous. We cannot survive on tourism alone and have the businesses in our community and opportunities for our youth. We should plan for our community to grow and be prosperous, so that we have a high standard of living and are a desirable place to live."

"Dredge ponds, it's a bunch of unused land that is a constant memory of what happened to this land. No trees or anything grows on them, it wouldn't make sense to clear more land for the use of housing when...cleared land is sitting completely unused."

"We must first accept that our region is growing with more people coming and staying. I believe that if we start planning for the increase of people now we can avoid problems down the road..."

Climate Change

"The entire land use plan...needs to be framed within the context of climate change. While some changes may benefit the region, such as increased agricultural potential, many are linked to high levels of uncertainty and unpredictability – because of this the precautionary principle should be used" "With climate change comes changes to once well used areas for both wildlife and people. Which means you will see them in areas that were not used or less used before."

"Traditional knowledge, active resource management, respect, listening to elders, adaptability, learning."

Harvesting Rights and Activities

"First Nations should not be impacted by mineral exploration activities impacting their right to harvest in their traditional territory."

"Having access to habitats to carry out our hunting practices is extremely important. There are too many rural applications happening in the Klondike and Dempster Highway making it challenging to harvest in areas that were previously used for harvest purposes."

Cumulative Effects

“As development occurs, it is important to see the impacts that could be coming down the line. A proper evaluation of this is also key to keeping placer mining alive”

Heritage Resources and Sites

“Cultural heritage resources and sites are potent reminders of the values and interests we inherit from the Elders”

“Respect!”

“Preserve history – when I come back, I will be bringing my children and then we can learn about our heritage together.”

“The sites provide a glimpse into our past and tell us stories of the way people lived on the land. There are lessons or practical information we can learn from these places and take that knowledge and apply to our lives today, and into the future.”

2.3.3.2 Draft Resource Assessment Report

The Resource Assessment Report (RAR) is a key background document that is accompanied by a comprehensive map series. Most respondents indicated that they read the Executive Summary or the parts of the report that most interested them (n=168). Some responded that they read the whole report or looked at the maps. About 35% of respondents did not read any of the report.

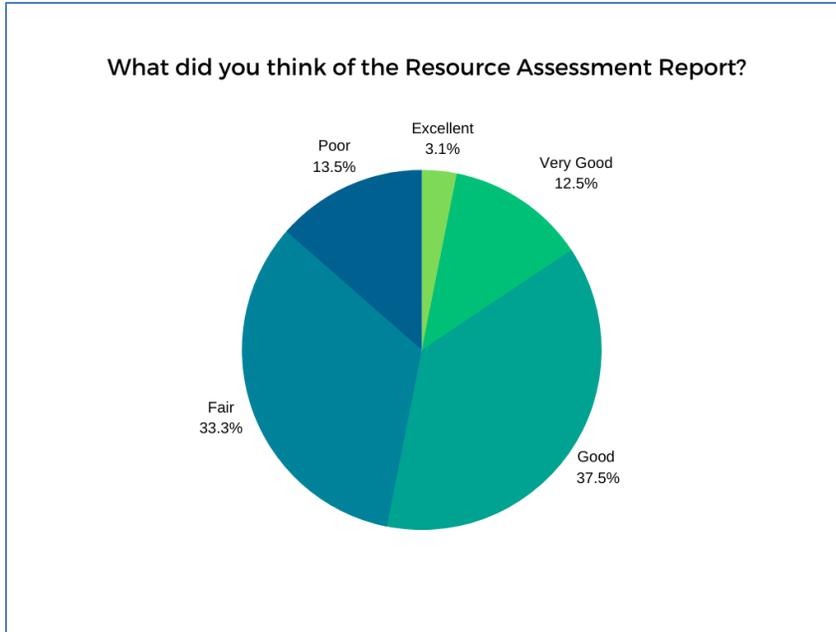


Figure 2-7 Chart depicting the overall opinion of the Resource Assessment Report (Survey Question n=93)

Most people thought that the report was ‘Good’ or ‘Fair’ and found it informative. Generally the comments were positive and respondents felt that the RAR did a good job of describing the resources in the Region. There were some data gaps in the RAR that were identified in the areas of salmon, recreation, and the absence of a more comprehensive evaluation of mineral resources (economic and mineral assessment). Once the report is finalized, the Commission and staff will continue to incorporate new information into the planning process as it pertains to planning issues in the Region.

2.3.4 My Best Advice

At the community meetings and on the survey the public was asked to provide their best piece of advice to the Commission. The advice covered a lot of ground, but some repeated sentiments included the public’s desire for a fair and transparent process that above all is created with meaningful input from the Dawson community and puts the Region and the Yukon first.



Figure 2-8 Best Advice Poster from Community Meetings

Many people recommended that the Commission be mindful of the importance of the economy and to be “creative” in their recommendations, to seek out “mutual win-wins”, be open to “new ideas of economy” in the Region.

Others took the opportunity to remind the Commission that in this world ‘wilderness’ is finite and that they have a responsibility to the Region for future generations. Some offered the reminder that the Elders in the community are a source of valuable knowledge and insight.

Overall people were thankful to the Commission for taking on this endeavor and encouraged members to “keep the conversation going” throughout the planning process.

2.4 The Youth Perspective

As indicated in Section 1.3.2, the Commission recognized that they were missing a key voice during the fall engagement period. As such, staff worked to reach this key demographic through other means, including class presentations and an online survey in the spring of 2020. Because the approach and questions asked were not consistent with those of our general public engagement, the data has not been compiled in the summary provided above. Rather, the results have been summarized separately below.

2.4.1 Classroom Visit

Staff provided a presentation to a Grade 12 First Nations Studies Class in February 2020. The focus of the presentation was to provide a high-level overview of land use planning, the process, and also to ask students what their priority issues and/or interests are for the region.

Students expressed that they felt that the following were priority interests in the planning region.

- fish and wildlife habitat,
- protected and conserved areas,
- community growth, and
- harvesting rights and activities

When asked about what their favorite thing about living in the Dawson region is, there was an overall expression of gratitude for the wilderness setting of the area and the ample opportunities for recreational pursuits and being out on the land.

2.4.2 Youth Focused Survey

Working closely with youth programming staff representatives from Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, staff developed an online survey designed for a youth audience (under 25) in May 2020. The survey was posted on existing online youth programming channels, as well as circulated through Robert Service School students in Grades 9 to 12, as well as available upon request through the Commission's Facebook page. In total, nine responses were collected.

Your Home

Survey Question: This is your home. What is your favorite thing about living here? (n=6)

Respondents to this question focused on two key themes

- 1) Access to Wildlife and Nature, and
- 2) Sense of Community.

Your Priorities

Survey Question: Which from the following statements do you feel most strongly about?

Respondents were provided with a list of nine key planning interests, as identified in the Issues and Interests Report. These statements are listed in **Figure 2.9** (next page). Respondents were asked to rank the statements from 1 (most important) to 9 (least important):

Statement	Ranking
The effects of a changing climate, including increased wildfires, changes to wildlife habitats, water temperatures and levels etc. are important to consider when planning for the future in the region	1
It is important for our community to have recreational areas (hiking, fishing, biking, swimming, etc.) close by	2
It is important to have healthy fish and wildlife populations	3
People who live in the region, or work in the region, hold valuable knowledge that should be considered in the plan	4
First Nation and non-First Nation harvesting rights and areas must be respected and protected	
Historic and sacred sites, archaeological and paleontological resources are important and should be protected	5
Some areas within the region are so important that they will need to be protected and/or conserved	6
Land should remain available for placer and quartz exploration and mining	7
It is important for our community to have room to grow into new residential areas	8

Figure 2-9: Survey Question: “Your Priorities”

Your Future

Survey Question: What do you want for Dawson's future? What does a positive future for Dawson and the Dawson region look like to you? (n=9)

Respondents to this question generally focused on the desire to keep things similar to how they are now. Examples of this included continued access to, and respect for, wilderness, and employment opportunities. Examples of an improved future included access to a wider range of activities geared to youth, and additional access to housing.

Land Use Conflict and Areas of Improvement

Survey Question: Land in the Dawson Region is used for many things (mining, hunting, fishing, tourism, etc.) do you see any places where these activities compete and create conflict? Can you think of where these activities work well together?

Respondents indicated that tourism as a land use appears to be working well but could be improved upon, and a few responses indicated mining as a land use that can create conflict. However, more than one response highlighted that there are clear linkages between tourism and mining in the region, and that both are important industries for Dawson.

In YOUR words: Here is what some youth had to say

I think that mining has provided a name for Dawson. Many tourist attractions are built on the foundation that we are a gold mining community. These two [activities] work well together.

“The beautiful nature and sense of community. The nature around town is healing and important to the essence of Yukon land. The community and community events are what makes Dawson such a special place.”

“Keep respecting the land and the people, help each other, be kind, be very respectful of the First Nation elders and community members who take time to share knowledge and wisdom about taking care of the land, yourself & others. I think doing those things can help make a positive future.”

“To keep the wilderness protected but allow for our population to expand.”

2.5 Other Online Engagement Tools

2.5.1 Online Poll

The poll on the engagedawson.planyukon.ca website was intended to give staff some feedback on the new Engage Dawson website. Of the people who responded (n=20) most felt that the website gave them a good balance of information and opportunity to provide feedback.

Poll option	# votes
Perfectly balances giving me information, and hearing from me	9
There isn't enough information	2
Doesn't allow me to say what I want	4
It is confusing	2
Makes me want to come back	3

This feedback will be taken into consideration by staff when designing the engagement process for Phase Three of the planning process.

2.5.2 All Our Ideas

The website also included a link to an idea generating survey tool from an outside organization called [All Our Ideas](#). The survey was initially populated by staff with 14 ‘ideas’ or statements that reflected the Region’s resources and key issues and interests. All Our Ideas is an idea generating tool and thus participants were able to consider two ‘ideas’ that

the program presented to them and either vote on one of those ideas, or generate their own idea to submit for consideration.

The intent of this tool was to provide an additional avenue for people to submit their ideas to the Commission and a way to express what is important to them.

At the end of the engagement period the tool had generated an additional 32 ideas (see Appendix C).

Some examples of the new ideas generated were...

- The Yukon River should be a special management area
- Easier access to develop placer ground
- There should be a moratorium on mineral staking
- Land access for mining needs to remain a priority
- The wilderness characteristics of the Region should be maintained

3 Summary of Results

3.1 Major Themes from Engagement

All input received during the engagement period (i.e. emails, letters, transcribed community conversations, etc.) were entered into a qualitative research software program called Dedoose. The input was then coded by topic or themes to track and determine what the predominant issues were during the engagement process. The following major and secondary themes from the engagement are those that were identified the most across all of the input types.

- **Mining / mineral development** – Based on the number of times it was identified, mineral development was the most prominent issue during the engagement period. There were three general responses from the public in regards to mining in the region.
 - Mostly people said that they rely on mining for their livelihood and expressed its importance to Yukon’s economy, “it is the region’s primary industrial, economic and cultural driver”. Land being available for exploration and development was of utmost importance to the majority of respondents. An overwhelming opinion was that the current regulations are robust (if not excessive) in ensuring that responsible mining occurs in the Region.

- Second, there were a lot of responses that expressed that mining is a damaging activity for the environment, *“(it is) the biggest threat to maintaining the wilderness character of the planning region”*.
 - And third, some people see the need for better balance in the industry and a close examination of existing legislation to achieve this is needed.
- **Access** – As mentioned in the previous section, access and mineral development go hand in hand. Good access to roads and trails is viewed as essential for a healthy mineral development industry. It should be noted that while the topic of access was most associated positively with mineral development, there was also concern about access as being environmentally detrimental, especially to the health of the Region’s wildlife.

“For claims to have value, and for an exploration project to be viable, surface access is absolutely necessary.”

○ **Conservation/ Fish and Wildlife**

In terms of conservation, the main messages that people expressed included the protection of large intact wilderness areas, maintaining connectivity between areas, stewardship of the land, and the need to focus on the Region’s wetlands. The species of fish and wildlife that were of most concern in the Region were overwhelmingly salmon, moose, and caribou. The connection between fish and wildlife and culture was expressed strongly throughout the feedback. The ‘way of life’ for many in the community is closely tied to or dependent upon the health of fish and wildlife in the Region.

“We must, as stewards of our local environment, look after and preserve fish and wildlife species. Conservation of these invaluable co-occupants of our region requires vigorous large area protection and conservation efforts”

“The Dawson Region in particular is so rich in healthy wetlands – which are quickly becoming endangered in our world. While I recognize that mining is ... a significant stakeholder in the Dawson Region – I believe that this land use plan has an important role in addressing the need for some habitats to remain undisturbed”

“Without fish and wildlife there is no life”

3.2 Secondary Themes

- **Cultural Identity** –A strong cultural identity exists in Dawson that dates back to time immemorial with the First Nations’ presence on the land, to the gold rush history, through to today. Additionally, the value and importance of listening to traditional knowledge and to the Elders in the community was expressed many times throughout the feedback.

“This is the land of the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in and their existing values on the land are critical to protect. It’s part of their, and all of our, cultural heritage and connection to this place.”

“It seems that mining and mineral exploration are blamed the most, they are a very important part of our culture, our community, our customs, economy and ability to have the variety of businesses and supplies available in our community. The culture of the mining community, some of which are now 6th generation should also be included in your considerations”

“Listen! And hear the heart of the Elders and the voice of the people. ALL the people, not just those in power.”

- **Community**– Having gainful employment, the ability to hunt and enjoy the land, being mindful of where new residential development is taking place and the community spirit of Dawson were the main points that were raised for this theme.

“The community is tight, arts, culture and industry all combine to make a colourful and special place to live and work. All three aspects are necessary”.

“In order to keep these [small] towns viable, people need to be able to find work that allows them to earn enough to provide all of what they need to raise a family...”

“...build your civic municipality. Make sure it is done as safely as possible”

“Dawson is an amazing and vibrant place with people from all walks of life co-habiting in a very remote locale. One of the best places I have ever lived in my entire life”

- **Tourism** – Tourism is certainly viewed as a key economic strength of the Region. There was a noted increase in tourism activity especially around the Tombstone

area and up the Dempster Highway. Expansion of trail systems, improvements to tourism infrastructure and promoting the area as an eco-tourism destination were suggestions to expand the industry.

“Tourism is an important economic driver for the Dawson Region; the gold rush history has been the primary theme visitors are looking for. The visitor profile is now including the adventurer and cultural experience type. Dawson has much to offer in this area and can certainly expand as well. Visitors are looking for natural habitat, wildlife and on the land experiences. Ensuring areas are designated or considered for ‘commercial’ development is key. How we protect and manage our natural resources will be an important factor in the story we share with visitors”

3.3 Bringing It All Together

There is a strong desire for this plan to represent a reasonable balance between having the freedom to explore and seek out new economic opportunities while keeping the Region’s wilderness in order to maintain people’s way of life and enable them to continue their traditional pursuits.

Feedback received to date has generally not been ‘black or white’, or ‘this or that’, but rather it has been focused on trying to highlight the possibility of ‘this AND that’. There is a strong recognition that the mining sector is a major economic driver for the Region and Yukon, but there is also a lot of pride and love for the ecological characteristics of the Region. People want to see a healthy environment and economy to continue in order to maintain a healthy community.

The need for certainty was often discussed during the community conversations, emails and letters, and in the survey results. There was a need expressed for the plan to provide certainty for the mining industry, to ensure that investments are protected and clarity as to how they will continue to operate. This clarity and certainty can help in conservation efforts and fish and wildlife habitat mitigation and enhancement.

Respect for the land, its inhabitants, and a strong acknowledgement of traditional and cultural values was a sentiment that was repeated often. Recognizing the interconnectedness between all of the issues that were identified throughout this process will be necessary to produce a balanced plan that is truly representative of the community as a whole.

Concern for the future of the Region was a common theme from this process. Concern for the future came through in two ways. First, there is concern for the future of the Region’s

fish and wildlife and the preservation of its wilderness character. There is a desire to protect large connected landscapes to create resiliency in this time of climate change, and to protect the land for future generations. Secondly, there is concern for the future viability of the Region’s mining industry, and specifically the future of small family placer mining.

“I’m a little nervous at this time. I have put my life into the Klondike. Brought life to frozen ground”.

4 Next Steps

4.1 Nän kāk ndä tr’ädäl: On the Land We Walk Together

The Commission and staff would like to express their sincere thanks to community members, other individuals, and plan partners who participated in this phase of engagement. All of the input received will be considered by the Commission and staff as they move into the next phase of the planning process: developing the Draft Plan.

4.2 Key Tasks Moving Forward

The following key tasks are anticipated as the Commission and staff begin to develop the Draft Plan.

Task	Estimated Completion Date
Target engagement with groups identified in section 1.3.2	(Completed) Spring 2020
Finalization of Resources Assessment Report	(Completed) Spring 2020
Finalization of Issues and Interest Report	Summer 2020
Draft Plan development	Fall-Winter 2020
Draft Plan submission	Spring 2020

4.3 Continuing the Conversation

While the first public engagement period is over, the Commission still wants to hear from you. The Commission and staff are always open to receiving input or having a conversation about the region.

- Come and visit us at the Dawson or Whitehorse offices
- Give us a call or send us an email
- Updates will continue to be posted on our [Engagedawson.planyukon.ca](https://engagedawson.planyukon.ca) and our Facebook page [Dawson Regional Planning Commission](https://www.facebook.com/DawsonRegionalPlanningCommission).
- Public Commission meetings notices will always be posted around Dawson City and online.

"I have spent time in the Dawson region to visit friends in Dawson City, to backpack in the backcountry, to access the Dempster highway, and to ride my motorcycle over the top of the world highway. The Dawson Region is an incredible area as far as I can see, and I am happy that land use planning is underway for this important region. When I think of Dawson I think of the Moosehide Gathering and the Trondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, I think of Tombstone Territorial Park, I think of salmon, I think of caribou, I think of great produce, and I think of the Yukon River. I also know that placer mining has given many placer miners a good life in this region." (Survey respondent)

