

I was alarmed to find that the following is the goal or mission statement for the Peel Watershed planning process.

The goal of the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan is to ensure wilderness* characteristics, wildlife and their habitats, cultural resources, and waters are maintained over time while managing resource use. These uses include, but are not limited to traditional use, trapping, recreation, outfitting, wilderness tourism, subsistence harvesting, and the exploration and development of non-renewable resources. Achieving this goal requires managing development at a pace and scale that maintains ecological integrity**. The long-term objective is to return all lands to their natural state as development activities are completed.

It is the statement ".../exploration and development of non-renewable resources. Achieving this goal requires managing development at a pace and scale that maintains ecological integrity**. The long-term objective is to return all lands to their natural state as development activities are completed/." which implies that industrial activity is a already included in the destiny of the Peel watershed.

We have a legacy of expired industrial scale resource extraction projects in this territory at great public expense and ecological compromise. The planning process should be about /whether /industrial activity takes place, not /how and when. /Returning lands to their natural states has not happened in any of the large scale industrial resource projects in the Yukon. To imagine we can "return all lands to their natural state" after many of the large scale resource extraction projects being considered for the Peel have taken place simply is not currently a realistic possibility considering the legacy of resource extraction, its economics, and the lack of precedent in any such large scale industrial activity ever being successfully mitigated in the Yukon. We simply are not capable of "repairing" devastation to an ecosystem which took thousands upon thousand of years to form.

I am not pleased, as a Yukoner, by this predisposition of Yukon lands for industrial development in the planning process. I request the mission statement of the planning process to be changed to reflect industrial activity as one of the activities to be considered/screened/opened to public debate and review for the Peel watershed.

Thank you! A reply would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Marten Berkman
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