

5. Plan Implementation and Revision

Implementation is a crucial stage in the planning process, providing clear directions for key Plan recommendations. It is intended mainly to demonstrate the Commission's regard for its guiding documents. Its terms of reference, in particular, require the Plan to give effect to certain provisions of the following agreements:

- 1) Yukon First Nation Land Claim Agreements of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, and First Nation of the Na-Cho Nyak Dun;
- 2) Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement (Yukon Transboundary Agreement, Chapter 3 and Chapter 7); and,
- 3) Yukon Northern Affairs Program Devolution Transfer Agreement (Chapter 2, Chapter 7, Appendix D).

It is during implementation that the guiding principles, goals, and objectives of the Plan are put into action. Periodic monitoring of Plan implementation provides an opportunity to evaluate its effectiveness, to decide if goals and objectives are being met, and to find out whether the Plan has been used in land and resource decision-making processes. If land-use circumstances change in the region, changes to the Plan may be needed.

The Parties will develop a detailed implementation strategy at the same time as, or following, the approval of a final Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan.

5.1. Plan Implementation Responsibilities

The governments of the Yukon, Na-Cho Nyak Dun, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Vuntut Gwitchin, and the Gwich'in Tribal Council are the Parties to the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan. They have primary responsibility for implementation. These responsibilities may also involve other groups, including the following:

- Peel Watershed Planning Commission (PWPC);
- Yukon Land Use Planning Council (YLUPC);
- Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB);
- Government of Canada; and,
- Umbrella Final Agreement boards and committees.

Until the Parties reach an agreement on implementation, the roles and responsibilities for other groups are uncertain.

RECOMMENDATION	<i>A detailed implementation strategy should be developed at the same time as the review and approval process for a Final Land Use Plan.</i>
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5.2. Proposed Implementation Activities

A number of specific implementation activities are necessary and will evolve through submission of a Final Recommended Plan. They can be grouped under four general categories:

- 1) Adopting Plan concepts, framework, and general management directions/objectives/strategies;
- 2) Implementing recommendations (land-use management, research and policy);
- 3) Developing and implementing monitoring and reporting protocols that will determine if Plan goals and objectives are being met; and,
- 4) Creating and maintaining efficient procedures to review and modify the Plan.

Proposed implementation activities for the parties to consider are listed in Table 5.1. Specific tasks will include identifying roles for various land management authorities and advisory bodies. Such work will be specified and agreed in a detailed implementation strategy.

The Commission took a comprehensive approach in developing its Plan recommendations. This reflects the complexity of the planning region's environment, key information deficiencies, untested land management tools, and the Commission's understanding of the resource management and regulatory capacities of the parties.

The Plan emphasizes the Commission's primary recommendation for (a) general zone designations (SMA or IMA) and (b) the most effective regulatory designation under Yukon Government legislation for achieving the objectives for each LMU (Section 4.2). The Plan provides a rationale to support these recommendations, followed by management conditions and special management considerations when new land uses are being proposed. For these higher-level Plan designations and management objectives, linkages to relevant Umbrella Final Agreement/First Nation Final Agreement Chapters have been identified, based upon the Commission's interpretation of these documents. The parties, however, are strongly advised to make sure such linkages are accurate during the Recommended Plan review stage, including deferring to expert opinion on UFA interpretation.

Other sections of the Plan provide further guidance to individual industry sectors (Section 4.1) and general management directions on other important issues (Section 4.3), along with strategies and best management practices (Appendix B). Finally, the Commission offers various recommendations throughout the document in the form of policy development, research, monitoring, and future modifications.

Table 5.1: Proposed implementation tasks, actions, and timelines.

Task	Actions/Details	Timeline
Detailed Implementation Strategy		
1. Prepare detailed implementation strategy	<p>Prepare a detailed implementation strategy as a separate document.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the implementation strategy concurrently with the Plan approval process • Initiate an interim land-withdrawal from mineral staking and new gas tenures until completion of Recommended Plan review 	Final Plan Review and approval
2. Project conformity process	<p>Develop protocol for YESAB project conformity check with all First Nation parties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As per Final Agreement clause 12.17.0, develop detailed protocols for YESAB project conformity checks. • Involve PWPC in project conformity checks for large projects assessed under YESAA Screenings and Reviews. 	Protocols in place by date of Final Plan approval
Plan Framework and Key Recommendations		
1. Apply regulatory designation tool	<p>Select appropriate regulatory tool for each LMU.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply selected regulatory tool for each LMU, and undertake all necessary notices to affected tenure holders, affected communities, and the general public. • All parties develop or amend all required legislation to enable the appropriate regulatory designations. 	Within one year following Final Plan approval
2. Apply land designation	<p>Adopt and implement Landscape Management Units and Land-Use Designation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate landscape management units and land-use designation into existing Yukon land-status databases and land-use decision-making processes. 	Final Plan approval
3. Establish the following types of Special Management Areas	<p>In accordance with Section 10.3.0 of the Umbrella Final Agreement, Vuntut Final Agreement, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement, and Na-Cho Nyak Dun Final Agreement, undertake to establish the following types of Special Management Areas:</p>	
	<p>Establish a contiguous Special Management Area for “Heritage Emphasis” as per Section 10.2.0 for the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LMU F: Hungry Lakes • LMU N: Tshuu tr'adaojjich'uu / Aberdeen and Peel Canyons • LMU O: Teetl'it njik / Lower Peel River 	Within one year following Final Plan approval
	<p>Establish a contiguous Special Management Area with “Fish and Wildlife Emphasis” as per Section 10.2.0 for the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LMU A: Ogilvie River Headwaters • LMU C: Hart River • LMU G: Richardson Mountains - South • LMU P: Mid-Peel River and Big Eddy 	Within two years following Final Plan approval

Task	Actions/Details	Timeline
Continued...	Establish a contiguous Special Management Area for “Watershed Protection” as per Section 10.2.0 for the following areas: • LMU D: Wind/Bonnet Plume River	Within two years following Final Plan approval
	Establish a contiguous Special Management Area for “General Environmental Protection” as per Section 10.2.0 for the following areas: • LMU B: Blackstone River Uplands • LMU E: Snake River • LMU H: Richardson Mountains - North • LMU I: Vittrekwa River • LMU J: Tabor Lakes • LMU K: Jackfish Creek Lakes • LMU L: Chappie Lakes Complex • LMU M: Turner Lakes Wetlands	Within three years following Final Plan approval
4. Prepare Sub-Regional Plan	Prepare a “Sub-Regional Plan” in accordance with UFA 11.8.0 and Management Plan for LMU 2: Dempster Highway.	Within three years following Final Plan approval
	Prepare sub-regional plans as may be recommended by the relevant RRC for each Special Management Area listed above, including creation of a Management Advisory Board consistent with Final Agreements, Sections 10.5.2. and 10.5.7 or otherwise specified, specifically NND Implementation Plan for SMAs in their traditional territory (p. 104)	Within three years following Final Plan approval
5. Prepare research action agenda	Develop an action agenda based upon all PWPC research and monitoring recommendations.	
4. Establish cumulative effects indicators and thresholds	Adopt and implement cumulative effects indicators and thresholds where applicable in Integrated Management Areas: • Refine current surface-disturbance estimates. • Refine exemptions list for surface-disturbance and linear-disturbance calculations. • Determine re-vegetation rates and standards for surface disturbances. • Confirm use of other land-management indicators (ecosystem, socio-economic).	Final Plan approval; TBD
5. Develop heritage route management guidelines	Develop management guidelines for identified heritage routes.	Final Plan approval; TBD
6. Develop and maintain regional database	Compile and make accessible the regional maps and information collected during planning process. • Provide central repository for storage and public distribution of maps and resource information through Yukon Planning Atlas project. • Determine ongoing information collection requirements. • Perform annual updates of regional resource status, including indicator status.	One year for development Ongoing annual maintenance
7. Perform annual	State of region reporting.	Initial assessment in year following Final Plan

Task	Actions/Details	Timeline
regional assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following Final Plan approval, carry out an annual general evaluation of land-use activities (type, level, and location) and land status from the previous year. • Discuss current and anticipated land uses. • Evaluate the status of cumulative effects indicators in relation to thresholds as part of this assessment. • Summarize results of annual assessment in a brief State of the Region report. • Decide on potential course of management action for the upcoming year(s) if cautionary thresholds are reached. (Decision to be made by parties.) • Include indicator status and evaluation results as part of Yukon State of the Environment reporting. 	approval Ongoing annual reporting
	Report on status of implementation tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out annual monitoring and reporting of progress toward completing identified implementation tasks. 	Initial assessment in year following Final Plan approval Ongoing annual reporting

RECOMMENDATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>As per Final Agreement clause 12.17.0, the PWPC recommends that an assessment of individual project conformity with the Plan, where such projects are evaluated at the level of a YESAB Designated Office, be undertaken on an annual basis as part of an annual regional assessment, rather than on a project-by-project basis.</i> • <i>The PWPC believes that the Plan establishes adequate management direction for YESAB to assess conformity of most individual projects, as part of a Designated Office evaluation. Where land-use variances are being considered within areas designated for protection and conservation, the PWPC recommends that such technical reviews be done by a qualified professional planner serving as a representative of the PWPC.</i> • <i>Where Plan amendments are required, the PWPC recommends that it be reconvened to consider such proposals.</i>
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5.3. Plan Revision

As outlined in detail in Section 3, the task of Plan conformity evaluation and revision is a fundamental cornerstone of this Plan. Based upon the First Nation Final Agreements, the Plan identifies three ways of allowing land uses to change from their current status in the Plan. The procedures will need the formal establishment of a process when the Plan is approved:

- by authorizing a Plan variance (non-conforming uses that are inconsistent with the Plan);
- by amendments to the Plan (alterations to Plan framework, policy, or management directions);
- through a Plan review (a systematic process for updating the Plan, either after a five to seven year period or when the Yukon and signatory First Nation Governments require a review). Plan review would occur either on an agreed-upon schedule or whenever the parties decide it is needed. The development of methods and timelines for changing the Plan will be part of the detailed implementation strategy.

RECOMMENDATION	<i>To support adaptive management and provide a periodic process to evaluate Plan effectiveness, the maximum length of time between Plan reviews should be seven years.</i>
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5.3.1. Plan Review check-list

The status of Plan recommendations should be evaluated at the first Plan review. While consulting on the Draft Plan, the PWPC received comments about additional research or management items to consider. Some have been deferred for the future, while Table 5.2 lists suggested items to consider at the first Plan review.

Table 5.2: Suggested items for consideration at first Plan review.

Task	Actions
Plan Review	
1. Evaluate success of Plan in achieving goals and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine if recommendations from Plan were successfully implemented. • Consider if the goals and objectives of Plan were met and/or if they are still achievable. • If required, revise Plan content.
2. Develop and implement additional indicators for sustainable development (ecosystem and socio-economic sustainability)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider inclusion of habitat targets for focal species for specific LMUs. • Consider indicators of aquatic habitat integrity and water quality (e.g., stream crossing index, CCME water quality index, etc.) to complement current terrestrial indicators. • Consider inclusion of regional ecosystem and socio-economic sustainability indicators, to be determined in consultation between YESAB and the parties to the Plan
3. Consider zoning system for Dempster Highway corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider Dempster Highway corridor zoning system that is complementary to the existing land designation system proposed in the Plan.
4. Refine application of cumulative effects indicators and thresholds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider weighting of linear disturbance effects within different habitat types (e.g., floodplains versus upland habitats). • Incorporate new information on re-vegetation rates and standards for surface disturbances.

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