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April 3, 2024

Re: Recommendation for Chapter 11 Plan Review for North Yukon

The Yukon Land Use Planning Council (the Council) is pleased to make a Recommendation to the Vuntut Gwitchin Government and to the Government of Yukon to undertake a review of the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan.

As per our mandate under Section 11.3 of the First Nation Final Agreements, the Yukon Land Use Planning Council is to make recommendations related to land use planning in the territory.

In 2009, the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan was approved by both Parties (Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and Government of Yukon). It has been 15 years since the approval and the Council feels strongly that a “periodic review” per VGFNFA Section 11.2.1.4 be undertaken, beginning in 2025. Evaluations by Gillian McKee (2018) and Vector Research (2019) provide a variety of rationale that support the need for a Plan Review.

The North Yukon Plan was the first Chapter 11 plan to be approved in the Yukon and it should be the first plan to undergo a review. The Parties have implemented many of the key recommendations of the Plan, such as the establishment of Dàadzàii Vàn Territorial Park and Ch'ihilii Chik Habitat Protection Area. Given this progress and the amount of time that has passed since the approval, the Council believes that there is strong rationale to proceed with a full and comprehensive review. This review should have a two (2) year timeline.



Alternatively, a scoped plan review could be undertaken. Such a review would focus on only those aspects of the plan that the Parties agree to (such as specific areas or land uses). This review would be completed in less time and use fewer resources. The timeline for such a review would depend on the scope and level of detail.

The Council further recommends that any Plan Review be undertaken by a Chapter 11 North Yukon Planning Commission with nominees from the Parties. There is currently sufficient Chapter 11 implementation funding remaining to conduct the North Yukon Plan Review under a commission-led process.

Lastly, the Council recommends that the process include the area known as Chuu Tl'it Gwa'an (upper Miner River) located south of Ni''iinlii Njik (Fishing Branch) Habitat Protection Area. This is an area that remains unplanned and is in an overlap area with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation. If not included in the Plan Review, it is imperative that a subsequent Chapter 11 planning process be undertaken to address this gap in the regional planning fabric.

The Council would like to offer a meeting with you to discuss a cooperative and collaborative approach to developing of a new General Terms of Reference for a North Yukon Planning Commission mandated to conduct the 11.2.1.4 Plan Review.

Please contact our Director, Tim Sellars, at tim@planyukon.ca or at (867) 333-6095 if you would like to meet with the Council.

Thank you,

Neil Salvin, Chair

Yukon Land Use Planning Council

- cc. John Bailey, VGFN Senior Liaison Committee member
- Heather Mills, YG EMR Senior Liaison Committee member
- Shehnaz Ali, YG ENV Senior Liaison Committee member
- Kay Lindsey, TH Senior Liaison Committee member
- Shirlee Frost, Past Chair, North Yukon Planning Commission