



YLUPC
YUKON LAND USE
PLANNING COUNCIL

ŁU GHĄ (KLUKSHU VILLAGE)
LAND RELATIONSHIP
GATHERING JULY 30 -
AUGUST 1

2025



“Overall, the spirit and intent of the UFA is about respecting the rights and aspirations of Yukon First Nations, shared decision-making, self-determination, and reconciliation that recognizes past injustices.”

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INTRODUCTION

Each year the Yukon Land Use Planning Council (YLUPC) hosts a land use planning conference with a planning-related theme. For the past four years, these events have taken the form of land relationship gatherings.

Two of these have been on the land, including Brooks Brook in 2023 and Łu Ghq (Klukshu) in 2025. Each gathering has built upon the previous:

- 2021 - Online: Land Relationships
- 2023 - Brooks Brook: Embracing Traditional Knowledge and Ways
- 2024 - Mayo: Building and Empowering Relationships
- 2025 - Łu Ghq (Klukshu): Breaking Down Barriers

This year, YLUPC and the Traditional Knowledge Circle held its fourth land relationship gathering in Łu Ghq, the Southern Tutchone name for Klukshu Village, meaning “a place for fishing”.

This special place is within the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations’ Traditional Territories. Łu Ghq (Klukshu) was chosen as the gathering place this year because it holds great cultural and spiritual significance and because the Kluane region is identified as a future planning region.

The goal of the gathering was to explore barriers, particularly breaking down those faced by the land use planning process under the Final Agreements.



The gathering was held July 30 - August 1, 2025. Over 70 people attended, including Yukon First Nations, Elders, key government departments, and Umbrella Final Agreement (UFA) boards and committees' representatives.

The event included a salmon drying and smoking activity at Łu Ghq (Klukshu) led by Carl Sidney and supported by Barb and Chuck Hume as well as an interpretive walk of the old Shāwshe Village, led by Chuck Hume.

What is the YLUPC?

The Yukon Land Use Planning Council (YLUPC) is an independent board established under the Yukon First Nations land claims agreements.

YLUPC supports regional planning commissions and makes recommendations to the Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations on land use planning matters.

YLUPC is a three-member board with nominees from Canada, Council of Yukon First Nations, and Government of Yukon, appointed by the Government of Yukon.

Current members include:

- Al Foster (Chair)
- Carl Sidney, and
- Neil Salvin

What is the Traditional Knowledge Circle?

YLUPC is supported by a Traditional Knowledge Circle, chaired by Carl Sidney. Through the Circle, YLUPC is better able to embrace Indigenous knowledge and values and planning approaches are more value-centered and collaborative, founded on relationships with land, water, animals, air and each other.

Current members are:

- Carl Sidney (Chair)
- Angie Joseph-Rear
- Colleen James
- Roland Peters
- Gary Darbyshire
- Shirlee Frost
- Hammond Dick, and
- Franklin Patterson



APPROACH & AGENDA



Intent

YLUPC's intent for the gathering was to draw learnings from past gatherings, discuss barriers to implementation of Umbrella Final Agreement Board and Council recommendations and to solicit solutions to help construct a path forward.

Approach

Participants were encouraged to listen to each other and to the past, respect each other's perspectives, and to keep an open mind when looking forward to the future.



Methods

- On-the-land activities: camping, drying and smoking fish, tour of Shāwshe Village.
- Addresses from Champagne and Aishihik First Nations Elder Ron Chambers and land claims negotiator and citizen Lawrence Joe.
- Panel including leaders from YG, CYFN, CAFN and YLUPC.
- Roundtables and break-out groups.

Agenda

Land Relationship Gathering ŁuGhą (Klukshu) July 30-August 1, 2025

Facilitator: Line Gagnon

Pre-Gathering Activities (Wednesday, July 30)

- Dinner provided: 6:00pm-8:00pm, dry fish activity: 7:00pm

DAY 1 (Thursday, July 31)

Time	Agenda Item
7:00-9:00	Breakfast
9:00-9:15	Opening Ceremony and Prayer (Ron Chambers)
9:15-10:30	Introductions and speeches Opening remarks from dignitaries
10:30-10:45	In memoriam Recognition of those we have lost
10:45-11:00	Break
11:00-11:15	Reflections How we got here
11:15-12:00	Keynote speaker (Lawrence Joe) Bringing our work to life
12:00	Lunch & Reflection
1:00-3:00	Roundtable on barriers Perspectives on barriers to positive change
3:00-3:30	Break
3:30-4:30	Panel discussion with leaders Moving from recommendations to action

Dinner provided: 6:00pm, evening activities: 7:00pm – 9:00pm (dry fish, free time, crafting).

DAY 2 (Friday, August 1)

Time	Agenda Item
7:00-9:00	Breakfast
9:00-9:15	Recap of Day 1
9:15-10:00	Discussion: What now? How to make meaningful and impactful recommendations
10:15-10:30	Break
10:30-11:30	Advice to the Council Brainstorming session
11:30-12:00	Łu Ghą (Klukshu) & Shäwshe (Dalton Post) knowledge sharing Shäwshe Management Plan
12:00-12:30	Closing remarks and prayer
12:30-1:00	Bagged lunch provided
1:00-3:30	Time on the Land Shäwshe Road Trip, interpretive walking tour Adjourn Gathering

BACKGROUND

Recognition of Those Who've Passed

Participants took time to recognize and honour those who have passed and spoke about their important contributions to the land and its people.

Yukon Land Claims Process

As part of our grounding, the Council reflected on the Yukon land claims process.

In 1973, the Yukon Native Brotherhood travelled to Ottawa to seek recognition of Yukon First Nations' rights and self-determination. They presented "Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow" to the then Prime Minister, Pierre Elliott Trudeau. This set the tone for treaty negotiations.

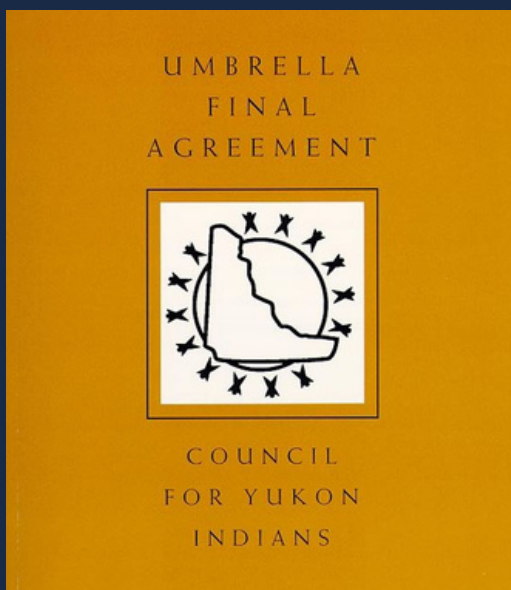
It was a visionary document that was intended to reshape the relationship between Canada, Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations.

In 1993, the Umbrella Final Agreement (UFA) was signed by Canada, Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations. This meant working together when making decisions about the land and respecting self-governing Yukon First Nations' rights.

Part of that arrangement was participating in land use planning in the Yukon which meant having Yukon First Nations' voices heard when managing resources as well as being consulted on important decisions. This is far from happening.

The recommendations that UFA boards and committees put forward are often not implemented. This has gotten in the way of co-management of the land, resources, water, fish, wildlife and culture.

Overall, the spirit and intent of the UFA is a vision of respecting the rights and aspirations of Yukon First Nations, shared decision-making, self-determination, and reconciliation of past injustices.



KEYNOTE ADDRESS



Lawrence Joe

Lawrence Joe, is the son of Lorraine Joe and the late Douglas Joe and is of the Käjèt (Crow) clan, and a citizen of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.

Spirit and Intent of the UFA - Bringing Our Work to Life

Lawrence reflected on his life, his Nation's history, and the challenges and opportunities of land claims and self-government in the Yukon. Speaking from his home community of Łu Ghq̓ (Klukshu), he shared stories of growing up on the land, his family's deep ties to the area, and the racism he faced as a young person. He reminded listeners how the UFA and land claim settlements have changed the Yukon for the better by recognizing Indigenous rights, land and governments.

Lawrence described the history of how protected areas, such as Kluane National Park, were created without the consent of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, and how these decisions still affect people today. He spoke about the hard work of negotiating land claims and how, after signing the agreements, communities were left to manage complex new responsibilities. Lawrence emphasized that true partnership and respect are still needed from the Yukon and federal governments to fully implement the agreements — especially around land use planning, trapline management, and public service jobs for First Nation citizens.

He urged everyone to return to the spirit of cooperation that guided early negotiations and to strengthen relationships between governments and First Nations. He also called attention to modern challenges like climate change, overhunting, population growth, and the need for co-management.

Lawrence ended with a challenge to all: work together so future generations inherit healthy lands, strong cultures, and fair partnerships — ensuring the promises of the UFA are truly fulfilled.

PANEL DISCUSSION



Four panelists were selected to provide a variety of perspectives on land claims implementation barriers and opportunities, with a focus on land use planning:

- Grand Chief Math'ieya Alatini, Council of Yukon First Nations
- Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, John Streicker, Government of Yukon
- Chair of Yukon Land Use Planning Council, Al Foster; and
- Director of Heritage, Lands and Resources, Ray Gunness, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.

Grand Chief Math'ieya Alatini, Council of Yukon First Nations

Strengthening Yukon First Nations' participation in boards and committees is crucial for effective decision-making and representation.

- Members need to be knowledgeable and aware of ongoing issues.
- Build capacity among Yukon First Nation youth. Explore Yukon University for training.
- Leadership should provide high caliber training like corporate board programs and address honoraria funding challenges.

Land use planning faces a number of challenges including overlapping claims, limited budgets, capacity, and having to balance mining and conservation.

- Regional planning can be hindered by traditional territory overlaps, as is the case in the Kluane region.
- There is limited budget and capacity to complete all land use plans in the territory.
- Mining is a major economic driver but needs to be responsible.
- Philanthropic organizations are a potential source of funding.



Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, John Streicker, Government of Yukon

Land use planning is complex and requires timely progress.

- YLUPC sets up quarterly meetings and YG follows up on actions and next steps which has improved collaboration.
- Members need to be knowledgeable and aware of ongoing issues.
- Honoraria for UFA boards and committees is insufficient - the issue is tripartite - Canada, CYFN and YG.

Diverse viewpoints on boards and committees is important in order to capture a range of perspectives across age groups and communities.

- Though differing opinions and experiences exist, shared values and mutual respect enable progress.
- Decision-making should prioritize community-based insights rather than be centralized in larger hubs like Whitehorse in order to understand local contexts and prevent disproportionate influence.



Chair of the Yukon Land Use Planning Council, Al Foster

The North Yukon Land Use Plan exemplifies a successful collaborative process characterized by effective communication, secure multi-year funding, clear terms of reference, dedicated leadership, and timely deliverables.

- The commission worked closely with Elders, the citizens of Yukon First Nations, and Government of Yukon to foster consensus decision-making, supported by community engagement through open houses.
- The commission overcame challenges by building trust and flexibility.

Early in the Dawson Land Use Planning process (2011-14) there was confusion about roles and expectations within the appeal framework, which caused distress and hindered collaboration.

- Absence of a dispute resolution process and lack of clarity led to entrenched positions, stalled progress on key reports, and complicated communication and public engagement.
- Lessons from this experience emphasize the importance of trust, establishing clear rules, formal relationships, and collaboration focused on interests rather than fixed positions.



Ray Gunness, Champagne & Aishihik First Nations Director of Heritage, Lands and Resources

An example of success in land claims implementation is the effort to regulate moose and other wildlife harvests in traditional territories.

- There are now permit harvest zones and a lottery system for resident hunters, alongside improved harvest reporting to address population pressure and species migration.
- Kluane National Park and Tatshenshini-Alsek Provincial Park are co-managed despite the absence of formal treaties.

Effective management of interests and priorities is crucial in negotiations.

- Prolonged disagreements can delay progress and hinder collaboration.
- Strive for mutual understanding before concluding discussions to prevent misinterpretations and reluctance to reconvene.
- Some UFA boards and committees are active in making recommendations to First Nations while others have untapped potential.



MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

A roundtable discussion was held at the end of day one, with participants identifying and discussing how to break down barriers concerning management of land, water, fish, wildlife, and culture.

The following day, participants were divided into groups to explore solutions and focus areas for the YLUPC based on these themes. These were recorded on flip charts and are transcribed on the following pages.



BARRIERS	SOLUTIONS
<p>Umbrella Final Agreement implementation challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •lack of understanding •different interpretations •lack of legislation • impact of devolution •lack of support for UFA boards andcommittees 	<p>Everyone should know the UFA</p> <p>Promote the benefits of the UFA</p> <p>Get commitments to the UFA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • from Canada, YG & FNs (leadership) <p>UFA in institutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use existing tools (e.g. YFN 101) • schools (K-12) - curriculum & credits • mandatory education for YG staff • knowledge of the UFA assessed in performance reviews <p>UFA targeted communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • newcomers should receive a package with UFA information • consultants and non-profits • “UFA Built” t-shirts <p>UFA boards and committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase staff and funding <p>UFA implementation working group needs to step up and be more effective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hold them accountable <p>Culture camps</p> <p>First Nations Language</p> <p>Laws:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FNs to develop their own laws • re-do old legislation (lands, mining acts) • new laws needed (e.g. land use planning legislation)
<p>Conflicting values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • competing interests • incongruent ideas • polarized population • economic development vs conservation values • no shared understanding • Traditional Knowledge vs western science 	<p>Respect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • go beyond acknowledgement, demonstrate full respect for someone’s values and change the behavior • respect – “look again” – spiritual – creator <p>See the big picture (systems approach):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shift system/decision making to not just look at economic • more thinking about what makes a good life • short term and long-term honesty • look at all the UFA when making decisions (don’t cherry pick sections)

BARRIERS	SOLUTIONS
	<p>Focus on similarities – universal values are shared values – sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we all value water in a different way • set standards based on common values • rivers are living <p>Information and education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • misunderstanding can be overcome by sharing information <p>Include Traditional Knowledge and ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retell historic narratives and reevaluate • TK needs some weight as scientific knowledge • TK is not for everyone and should not have to be proven <p>Environmental assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessors should walk the land with Elders/knowledge keepers • proponents should have to pay a fee for assessments and a walk through • just because you can, doesn't mean you should
<p>Relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of respect • lack of trust • communication issues • Canada's disengagement • First Nations vs Government of Yukon 	<p>Relationships are important:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acknowledge the importance of relationships between people, even when representing institutions <p>Be open:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • invite others in • dive in • sit down and say hi! • come play in my sandbox <p>Host meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set the tone with common ground • space for open dialogue and conversations • build trust • be careful with opening prayer <p>Empathy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • put yourselves in each other's boots/shoes/moccasins • describe the other's problems/values • ask them what they need <p>Respect:</p>

BARRIERS	SOLUTIONS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be aware of your audience • listen to each other • agree to disagree • acknowledge each other's perspectives <p>Relationship with the land:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we are part of the land • stop seeing and doing things with humans "above" the land <p>YG/Canada need more accountability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clients should do the assessment of government <p>Bring it back to the UFA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the UFA established new relationships • everything we do should be in context of the collaborative relationships intended <p>FN engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Assembly attendance • symposiums – UFA based in a good way • FN meetings <p>Newsletters</p>
<p>Insufficient funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UFA boards and committees • land use planning processes • land use planning commissions 	<p>Consider new sources of funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proponents should pay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o project fees o ecosystem service fee o security & bonding • Ch. 23 – resource royalties • YG fee for service • release YG funds set aside for LUP <p>Funding for First Nations participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UFA funds communities <p>Policy changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • multi-year funding • reallocation of funds that are not being used <p>Improve efficiencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more collaboration to reduce redundancies • more cooperation between boards/committees • fast track smaller projects
<p>Limited capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of UFA boards capacity 	<p>Mentorship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports youth involvement and succession planning

BARRIERS	SOLUTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Nation and community capacity • recruitment and vacancies • staff turnover • succession gaps • appointment process delays • youth underrepresented 	<p>Flexibility around meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accommodate the needs of board members so they can attend – full time workers struggle to make meetings • create space/give credit/make part of job. <p>UFA boards working together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • job sharing and other HR alternatives <p>Long-term retention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • longer funding commitments <p>Use existing YG staffing programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • representative public service • employee exchange • builds capacity and understanding <p>Community capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more buildings and office space <p>Youth involvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have more youth in UFA boards – capacity - youth mentorship • build education into processes - it takes time • public speaking for youth – extroverts are favoured <p>Prioritize appointment processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simplify the process • increase communication <p>TPC should lead training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B&C training • other training for FNs, communities, UFA B&Cs
<p>Processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complexity • colonial silos • data gaps • length 	<p>Simplify processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • land use planning process • implementation <p>Fund the full process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • needs to be sufficient for UFA B&C to fulfill mandates • long-term commitment of funding, for staff retention • fill data gaps <p>Trust:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planning framework would be followed if there is trust

BARRIERS	SOLUTIONS
	<p>UFA inclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bring treaty into everything <p>Timelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • process timelines/performance standards • it's government's responsibility to communicate with citizens <p>Flexibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pending members of B&Cs should be able to participate while appointments are in process <p>Holistic approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decolonize • Indigenize • find or make links between processes (e.g. planning processes)
<p>Power dynamics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decision makers vs recommendations • First Nations • Government of Yukon • Canada (Parks) • colonialism • racism 	<p>UFA B&C alliances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bring people together more • stronger together • challenge YG collectively – strength in numbers <p>UFA B&C integration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RRCs with YFWMB <p>Smaller contingents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when meetings with YG and FNs • more informal <p>Engage leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • letters and meetings with ministers – by-pass bureaucrats <p>First Nation relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unique Nations: treat each Nation as sovereign • different outcomes will happen because all Nations are unique <p>Transparency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share outcomes/decisions throughout each organization <p>Don't take no for an answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seek solutions and alternatives • governments change – political, policy, legal, etc. <p>Take action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fewer recommendations, more action <p>YG responsibilities:</p>

BARRIERS	SOLUTIONS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reallocate decision-making powers to reflect co-management under UFA • YG needs to inform people of FNs rules & regulations • acknowledge that UFA has more economic impact than mining
<p>Lack of land use planning progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of commitment from Government of Yukon • plan complexity • plan implementation issues • barriers to assessments • policy gaps 	<p>More plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • secure more funding and resources for planning <p>Simplify plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overcomplication of LUPs – should be a regional scale, now are e.g. CEF, reclamation <p>Plan implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • put existing plans into action • LUPs should be easily amendable • keep commissions in place • working groups should support them • establish a united Yukon Commission to implement approved plans • communicate existing plans - print and make them available <p>Moratoriums:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • withdraw lands from staking until planning done <p>First Nations action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FNs should be proactive with their own planning e.g. H.W.W.



IN CLOSING

We would like to acknowledge the financial support of the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board and the Council of Yukon First Nations which enabled the Council to ensure the participation of First Nations Elders at this Gathering. We also appreciate that many representatives were willing and able to pay a registration fee to attend, which helped offset the cost to host this event.



“Some barriers are minor annoyances that slow you down. Other barriers are structural issues, complex challenges, or wicked problems that make it seem impossible to break through.”

“Self-Government is a tool that we use to bring all this together. Self-government is an expression of the will of our community.”



“The spirit and intent of our land claim agreement wasn't captured by the text of the agreements, and so many times the governments are taking the narrowest interpretation of what's in there.”





