



PEEL WATERSHED
PLANNING COMMISSION
 TOGETHER FOR THE PEEL • CHUU TL'TI GEENJIT KHETOK

**Peel Watershed Planning Commission:
 Meeting #7 Minutes**

**June 24-27, 2006
 Goz Lake, Yukon**

In Attendance:	
<u>Peel Watershed Planning Commission</u>	<u>Support Staff</u>
Albert Genier – Chair	Brian Johnston – Senior Planner
Peter Kaye	Richard Vladars – Minutes
Steve Taylor	
Sam Wallingham	
Marvin Frost	
David Loeks	

June 25 & 26

Welcome	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting began at ~9:00 AM at Chris Widrig’s lodge, Goz Lake 	
Agenda Item #1: Review Agenda	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission members reviewed agenda 	

<p>Motion #1: To accept the agenda with changes as outlined. Moved: Sam Wallingham 2nd Dave Loeks All in Favour Passed by Consensus</p>	
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Agenda Item #2: Review of Previous Minutes	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed. <p>Motion #2: To accept the minutes from Meeting #6 February, 2005 as per the revisions agreed upon. Moved: Dave Loeks 2nd Steve Taylor All in Favour Passed by Consensus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agenda item #3 – Albert asked about the role of the Commission in providing guidance for sub-regional planning. He feels it could be a solution for conflicting land uses. Brian agreed, but said it is not the mandate of the Commission to draft the sub-regional plans. Dave said that the Commission should not hand off problems to a new group unnecessarily, but that the regional plan can establish principles for guiding sub-regional plans. Brian added that the Commission can make a recommendation for the creation of sub-regional plans in the regional land use plan. Agenda item 3.2 – Steve said that Robert Charlie mentioned that the PWPC have not yet had a public meeting in Tsiigehtchic. Brian said he or the Commission could make a presentation to the community at the next commission meeting scheduled for Fort McPherson in September. Agenda item #6 – Albert feels that the amount of mineral exploration dollars to be spent in the Peel this summer is underestimated. Sam thinks that \$25 million will be spent in exploration activity. Not \$3-5 million as Al Doherty from the Yukon Chamber of Mines indicated at the last commission meeting. 	<p>Brian to confirm with YLUPC that the regional plan can recommend the need for a sub-regional plan.</p> <p>Brian and Peter to arrange a community meeting in Tsiigehtchic</p> <p>Brian to review notes from Alan Doherty’s presentation to confirm the numbers provided, and follow-up with the Yukon Chamber of Mines to get current estimates for 2005</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda item #7 – Albert asked if Gartner Lee has finished the contract to assess potential mineral scenerios in the Peel. Brian said that the Commission should be receiving it shortly. It will also be posted on the Peel website for public viewing and comments. • Agenda item #9 – Discussion regarding the legal “teeth” of the plan. • Agenda item #10 – Dave asked if YTG provided a response with respect to the Commission’s letter requesting a Yukon Government opinion on the establishment of SMAs within the Peel watershed. Brian said that the Commission has not yet received a response. • Agenda item #12 – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Albert asked if there is an action plan for reducing the amount of time to collect GIS data for the Peel. Brian said that the traditional knowledge data collection phase is progressing well. • Dave asked if an historical literature review of non-scientific documents (memoirs, journals, etc) was being conducted to gather additional data. Brian replied that there were no plans to conduct such a literature review; it could be valuable and can be considered, but would likely require a contractor to do the work, due to limited staff resources. • Albert inquired if the Mackenzie Delta-Beaufort Sea Land Use Plan was being considered in the data collection exercise. Brian said that the spatial data was being digitized and will be completed shortly, providing an additional layer of traditional land use information. <p>Albert also inquired about the acquisition of the Dene Nation data, regarding traditional Gwich’in travel routes. Brian said that he was having difficulty getting cooperation from the Dene Nation and would approach the Gwich’in Tribal Council to request that they formally request the Dene Nation to share the information with the Commission.</p> 	<p>and 2006.</p> <p>Brian to email the report to commission members upon receipt.</p> <p>Brian will formally request the YLUPC to seek a legal opinion regarding the extent to which the plan will have legal “teeth” when implemented.</p> <p>Brian to get permission from GTC to acquire the Dene Nation travel route data.</p>
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Agenda Item #3: Chair’s and Member’s Report	
Discussion	Action Item
<p>3.1 Chairs Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Albert stated that the Mayo RRC has requested a progress report from the Commission. Albert said that he will provide them with the update. <p>3.2 Members Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sam asked if the Commission was going to be able to get a reliable assessment of the mineral potential in the planning region. Brian reminded the Commission members that Gartner Lee had been contracted to put together a report that summarizes the mineral development potential of the region. That report will be submitted to the Commission very shortly. Dave stated that there is a better understanding of oil and gas potential than minerals. Albert said that the Yukon Film Commission was quoted as saying the film industry will be spending a considerable sum of money in the Peel watershed this year. The National Film Board may also be filming in the Yukon. Peter asked if there will be a follow-up to the wildlife/traditional land use workshop conducted in winter 2006. People from the community have been inquiring about the results. Peter said he explained to the community that the staff is very busy and that things take time, but that all information collected will be incorporated into the resource assessment report/land use plan. Sam said a follow-up letter should be sent to the Fort McPherson RRC to keep the community up-to-date. This should also apply to other communities workshops/meetings as well. Marvin stated that he has been focused mostly on the North Yukon plan, as they approach completion of their Resource Assessment Report. Steve said the Tr’ondek Council does not have time to review and comment on the Issues & Interests Report, and that it would be useful for Brian to brief them on the highlights of the report, as well as planning status and Senior Liaison Committee responsibilities. He added that the Council has concerns about: a) First Nation overlap lands within the planning region, and b) planning implications on settlement lands. 	<p>Brian to contact Yukon Film Commission to get estimate on this year’s investment in the Peel.</p> <p>Brian to draft a follow up letter to the RRCs, explaining the status of the work from the workshops.</p> <p>Brian to brief Tr’ondek council and request comments on the Issues & Interests Report. Consider other briefings with the other First Nations.</p>

Agenda Item #4: Director’s Report	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian gave an update on the progress of FN cultural data collection. Still trying to get Gwich’in travel routes from the Dene Nation. Albert said that the NND has a lot of historical hardcopy maps in the basement of their office, but are understaffed or have no qualified staff to review the maps for information that could pertain to land use planning in the Peel. • Communications update – newsletter near completion. Website design concept completed. Need to add content. Need photos of all interests/issues for the website. • Brian attended the Yukon Outfitters Association general assembly on April 5, 2006. There was strong interest from all Peel concession owners. Several of them had already provided wildlife information to Mark O’Donoghue. Brian informed the outfitters that addition interviews would be very helpful, in order to gain an understanding of the land use needs and expectations. Since the meeting, Brian drafted a questionnaire that was circulated to each of the outfitters but it will still require a face-to-face interview with each of them. Chris Widrig will be sitting down with Brian tomorrow. • The transboundary water group held a meeting in Dawson and invited Commission staff to present a status report but no staff was available, so a PowerPoint presentation was provided to them in advance. • The YLUPC hired a short-term communications specialist to assist the planning commissions with newsletters and website development. Richard will make the final revisions to the newsletter and website content. Jeff Hamm, of YLUPC will continue to look after management of the website. 	

Agenda Item #5: Selection of a Commission Chair	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian reminded the Commission that the position of Chair was to be discussed, concluding with a vote to appoint a Chair to the Commission for the remainder of the Commission’s term. • Albert Genier was selected as the chair. 	

Agenda Item #5: Selection of a Commission Chair	
Discussion	Action Item
<p>Motion #3: To appoint Albert Genier as the Chair of the Peel Watershed Planning Commission for the remainder of the Commission’s term. Moved: Sam Wallingham 2nd Marvin Frost All in Favour Passed by Consensus</p>	

Agenda Item #6: An Outfitter’s Perspective/Comments – from host Chris Widrig	
Discussion (Paraphrased)	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris stated that he would like the Peel watershed to remain just as it is: a pristine natural wilderness environment. The world is running out of wilderness areas and there is not enough oil, gas or minerals that can replace the wealth of this natural ecosystem. The Peel watershed is a special area, unlike any other in the world, and it deserves to remain in this state. He would like to see absolutely no development or visual impacts. Large mammals in the North require a vast land base for survival and outfitters need to cover large areas of land in order to hunt. The future success of his outfitting business hinges on no industrial development pressures. The entire concession – intact and healthy – is necessary to maintain the wildlife populations. From an outfitting industry perspective, protection of the wilderness quality is of utmost importance. • Chris indicated that most of wilderness canoeing activity in the Peel takes place on the Snake River, although it is still not to a point of saturation. Many canoeists are flying in from Norman Wells, and the Yukon is not economically benefiting from these people. He said that outfitting and canoeing are compatible land use activities. Wilderness canoeists are extremely conscious of the environment and leave few traces of their presence. Chris explained some mineral exploration companies called to inform him that they will be conducting aerial geophysical surveys in the area, but plan to conduct the work in June and July to minimize conflict with hunting. • Q – Sam: What would your comfort level be with increased industrial development? • A – Chris: It would cause a lot of grief with increased footprints and traffic. There will be more mineral exploration in the future, but if any permanent roads are developed I will sell the business. Land use conflict could be avoided with the mineral exploration sector if there was coordination of activities to ensure avoidance. 	

Agenda Item #6: An Outfitter’s Perspective/Comments – from host Chris Widrig	
Discussion (Paraphrased)	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q – Albert: Do you plan on building more camps or cabins? • A – Chris: No. Possibly some temporary tent frames. • Q – Richard: Are there any footprints from outfitting? • A – Chris: Yes & No. We burn and bury garbage. We use spruce trees for tent frames. We use existing game trails for travel (horse trails). There are two base camps (Goz Lake and Bonnet Plume Lake) and 50 spike camps (though only 10-15 of these camps are used per year). The spike camps consist of just fire pits and tent poles. • Q – Richard: How do you feel about establishing protected areas within the Peel? • A – Chris: I do not want to see any “no hunting corridors” because it would force me to hunt in other areas which ultimately put added hunting pressure on those areas. It would also affect my business economically. I want things to stay as they are. I require access by air and by horse. I’ve been here for 21 years and plan to be here for another 20, and my son may want to carry on the business. In terms of trends over the past 21 years in this concession, wildlife patterns have remained the same, but there is increased canoeing activity, a few more hikers, and less mineral exploration. • The Commission thanked Chris for his hospitality and for providing his perspective to the planning process. 	

Agenda Item #7: Issues and Interests Report - Responses	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian indicated that the Commission has received many letters (approximately 82) from the general public asking that the Peel Watershed be protected from development. These letters – not specifically responding to the Issues & Interests Report – are inspired by the national campaign launched by CPAWS to protect the “Three Rivers” area of the watershed. The Commission has also received letters from other respondents who expressed an interest in mineral development in the Peel. General replies have been drafted and mailed to the respondents. All letters were made available to the Commission members for review. 	

Agenda Item #7: Issues and Interests Report - Responses	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been over a dozen responses to the Issues & Interests Report. Among the approval bodies, Yukon Government submitted a response, but none of the First Nation Governments have responded yet. However, some of the First Nation lands departments have responded to the report. • The sectors that have responded include: conservation/protection, tourism, mineral exploration & development, and outfitting. • In order to maintain momentum with the planning process, the Commission will respond to the stakeholder comments in a general letter, rather than try to respond to individual questions or comments. • Brian informed the Commission that the North Yukon Planning Commission was making good progress in identifying the management tools it would use, including thresholds. He suggested that it might be useful to invite Shawn Francis to explain the thresholds concept and other tools, and how they might apply to the Peel planning region. Albert added that it would be useful to educate Yukoners on the thresholds approach as it pertains to land use planning as it is a concept that is not fully understood by many. • Steve asked if First Nation settlement lands (R-blocks) would be treated differently in the land use plan from other lands within the region. Brian replied that the UFA states that regional land use plans apply to <i>all</i> settlement and non-settlement lands in the planning region. First Nations will be approving the plan, as it applies to their settlement lands, and will be responsible for implementing the plan on their settlement lands. 	<p>Brian to solicit feedback from the First Nation governments to the Issues & Interests Report.</p> <p>Brian to send a letter to stakeholders summarizing comments made in response to the Issues & Interests Report and outlining major themes of concern.</p> <p>Brian to invite Shawn Francis to present management tool concepts to the Commission.</p>

Agenda Item #8: Pembina Study and YTG Response	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian referred Commission members to the two documents under the agenda item: YTG-EMR's letter in response to the Pembina Institute's report, "A Peak into the Future", and the Pembina 	

Agenda Item #8: Pembina Study and YTG Response	
Discussion	Action Item
<p>Institute’s response to the YTG letter. He stated that these documents were information items for the Commission members, as this was a fairly technical debate and that this Discussion was beyond the current stage of the planning process. He expressed confidence that, like the North Yukon Planning Commission, the Peel Watershed Planning Commission will be able to objectively assess oil and gas development scenarios.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dave and Albert asked how YTG defines “best management practices” for the oil and gas and mineral sectors. Brian stated that YTG currently does not have a best management practice policy in place for oil and gas, but that it is in the advanced stages of development. Sam suggested that the Commission research the policies and practices from Alberta and BC, in addition to Yukon’s draft policy. 	<p>Brian to gather examples of “best management practices” policies in the oil & gas and mineral sectors.</p>

Agenda Item #9: Objectives of the Plan	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian explained that this agenda item was intended to give the Commission a chance to review and explore the objectives of the plan, and their expectations with respect to the planning process and the content of the plan. He reviewed the goals & objectives that are identified in the UFA and in the precise terms of reference (PTOR). He stated that it was his conclusion that the Commission cannot possibly achieve the goals and objectives of the plan within the time lines that have been given. The Commission is making good progress but the three-year time line was not realistic when considering: a) the complexity of the planning region, with respect to land use interests and the number of stakeholders, b) reliance on technical assistance from Yukon Government and First Nations, and c) extended response times from YTG and First Nations. Even under ideal circumstances, with support and consensus from the approval bodies and stakeholders, it is very unlikely that the draft plan can be completed on schedule. • Brian stated that the more work that is done “up front” in the preparation of a plan will result in a better quality plan, greater confidence in the recommendations, and greater buy-in from the approval bodies and stakeholders. • Brian reminded the Commission that taking short-cuts in order to try to meet the deadline would 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brian to draft a letter to YTG requesting more time and money to achieve the mandate. - Brian to request use of M. Kechika vision statement or to borrow some key phrases from the statement. - Circulate vision statement to commission and Peel planning staff for comment

Agenda Item #9: Objectives of the Plan	
Discussion	Action Item
<p>mean that significant tasks would have to be deferred to the implementation and review stage. Currently there is no certainty about how the implementation and review stage will be conducted, nor has there been a commitment from the funding source for the necessary resources to fulfill the deferred tasks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian stated that, in addition to the goals identified in the UFA & PTOR, the Commission may also have some specific objectives, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing certainty to stakeholders, • identifying SMAs and recommending appropriate levels of protection, • contributing a tool to the environmental assessment process, • addressing the land disposition process, • addressing the goal of sustainable development, • considering and addressing cumulative effects, • considering the costs, • identifying the benefits and trade-offs of land use designations, and • considering and addressing potential land use conflicts. <p>If these objectives are desirable, then there are a variety of tasks that may need to be completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • biophysical base map • data collection & analysis • habitat suitability mapping • species modeling • ALCES modeling and scenario-building • thresholds and measurable targets • prescriptive direction • non-prescriptive direction • land use designation system <p>All Commission members expressed a desire to fulfill the UFA/PTOR goals, as well as pursuing the above objectives and approaches. Dave added that an additional approach that needs to be considered is</p>	

Agenda Item #9: Objectives of the Plan	
Discussion	Action Item
<p>“outcome-based designations” where the plan would clearly define the results you would like to see, with respect to land management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Albert stressed that the time lines for completing the plan are optimistic and that more time is needed to properly complete the plan. We do not want to release a land use plan that is substandard. • Brian presented a series of five tables that depicted various planning options, along a spectrum of detail: from a “Timeline or Bust” scenario to a “Full Package” scenario. Brian noted that even these scenarios have optimistic timelines, and that completion dates would likely extend beyond the dates in the tables. • Brian stated that the middle scenario – the “Compromise” scenario – would likely be the scenario with the shortest timeline while still achieving the goals, objectives and tasks stated above. Some tasks would still be deferred to the implementation stage, but the plan would be thorough enough to provide strong guidance for implementation. The “Compromise” scenario had a estimated completion date of June 2008. • It was suggested that the Commission should draft a letter to the approval bodies requesting an extension to the planning timeline. • Dave suggested that it might be an appropriate time in the process for the Commission to develop a vision statement that communicates the Commission’s broad vision for the management direction of the region, based on the input of the public consultations and the feedback from the Issues & Interests Report. All members were in agreement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian referred the members to “General Management Direction for the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area” that was included in their meeting binder as a reference point for discussion. • A vision statement was drafted by the Commission members. Commission members requested that formal endorsement of the statement be postponed until they had a chance 	<p>Brian to adjust the timeline scenarios as needed, and circulate it to commission members.</p> <p>Brian to draft a letter to the approval bodies requesting an extension to the timeline and review of the budget for the planning process.</p>

Agenda Item #9: Objectives of the Plan	
Discussion	Action Item
<p>to review it independently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commission directed Brian to finalize the draft wording and email it to the members for review. Members agreed that there may be a need to hold a teleconference to formally endorse the statement once there is consensus, so that it can be released to the public. • Brian noted that the vision statement should not be finalized until the Commission has given First Nation governments a final opportunity to respond to the Issues & Interests Report. The Commission agreed. 	<p>Brian to circulate the draft vision statement and organize a teleconference to discuss and endorse a vision statement (after seeking comment from First Nation governments on the Issues & Interests Report).</p>

Agenda Item #10 MOU between YLUPC and PWPC	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian referred the Commission to the 2006-2007 MOU between YLUPC and the Commission. He reminded members that the MOU is an agreement between the commissions and the YLUPC with respect to the administration and operation of the commissions. He stated that nothing had changed from the previous year’s MOU, but that a motion was required to ratify the MOU. • Albert suggested that the North Yukon and Peel commissions meet to discuss issues pertaining to both planning commissions/regions. <p>Motion #4: To approve the 2006-07 MOU between Yukon Land Use Planning Council and the Peel Watershed Planning Commission.</p> <p>Moved: Sam Wallingham 2nd Marvin Frost All in favour Passed by consensus</p>	<p>Brian to provide signed MOU to YLUPC.</p>

Agenda Item #11: Data Collection Update	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian reviewed the status of data collection for the Resource Assessment Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only new data being gathered by the Commission are the result of the local knowledge interviews/workshops with elders and outfitters. These interviews focus on wildlife information and land use patterns. • Workshops were held in Dawson City and Fort McPherson. They were jointly organized with the Tr’ondek Heritage Department and the Gwich’in Land Use Planning Board, respectively. • Mark O’Donoghue, the YTG Regional Biologist in Mayo, has conducted interviews with NND elders and with outfitters, gathering wildlife information about the Peel watershed. • Other data have already been gathered by First Nation organizations (Tr’ondek, NND, Gwich’in Social & Cultural Institute and Yukon Government departments (Environment, Oil/Gas Branch, Yukon Geological Survey, and Tourism & Culture). The Canadian Wildlife Service has developed strong Porcupine caribou data as well. • The Commission contracted third parties to conduct some of the data collection (fisheries information and mineral development potential). • The Commission and YLUPC hired a summer GIS specialist to assist with the development of the biophysical map. He is working in cooperation with Yukon-Environment. 	

Agenda Item #12: Senior Liaison Committee Meeting	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brian remarked that it was suggested at the last commission meeting that a Senior Liaison Committee (SLC) meeting should be held soon, to introduce the senior managers of the approval bodies to the planning process and update them on progress. Albert mentioned that perhaps the SLC could schedule the meeting in Whitehorse to coincide with one of the monthly CYFN leadership meetings. 	<p>Brian to phone and send a letter to the First Nation chiefs, reminding them to appoint a representative for the SLC.</p> <p>Brian to initiate a meeting of the SLC in the fall.</p>

Agenda Item #13: Hunt Oil application to YESAB for Turner Lakes	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brian referred Commission members to the YESAB documents in the meeting binder, regarding the Hunt Oil application for 3D seismic exploration in the Turner Lakes. He also referred to the letter that was submitted by the Commission, in response to the application. Some commission members expressed concern that it may not be the mandate of the commission to comment on development applications, especially prior to the drafting of a plan. The Commission recommended that Brian seek guidance from the YLUPC with respect to the role of the Commission in responding to YESAB applications. Sam requested that Brian acquire a schematic diagram that explains the environmental assessment process and circulate it to the Commission. 	<p>Brian to seek advice from the YLUPC with respect to the role of the Commission in commenting on YESAB applications.</p> <p>Brian to send Commission members an explanation of the environmental assessment process.</p>

Agenda Item #14: Correspondence	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the meeting, Brian circulated all of the letters received from the public, expressing their concerns about the planning region. From the CPAWS campaign, the Commission received 82 	

Agenda Item #14: Correspondence	
Discussion	Action Item
letters from Canadians. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian reviewed the incoming and outgoing correspondence with the Commission members. 	

Agenda Item #15: Financial Update	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian reviewed the budget variance report with the Commission. The Commission has under-spent in all areas to date. 	

Agenda Item #16: Next Steps	
Discussion	Action Item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next meeting is scheduled to take place in Fort McPherson between the 10th and 20th of September, 2006. 	

Meeting adjourned at 7 pm on June 26, 2006		
Motion: To adjourn the meeting.		
Moved: Albert Genier 2nd Marvin Frost All in favour Passed by consensus		
_____	_____	_____
Chair	Senior Planner	Date