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North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan Approved

OLD CROW – Yukon Premier Dennis Fentie and Vuntut Gwitchin Chief Joe Linklater today marked a milestone in land claims implementation with approval of the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan. Signed at a community ceremony in Old Crow, the plan fulfills the commitment to regional land use planning in the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Final Agreement.

“Completion of the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan is a significant achievement in intergovernmental cooperation with Yukon First Nations, regional planning and implementation of Yukon’s land claims,” Fentie said. “The Government of Yukon is pleased to have worked in partnership with the Vuntut Gwitchin Government and the First Nation of Nacho N’yak Dun on this important plan.”

The North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan will guide the Government of Yukon and the Vuntut Gwitchin Government in managing their lands and resources in a cooperative manner to ensure sustainable development and sound environmental stewardship, while minimizing land use conflicts.

“Our Vuntut Gwitchin Government and citizens are very pleased to have received and approved the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan,” Linklater said. “We thank the Planning Commission for their excellent work and we appreciate the constructive inter-governmental work with the Yukon government.”

Highlights of the plan include:

- Recognition and approval of 23 land management and sub-management units.
- Creation of a zoning system based on intensity of use rather than type of use.
- Immediate implementation of the zoning recommendation concerning the areas affected by the lifting of the North Yukon land withdrawal.
- Agreement to use surface disturbance and linear density indicators to track and guide the adaptive management of new development activities.
- Establishment of a Whitefish wetland protected area, and a study area for the proposed Summit Lake – Bell River protected area and related land withdrawals.
- Agreement to develop a protocol enabling either government to initiate a review and amendment of the plan.
- Commitment to track existing access from the Dempster Highway to monitor possible wildlife and habitat impacts.

“Having achieved the special management arrangements for the Old Crow Flats, this plan represents the completion of our government’s land management framework for North Yukon,” Linklater added.

Work on the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan was led by the North Yukon Planning Commission (NYPC). The NYPC developed a series of plans that incorporated local, scientific and traditional knowledge during a process of consultations with community members and stakeholders.

“This comprehensive and balanced land use plan will guide responsible resource management for years to come,” Energy, Mines and Resources Minister Brad Cathers said. “We appreciate the hard work by the North Yukon Planning Commission, their staff and the staff of the Yukon government and First Nations that went into its development.”

For more information on the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan visit www.gov.yk.ca or www.vgfn.ca.

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