



FOR RELEASE #09-197
August 28, 2009

Management Plan for Tombstone Territorial Park Adopted

DAWSON CITY – Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation Chief Eddie Taylor and Environment Minister Elaine Taylor today signed the Tombstone Territorial Park Management Plan. The plan will protect the natural and cultural values of the area for all time. It also recognizes the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in's traditional and ongoing use in developing and managing the park.

"This management plan supports the government's ongoing commitment to honour and implement land claims final agreements and enhance the quality of Yukon's natural environment for present and future generations," Minister Taylor said. "We are proud of this plan that serves as a model for working together to establish, protect and manage special areas."

"The collaborative and cooperative efforts by the two governments to formalize the plan will provide certainty and direction for protecting the natural, cultural and recreational values of the park and provide new employment and economic opportunities for Tr'ondëk citizens," Premier Dennis Fentie said.

Chief Taylor noted that Tombstone Territorial Park, which resulted from the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement, has significant cultural, heritage and wildlife values for the First Nation.

"My people have been and always will be stewards of this area," Chief Taylor said. "We have a spiritual connection to this land and we still use this area every day for hunting, gathering plants and traditional pursuits."

The plan also outlines how the First Nation can benefit from the economic and employment opportunities arising from the operation and management of the park, including training and employment programs, trail construction and tourism-related activities associated with wilderness tourism.

"The management plan encourages public awareness, appreciation and enjoyment of the park in a manner that ensures it is protected for Yukoners and visitors alike," Klondike MLA Steve Nordick said.

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Yukon government will appoint a four-person management committee to provide advice on the implementation and monitoring of this plan. The plan will be publicly reviewed in 2012 and at least every 10 years thereafter.

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