

Who are we?

The Peel Watershed Planning Commission (PWPC) is an independent public commission created by Chapter 11 of the UFA with members that are jointly nominated by the Parties for a period of five years. The PWPC was formed in fall of 2004.



Planning Team: (L-R) Nadele Flynn (Land Use Planner), Reg C. Whiten, MCIP (Senior Planner), Sam Skinner (Land Use Planner) and Heidi Faulds (Administrator)



Peel Watershed Planning Commission
(L-R) Marvin Frost, Steve Taylor, Dave Loeks, Peter Kaye, Albert Genier (Chair) and Ray Hayes

What's next?

The Recommended Regional Land Use Plan will be reviewed by the Parties starting in December, 2009. Discussions between the Parties, and additional public consultations will be undertaken under the coordination by planning section of the Yukon

Energy and Mineral Resources (Corporate Planning Branch). When complete, this review will result in a decision to accept, reject or modify with a consolidated written response for the Commission to consider in drafting a Final Recommended Plan.

Want to learn more?

Learn more about other Commission outputs released during the past year, including the Conservation Priorities Assessment Report (CPAR), Resource Assessment Report (RAR), Scenario Methodology Report (SMR), Scenario Options Report (SOR), and the Draft Regional Land Use Plan (DRLUP)

- Keep updated on the Peel Watershed Planning Commission's website
- Provide comments directed to attention of the PWPC via email: info@planyukon.ca or mail us a letter to the address below

During the period of Recommended Plan Review, the PWPC will not be maintaining an office, however enquiries will be handled by the Yukon Land Use Planning Council.

Download the full Plan at: www.peel.planyukon.ca/downloads/RLUP.html
<http://www.peel.planyukon.ca/downloads/downpldo.html>



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Highlights of the Recommended Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan

This document provides highlights of the Recommended Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan (PWRLUP). Effort has been to develop a Plan with clear recommendations for the **Plan Parties** to consider according to the Peel Watershed Planning Commission's Terms of Reference and its foundation documents. While guided by

Chapter 11 in the Umbrella Final Agreement on Land Use Planning, the Plan considers the inter-relationships of other key Chapters affecting the lands, water, heritage, fish and wildlife contained within this unique region of the Yukon., interjurisdictional responsibilities under the Gwichin Comprehensive Land Claim and other agreements.



Goz Lake (Photo: Jimmy Johnny)

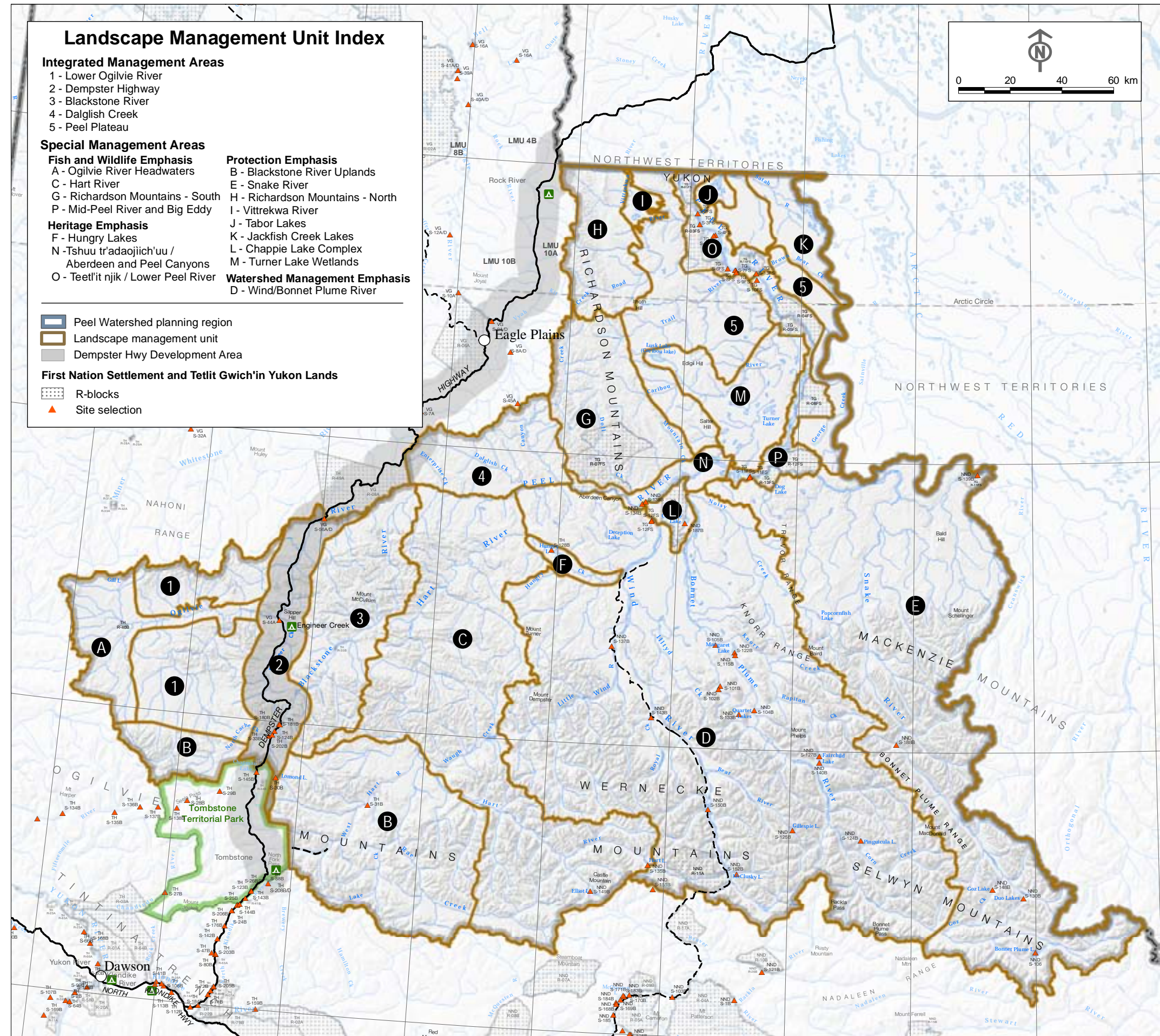
About the Peel Watershed

The Peel watershed is a vast unpopulated area in northeastern Yukon highly valued for wilderness recreation, big game outfitting, mineral and oil and gas potential, tourism, and ecological integrity. It also has significant cultural, heritage, and economic value for the three Yukon First Nations with overlapping traditional territories including: the Na-cho Nyak Dun, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Vun-

tut Gwich'in. Also overlapping the PWPR are the primary and secondary use areas of the Teetl'it Gwich'in. The social, economic and environmental values - together with very few roads and little industrial development in the region - make this area unique at territorial, national, and even global level.

Findings of the Plan

- Affected First Nations have stated clearly that their resource-use interests and rights depend upon intact regional ecosystems and landscapes that a conservative and precautionary approach is necessary to sustain current uses while maintaining future resource-use options for their citizens;
- Year round monitoring of water quality and flows is a dominant management consideration and winter flows are a major limiting factor likely to affect certain forms of industrial development in the planning region;
- Large segments of the Yukon public have identified values and interests that are congruent with those of the affected First Nations, namely that ecosystem integrity and intact landscapes are the priority land-use management consideration in the planning region;
- While aerial access to mineral claims may have generally been a manageable land-use activity, predominant Yukon public opinion indicates that surface access is likely to undermine the region's wilderness character outside of the immediate Dempster Highway Corridor; this wilderness character is considered to most renewable resource-use sectors in the planning region;
- Current practices of consultation and site-level management for oil and gas development are considered adequate. However the cumulative effects and their implications of this sector is not yet understood by affected First Nations in the Tetlit Gwich'in Primary Use area;
- The Plan cannot be viewed as a template for other future Yukon regional land-use planning processes. Its provisions result from the region's unique biophysical and socio-economic features and values.
- The mechanisms provided in the UFA for evaluating conformity with the Plan (under Chapters 11 and 12) require that a Peel Regional Planning Commission is consulted to consider any Plan amendments and variances as part of YESAB's project review process;
- Cumulative environmental and socio-economic effects are neither well understood nor evaluated in the current practice of project assessment in the Yukon;
- Existing surface access routes, including off-trail ATV use are impacting caribou populations. Existing voluntary conservation measures are not sufficient to sustain these herds.
- Some resource conflicts are intractable and cannot be solved by on-site, management techniques.



Summary Statistics

Here we provide summary statistics of land ownership and recommended land-use designations. The Land Use Plan Map shows location of these designations by LMU. Unless stated otherwise all percentages are the total area of the region.



Road River perched wetlands
Photo: J. Meikle

Land-use designation by key zone (%)

SMA - Heritage	(2.1%)
SMA - Watershed	(27.7%)
SMA - Gen Protection	(31.2%)
SMA - Fish & Wildlife	(19.6%)
IMA	(19.4%)

Ownership of land by class (%)

Settlement	(0.4%)
Fee-simple	(2.3%)
Non-settlement	(97.3%)

Plan Highlights and Key Recommendations

- The Plan divides the region into 21 major landscape management sub-units
- LMU's designated as either Special Management Areas with one of four emphases (Heritage, Fish & Wildlife, Watershed Management or General Protection); or as an Integrated Management Area
- Primary regulatory tools were selected to achieve Plan goals, objectives and desired future state for each respective SMA
- All SMA's (covering 80.6 % of the region) are proposed to be withdrawn from staking; however existing oil and gas and mineral tenures will be maintained as a conforming use subject to key management conditions
- New surface access is a prohibited use in SMA's but may be permitted in IMA's subject to management conditions requiring enhanced consultation with affected First Nations and protection of key wildlife values
- New access will be strictly controlled and restored when no longer used for initial industrial access purpose
- A Sub Regional Plan should be developed for the Dempster Highway Corridor
- The Wind River Trail should no longer be classified as a designated access corridor
- A comprehensive Water Management Plan should be developed for the planning region

About the Plan

The Recommended Peel Regional Watershed Land Use Plan was produced by the Peel Watershed Planning Commission (PWPC) as part of the implementation of Chapter 11 of the Final Agreements for Nacho Nyak Dun, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nations. The Recommended Plan will help ensure wilderness characteristics, wildlife and their habitat, cultural resources, and waters are maintained over time while managing resource use. *A cornerstone of the Plan is the UFA-based definition of Sustainable Development which emphasizes that renewable and non-renewable land-uses should be accommodated only if consistent with sustaining ecosystems and social systems.*



Snake River

Management Goals for the Plan

The General Terms of Reference (GTOR) guided the Commission in developing the Plan for settlement land, non-settlement Land and Tetlit Gwich'in Yukon land.

The PWPC outlined three over-arching management goals for the Peel Watershed Planning Region, based on the GTOR and the Commission's Statement of Intent:

- Enable stewardship of Peel region ecosystems including aquatic, fish, wildlife, plant and terrain resources.
- Provide for the social well-being of affected First Nations, and other Yukoners through consideration of heritage, culture, employment and quality-of-life objectives.
- Realize sustainable development opportunities while maintaining traditional First Nation livelihoods



Commission's Statement of Intent

The goal of the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan is to ensure wilderness characteristics, wildlife and their habitats, cultural resources, and waters are maintained over time while managing resource use. These uses include, but are not limited to, traditional use, trapping, recreation, outfit-

ting, wilderness tourism, subsistence harvesting, and the exploration and development of non-renewable resources. Achieving this goal requires managing development at a pace and scale that maintains ecological integrity. The long-term objective is to return all lands to their natural state.

The Four Legs of the Recommended Plan

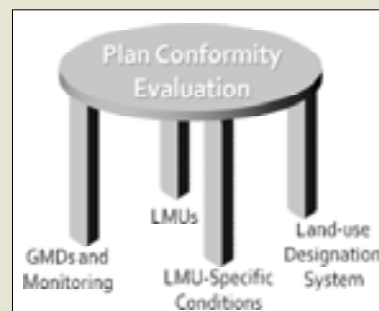
One can think about the Peel Land Use Plan like a Kitchen Table - with key Plan recommendations resting on four legs that serve as the foundation to achieve desired goals.

Land Management Units: the areas of interest defined for land management (landscapes to manage land)

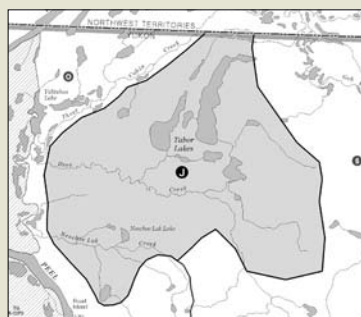
General Management Directions & Monitoring : the key strategies for achieved land management goals and objectives (how to manage the land)

Land Use Designation System: the various types of zoning for land-use with allowable or prohibited land uses, and the recommended regulatory designation

LMU Specific Conditions: management conditions that must be followed to achieve land-use objectives when new uses are proposed



Tool 1: Landscape Management Units



The Plan divides the region into 13 landscape management units and 21 sub-units. Each sub-unit is assigned to a land use management zone (see Map), and in turn to a set of indicators and allowable or required actions. Some sub-units have additional special management considerations. Some sub-units allow a certain amount of development, while others do not allow any.

Tool 2: General Management Direction & Monitoring

General Management Directions (GMD) frame the seven over-arching management goals for the region into objectives, strategies, best management practices and recommendations. GMDs form the foundation for guiding both commercial and non-commercial land-use activities in the region. The figure below shows how Goals, Objectives and Strategies are connected. An example is shown using Goal 2 - Aquatic Resources. Many more objectives and strategies are detailed in the full draft plan.

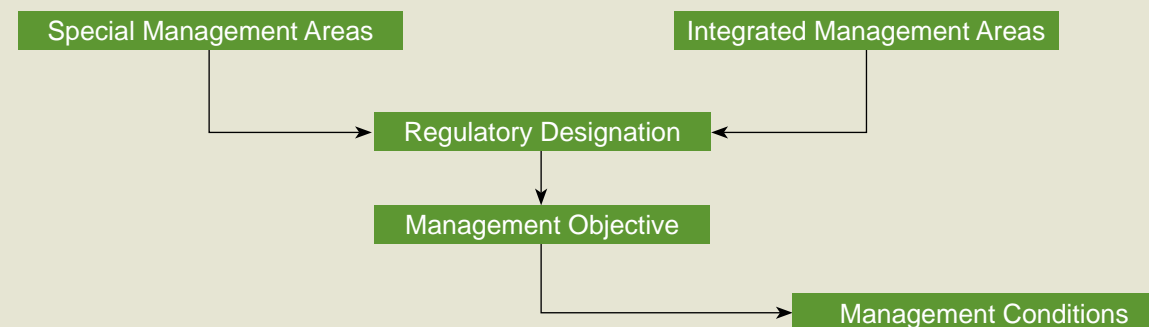
COMPONENT	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
GOAL	Broad statement of desirable land-term condition	Provide for the management, protection and use of water and related ecosystems and the species they support for the future.
OBJECTIVE	Desired specific condition that contributes to achieving the goal	Maintain wetland and riparian integrity and connectivity.
STRATEGY	Specific approaches and actions needed to achieve	Reduce surface and vegetation impacts in riparian areas
	Recommendations Best Management Practices	
INDICATOR	Measurable signal used to assess if GOALS and OBJECTIVES are being met	Linear (access) density (km/km ² landscape unit)
INDICATOR LEVEL	Concise statement about desired status of INDICATOR	Less than a specified amount of linear (access) density (km/km ² landscape unit)

Tool 3: Land-use Designation System

A Land-use Designation System is used to guide the management of land use activities within a certain area. It provides the broadest level of guidance for land and resource decision-making.

A land-use designation system consists of different landscape categories or zones that describe the over-arching management intent for an area (see

Tool 4 Landscape Management Units). The types of zones, the primary recommended regulatory designation, the desired future state, required management conditions and some required or allowable actions are described in the table below. In addition, different indicators, often with different critical levels, are assigned to each designation.



What is Plan Conformity?

Once a Plan is formally approved, it becomes a guide to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board (YESAB) in reviewing new projects (UFA 12.17.0), and for other regulatory agencies of the Parties considering new land-use proposals. Checking whether a land-use activity fits with the Plan (allowable or prohibited) is another word for Plan Conformity.

What is an Allowable vs. Prohibited Use?

- Allowable:** this plan allows this land use, subject to GMDs, LMU-specific conditions and the laws of general application (i.e. existing or new regulations)
- Prohibited:** this plan does not allow this land-use. A plan amendment may alter this prohibition.

Tool 4: LMU Specific Conditions

Management conditions can be thought of as rules that the Commission considers essential for guiding land uses in the planning region. This leg of the land-use planning framework is critical for maintaining underlying ecosystem values that are consistent with the Commission's view on sustainable development. They cover a range of important topics that strive to address key resource management issues and prevent potential problems from occurring



(L-R): Vuntut Gwich'in First Nation Chief Joe Linklater, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Chief Eddie Taylor, Gerald Isaac - YLUPC First Nations Liaison, Reg Whiten - PWPC Senior Planner, Na-Cho Nyak Dun Vice Chief Sharon Peter, Gwich'in Tribal Council President Richard Nerysoo and Grand Chief Andy Carvill
Photo: YLUPC