



June 30, 2009

Peel Watershed Planning Commission  
Suite #201-307 Jarvis Street  
Whitehorse, YT  
Y1A 2H3

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: OFFICIAL POSITION/COMMENT FROM TIA YUKON

We, the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon (TIA Yukon), would like to state our position on the Peel Watershed Plan. First and foremost, our association believes that we need a prosperous mining industry in Yukon. Our members rely on the business and the infrastructure that both mining and tourism bring to run viable, sustainable businesses. We recognize the financial contribution that mining makes to our members, the communities and the territory as a whole.

That being said, TIA Yukon's official position is to call for the protection of the Three Rivers Area of the Peel River Watershed – specifically, the Wind, the Snake and the Bonnet Plume Rivers and the corridors in between. This accounts for approximately 6% of the total Yukon land mass and 40% of the Peel River Watershed.

The most recent scenario (scenario #3) suggests 50% protection of the Peel Watershed with the rights for current claims holders (approximately 12,000) to continue to develop, including full exploration, winter road development and unlimited air and river access. In addition, the plan states that should a deposit be deemed substantial enough to warrant advanced development, including the creation of a mine, all protection is off – full access will be afforded including permanent roads, landing strips, and buildings wherever necessary. In TIA Yukon's view – this is not protection; it is partial protection until "something better comes along".

Should the protection we are requesting for the Three Rivers Area be afforded, the total protected land mass of the Yukon would still remain less than 20%. The State of Alaska, which is an example of thriving mining and tourism industries, currently protects 40% of their land mass. In addition, our neighbouring territory, NWT, has recently experienced significant growth in mining and protects well over 20% of their land mass with another 16.5% being planned for a total of 36.5%. It is not unreasonable to request a further 6% protection of the Three Rivers Area to bring Yukon's total land mass protection to 18%.

It is our understanding that other groups such as the three First Nations of Vuntut Gwichin, Nacho Nyak Dun and Trondek Hwechin, are in favour of protection of this area – these views have not been reflected in the current plan.

The fact is that a massive area of the Yukon land mass that is rich in mineral deposits would still be available for resource extraction. The Three Rivers Area of the Peel Watershed is the jewel of the Yukon. It is fundamental to our tourism brand of pristine wilderness. It is recognized world wide and is home to one of the largest intact boreal forests on the planet. It seems unreasonable that this small area not be protected including ensuring the footprint and impact of other industries, including tourism, be managed.

This approach is the balance that TIA Yukon believes that Yukoners are looking for, one that supports and affords certainty for the mining and tourism industries as well as protects those assets most valuable to Yukoners quality of life.

Sandy Hachey  
Executive Director