

Stewardship • Knowledge • Trust • Excellence



Strategic Plan





▲ SUMMIT LAKE COVER L TO R: BOREAL OWL; INTERPRETERS AT TOMBSTONE INTERPRETIVE CENTRE; FISHERIES BIOLOGIST OLIVER BARKER AT CONSERVATION ACTION TEAM

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Our Vision

Environment Yukon is a recognized leader and a trusted partner in environmental stewardship. Our actions support a healthy, sustainable and prosperous Yukon now and into the future.



Message from the Minister

Yukon's environment and wildlife are deeply important to the lives and cultures of the people of Yukon. This strategic plan for Environment Yukon outlines the Yukon government's commitment and vision to protect and sustain those important features. This is critically important in light of the many challenges we face in a rapidly changing world. The suite of goals, objectives, and strategies presented in this strategic plan anticipate those challenges and will guide Environment Yukon forward over the next five years.

Environment Yukon takes a leading role in regulating and enforcing safe standards for air, water, and soil, in managing human impacts on fish and wildlife, in providing quality outdoor recreation opportunities in our parks and campgrounds, in addressing the challenge of global climate change, and in actively implementing the provisions of First Nation Final Agreements.

We will continue to work closely with First Nations, federal and municipal governments, and other partners to ensure efficient and effective approaches.

Through the collective efforts of Environment Yukon and our partners in implementing this strategic plan, I am confident that we will succeed in protecting our environment and sustaining healthy fish and wildlife populations which will provide benefits for all Yukoners.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Currie Dixon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C".

Honourable Currie Dixon





PRIMROSE LAKE



Message from the Deputy Minister

Environment Yukon plays a vital role in protecting our environment and enabling the sustainable use of our renewable resources. This is a large task, and we need the cooperation and help of many others who share a role in caring for our environment.

We foresee Environment Yukon as a recognized leader and a trusted partner in environmental stewardship. To achieve this vision, the department will work to foster informed, inclusive decision making, generate and share knowledge, and guide others to act responsibly and respectfully in their interactions with the environment.

The department has a tradition of developing scientific knowledge and establishing standards of care and service that have sustained Yukon's ecosystems. This reputation is widely acknowledged and the achievements of the past are a solid foundation from which we embark on our strategic plan. This plan, together with a risk management approach, will help us refine and focus our energies to meet future challenges, grounded in our shared values.

Environment Yukon staff demonstrate professionalism and commitment in their work, and achieve a high degree of effectiveness. With the introduction of performance measures, we will work toward continuous improvements in our management programs. I am proud of how the people in Environment Yukon have delivered on our mandate in the past. Staff have been fully engaged in developing this plan and I trust that it will guide us to serve the public interest, providing environmental stewardship into the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelvin Leary". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names being more prominent.

Kelvin Leary

Our Mission

We foster informed, inclusive decision making, generate and share knowledge, and guide others to act responsibly and respectfully in their interactions with the environment. We strive to safeguard Yukon's ecosystems.



▲ TR'ONDĚK HWĚCH'IN INTERPRETER ASSISTANT
DARREN BULLEN AT TOMBSTONE INTERPRETIVE CENTRE

Healthy communities thrive in a healthy environment. Our quality of life is enriched by clean air, water, soils and wild life. Our natural environment nourishes our body and spirit and provides an array of economic and recreational opportunities.

Our vision is for Environment Yukon to act in the public interest as a leader, demonstrating exceptional stewardship through our actions. We must be an effective, trusted partner with the many governments and organizations who share our responsibility to protect and maintain the natural environment.

Our mission emphasizes how we will safeguard Yukon's ecosystems and become a trusted partner to achieve the vision of a healthy, sustainable and prosperous Yukon.

We develop knowledge in many ways, including investigation, inventory, monitoring and research. We leverage that knowledge by sharing it widely, embracing new communication tools and networks to educate and motivate others, and to support decisions. These decisions impact conservation, development, assessment and

program delivery as well as policy, recruitment, communications and fiscal responsibility. They are consistently inclusive and knowledge-based.

We guide others by demonstrating our commitment to environmental protection, renewal and sustainability. This commitment is evident through fair enforcement and education that inspires others.



PORCUPINE CARIBOU AT HERSHEL ISLAND

Our Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Environmental Stewardship

Yukon's natural environment is protected, maintained and enhanced, and it is secured for the sustainable use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Goal 2: Decisions Informed by Shared Knowledge

Valid, relevant knowledge is the foundation for decisions, policies and actions that define responsible use of Yukon's environment.

Goal 3: Strong and Trusted Partnerships

Stewardship of the environment is improved through strong, effective partnerships.

Goal 4: Organizational Excellence

Exceptional public service is delivered through effective business practices, by proficient and engaged staff.



▲ TOP YOUTH PROGRAMS COORDINATOR MORRIS LAMROCK AND PARK INTERPRETER OLIVIA MASTERS AT THE ENVIRONMENT FAIR BOTTOM CONSERVATION OFFICER LARRY BILL

Our Values

We conduct ourselves professionally and with integrity.

We cooperate and collaborate with others to achieve best outcomes.

We are committed to making a difference and take pride in our contributions.

We are stewards of the environment and act in the public interest.





▲ MINISTER DIXON SPEAKS AT THE YUKON NORTH SLOPE CONFERENCE

Strategic Context

Environment Yukon provides leadership on behalf of the Yukon government in many areas, including the planning and management of fish and wildlife, protected areas, water resources, environmental standards, enforcement, animal health, climate change planning, and assessing and remediating government-owned contaminated sites.

The department works with a wide range of partners, such as boards and councils, First Nation governments, agencies across Canada, the State of Alaska, industry, non-governmental organizations and others.

Environment Yukon operates within the wider context of social, economic, technological, health and environmental factors that can have a bearing on planning and management initiatives.

Social Influences

Growth of Whitehorse's population, declining populations in communities, a general shift from traditional consumptive outdoors activities (hunting/fishing) to non-consumptive uses (wildlife appreciation, canoeing, birding, etc.) and changing demographics shape how the department plans. For example, Environment Yukon will need

to actively recruit and train new staff as we replace retiring workers.

As First Nation governments evolve, a greater focus on government-to-government relationships and partnerships can be anticipated. Cooperation among governments at all levels will be needed to enable cost-efficient and streamlined services for the public, consistency in resource management decisions, and clarity of responsibilities. Citizens will expect continuous improvement in services, meaningful engagement in public planning processes, as well as transparency by government in its decisions and activities.

Economic Influences

Energy is a key economic factor influencing our planning focus. With new mines expected to come on stream over the next decade, it may be a challenge to meet their demands for power while limiting greenhouse gas emissions and sustainably managing water and aquatic resources. There may be additional pressure on Yukon's water resources arising from industrial uses. Economic development – however it takes place – could have implications for the environment.

Managing Risk

Building on the department's risk management plan, we have a systematic approach for identifying, assessing and mitigating risks that could affect the environment and our capacity to manage. New risk management practices are being integrated into processes for setting priorities, allocating resources and making decisions about environmental protection and sustainable resource management.

Environmental Influences

Yukon's natural values inherently influence how Environment Yukon plans for the future. A growing focus on Yukon's wilderness and biodiversity values can be anticipated, and the world-wide reduction in natural habitats may result in more attention to the north and the value that northern natural environments have. At the same time, citizens' awareness of the importance of nature to their quality of life will continue to grow. The public will continue to have access to more advanced equipment for accessing the back country, with growing potential for increased conflict between users, including industry. Yukon's average temperature has risen approximately 2.0°C since 1948 while Canada's average temperature rose 1.3°C. This trend toward higher year-round temperatures is expected to continue in Yukon and to impact Yukon's natural environment and its social, cultural and economic assets (e.g. permafrost thaw, infrastructure damage, changes in habitat ranges, invasive species, animal and human diseases). All sectors will be challenged to understand the impacts, find ways to enhance resilience, and adapt.

Health Influences

The globally emerging concept of 'One Health' – the interrelationship between human, animal and ecosystem health, sets the context for Environment Yukon planning. Knowledge of ecosystem health helps predict emerging threats to human health such as influenza or hantavirus. Awareness about subtle, chronic and long term health issues and their connection to environmental stresses and contaminants may motivate citizens to support policies that promote a clean environment. Ideas like the '100 mile diet' and sustainable harvesting will continue to resonate given increasing concerns over food security. Understanding how demographic changes might influence access to natural food sources, local farming and other opportunities may be a challenge.

In summary, the department is operating in an environment of continual change. The interplay of social, economic, technological and environmental implications will need to be carefully considered in the department's planning and management activities.

Goals, Objectives & Performance Measures

This section presents our strategic goals, objectives and key performance measures. Measuring performance improves accountability and transparency, and enables continuous improvement. A number of key measures are identified for each goal. Additional specific measures are also identified in the Department's Branch Plans. The performance measures will be tested and improved on an ongoing basis.



▲ DISTRICT CONSERVATION OFFICER
DEAN MCLEAN ON PATROL

Goal 1: Environmental Stewardship

Yukon's natural environment is protected, maintained and enhanced, and it is secured for the sustainable use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

TO ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL WE WILL:

- 1.1 Lead the development of Yukon's environmental legislation, regulation, policies, and plans through open and meaningful participation;
- 1.2 Advance the sustainable management of Yukon's environmental resources;
- 1.3 Provide opportunities for the sustainable use of Yukon's environment;
- 1.4 Encourage compliance, and enforce laws and regulations; and
- 1.5 Lead the Yukon government's program to address climate change.

Performance Measures for Goal 1	Examples
Effective processes are in place for maintaining legislative, regulatory and policy tools.	A collaborative Wildlife Regulation process with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board demonstrates an effective approach.
The number and percent of management plans in place is maintained or increased.	This is measured against the standards set in legislation, regulations, policy, or Final Agreements.
Progress on identifying, quantifying and remediating Yukon government environmental liabilities.	The number of Yukon government properties for which environmental liability has been estimated, and the number of Yukon government contaminated sites that have been remediated demonstrate improvements.
A system is in place for prioritizing the location of monitoring stations. It is based on risk, and is responsive to needs.	Environment Yukon is able to respond to development by locating monitoring stations in the right place at the right time.
Involvement in outdoor activities, as a measure of opportunities for sustainable use of Yukon's environment.	Examples include: number of applications for permit hunts; number of hunting and fishing licences issued; number of courses and participants in the Hunter Education and Ethics Development program; park campground and backcountry visitation; seasonal visitation levels at Herschel Island; number of commercial licences issued.
Satisfaction with opportunities and experiences for sustainable use.	This can be measured through surveys of hunting and fishing effort and park use.
Trend in Yukon government greenhouse gas emissions.	This demonstrates the success of government actions in reducing emissions and achieving territorial and national commitments.
Effective monitoring, inspecting and enforcing systems are in place.	Examples include: Number of inspections completed; ratio of the number of inspections conducted to the number of known activities; ratio of the number of notices of non-compliance or deficiencies to the number of activities inspected; percent of charges that are successfully prosecuted or paid out; operating procedures for the Chronic Wasting Disease Voluntary Herd Certification program are audited, revised and applied to all enrolled Yukon game farms.



▲ **TOP** LITTLE SALMON-CARMACKS COMMUNITY-BASED FISH AND WILDLIFE WORK PLAN MEETING; **BOTTOM** THE MOUNT MYE VIEWING PLATFORM DURING FARO'S CRANE & SHEEP VIEWING FESTIVAL

Goal 2: Decisions Informed by Shared Knowledge

Valid, relevant knowledge is the foundation for decisions, policies and actions that define responsible use of Yukon's environment.

TO ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL WE WILL:

- 2.1. Continually improve our knowledge of Yukon's environment;
- 2.2. Improve the management of information resources in support of decision making;
- 2.3. Share environmental information with citizens, governments and partners to enable their effective participation in policy and resource management discussions; and
- 2.4. Engage and inspire people to appreciate Yukon's environment.

Performance Measures for Goal 2	Examples
A system of Inventory, Monitoring and Reporting is in place to prioritize activities.	<p>This enables staff to identify priorities based on the status of the resource values, threats that could impact values, and the priority placed on resources by First Nations and the public.</p> <p>Yukon water monitoring programs for water quality, quantity and snow surveys are active and ongoing.</p>
State of the Environment Report is prepared annually.	<p>A variety of technical reports and information about the environment is available to help citizens, governments and others. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual State of the Environment reports and other status summaries. • Number of publications (reports, brochures, maps, etc.) produced annually (print or electronic).
Use of Environment Yukon websites.	<p>Measures such as the number of hits, bounce times, ratio of number of pages to number of updated pages in the last year, help to indicate level of use and currency of the information.</p>
People participating in outdoor education programs sponsored by Environment Yukon.	<p>Measuring the number of environmental education programs and the number of participants, including school groups, indicates how well Environment Yukon is engaging and inspiring people to appreciate Yukon’s environment. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Fair and Environment Speakers Series, • Wildlife viewing programs, • Fishing weekend, and • Tombstone Interpretive Centre programs.



▲ SIGN UNVEILING AT TOMBSTONE TERRITORIAL PARK

Goal 3: Strong and Trusted Partnerships

Stewardship of the environment is improved through strong, effective partnerships.

TO ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL WE WILL:

- 3.1 Enhance First Nation relations in a modern treaty environment;
- 3.2 Establish supportive working relationships with Renewable Resource Councils and Boards;
- 3.3 Strengthen our capabilities to establish and maintain partnerships; and
- 3.4 Develop opportunities for effective partnerships and sharing of responsibilities.

Performance Measures for Goal 3	Examples
Partnership funding invested in projects or cost shared with partners.	Examples include federal government inputs to programs and the number of projects implemented.
Number of projects with First Nation partners.	Examples include: facility construction projects, resource inventory and sharing of knowledge, planning protected areas.
Number of projects that Environment Yukon supports outside of the department.	This may include contribution agreements, other in-kind or cash agreements, or benefits through advice or mentorship.
Number of volunteers, hours of service and type of volunteer activities.	Volunteer involvement indicates meaningful opportunities for people to engage in Environment programs and how programs have been enhanced.
Role of departmental staff in federal, provincial, territorial forums.	This indicates how Yukon interests are represented, and the benefits that can be gained.





▲ STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS WORKSHOP

Goal 4: Organizational Excellence

Exceptional public service is delivered through effective business practices, by proficient and engaged staff.

TO ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL WE WILL:

- 4.1 Attract, develop, engage and retain talented people;
- 4.2 Assess organizational and staffing needs;
- 4.3 Improve infrastructure and services to the public and other clients, and provide effective support for departmental programs;
- 4.4 Practice open, accountable and fiscally responsible governance;
- 4.5 Enable the effective management of risks, emergency preparedness and response, and workplace health and safety; and
- 4.6 Engage in corporate initiatives through interdepartmental cooperation.

Performance Measures for Goal 4	Examples
Employee engagement is maintained or increased.	Examples include: employee engagement survey, number of programs and percent of employees involved in wellness programs.
Percent of people hired within last five years that are still with the department.	This shows how successful the department is in retaining talented people.
Infrastructure and services to the public.	Number of services available online. Surveys of hunters, anglers, park visitors help to show the level of public service provided and satisfaction of clients.

Yukon
Environment