

VUNTUT GWITCHIN FIRST NATION AND THE PEEL REGIONAL LAND USE PLAN
For Vuntut Gwitchin Citizens
February, 2014

The Peel Planning Process.....



- The Peel regional planning process has been underway for more than 12 years. The process has come to a head during the past two years and in particular during the past couple of months.
- The Peel Planning Commission submitted its Final Recommended Plan to the Parties in July 2011, with the FN Peel Parties (VG, NND, TH, GTC) supporting the Commission's Plan on both crown (97%) and Settlement lands (3%) in the region.
- Yukon Government (YG) did not accept the Commission's Plan, rather YG wanted to make 'modifications' for the application of a Peel plan for its crown land in the Peel region.
- The FN Peel Parties and YG maintained professional, cautious, but positive relationships throughout the Peel planning process. This relationship became strained during the past 2 years as YG added new planning principles and other details including communicating these through the media without prior notice to the FN Peel Parties. This went against our long standing intergovernmental memorandum of understanding between all Peel parties.
- VGG did a careful review of the Commission's plan and YG plan to understand the differences and to look at the possibility of bringing the two close enough to see if the Parties could work together. VGG would then make a decision on how to proceed from a VG perspective and work with the other Parties if they were willing to look at options.
- This VG analysis was done - but before discussions could start VGG concluded the other Parties were not willing to show enough flexibility to make it worthwhile to explore possible shared options in the region generally.
- As a result VG determined it was appropriate and

indeed necessary to focus on the direct effects of the YG Plan on VG rights and interests that affect part of the VG Traditional Territory in the Peel region. This represents about 3% of the region, and also about 3% of VG Traditional Territory - based on the VG and Trondek contiguous Traditional Territory boundary.

- In solidarity the FN Parties together had earlier, and again in December 2013, individually stated in correspondence to YG that the development of their new Peel plan is at odds with our UFA and Final Agreements. This is referred to as the 'process' issue.
- In December, 2013 the FNs Parties determined individually how they intended to participate in the intergovernmental consultation process with YG.
- VG, while repeating our intent to protect our ongoing position regarding the 'process' issues would consult with YG on VG's issues affected by YG's plan.
- VG had substantive issues to discuss with YG, which had been considered and approved by the Chief for discussion with YG. This discussion was conducted by senior and technical officials of both

governments on January 3, 2014.

- The YG officials agreed to accommodate all of VG's concerns; which was confirmed in writing by the YG ministers.
- VG's earlier 'process' issue would be maintained as an option but VGG accepts YG accommodation of VGG concerns by changes to the YG plan and administrative measures in the VG Traditional Territory portion of the Peel planning region.
- VG has a 'process' concern shared with the other FN Parties which VG will continue to protect while having achieved a solution to its 'substantive' issues.
- YG announced its decision to implement its Plan on January 20, 2014.
- TH & NND with 2 conservation groups announced their joint filing of a legal action against YG regarding the YG 'process' issue and seeking action to force YG to approve the Commission's Recommended Plan.
- GTC has announced it is considering filing legal action.



Vuntut Gwitchin Government will.....

- **Support the Commission's Peel Plan** on both crown and Settlement lands, with TH/NND & GTC positions, while keeping in mind YG's recent accommodation of VG issues which are very comparable to the Commission's plan in the VG Traditional Territory portion of the region. The effect of the two plans in VG Traditional Territory is similar.
- **Support the UFA/FA 'processes' issue** with TH, NND & GTC, once again keeping in mind our success in having VG concerns dealt with by YG.
- **Maintain the option** to legally dispute the 'process' with YG, while at present VG prefers to advance that issue in solidarity with all other self-governing First Nations through political not legal processes.
- **Only proceed to implement** the measures in VG Traditional Territory that have been agreed to with YG after the other FNs Peel Parties have sorted out their current actions/situation with YG and are comfortable with proceeding - including for the Dempster Corridor sub-regional plan.
- **Practice ongoing open and transparent communication** amongst the Peel FNs Parties in the conduct of all VGG's Peel related matters and roles at the political, senior official, technical and legal levels.
- **Continue to monitor** the legal proceedings to ensure VG can move quickly with legal intervention should VG choose this avenue.



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