

INTRODUCTION

What this plan is about

The Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation (LSCFN) Final Agreement requires a cooperative approach to fish and wildlife management involving the First Nation, the Carmacks Renewable Resources Council (CRRC) and Yukon Government (YTG). This community-based fish and wildlife plan reflects this new relationship by involving the LSCFN, CRRC, YTG and the community in the development of a five-year work plan to address local concerns about fish and wildlife. The plan coordinates the management of fish and wildlife from 2004-2009 in the LSCFN traditional territory.

How this plan was developed

The planning followed five steps:

1. Introduction to the community about how the planning would be done;
2. Identification of community issues and concerns;
3. Review of the issues and concerns;
4. A community planning workshop to help develop the plan; and
5. Plan writing, review by the plan partners, and final production.

At the request of the LSCFN and the CRRC, planning began in 2001 and, in October 2002, a public open house was held at the LSCFN Heritage Hall. At this meeting, the CRRC, LSCFN and YTG introduced how the plan would be developed, and we provided the opportunity for the community to ask questions.

In January 2003, the LSCFN conducted a door-to-door survey of 63 Carmacks households asking for concerns about fish and wildlife management in the traditional territory. We collected most of the community concerns in April and May 2003 with small interview groups at the CRRC office. We divided the traditional territory into six areas: Mount Nansen, Braeburn, Big Salmon, Claire Lake, Minto and Little Salmon Lake. People who were knowledgeable about these areas participated in small group meetings to discuss their concerns about fish and wildlife. We combined the concerns collected in the door-to-door survey and small group meetings, and presented them at an evening open house and community feast on November 26th, 2003 at the Carmacks Recreation Centre.

In December 2003, the LSCFN, CRRC, and YTG (the plan partners) met to review the issues and decide which ones were important to include in a planning workshop. The planning workshop was held March 23rd and 24th 2004 at the LSCFN Heritage Hall. The workshop provided the opportunity for community members, stakeholders, and the partners to review each issue, identify any solutions and develop appropriate actions, including who would do the work, and when, during the five years of the plan.

LSCFN
Little Salmon/Carmacks
First Nation

CRRC
Carmacks Renewable
Resources Council

YTG
Yukon Territorial
Government (specifically,
the Department of
Environment)

YWBTT
Yukon Wood Bison
Technical Team

CAFN
Champagne and Aishihik
First Nations

Structure of the plan

This plan lists topics alphabetically. For example, all community concerns relating to fish management are grouped under the heading “Fish.” Each important issue or concern is listed along with a brief explanation. Solutions, or ways to solve each issue, were developed at the March 23rd and 24th planning workshop by consensus of the three partners. Commitments describe how the solution will be achieved, by whom and when.

We have included target timelines for completion of each commitment, which are guides to help schedule work during the five-year plan. Years relate to government fiscal years because this is how the funds are allocated. For example, a commitment identified for “2004” should be completed between April 1, 2004 and March 31, 2005. Sometimes timelines are for more than one year. For example, “2004-2009” means the action will be carried out during each year of the plan. Other actions could be included in some years during the plan such as “2004, 2005,” meaning the action will be carried out in these years only.

The plan assigns commitments to one or more of the plan partners. If more than one plan partner is responsible for the commitment, the order of the agencies listed generally indicates which agency will take the lead completing the commitment. Where the plan lists only two agencies for a commitment, it will usually be a joint responsibility.

Sometimes a community concern fell outside of the authority of the plan partners, meaning that the LSCFN, CRRC or YTG are not the right groups to address the concern. This happened when we discussed bison and elk, which have management teams that include other traditional territories, governments and Renewable Resources Councils. Issues about bison and elk are stated as community recommendations for these broader teams to consider in their plans. In addition, recommendations in our plan that require Yukon-wide consideration are directed to the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board.

Ted Fairclough as river ranger



Key issues by area

There were a number of key issues that came out of the six small group meetings in April and May 2003.

Mount Nansen area

The Mount Nansen road has provided year-round access to the western part of the traditional territory since its opening in the early 1970s. Because the road is open in winter, disturbance to wildlife is believed to be highest in this part of the traditional territory. Winter traffic has increased sharply with the winter harvest of the wood bison herd that ranges in this area. Moose harvest in the area has been closed to licensed hunters since 1988 but populations are considered low. The Klaza caribou herd ranges in the area year-round, and the herd is increasing. Bison herd management, disturbance to caribou and moose, moose harvest, and winter road access issues dominated the community concerns about this area.

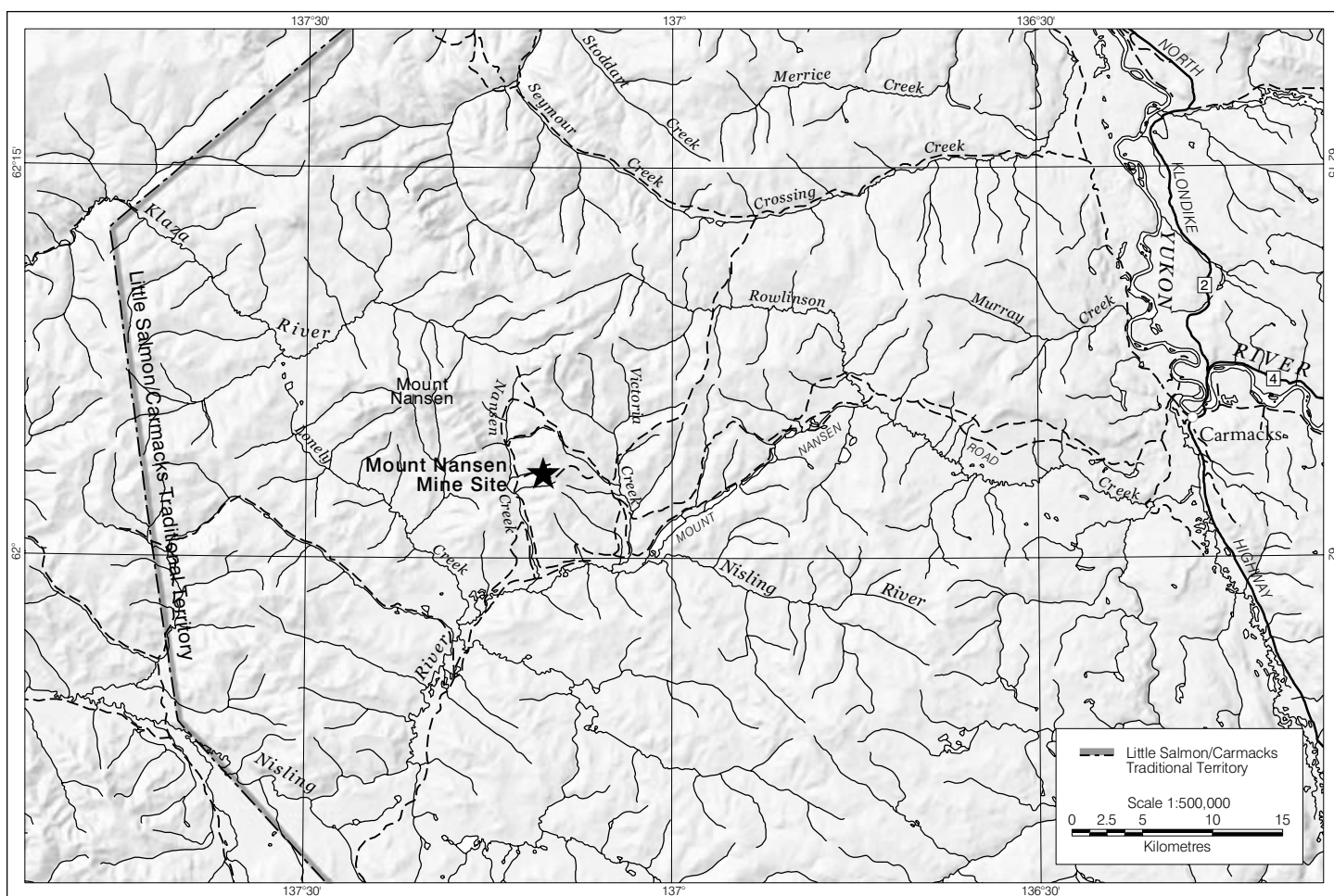


Figure 2. Mount Nansen area.

Braeburn area

Elk were the focus of residents' concerns in the Braeburn area. Key elk concerns include habitat use and range expansion, disturbance of moose by elk, elk as a road hazard and feeding on agricultural crops, and the need for some harvest to control elk herd size. Similar management concerns arose with the Aishihik wood bison herd.

Other important concerns of Braeburn residents were low moose numbers, and high pressure on freshwater fish in easily accessible lakes in the area, particularly Ten-Mile Lake and Braeburn Lake.

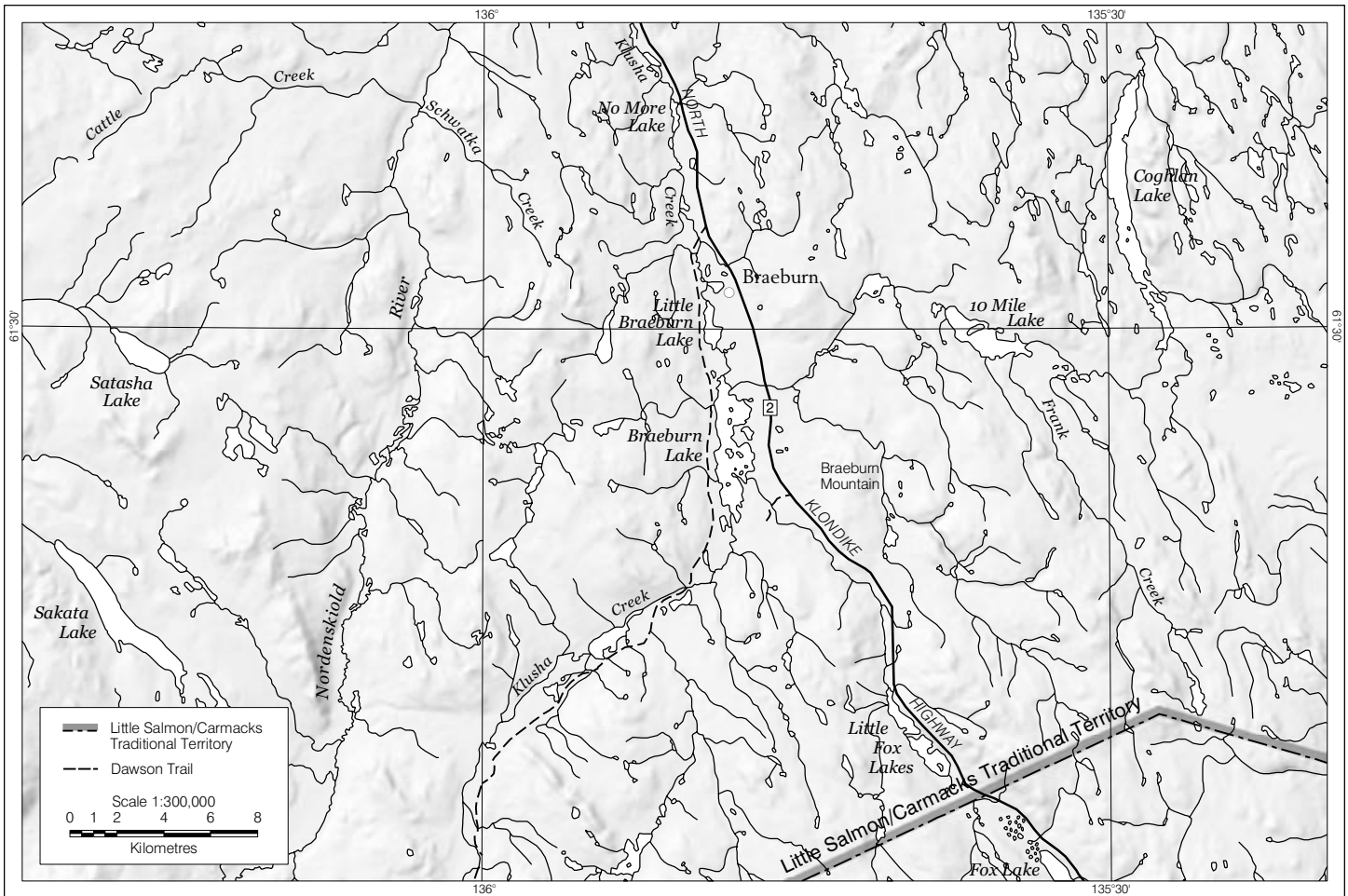


Figure 3. Braeburn area.

Big Salmon area

The most important issue identified in the Big Salmon area was the negative impact of river travellers on wildlife and habitat along the Yukon River. Residents believe there is a lot of disturbance to important moose summer areas from unmanaged campsites. Moose numbers have dropped in this once important hunting area upstream from Carmacks. Forest fires in this area in the last ten years have changed wildlife habitat.

Claire Lake area

Access to this relatively remote area for fishing and hunting is only by a series of trails. A fly-in fishing camp operates on local lakes (Claire, Frank, Coghlan, Mandanna, and Chain Lakes) and was recently purchased by a new owner. People said they were concerned about low numbers of lake trout in most of these lakes.

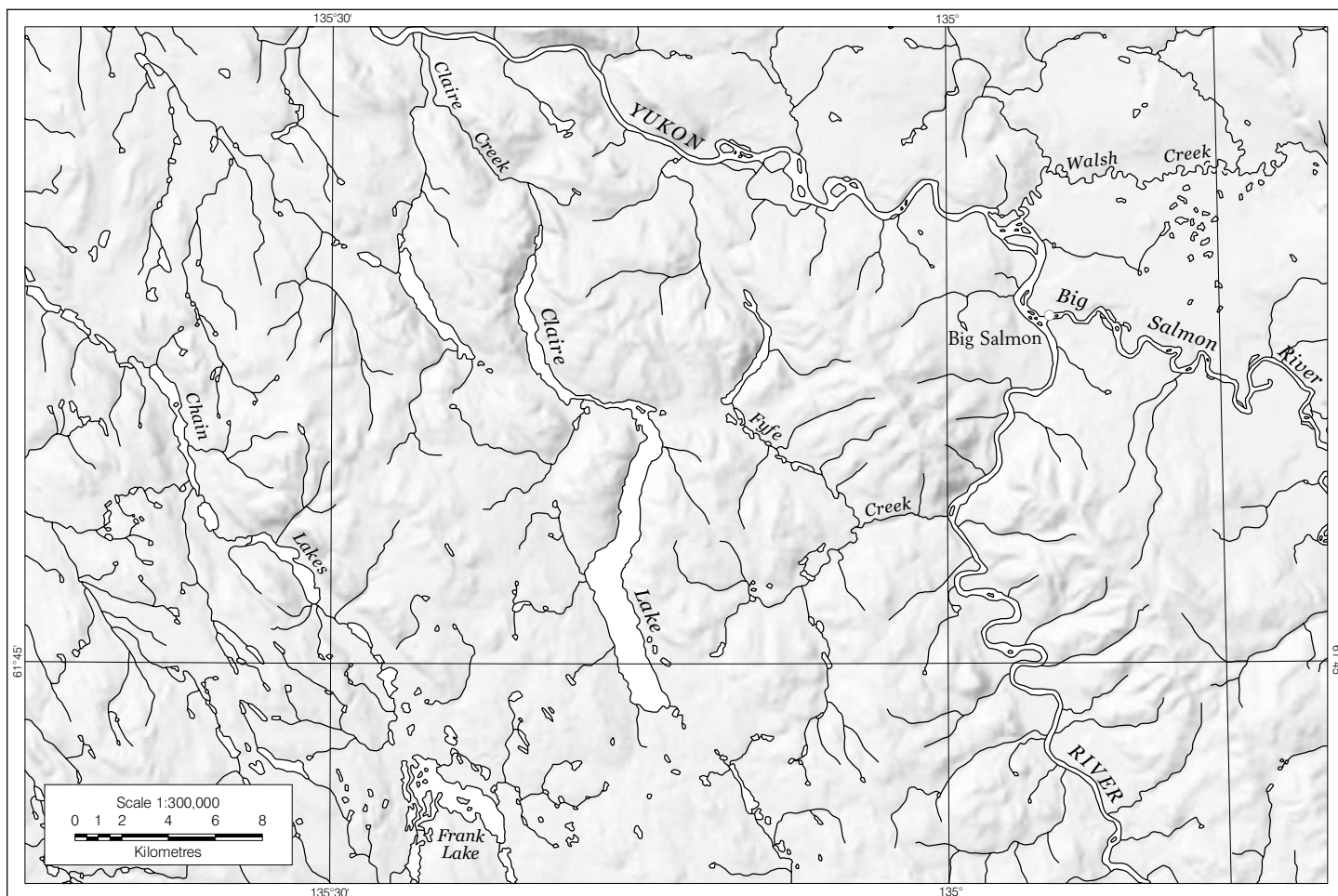


Figure 4. Big Salmon and Claire Lake areas.

Minto area

Like the Big Salmon area, the main issue in the Minto area was managing critical moose habitat and wetlands along the Yukon River downstream from Carmacks to Minto, at the northern edge of the traditional territory. Unmanaged river traffic is the main disturbance to habitat, camps and fishing nets. Moose numbers are thought to be low here, while both grizzly and black bears populations are thought to be high. Wolf management around communities is an ongoing issue. The Tatchun caribou herd ranges in this area, and while the herd size appears stable, people are worried about the small size of the herd (about 500). The key caribou issue is the loss of most of the winter range due to wildfires in 1969, 1995 and 1998.

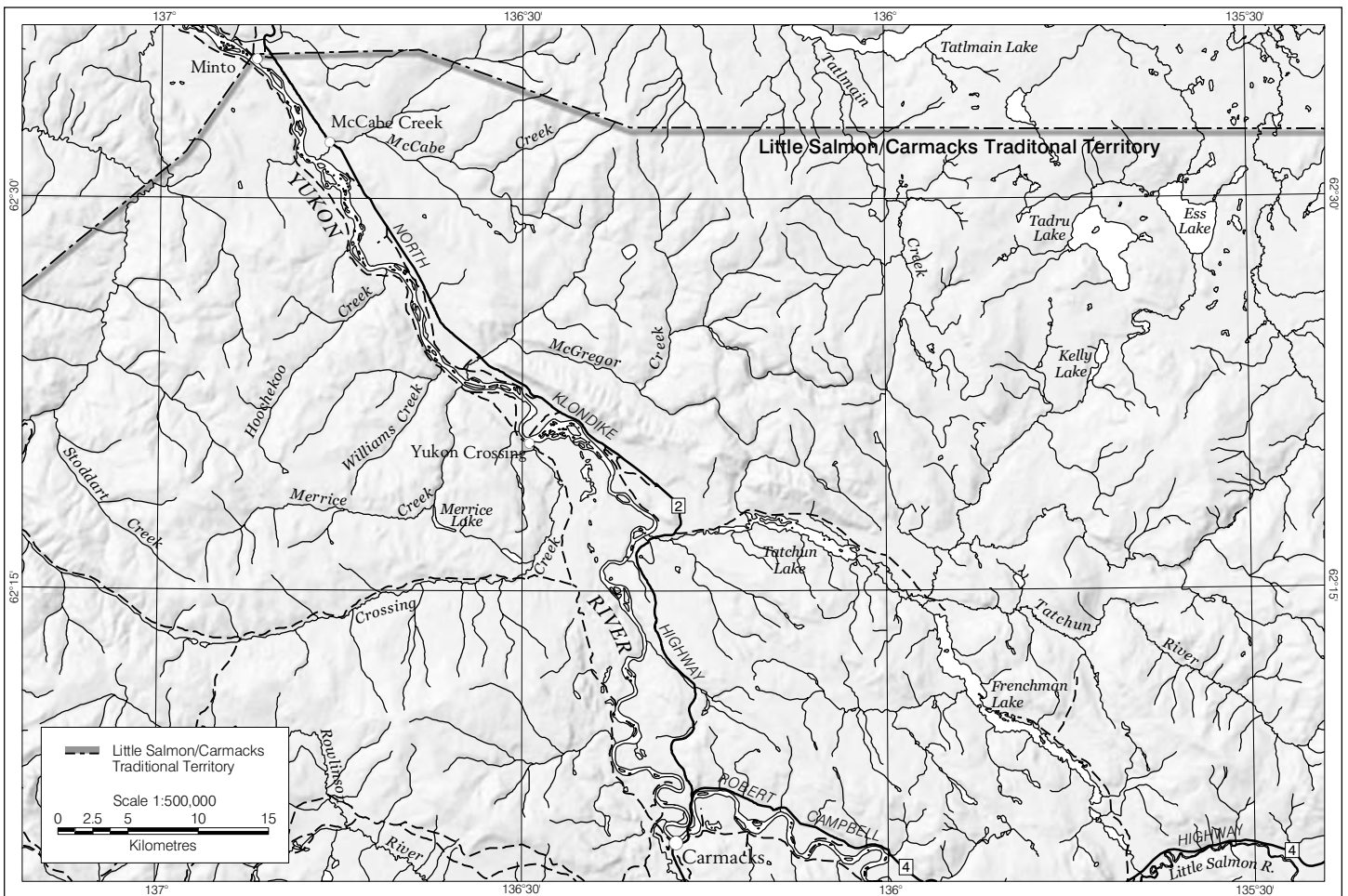


Figure 5. Minto area.

Little Salmon Lake area

A key issue identified at the Little Salmon Lake group meeting was the extended impact of the Robert Campbell Highway on fish and wildlife populations, their movements, and access to important habitats. Concerns about this area also focused on the cottage lot development along the shore of Little Salmon Lake, and along the lower Magundy River. The area has no plan for development, and the plan partners all expressed the need to come up with a better way to address spot applications for agriculture and recreation land. There is a need to map important wildlife habitats to help manage development applications (including forestry) in a coordinated manner.

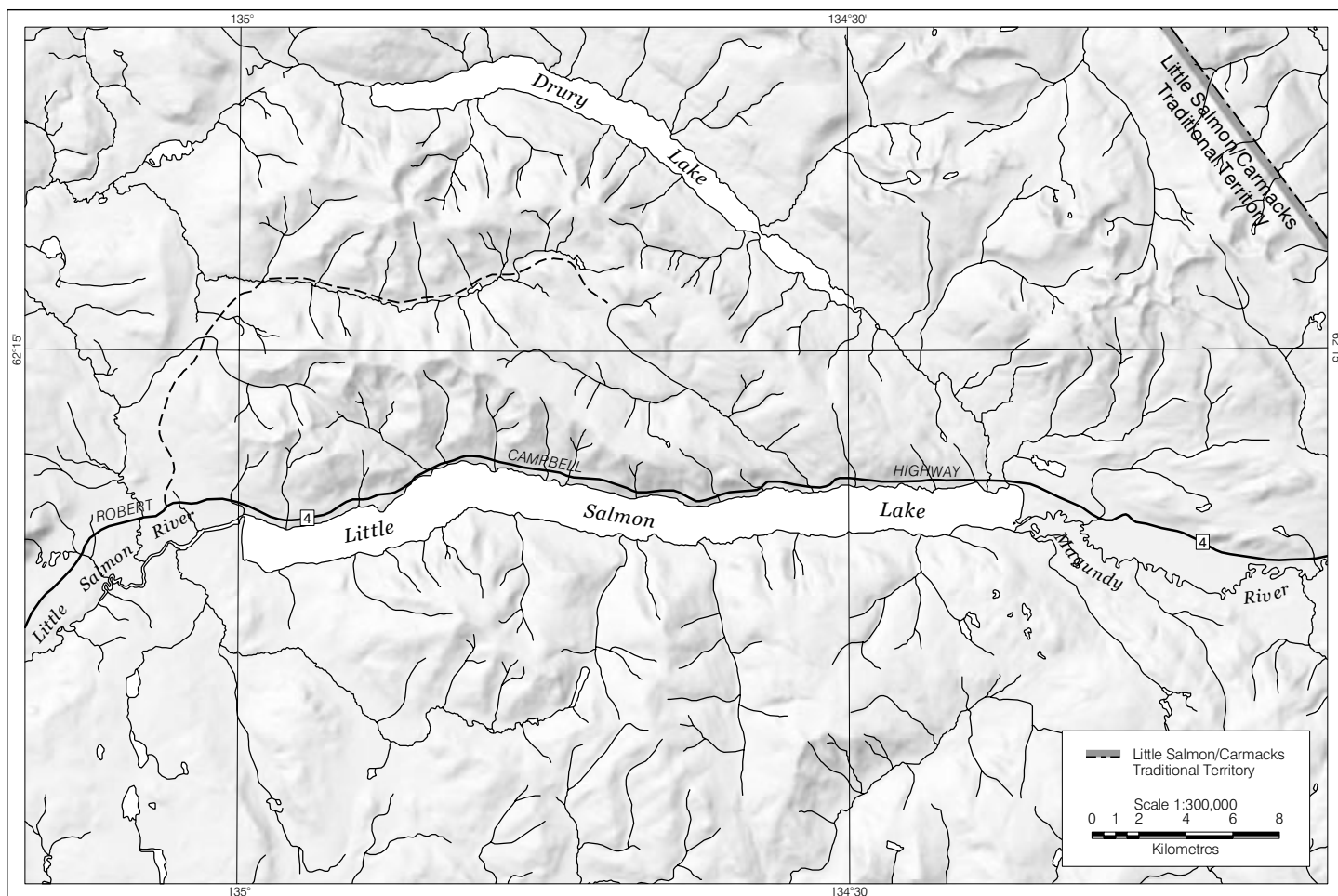


Figure 6. Little Salmon Lake area.