

HABITAT

Concern

Roadside patches of unburned forest, the west side of Braeburn Lake, and the Tatchun caribou herd winter range need to be protected from fire.

Large stretches of forest have been burned during the last 10 years along the North Klondike Highway. While regeneration of forest stands caused by fire is recognized as a natural process, there is a need for older stands for some wildlife species such as caribou. Maintaining some of these older stands is necessary for these species to stay in areas. Allowing some wet-season, lightning-caused fires to burn can help to create patch habitat. Wildfires in 1969, 1995 and 1998 in the Tatchun caribou herd range have removed a lot of wintering habitat for these animals. These areas provide important places for caribou to go in the late winter when food is difficult to find due to snow cover. Allowing wetter season wildfires to burn in caribou habitat would allow the natural regenerative process of fire's impact on a forest to proceed. Quickly extinguishing fires in dry years would help to manage fires so that they do not get out of control and result in large burned areas and in less patchy habitat.

Solution **Develop fire management strategies to protect important wildlife range and forest stands that are critical parts of the regional biodiversity.**

Commitment

By who? By when?

CRRC, LSCFN, YTG
2004-2009

Work with fire management officials to identify important areas for protection, and strategies for management of fires in areas outside the community. [48]

Over the next five years, work towards protection of important habitats in the LSCFN traditional territory, beginning with the Tatchun caribou winter range and Braeburn areas (see commitment #18, page 15). Both areas should be identified to Fire Management in 2004, with response actions expected mid-way through this plan.

CRRC, LSCFN
MIDWAY IN PLAN

Recommend the west side of Braeburn Lake as an important area for maintenance of biodiversity. [49]

The west side of Braeburn Lake is an area of old growth forest that the community would like to protect. Given the large fires that have occurred around the area, it is important to maintain some old growth timber for regional biodiversity. This fire management priority would need agreement from the First Nation because of settlement lands in the area.

Concern

Wildlife areas need to be identified in the Magundy River and Little Salmon Lake areas in a proactive and coordinated way.

There is a need to address conflicts between traditional uses of these areas and the agriculture, recreation, and other land application processes. Cottage lots and agricultural leases along the Magundy River and along the shores of Little Salmon Lake have been developed in a “spot application” approach to land development. There is a need to document, in an organized manner, more local knowledge about the movements and use of these areas by wildlife. Both ends of Little Salmon Lake are important for traditional use activities and both areas are important moose habitats. The Magundy River has also been identified as an area of “harvestable timber.”

Solution

Recommend the development of a local area plan for the Little Salmon Lake and Magundy River areas, and provide information about key wildlife habitats for consideration in the plan for the area.

Commitment

By who? By when?

LSCFN, YTG
2004

Document important habitats and cultural areas in the area as part of information gathering for a local area plan. [50]

Before making a request for a local area plan, LSCFN needs to gather information about wildlife habitat and cultural uses in these areas. The YTG regional biologist will assist in this collection.

CRRC, LSCFN
2004

Recommend to YTG Community Services that a local area plan be undertaken for the Magundy River and Little Salmon Lake areas. [51]

In making the recommendation, well-documented information would support the request, identifying the conflict between wildlife habitat and development in the area. The CRRC and LSCFN would need to draft a letter to initiate this process. Any planning should include Ross River Dena, as this is an area of traditional territory overlap.

Concern

There is a need to protect the Yukon River from Tatchun Creek to Minto as important habitat for moose, salmon, and other wildlife.

This section of the Yukon River contains a number of sloughs and islands, and was identified as important habitat for moose during calving, summer and winter. Moose were commonly seen in this area back in the 1960s, but fewer have been seen in recent years. “Dog Salmon Slough” was one area noted in particular as an important habitat area (Figure 15). Bears use Dog Salmon Slough for fishing. Moose might be staying away from river corridors now with the increased river travel traffic during summer. The review process for land applications in this area needs to consider the importance of these habitat areas to fish and wildlife.

Solution Conserve the important moose and salmon habitat along the Yukon River from Tatchun Creek to Minto.

Commitment

By who? By when?

CRRC, LSCFN
2004

Pursue designating the area between Tatchun Creek and Minto along the Yukon River as a Habitat Protection Area under the *Wildlife Act*. [52]

The community and governments need to get together to decide what kind of activities should happen in this important wildlife habitat. This is an overlap area with Selkirk First Nation, and the CRRC needs to consult with them. A LSCFN Game Guardian could also assist in evaluating the area for designation and providing management guidelines.

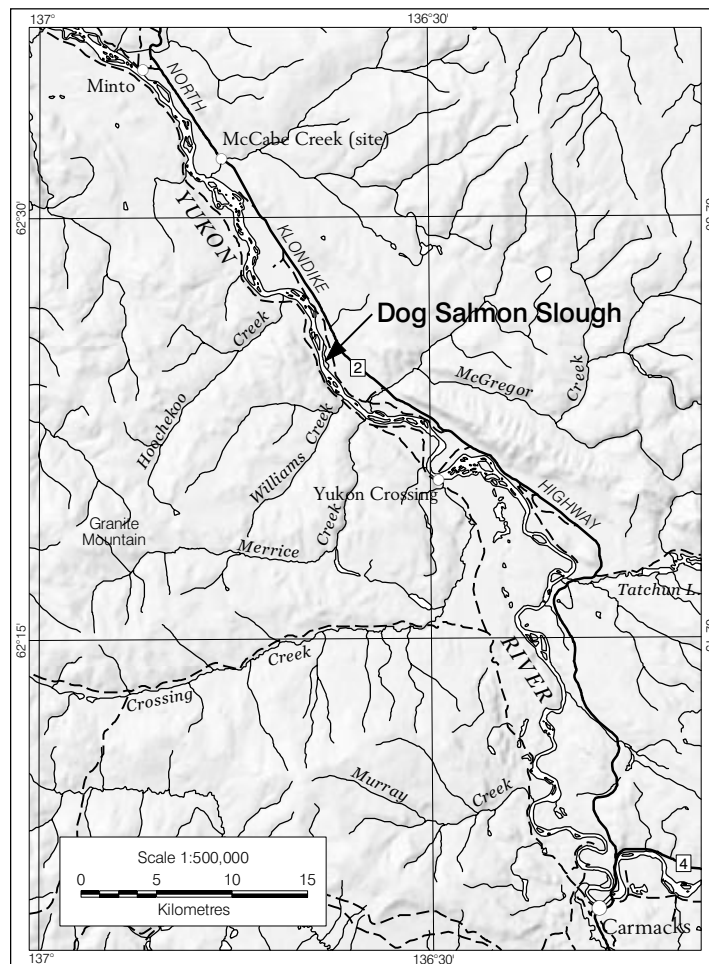


Figure 15. Dog Salmon Slough and area.

Concern

Beaver dams along Fox Creek, Klusha Creek and at No More Lake are blocking fish movements.

Residents identified Fox Creek and Klusha Creek as important spawning creeks. It is thought that spawning fish (whitefish and salmon) may not be able to get through these creeks due to beaver dams blocking creek flows. A community project to clear Klusha Creek of beaver dams for spawning salmon has shown success, with salmon returning to Twin Lakes in the past two years. A beaver management workshop, previously held in Carmacks with elders, identified important areas for dam removal.

Solution

Continue community program to manage beaver dams in important spawning creeks.

Commitment

By who? By when?

LSCFN
2004-2009

LSCFN will continue with programs of beaver management on creeks where needed. [53]
Once the reason for blockage is determined, LSCFN will consider how best to proceed.

*Winston Billy and
Howard Charlie,
Game Guardians*

