

MEETING NOTES

Pickhandle Lakes Steering Committee Meeting

Whitehorse

Canada Games Centre - Boardroom

November 15th & 16th, 2011

Members | **David Johnny Sr.** White River First Nation · **Sam White** Kluane First Nation · **Bob Kuiper** Yukon Government · **Karen Clyde** Yukon government

Support Staff | **Tess McLeod** Yukon government · **Kym Rempel** Kluane First Nation

Regrets | **Karen Clyde** Yukon government · **Tess McLeod (on day two)** Yukon government.

Action items carried over:

Action 11-9-4: Bob will continue with a technical analysis to determine the compatibility of Pickhandle Lakes HPA objectives with mineral exploration and development. Bob will send out the work done previously on this topic for the Devil's Elbow HPA to committee members.

Action 11-9-7: Sam will be conducting door to door interviews with residents in Burwash Landing to ask survey questions about Pickhandle Lakes HPA.

Action 11-9-8: David will be conducting door to door interviews with residents in Beaver Creek to ask survey questions about Pickhandle Lakes HPA.

New Action Items:

Action 11-10-1: Tess will invite guest speakers to the upcoming December 8th meeting; Lorne Larocque and Troy Pretzlaw (Department of Environment), Afan Jones (Department of Environment – Parks), Wally Hidinger (Department of Highways and Public Works), Bob Truelson (Water Resources).

Action 11-10-2: Tess will work with the communication branch of the Department of Environment to organize advertising and invitation for the open house on December 8th, 2011. Kym will provide addresses of Kluane First Nation members who live in Whitehorse.

1. Meeting Start

The meeting started at 9:00am on Tuesday, November 15th, 2011.

2. Review of agenda

The agenda was approved

3. Review of Minutes

Meeting notes from the September 22nd and 23rd, 2011 meeting reviewed and approved.

4. Updates

- Chief David Johnny will be returning to his job with the Department of Highways and Public Works in February 2012. He will keep us up to date about the staying on as the WRFN steering committee member.

5. Guest Speakers:

Richard Janowicz – Water Resources

- The Pickhandle Lakes HPA is an impressive wetland found at the bottom of a large watershed.
- Pickhandle Lakes is influenced by both a glacial regime and a permafrost regime. These influences alone will cause changes to the habitat over time due to climate change. There maybe significantly more land slumping, leading to increased nutrients into the river system and lakes. In recent years the trends are showing less water flow and less water quantity. These factors may occur irrespective of anthropogenic activities in the area.

- A stream gauge at the start of the HPA on the Koidern River and one at the end of the HPA near the Koidern River Bridge would be informative about the water regime in the area. Collecting baseline data would be useful to address any future development in the area.
- Stream gauges can cost ~\$15000 for installation and ~\$10000 for monthly maintenance.
- Water quality isotope work could be useful to understand where the water within the HPA is coming from.
- In a management context it is important to have baseline data before any impact assessment can be completed.

Lee Pigage – Mineral Assessment

- The geological survey conducted a study in the PLHPA in 2006 to evaluate what potential deposits are found in the area.
- Based on rock types and geological history there is a good understanding of what deposits are found in the area.
- Since this report was released it is believed there is a higher potential for gold deposits in the north eastern area, adjacent to the HPA boundary.
- There is very low potential for mineral exploration within the HPA boundary itself.
- There is significant interest in mineral deposits adjacent to the HPA.
- There is currently nothing in the advance stages of exploration (class 1) in the adjacent areas.

Tim Smith – Mineral Land Use and Regulations

- There has been relatively low exploration in the area south west of PLHPA and those claims that have not been lapsed have been paid in lieu as apposed to reports being submitted for work conducted on those claims. This may suggest there is limited potential in the area.

- All claims in the area are for hard rock or quartz mining, there is no placer claims.
- Tim explained the exploration class system used by YG and YESAA. (can be found on the website and will be printed out to include in Pickhandle Lakes information binders.
- Without withdrawal orders it is hard to limit or restrict class 1 exploration work.
- Thresholds along the boundary of the HPA could be included in the draft management plan in order to maintain habitat and wildlife values in the area.
- Operating seasons could also be included in the plan to guide mitigation measures on the best times of year work can be conducted in the area to decrease disturbance to wildlife.
- Helicopter traffic is not regulated through YG. It is a Transport Canada mandate. EMR is trying to better communication and education to pilots about no fly zones.

Michael Draper – Yukon Lands Act

- Lands Branch deals with:
 - Disposition
 - Land use permitting
 - Policy and Support
- There is one NPA reserve in the HPA next to the Highway.
- There are no private lots in the HPA, all surveyed lots in the HPA belong to YTG.
- Land tenure and land use permit application processes are subject to reviews. Approvals are at the discretion of YTG. HPA plan would guide review process and final decisions.
- There is no current YTG legislation that addresses Off Road Vehicles. Outside of Territorial Parks, YTG does not have a regulatory mechanism to control ORVs.

Ron Sumanik – Alaska Highway Pipeline and Right of Way

- Current pipeline easement: 240m wide.
- Only 50m will be required for final easement.
- Current easement expires in Sept 2012. Review and renewal process is currently underway.
- TransCanada Pipelines is the proponent. They have a lot of information available on their proposed project and the assessment and review work they have done to date. Their staff have also indicated a willingness to meet with interest groups and stakeholders such as ourselves to explain their project and address any questions.

6. Next meeting

The next steering committee meeting will be held on December 8th and 9th, 2011. The location is TBD. The steering committee will be holding an open house on the evening of December 8th, 2011.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm.

