Łútsäw Wetland Habitat Protection Area Management Plan



ŁÚTSÄW WETLAND

Habitat Protection Area

Management Plan

2013

Approved by

Kevin McGinty Chief Selkirk First Nation

2013 Date

Cirdit

Currie Dixon Minister of Environment Government of Yukon

45 30, 2013 Date





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Appendix 1 - Minto (Hetsutthat) Regional Land Use Plan, June 2002 Appendix 2 - Lhutsaw Wetland HPA, Schedule C

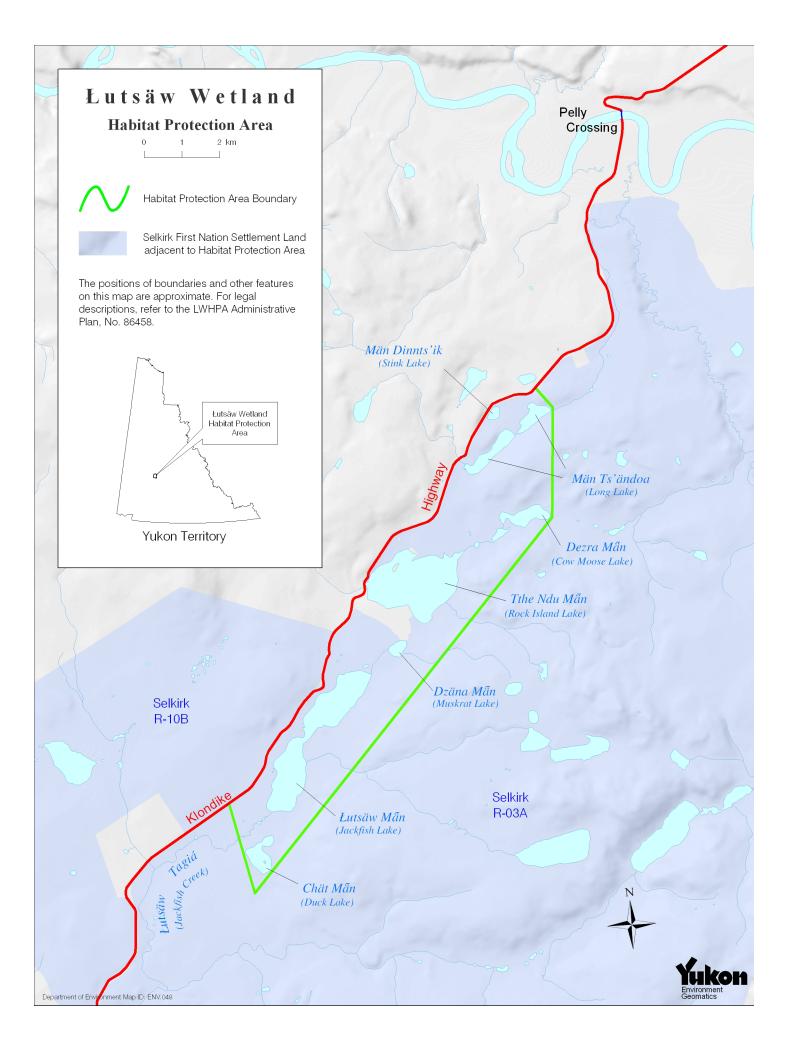
Introduction

The Łútsäw Wetland Habitat Protection Area (ŁWHPA) was established as a Special Management Area (SMA) in accordance with the terms and provisions of Chapter 10 of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement whose effective date is October 1, 1997. Schedule C (Section 1.2) of Chapter 10 of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement also requires that ŁWHPA be designated as a habitat protection area pursuant to the *Wildlife Act* as soon as possible after the effective date. No further designation is required to meet the management objectives of this plan. The wetland is comprised mostly of category A settlement land (parcel R-3A) and includes a small portion of Government of Yukon land.

Establishment of the area as a SMA imposes an obligation to maintain important features of its natural or cultural environment for the benefit of Yukon residents and all Canadians while respecting the rights of Yukon Indian people and Yukon First Nations. For greater certainty the Selkirk First Nation government and Selkirk First Nation people have established rights and responsibilities with respect to fish and wildlife in this habitat protection area as set out in Chapter 16 of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement. These established rights include the guarantee for sharing of powers and responsibilities in the management of fish, wildlife and their habitat in the Łútsäw Wetland Habitat Protection Area by both the Selkirk First Nation and Government of Yukon. In this context and for the purpose of developing a management plan for the wetland, the following objectives were established for the Łútsäw Wetland Habitat Protection Area as outlined in Schedule C of Chapter 10 of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement:

- To ensure conservation of fish and wildlife and fish and wildlife habitat for the benefit of Yukon residents;
- To recognize the importance of the area to Selkirk people and the protection of the use of the area by Selkirk people;
- The protection of the full diversity of wildlife populations and their habitats from activities that could reduce the area's capability to support wildlife; and
- The encouragement of public awareness of and appreciation for the natural resources of the area.

For the purpose of this management plan the definitions contained in the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement will apply to terms used in common. Łútsäw is a Northern Tutchone term referring to the unique type of pike that are resident in the lake. Other Northern Tutchone terms are used for geographical features, animals and plant species throughout this document.



Background

Area Description

The Łútsäw Wetland Habitat Protection Area is located approximately eight kilometers southwest of Pelly Crossing in south central Yukon (page 2). It is approximately 15 kilometers in length and, at its greatest width is about 2.5 kilometers. The area is bounded to the west by the North Klondike Highway and is situated in a southwest to northeast aspect. The majority of the land contained in the ŁWHPA is comprised of a portion of parcel R-3A (2,776 hectares) of Selkirk First Nation settlement land. In addition, it includes the whole of parcel S-122B (2 hectares) and a portion of Yukon land comprising 428 hectares. The entire Łútsäw Wetland Habitat Protection Area constitutes a total surface area of 3,206 hectares. An administrative plan showing legal boundaries of the ŁWHPA has been prepared under the Canada Lands Surveys Act by the Legal Surveys Division of the Department of Natural Resources Canada.

The Łútsäw Wetland Habitat Protection Area encompasses many of the ecosystem components associated with a series of freshwater lakes, ponds and land locally referred to as the Łútsäw wetland or "Von Wilczek Lakes" as listed in the *Yukon Gazetteer*. The originator of the present official name was Lieutenant Fredrick Schwatka of the United States Army who traveled down the Yukon River in 1883 in a search for evidence to the fate of the Franklin expedition. In his diary he describes a "beautiful wide valley" in the Minto area to which he named after "Graf Von Wilczek" of Vienna, Austria. The Geographical Board of Canada in 1960 designated the creek that drains the Łútsäw Wetland as Von Wilczek Creek and, at the same time gave the same name to the lakes contained in the present habitat protection area. The Northern Tutchone names for features in the wetland have only been recently recognized and it is recommended that these names be adopted for future reference.

Terrestrial Environment and Resource Values

The surrounding landscape is characterized by rolling hills and plateaus separated by deep broad valleys. Geologically, the region has been shaped by glacial activity whose deposits remain in the form of silt, sand and gravel. In some locations a layer of volcanic ash can be seen in the soil and can range up to 30 cm thick. Glacial deposits are typically covered with a thin surface layer of soil and organics. The region is within a zone of discontinuous permafrost.

The regional climate is generally cold and dry with a mean annual air temperature of approximately -3.5° C. During the summer months temperatures average 12° C but can reach to over 30° C. In the winter months temperature averages -19° C and can drop to well below -40° C. The driest month for precipitation is usually April, with the month of July having the most rain. Mean annual precipitation in the region can vary greatly, from 250 mm to over 400 mm at higher elevations. Owing to its higher terrain, this area is thought to intercept additional precipitation from moisture sources lower down in the Yukon River valley. Traditional and local knowledge suggests the topsoil is at its driest period during August.

Forest cover in the ŁWHPA is predominately black spruce (ts'ok) with dense stands associated with wetter areas. The dryer upland terrain supports mixed stands of white spruce (ts'ok), trembling aspen (t'o) and balsam poplar (t'o). Grass tussocks (tl'óshó') sphagnum moss (ńinmbáy') and cranberry are common in the wetland. High bush cranberry (tséntthya) is found in the wetter locations while low bush cranberries (intl'át) prefer the dryer soils of the area. Grassland expanses are established in the more open unforested areas.

Recurring fires have heavily impacted the forest resources in the area. The most recent fires were in 1969 and 1995, with the latter known as the "Minto Fire" burning much of the forested portion of the ŁWHPA southwest of Tthe Ndu Mān. At some sites the intensity of the fire was so great that it left no standing timber. These areas are presently undergoing post-fire succession but remain sensitive to soil disturbances. At some locations the fall-down of partially burnt timber may be a fire hazard under dry summer conditions. The entire area that encompasses the ŁWHPA is currently within the zone of active fire suppression.

The ŁWHPA forms part of the winter range of the Tatchun caribou herd. The area is frequented by caribou (hudzi), especially during the late winter period. Previous to the 1995 forest fire, relatively large numbers of caribou were periodically observed on lakes in the wetland. Recent observations suggest these animals now utilize other habitat more frequently outside the wetland as a result of the 1995 forest fire.

Moose (denyák) also use the Łútsäw wetland for spring calving and during the fall for rutting. An aerial survey of moose in 2011 suggests moose numbers may have declined in this area from high numbers observed in 1995 and 2000 surveys. Other wildlife inhabiting the area include grizzly (sra cho) and black bear (sra denét'ro), beaver (tśe'), muskrat (dzäna), fox (nuntthi), lynx (néde), wolf (egay), wolverine (néye), marten (nunt'in'), mink (tedhoga), squirrel (dlák), and rabbit (ge). Little is documented of the small mammals such as mice (dluan), voles and shrews that live in the wetland. Trappers have observed a change in the densities of the small mammals that utilize the ŁWHPA since the forest fire in 1995. Upland areas are known to support grouse (di). Numerous species of songbirds have been observed, reflecting habitat diversity.

Aquatic Environment and Resource Values

There are several lakes and ponds in the ŁWHPA with the two largest lakes locally known as Łútsäw Mān (Jackfish Lake) and Tthe Ndu Mān (Rock Island Lake). Other lakes of significant size that have traditional names include Chät Mān (Duck Lake), Mān Ts'ändoa (Long Lake), Mān Dinnts'ik (Stink'in Lake), Dzäna Mān (Muskrat Lake) and Dezra Mān (Cow Moose Lake). Their small surface areas and the gentle relief of the surrounding terrain suggest all to be relatively shallow in depth, generally less than five meters.

Drainage from the ŁWHPA is principally through Łútsäw Tagiá (Von Wilczek Creek). This creek flows south from the outlet of Łútsäw Mān eventually discharging into the Yukon River at Minto, Yukon. Traditional and local knowledge suggests sections of Łútsäw Tagiá become dewatered during low flow periods. The flow of water in these sections has been observed to "disappear into the ground" prior to entering the Yukon River. It is known that beaver dams have influenced aquatic habitat within Łútsäw Tagiá as well as the shoreline of Łútsäw Mān. High water levels, in particular on Łútsäw Mān, have flooded the lake margin where dead and dying trees have formed a ring around the lake. Lake levels on Tthe Ndu Mān have remained unchanged despite being connected by a small creek with Łútsäw Mān. The smaller lakes to the north including Mān Ts'ändoa, Mān Dinnts'ik and Dezra Mān, all appear to be land locked. The effects of drought, forest fires and changes to the water table likely influence surface water elevations and water quality in these lakes.

Surface waters in the ŁWHPA are ice-covered for approximately eight months of the year. During the relatively brief open water season, typically from May/June to September/October large numbers of waterfowl use this area. Waterfowl surveys suggest use by at least 18 bird species that include cranes (dga), ducks (chät), loons (tútsay), terns, gulls (méhk'én'), swans (degay), and

geese (khe). This wetland area has previously been identified as unique and significant in terms of the abundance of breeding, post breeding, molting and migrating ducks. Before ŁWHPA was established as a SMA, land-management officials affirmed its importance in terms of waterfowl habitat by noting it on *Territorial Resource Base Maps* as an area of significant conservation interest.

Łútsäw wetland also supports extensive emergent and submergent plant communities. Sedges, semiaquatic grasses, mosses and several species of aquatic pondweeds grow in considerable abundance in Łútsäw Mān and Tthe Ndu Mān. Extensive stands of round-stemmed bulrush located along the shoreline of Tthe Ndu Mān are of special significance. This species of aquatic plant has a limited Yukon distribution and is seldom encountered elsewhere in Yukon.

Northern pike is the only known fish species known to occur in the ŁWHPA, inhabiting only Łútsäw Mān, Tthe Ndu Mān and Dezra Mān. These lakes contain numerous invertebrates, including freshwater shrimp that serve as the preferred food item for the northern pike. Each spring, northern pike in spawning condition can be observed in a small stream that connects Tthe Ndu Mān with Łútsäw Mān. This stream is the site of a historical and present fishery and serves as a food source for families of Selkirk First Nation people. Traditional and local knowledge had suggested a recent decline in abundance of spawning fish from 2000 to 2004 and Selkirk First Nation people voluntarily have reduced their harvest of fish. However, following fisheries work completed in 2006 the population has appeared to recover. Past harvests of northern pike were significant, but with no records, the extent of these harvests is unknown.

Historic and recent testing of the water under the ice in Łútsäw Mān in late winter suggest this lake is subject to very low oxygen levels (anoxic) and possibly "winter kill" conditions. The most recent forest fire in the area may have contributed in some way to the deficiency of oxygen in the lake. Nutrient levels have been shown to increase in boreal watersheds affected by fire from inputs of nitrogen and phosphorous made available through the process of burning. Oxygen depletion could result from decomposition of algae and aquatic plants following enhanced productivity of these organisms due to nutrient enrichment. Łútsäw Mān, however, has the highest oxygen levels of al lakes in the wetland and it is the core winter habitat for pike.

Other smaller lakes and ponds in the ŁWHPA most likely become oxygen depleted (anoxic) during the winter due to their small size and shallow depth. Traditional knowledge and local observations confirm the use of the wetland by wood frogs, a species that prefers small fish-less ponds.

Heritage

A total of 18 archaeological sites have been identified within the ŁWHPA in addition to numerous historic sites. Archaeological evidence indicates the area has been used continuously for the last 5,000 to 8,000 years. The location of the archaeological artifacts at traditional fishing sites and the current oral history about these lakes suggest continuity in traditional land use patterns over thousands of years. Excavation at one site at Rock Island Lake suggests spring waterfowl hunting is an activity that has been carried out for more than 5,000 years by Selkirk First Nation people.

Recent history shows the area is now utilized throughout the seasons by Selkirk First Nation and other aboriginal people, especially during the spring to harvest spawning northern pike. Access to these fish is important for people to maintain their traditional diet. Spawning migrations usually start during May in a small stream that connects Łútsäw Mān and Tthe Ndu Mān, where fish are harvested mainly by gaff. Selkirk First Nation people traditionally camp or use this area as a gathering place to harvest and sometimes dry fish. The fish are used as food for both people and their pack dogs. While fish resources at this location are more limited than those of Ta'tla Mān and other larger rivers in the region, this area is none-the-less an important and reliable food source. Łútsäw Mān and Tthe Ndu Mān are also fished traditionally in the winter with hooks through the ice.

Other historic and present uses of the area by Selkirk First Nation people included trapping, hunting for small (grouse, squirrel and ducks) and large animals (caribou, moose), berry and root harvesting and the collection of medicinal plants. Some locations that received repetitive cultural and spiritual use are used for teaching traditional practices, resulting in the passage of knowledge from one generation to the next. Recent uses of the wetland area included grazing of horses, cultivating forage and the collection of fuel wood.

Current Access and Other Use

Passing motorists along the North Klondike Highway occasionally stop for recreational fishing or hiking in the area. It is thought these visitations are motivated by road signage (Łútsäw Lake) or through the attraction of the easily visible access roads in the area. Access to Tthe Ndu Mān is well established and enables visitors to use motorized boats on this lake. Use of other types of off-road motorized vehicles such as ATVs is thought to be minimal and limited to the dryer upland areas, where travel is unconstrained and away from the lower wet terrain. Non-motorized activities in the wetland include bird watching, recreational fishing, kayaking and canoeing during the open water season.

Snowmachines are currently the most popular method of accessing the wetland during the winter, mainly by residents of the community of Pelly Crossing. The Yukon Quest dog sled trail also generates activity in the area as it bisects the ŁWHPA, crossing over Chät Mān, Łútsäw Mān, Tthe Ndu Mān and Mān Ts'ändoa. Floatplanes have occasionally used the area.

A single agricultural grazing lease was contained in the ŁWHPA and was issued in 1985 prior to the establishment of the habitat protection area. It was located in an open meadow just northwest of Tthe Ndu Mān and can be accessed from the North Klondike Highway. The lease agreement expired in 1991 and has never been renewed. A small titled property with an access road is shown on the ŁWHPA Administrative Plan prepared under the *Canada Land Surveys Act* by the Legal Surveys Division of the Department of Natural Resources, Canada. An abandoned "bunkhouse", fencing posts, barbed wire and several refuse piles are all that remain at this site. The LWHPA is included in two trapline concessions, both of which are registered to local residents of Pelly

Crossing. Three cabins are also located within the ŁWHPA, all situated on the settlement land portion of the ŁWHPA (parcel R-3A) and accessible by seasonal roads. Selkirk First Nation members own these structures.

A former gravel crushing and storage site is located at kilometre 446 of the North Klondike Highway near the northwest shore of Łútsäw Mān. The site was developed by the Government of Yukon in 1984 for use in resurfacing the highway. The area is now within the boundaries of the ŁWHPA and has since been abandoned. The former site can still be accessed from the highway but most of the disturbed area is undergoing natural revegetation.

Plan Development and Public Involvement

A steering committee was established in October 2000 to prepare a management plan for the Łútsäw Wetland Habitat Protection Area. Details on membership, plan objectives and implementation are outlined in Schedule C of Chapter 10 of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement. The preparation of the management plan required public involvement, including direct consultation with Selkirk First Nation people and the Yukon public. Consultation was achieved through a public workshop that focused on the identification of issues, observations and concerns. These consultations provided the framework upon which the plan was developed. The workshop was held in the Pelly Crossing community hall during March 2001. The workshop enabled the involvement of the Selkirk Renewable Resources Council, as well as individuals who had an interest in Łútsäw Wetland Habitat Protection Area.

Upon completion of the workshop, the management plan was prepared using material that was orally presented and recorded at the workshop in addition to technical and archaeological information from various government departments. Various drafts of the management plan were reviewed by the steering committee until a final draft was completed to the satisfaction of the committee. The steering committee then gave the draft plan to the Selkirk Renewable Resources Council for public review. Representatives from both governments took part in the public consultation with the Selkirk Renewable Resources Council (November 2003). The draft plan was recommended for final ratification by Selkirk First Nation and Government of Yukon in March, 2004.

Five Year Review and Update

In March 2012, a review of the original management plan was completed by staff from Selkirk First Nation, the Selkirk Renewable Resources Council and Yukon government. The review was conducted at a one day meeting in Pelly Crossing. Upon completion of the meeting the management plan was updated based on consensus from the planning participants and recorded comments. Final review and approval followed the provisions of Schedule C of Chapter 10 of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement.

Management Recommendations

Anticipated expenditures will be shared according to the areas of responsibilities of the parties to the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement and budgeted consistent with financial administration processes of the parties. An obligation to implement these recommendations is subject to money being appropriated by the parties for the purpose of the approved management plan.

Forest Resources and Fire Suppression

The quantity of forest resources to be harvested in ŁWHPA may be determined in a forest management plan developed under Chapter 17 of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement, should the need for such information arise. The forest resources in the planning area are thought to be small and interspersed. Only small stands of live merchantable timber are currently contained in the planning area.

Much of the forested terrain has been burnt by forest fires and in some areas, with such intensity that even standing fuel wood is limited. Use of live trees in the planning area has been solely for the construction of a small number of cabins on the category A settlement land portion of the ŁWHPA. Small volumes of fuel wood continue to be harvested by Selkirk First Nation people within the ŁWHPA.

Recommendation 1

Forest management in the settlement land portions of the ŁWHPA will be consistent with the Selkirk First Nation Hetsutthat (Minto) Land Use Plan 2002 (Appendix 1). The Parties agreed to continue coordinating any future forest resource planning initiatives in the ŁWHPA under Chapter 17 of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement. Selkirk First Nation will continue to issue wood cutting permits on settlement lands with terms and conditions that are consistent with objectives of the management plan. These include limiting access and wood cutting to the winter months when the ground is frozen which will decrease damage to the ecological integrity of the wetland.

Mineral Resources

The area has sparse bedrock exposures and has only been mapped at reconnaissance scale (1:250 000) by Bostock (1936) and Tempelman-Kluit (1984). The current geological compilation of Yukon by Gordey and Makepeace (2000) shows the area to be underlain by metamorphic rocks of the Yukon-Tanana terrane. A brief examination of roadside exposures during the summer of 2002 revealed that the area is underlain by marble, amphibolite (metamorphosed volcanic rocks), foliated granodiorite (plagioclase-muscovite-biotite orthogneiss) and muscovite-quartz schist. Recent bedrock mapping to the east (Colpron et al. 2002) indicates that the Łútsäw area is most likely underlain either by (1) the pre-Late Devonian Snowcap Complex (the oldest unit of Yukon-Tanana terrane in central Yukon), or (2) the Carboniferous Semenof formation (a probable equivalent to Quesnel terrane).

The Snowcap Complex consists predominantly of quartz mica schist and quartzite with minor amounts of marble and amphibolite. These rocks are metamorphosed to upper greenschist to amphibolite facies and are extensively intruded by Mississippian plutons (tonalite to granodiorite). Rocks of the Snowcap Complex are complexly deformed. No mineral deposits have yet been identified in the Snowcap Complex. Near Little Salmon Lake, the Snowcap Complex is overlain by Mississippian metavolcanic rocks which host a massive sulphide occurrence.

The Semenof formation consists predominantly of greenstone and amphibolite (mafic metavolcanic rocks) and subordinate marble. The Semenof greenstone is locally intruded by foliated tonalite and diorite plutons. Rocks of the Semenof formation are variably deformed and metamorphosed. Copper mineralization (malachite, azurite, native copper) and geochemical anomalies are locally present in the Semenof formation.

Regional mineral assessments are limited to the state of the geological knowledge current at the time the assessments were conducted, and are updated periodically as new detailed bedrock mapping is conducted, as new mineral discoveries are made or new mineral deposit types are identified. The tracts including the SMA were assessed for relative potential for the following mineral deposit types: gold quartz veins, epithermal deposits, volcanic massive sulphide deposits, gold deposits related to Tintina fault, and copper skarn deposits. Both tracts which cover the SMA were ranked as having the lowest potential with respect to the Southwest Yukon and the Cassiar/Yukon-Tanana Terrane regional assessments.

If mining were to be allowed in the area, it could affect the SMA's habitat values. The SMA contributes to watershed functions including sediment removal, flood attenuation, groundwater recharge and discharge and shoreline protection. It also provides regionally important habitat for moose, caribou, grizzly and black bears, beaver, muskrat, fox, lynx, wolf, wolverine, and many

other furbearers. Cow moose use the area for calving in spring. It is especially significant for waterfowl, and supports an abundance of breeding, post breeding, molting and migrating ducks. The area is also an important area for local people to fish for northern pike.

Mineral exploration and extraction involves many activities that can negatively affect these values in sensitive wetland environments. Mining often involves building roads, clearing vegetation, trenching, drilling, extracting ore, using explosives and/or heavy machinery, the use and drainage of water, and introducing increased human noise and activity into an area.

In the areas of the special management area that contain permafrost, surface disturbance can lead to melting, drainage of water and loss of wetland function. Land clearing can increase flow of storm-water to wetlands, while road building and crossings can create flow constrictions. A combination of these changes can lead to increased ponding and greater water level fluctuation or hydrologic drought, dependant on the scale of development. Changes to water quality or quantity could detrimentally effect the waterfowl, shorebirds, and northern pike populations as well as alter the wetland functions for all wildlife that frequent the habitat protection area.

Land and vegetation clearing can reduce important habitat areas and remove protective cover for wildlife. New roads can introduce access and lead to increased predation on species that currently use the area for protection and shelter. Land clearing and industrial development can also lead to greater inputs of organic and inorganic pollutants, especially during snowmelt and periods of heavy precipitation. Declines in the diversity of the native plant and animal communities and an increase in invasive plant species that can tolerate stressed conditions have been documented where wetlands have been impacted by human development.

Increased human presence, noise and mining activity in the special management area, including the use of heavy machinery and/or explosives, could disturb wildlife in the area and alter their behaviour and use of the special management area.

All the above activities could reduce the area's capability to support wildlife. They could also negatively impact the use of the area by Selkirk First Nations people. It is therefore concluded that mining in the special management area would not be compatible with the area's management objectives of the ŁWHPA.

Recommendation 2

The Yukon government should permanently withdraw all Yukon government lands in the Habitat Protection Area from locating, prospecting or mining under the Yukon *Quartz Mining Act* and the Yukon *Placer Mining Act* and from staking out a location for the mining of coal and from issuance of a licence to explore for coal pursuant to the *Territorial Lands Act*.

Selkirk First Nation should make similar permanent withdrawals of all Selkirk First Nations Land in the Habitat Protection Area.

Oil and Gas Resources

The ŁWHPA is not within any known oil and gas basin and there are currently no oil and gas activities in the vicinity of the ŁWHPA. Given the current state of knowledge of the region's geology, it is extremely unlikely that oil and gas resources will ever be found in the habitat protection area or anywhere close to it. Since there are not any known oil and gas basins in the area, it is almost impossible to envision that an oil and gas disposition would ever occur there.

The majority of the ŁWHPA is comprised of 2,776 hectares of SFN Settlement A land (R-3A). The ŁWHPA also includes a 2 hectare parcel of settlement B (S-122B) land and 428 hectares of Yukon government land. Selkirk First Nation has total ownership of the surface and subsurface on all settlement A land within the ŁWHPA.

Recommendation 3

The Yukon government should permanently withdraw all Yukon government lands in the Habitat Protection Area from disposition under the Yukon *Oil and Gas Act*.

Selkirk First Nation should make similar permanent withdrawals of all Selkirk First Nations Land in the Habitat Protection Area.

Water Resources

Water resources both within and around the ŁWHPA are generally considered to be pristine. While the maintenance of water resources is a key component to ultimately protect aquatic habitat, influences outside the boundaries of the ŁWHPA have the potential to affect water resources in the planning area. Change to either the quality or quantity of surface waters in streams that feed the wetlands, ponds and lakes, whether from natural disturbances or human activities, can have a significant effect.

Specific concerns raised in the public workshop were largely associated with issues outside the current boundaries of the ŁWHPA. The steering committee and workshop participants felt that establishing water management objectives for ŁWHPA without some consideration of adjacent activities would be a weakness in the plan. Issues such as groundwater contamination through the application of road salt, erosion from trail development, impacts of ATV's on terrain, agriculture encroachment, forest fires and impacts of beaver dams, especially in the Łútsäw drainage, were identified as concerns. While some of these concerns can be resolved in the current plan, others may be more difficult to quantify. Nonetheless it was felt that a number of options to assess and manage ecological impacts from land and water based disturbances within the watershed could be pursued. These options may include but are not limited to providing comment on current and future land and water use assessment processes and through the participation of Selkirk First Nation people in any future watershed or land use planning process.

Recommendation 4

Ensure water quality and quantity within the ŁWHPA remains in a natural state and monitor if necessary. Adverse or negative ecological impacts related to changes in the water quality and/or quantity in the ŁWHPA from disturbances outside the boundary of the ŁWHPA will be minimized through coordinated government responses currently available under regulatory and review processes that apply. Any work that does take place around the ŁWHPA should adhere to *Best Management Practises of Works Affecting Water in Yukon* (YG, 2011).

Recreation and Tourism Development

ŁWHPA and its wetlands, lakes and ponds, while currently not popular Yukon destinations, do provide recreation opportunities to both local and regionally based visitors. Visitations during the summer are largely from people who travel the North Klondike Highway who are curious enough to stop, attracted by the road signage. In some instances, those with vehicles that are self contained such as RV's may stop and overnight. To others who have some background knowledge of the area, the main attraction is the wildlife (waterfowl) viewing potential of the area. Tthe Ndu Mān is the only waterbody in the habitat protection area to have a boat launch.

Recommendation 5

Discourage the use of campfires and overnight camping, as no facilities are provided in the ŁWHPA. Prohibit commercial recreation that does not conform to the objectives as outlined in Schedule "C" (Section 1.4) of Chapter 10 of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement. Signage should be posted at the ŁWHPA notifying the public of the significance of the area as a habitat protection area and that dumping is not allowed and informs the public that the Pelly Crossing municipal dump is available nearby for waste disposal.

Residential Development

Residential development in the ŁWHPA has the potential to affect a number of natural and cultural features in the wetland. In order to preserve the wetland character and the long-term conservation of fish and wildlife habitat, any development will need to be considered carefully in light of the objectives of this management plan. The conservation of both the natural and cultural resources in the ŁWHPA needs to be the priority in the consideration of any residential development.

Recommendation 6

All proposed residential development must be consistent with the objectives outlined in Schedule C of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement. Any proposed residential development will be addressed case by case and will be regulated under Selkirk First Nation regulatory and review processes.

Access and Roads

The general public as well as Selkirk First Nation members regularly use existing access points to Łútsäw Mā, and Tthe Ndu Mān. The issue of access, road and trail development was a primary focus in discussions at the public workshop. Currently the Yukon Quest trail bisects the ŁWHPA and provides access for snowmachines to the ŁWHPA by the public during the winter. There was support to maintain this trail in its present condition without improvements other than for general maintenance, for the 5-year term of the plan.

Workshop participants felt a need to discourage and prohibit where possible the establishment of new roads, including winter roads, and trails into and through the ŁWHPA. By discouraging and prohibiting ground access other than on the existing trail, additional access points into ŁWHPA will not be developed. It was also felt that, during the summer, ATV's should also be discouraged from using the wet areas to avoid habitat disturbances. Access for winter fuel wood cutting will be allowed on existing trails. Motorized boats are not commonly used in the area and are currently not of concern; canoes are more commonly used to access the lake.

Recommendation 7

Motorized vehicles should be confined to existing winter and summer trails in the ŁWHPA. The parties may impose conditions to further manage access as needed and when such tools are available. In addition activities such as camping, campfires and the development of new access should be discouraged in the ŁWHPA to prevent damaging habitat.

Any new roads or trails created to access fire wood will be managed and regulated by Selkirk First Nation and Yukon government. An assessment on the most efficient route and least disturbance to habitat would be completed beforehand and road access would only be permitted in the winter months when ground conditions were suitable. The present public access point (Tthe Ndu Mān) should be posted with signage notifying the public about the lack of facilities and of their responsibilities when accessing the area such as there is no dumping and the Pelly Crossing municipal dump is available near by for waste disposal.

Other Linear Developments

Linear developments such as railways, oil and gas pipelines, high voltage electrical transmission lines and other developments of this nature have the potential to directly or indirectly affect fish and wildlife and their habitat in the ŁWHPA. It was felt that developments such as these should not occur within the boundaries of the ŁWHPA to avoid direct habitat loss and disturbance to wildlife. Any proposed linear development near the wetland would require the design, implementation and coordination of large-scale multi-disciplinary environmental impact assessment studies intended to identify and mitigate impacts on the ŁWHPA.

Recommendation 8

Linear developments that do not conform to the objectives outlined in Schedule "C" of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement shall not be sanctioned within the boundaries of the ŁWHPA. Any linear development will only occur within the Klondike Highway right-ofway corridor and should be on the west side of the highway.

Heritage Resources

The ŁWHPA was historically important to First Nations as resting place where fish were plentiful and time was spent catching and drying fish and trading mail. Elders expressed a need to teach the cultural significance of artifacts found in the ŁWHPA to youth, and link the present to historic methods of survival. Currently, 18 archaeological sites are identified in the ŁWHPA, in addition to numerous historic / traditional occupation sites. Interpretive and curriculum material developed from the heritage research will be used in education programs for Selkirk First Nation youth. As per section 13.3 of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement, the Selkirk First Nation government owns and manages heritage sites on settlement lands in the ŁWHPA. On non-settlement land within the ŁWHPA, moveable ethnographic resources are owned and managed by the Selkirk First Nation government; the Government of Yukon will work together with the Selkirk First Nation government to manage and research heritage sites on non-settlement lands. Archaeological research will be carried out so as to provide training and employment opportunities for Selkirk First Nation students.

Recommendation 9

To protect known and undiscovered heritage sites, the usage of motorized vehicles should be confined to existing winter and summer trails in the ŁWHPA. In addition, activities such as camping, campfires and the development of "new" trails should be discouraged in the ŁWHPA to prevent damaging both heritage artifacts and habitat. It is recommended that an archaeological survey of the area be completed if new heritage resources are found. Interpretive panels with information on the importance of the area both traditionally and ecologically may, as opportunities allow, be put up in Big Jonathan House in Pelly Crossing.

All archaeological studies in the ŁWHPA will be performed in collaboration with the Selkirk First Nation government as stipulated under Chapter 13 of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement. Archaeological research will be carried out to provide opportunities for Selkirk First Nation students to participate.

Fisheries

Northern pike is the only known fish species to inhabit the ŁWHPA, specifically in Łútsäw Mān, Tthe Ndu Mān and Dezra Mān. Recreational anglers, some attracted by road signage angle for this species, primarily during the summer. Access by snowmachine especially during the spring, allows for ice fishing opportunities. Non First Nation recreational anglers are required by law to have a Yukon Angling License that sets catch limits, gear and season requirements.

The participants of the spring subsistence fishery access their traditional fishing site between Łútsäw Mān and Tthe Ndu Mān by foot from the North Klondike Highway. The fishery occurs for a few weeks during May coincident with the spring freshet. There is limited information on current or historic harvests.

Recommendation 10

A study was completed in 2006 to determine the status of the northern pike population and potential causal factors of the perceived decline in pike abundance. The study concluded that the previously blocked spawning run between Łútsäw Mān and Tthe Ndu Mān had been re-established and that the population appeared robust, but that large pike were seldom seen in the lakes. Continued monitoring of the pike population and periodic reconnaissance of the spawning creek for barriers to fish movement should be conducted if further concerns arise. No commercial fishing, domestic fishing or fish farming licences shall be issued for any lake or stream in the ŁWHPA. Stocking of fish in lakes contained in the ŁWHPA shall not be allowed. Information about harvest levels should be included at the May Gathering, to continue to disseminate information about this unique and important population.

Wildlife

Selkirk First Nation people will continue to use and encourage the practice of cultural activities in the ŁWHPA. Cultural activities in the past have included hunting, fishing, trapping, free grazing of animals, berry picking, medicinal plant harvesting, fuel wood gathering and habitat stewardship activities.

Recommendation 11

Access to harvesting wildlife shall be regulated by the Selkirk First Nation Government on all Category A portions of the ŁWHPA. Harvests of wildlife on the Yukon government portion of the ŁWHPA shall be under laws of general application. Current trapline concession holder(s) will continue to have access to furbearers within the ŁWHPA.

Agriculture

Previous agricultural use in the ŁWHPA was limited to a single agricultural lease for the grazing of horses, which has since expired. In order to protect habitat and archaeological resources, workshop participants did not want any further agriculture or grazing interests sanctioned in the ŁWHPA. The majority of the refuse at the site of the expired grazing lease (fencing posts, barbed wire and garage) has been removed from the area.

Recommendation 12

No commercial agriculture or grazing interests should be sanctioned in the ŁWHPA. Occasional grazing of horses can be sanctioned provided it conforms to the management objectives of this plan. The remaining refuse at the site of the expired grazing lease should be removed and disposed of appropriately.

Review of the Plan

The effective date of this management plan is the date on which it is approved by Environment Yukon and Selkirk First Nation. The five year review of the ŁWHPA management plan was completed in March 2012. The Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement provides that a review of the management plan to occur within five years of the initial approval and no later than every ten years thereafter. The parties agree to complete the second review of the plan by 2018.

Recommendation 13

Any proposed amendments of the approved management plan shall be referred to the Selkirk Renewable Resources Council for its review and recommendations.

Implementation

RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	AGENCY	TIMELINE
Forest Resources and Fire Suppression		
Selkirk First Nation will continue to issue wood cutting permits with terms and conditions that are consistent with objectives of the management plan.	SFNG	As required
These include limiting access and wood cutting to the winter months when the ground is frozen which will decrease damage to the ecological integrity of the wetland.		
Mineral Resources		
The Yukon government should permanently withdraw all Yukon government lands in the Habitat Protection Area from locating, prospecting or mining under the Yukon <i>Quartz Mining Act</i> and the Yukon <i>Placer Mining Act</i> and from staking out a location for the mining of coal and from issuance of a licence to explore for coal pursuant to the <i>Territorial Lands Act</i> .	SFNG, YG	Within first year
Selkirk First Nation should make similar permanent withdrawals of all Selkirk First Nations Land in the Habitat Protection Area.		
Oil and Gas Resources		
The Yukon government should permanently withdraw all Yukon government lands in the Habitat Protection Area from disposition under the Yukon <i>Oil and Gas Act</i> .	SFNG, YG	Within first year
Selkirk First Nation should make similar permanent withdrawals of all Selkirk First Nations Land in the Habitat Protection Area.		
Water Resources		
Ensure water quality and quantity within the ŁWHPA remains in a natural state and monitor when necessary.	SFNG, YG	As required
Recreation and Tourism Development		
Signage should be posted at the ŁWHPA notifying the public of the significance of the area as an HPA and that dumping is not allowed and that the Pelly Crossing municipal dump is available nearby for waste disposal.	SFNG, YG	Within next five years
Residential Development		
Any proposed residential development will be addressed case by case and will be regulated under Selkirk First Nation regulatory and review processes.	SFNG	As required.

RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	AGENCY	TIMELINE
Access and Roads		
Motorized vehicles should be confined to existing winter and summer trails in the ŁWHPA. The parties may impose conditions to further manage access as needed and where appropriate tool are available. In addition activities such as camping, campfires and the development of new access should be discouraged in the ŁWHPA to prevent damaging habitat.	SFNG, YG	As required.
Any new roads or trails created to access fire wood will be managed and regulated by Selkirk First Nation and Yukon government. An assessment on the most efficient route and least disturbance to habitat would be completed beforehand and road access would only be permitted in the winter months when ground conditions were suitable.		
Other Linear Developments		
Linear developments that do not conform to the objectives outlined in Schedule C of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement shall not be sanctioned within the boundaries of the ŁWHPA. Any linear development will only occur within the Klondike Highway right-of- way corridor and should be on the west side of the highway.	SFNG, YG	As required
Heritage Resources		
To protect known and undiscovered heritage sites, the usage of motorized vehicles should be confined to existing winter and summer trails in the ŁWHPA. In addition, activities such as camping, campfires and the development of "new" trails should be discouraged in the ŁWHPA to prevent damaging both heritage artefacts and habitat.	SFNG, YG	Within next five years
It is recommended that an archaeological survey of the area be completed if new heritage resources are found.		
Interpretive panels with information on the importance of the area both traditionally and ecologically may, as opportunities allow, be put up in Big Jonathan House in Pelly Crossing.		

RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	AGENCY	TIMELINE
Fisheries		
Continue monitoring of the pike population and conduct periodic reconnaissance of the spawning creek for barriers to fish movement conducted if further concerns arise.	SFNG, YG	As required.
No commercial fishing, domestic fishing or fish farming licences shall be issued for any lake or stream in the ŁWHPA. Stocking of fish in lakes contained in the ŁWHPA shall not be allowed. Information about harvest levels should be included in May Gathering, to continue to disseminate information about this unique and important population.		
Use Traditional Law, if required, for the restriction of the subsistence fishery in the ŁWHPA if the northern pike population declines.		
Wildlife		
Access for harvesting of wildlife shall be regulated by the Selkirk First Nation government on all Category A portions of the ŁWHPA. Harvests of wildlife on the Yukon government portion of the ŁWHPA shall be under laws of general application. Current trapline concession holder(s) will continue to have access to furbearers within the ŁWHPA in accordance with the SFN Final Agreement. Collect baseline information when opportunities allow from traditional and other sources on fish and wildlife habitat in the ŁWHPA including habitat condition and the need for habitat enhancement. Information about harvest levels should be included in May gathering, to continue to disseminate information about this unique and important population.	SFNG, YG	As required.
Agriculture		
No commercial agriculture or grazing interests should be sanctioned in the ŁWHPA. Occasional grazing of horses can be sanctioned provided it conforms to the management objectives of this plan. The remaining refuse at the site of the expired grazing lease should be removed and disposed of appropriately.	SFNG, YG	Within next five years.
Review of the Plan	·	
Any proposed amendments of the approved management plan shall be referred to the Selkirk Renewable Resources Council for its review and recommendations.	SFNG, YG	2018
Complete a five-year review of this plan.		

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Appendix 1 - Minto (Hetsutthat) Region Land Use Plan June 2002

Use	Activity	Management	Recommended work
Wood cutting	 R3A small trees, mostly burned some green stands Personal use west of McCabe Hills from policeman's point to southern boundary Commercial potential east of McCabe Hills No commercial west of McCabe Hills Protect Lhutsaw Creek, and link with special management area, limited personal use 	 Based on: Traditional/Dooli Forestry principles Timber harvest plan identify plots etc. Guidelines for personal cutting Sharing accord Northern Tutchone identification Monitoring and enforcement 	 Record Dooli/Traditional Law List forestry principles Develop timber harvest plan Develop guidelines for personal cutting Identify protected areas to leave alone Put up signs Ensure continued supply for Minto residents
Use	Activity	Management	Recommended work
Wood cutting	 R43B small trees half popular; residential area and lodge Residential use NT personal use No commercial R41B sheep road access not much wood, camping old cabin Protect for sheep No cutting 	 Follow guidelines for personal cutting Area for NT personal use Leave area for natural regrowth for sheep	 Develop timber harvest plan Look for area for NT personal use and show with signs Make sure residential values protected
Use	Activity	Management	Recommended work
Wood cutting	 R10B, R11B burnt and good wood access road Commercial away from road NT personal use near road No cutting across from Lhutsaw Lake/Wetlands 	 Commercial cutting areas Personal use corridor near road Prohibit cutting in narrow corridor across from Lhutsaw/ Wetlands Timber harvest plan 	 Develop timber harvest plan Survey commercial cutting areas Designate personal use corridor Set up no-cutting corridor across from Lhutsaw and erect signs

Use	Activity	Management	Recommended work
Wood cutting	 R6A, R40B, R44B ice bridge, winter road, cabin logs, moose habitat, future residences, view from Minto, salmon habitat, mine might reopen Habitat protection Commercial cabin logs in (near?) future Firewood in future No cutting at present 	 Moose habitat areas Salmon habitat protection Timber harvest plan View corridor for Yukon River Commercial status of cabin logs 	 Identify key moose habitats Identify salmon habitats Develop timber harvest plan Status and inventory of cabin logs Review plan status if mine reopens
Use	Activity	Management	Recommended work
Cabin and house building	 R34B people live there interest in moving back Cabins/houses G.A. meeting house Treatment centre R40B, R6A, R3A, R11B Leave for future residence potential 	 SFN lands policy Minto community plan Land administration by SFN Dooli/traditional way Sustainable development 	 Review lands policy Develop Minto Community Development Plan Set up SFN Lands Committee
Use	Activity	Management	Recommended work
Commercial Agriculture	 All R blocks in Minto planning area No commercial agriculture will be permitted until proper soil samples done Pilot projects in agriculture will be done by SFN first 	 SFN lands policy Minto community plan Land administration by SFN Dooli/traditional way Sustainable development 	• Look for good agricultural pilot project to be undertaken by SFN

Appendix 2 - Lhutsaw Wetland HPA, Schedule C

1.0 Establishment

- 1.1 The boundaries of the Lhutsaw Wetland Habitat Protection Area (the "Area") shall be as set out on map "Lhutsaw Wetland Habitat Protection Area, (LWHPA)" in Appendix B - Maps, which forms a separate volume to this Agreement.
 - 1.1.1 For greater certainty, the Area comprises that portion of Parcel R-3A and the whole of Parcel
 -122B and that portion of Non-Settlement Land designated as Lhutsaw Wetland Habitat Protection
 Area on Territorial Resource Base Maps 115 I/10 and 115 I/15, dated July 21, 1997, in Appendix
 B Maps, which forms a separate volume to this Agreement.
- 1.2 The Yukon shall designate the Area as a protected habitat area pursuant to the Wildlife Act, R.S.Y. 1986, c.178 as soon as practicable after the Effective Date of this Agreement.
- 1.3 The designation as a protected habitat area shall not be removed from any part of the Area except with the agreement of Government and the Selkirk First Nation.
- 1.4 Subject to 1.4.1, Canada shall withdraw the mines and minerals in the Non-Settlement Land portions of the Area from locating, prospecting or mining under the Yukon Quartz Mining Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. Y-4 and the Yukon Placer Mining Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. Y-3, from exploration and development under the Canadian Petroleum Resources Act, R.S.C.1985 (2d Supp.), c. 36, and from staking out a location for the mining of coal and from issuance of a licence to explore for coal pursuant to the Territorial Lands Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. T-7, for 24 months from the Effective Date of this Agreement or until a management plan is approved under 5.0, whichever is earlier.
 - 1.4.1 The withdrawal shall be subject to:
 - 1.4.1.1 recorded mineral claims and leases under the Yukon Quartz Mining Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. Y-4 and recorded placer mining claims and leases to prospect under the Yukon Placer Mining Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. Y-3, existing on the Effective Date;
 - 1.4.1.2 oil and gas rights, interests and privileges under the Canadian Petroleum Resources Act, R.S.C. 1985 (2d Supp.), c. 36, existing on the Effective Date;
 - 1.4.1.3 rights granted under section 8 of the Territorial Lands Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. T-7, existing on the Effective Date; and
 - 1.4.1.4 new licenses, permits or other rights which may be granted in respect of an interest described in 1.4.1.1, 1.4.1.2 or 1.4.1.3.

2.0 Fish and Wildlife

- 2.1 For greater certainty, the Selkirk First Nation and Selkirk People have, within the Area, all rights set out in Chapter 16 Fish and Wildlife.
- 2.2 For greater certainty, the powers and responsibilities of Government and of the Selkirk First Nation for the management of Fish and Wildlife in the Area and their habitats shall be in accordance with Chapter 16 Fish and Wildlife and with the Selkirk First Nation selfgovernment agreement.

3.0 Forest Resources

- 3.1 In this schedule, "Forest Resources" has the same meaning as in Chapter 17 Forest Resources.
- 3.2 The harvesting of Forest Resources in the Area shall be subject to the provisions of the management plan approved pursuant to 5.0.

4.0 Management Plan

- 4.1 A steering committee shall be established to prepare a management plan for the Area.
- 4.2 The steering committee shall be comprised of four members of whom two shall be nominated by the Selkirk First Nation and two shall be nominated by Government.
- 4.3 The management plan shall be consistent with the following objectives:
 - 4.3.1 the Conservation of Fish and Wildlife and Fish and Wildlife habitat for the benefit of Yukon residents;
 - 4.3.2 recognition of the importance of the Area to Selkirk People and protection of the use of the Area by Selkirk People;
 - 4.3.3 the protection of the full diversity of Wildlife populations and their habitats from activities that could reduce the Area's capability to support Wildlife; and
 - 4.3.4 the encouragement of public awareness of and appreciation for the natural resources of the Area.
- 4.4 The steering committee shall consider and the management plan may address matters pertaining to the management of the Area including:
 - 4.4.1 Fish and Wildlife management and protection;
 - 4.4.2 habitat management and protection;
 - 4.4.3 land use;
 - 4.4.4 recreational use;
 - 4.4.5 access to and use of the Area for commercial purposes;
 - 4.4.6 harvesting of Forest Resources;
 - 4.4.7 scientific research;
 - 4.4.8 traditional knowledge, customs and culture of Yukon Indian People in connection with the Area;
 - 4.4.9 the role and views of Yukon First Nation elders in the development of the management plan;
 - 4.4.10 measures to enhance public awareness and appreciation of the Area;
 - 4.4.11 recommendations respecting any withdrawal of portions of the mines and minerals of the Area from locating, prospecting or mining under the Yukon Quartz Mining Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. Y-4 and the Yukon Placer Mining Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. Y-3, from exploration and development under the Canada Petroleum Resources Act, R.S.C. 1985 (2d Supp.), c. 36, and from staking out a location for the mining of coal and from issuance of a licence to explore for coal pursuant to the Territorial Lands Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. T-7.
- 4.5 The preparation of the management plan shall include a process for public consultation, which for greater certainty includes consultation with Selkirk People.

- 4.6 The steering committee shall make best efforts to recommend the management plan to the Selkirk First Nation and the Minister within two years of the Effective Date of this Agreement.
 - 4.6.1 If the members of the steering committee are unable to reach agreement on the provisions to be included in the management plan, the Minister or the Selkirk First Nation may refer the matter to dispute resolution pursuant to 26.4.0.

5.0 Approval and Review of the Management Plan

- 5.1 The Minister and the Selkirk First Nation shall jointly approve the management plan.
- 5.2 If the Minister and the Selkirk First Nation are unable to agree on the provisions of the management plan, the Minister or the Selkirk First Nation may refer the matter to the dispute resolution process under 26.3.0.
 - 5.2.1 Nothing in this schedule shall be construed to confer upon an arbitrator appointed pursuant to 5.2, any power to determine resources to be provided in connection with the Area by either the Selkirk First Nation or Government.
- 5.3 The management plan which is jointly approved pursuant to 5.1 or decided upon pursuant to 5.2 shall be the "Approved Management Plan".
- 5.4 Government and the Selkirk First Nation shall review the Approved Management Plan no later than five years after its initial approval and no later than every 10 years thereafter.
- 5.5 Government and the Selkirk First Nation shall refer any proposed amendments to the Approved Management Plan to the Selkirk Renewable Resources Council for its review and recommendations.

6.0 Implementation

- 6.1 The Area shall be managed in accordance with the Approved Management Plan.
- 6.2 Prior to the approval of a management plan pursuant to 5.0, the Area shall be managed in accordance with the objectives set out at 4.3.

