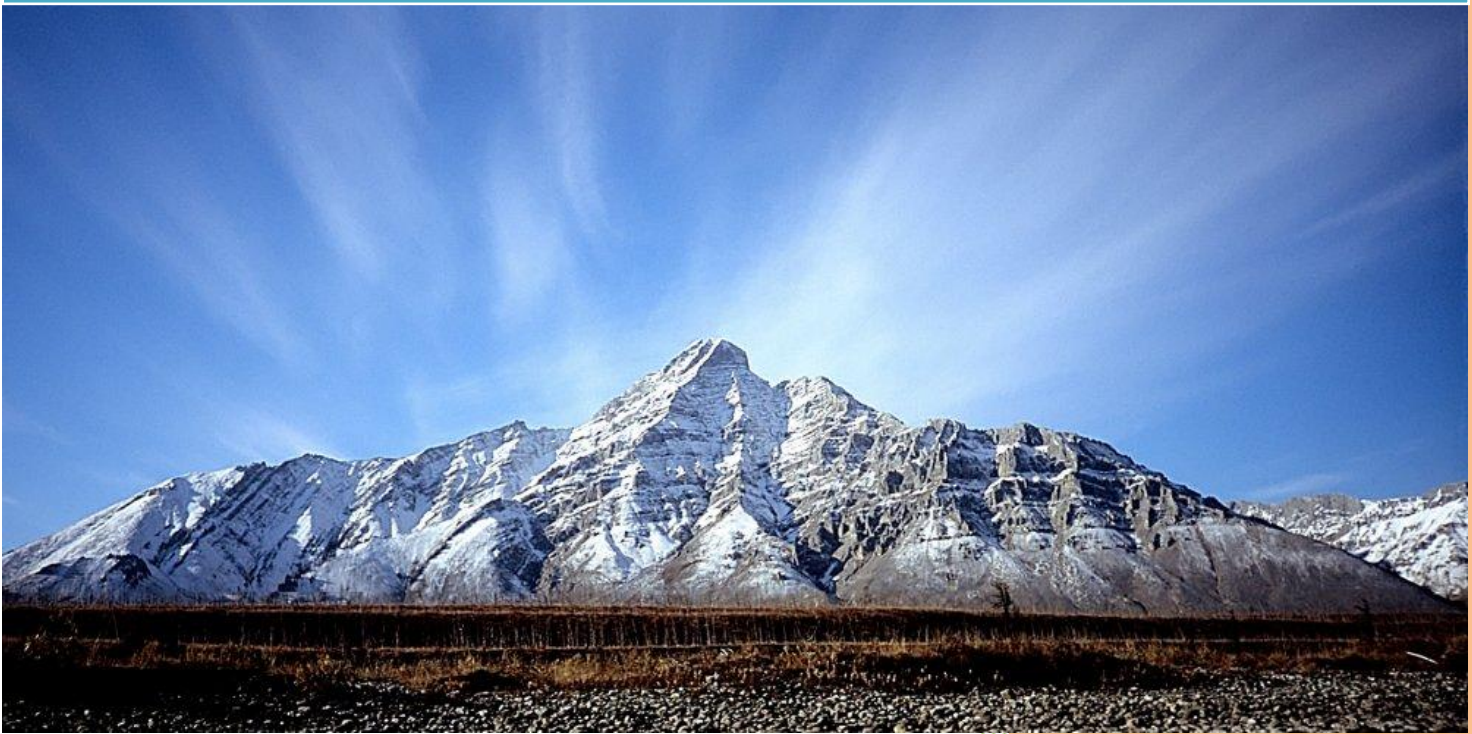


2010

Review of Public Consultation: Peel Watershed



On Behalf of CPAWS, YCS, WTAY

11/18/2010



1 Background

Over the summer of 2010, the Yukon government conducted a consultation of Yukoners and others regarding the Peel Watershed area. In October of 2010, DataPath Systems was contracted by CPAWS-Yukon, Yukon Conservations Society (YCS) and The Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon (WTAY) to conduct a third-party objective review of the consultation comments. DataPath Systems is an independent, full service market research company located in Marsh Lake Yukon. DataPath has no vested interest in the results of this study, and has taken an unbiased approach to analyze the comments.

This report is primarily qualitative in nature. The findings in this report are representative only of those individuals who took the time to either attend a public meeting, comment on the Yukon government consultation website, or write or fax to the government. As with all open public consultations of this nature, these consultations do not constitute a representative survey of Yukoners and should not be extrapolated to include all Yukoners.

DataPath was not present at any public meeting and is basing this report on the meeting transcripts provided by the Yukon Government and online comments. In this report, only individual comments are included – prepared comments by either YTG, their consultant, or other associations or business groups are not included. This analysis includes public comments about the desired future for the Peel watershed, but excludes specific comments on the Peel Watershed Planning Commission's Recommended Plan, and comments on specific mapping issues.

2 Consultation Overview

- ▶ Public meetings were held in 8 Yukon communities, including 1 in Whitehorse (September 2010)
 - In the 7 communities a total of approximately 212 people attended
 - In Whitehorse between 150 - 170 people attended
- ▶ A Yukon government website was set up to allow comments, organized under 7 themed areas.
 - A total of 897 comments were posted, however, this represents no more than 228 individuals who registered on the system.

3 Methodology

Step One: A review of the website comments was undertaken and comments were coded on various aspects of the respondent's intent. While often the same person responded with similar comments across various questions, we have limited the attempt to quantify the findings to just the first question on theme one and the section entitled "other comments". Even though the online form was not a survey, limiting the reporting to individual questions allows for some level of confidence in reporting the opinions of the respondents. (both the size of the land to be preserved and their motivation was covered in Theme One Q 1 and Other Comments. Therefore these were reviewed with duplicates removed.

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Step Two: For each topic area, a review of the public meeting comments and written letters and petitions is included. They are reported separately because combining comments from different methodologies is not acceptable research practice.

4 Findings

4.1 Overall sentiment for the protection levels of the Peel Watershed

Level of Protection	Public meetings (n=82)	Online comments (n=201)	Solicited (Letters/Post cards)	Petitions
None (0)	2%	13%	37 post cards 6 Association letters	
Less than 80% as recommended in the plan, but more than 0	2%	4%		
At 80% or as stated in the plan	4%	7%		
All or 100%	76%	71%	19 student letters 12 Association Letters	982
Unknown/did not state	16%	5%		

Comparing the two methods that were used to generate independent attitudes (public meetings and online comments), there are consistent findings:

- In both the public meetings and the online comments, only a very small percentage supported the current Recommended plan of approximately 80% protection.
- The majority in each group supports 100% protection of the Peel Watershed, 76% and 71% respectively.
 - The percentage may have even been slightly higher in the public meetings, since 16% did not address specific allocations, but the majority of those who did speak, spoke of strong protection. Removing the those who did not state a specific percentage of protection from the counts, shows 90% speaking out for 100% protection.
- The online form generated relatively more comments in favour of no protection from industrial development and roads in the Peel Watershed compared to the public meetings, however, they still only represented 13% of the comments content.
 - Removing the unknowns from the counts in the online form data, shows 74% in favour of 100% protection and 14% for none.

The solicited methods of generating comments (letters, postcards, and petitions) lean heavily towards 100% protection of the Peel Watershed.

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- While 37 post cards were received supporting industrial development, 982 names on petitions were received in support of 100% protection of the region.
- Comparing the volume of association comments, there was a ratio of 2 to 1 in favour of total or strong protection of the Peel Watershed. (12 vs. 6)

4.2 Motivations for Land Use Allocation Preferences

	Public Meetings (n=82)	Online comments	
	% of people	Total (n=201)	Yukoners (n=116)
		% of posted comments	
First Nation Culture/Traditions	43%	7%	8%
Concern for Pollution/Damage to Land/Environment	35%	9%	13%
Protect for Future Generations	20%	13%	15%
To keep the Pristine Wilderness	13%	17%	15%
To Support the position made by First Nations	9%	17%	16%
Area is Not Compatible with mining/roads	7%	21%	20%
Tourism has an economic and social value	7%	10%	10%
Wildlife habitat/health	6%	11%	13%
A Canadian and World Asset	5%	3%	2%
The Economic Value of Mining Industry	4%	12%	13%
Mining is not the Economic Value they say it is	4%	7%	10%
Mining industry can Self-Regulate	4%	6%	5%
Just want it protected (non-specific)	2%	9%	7%
The plan is Balanced as it is	2%	5%	8%
Concern for Climate change	1%	0%	1%
There is Enough Other Land for mining	1%	2%	1%
Everyone Uses the Minerals mined	0	2%	3%

The motivations which prompted respondents to speak out differed by the methodology they used to reply.

- Those attending a public meeting were significantly more likely to be motivated by First Nations use of the land and by concern for the long term health of the land. Combined, those two motivators were included by over 3/4 of all attendees.
 - Two additional major motivators in the public meetings was to protect the land for future generations and to keep the whole area pristine and unchanged.
- Those in favour of protection, who responded online, were more likely to have general comments which were lead by a feeling that mining and roads were not compatible in the Watershed.
 - Two other strong motivators for the online respondents were to keep the region pristine and to support the First Nations position of 100% protection.

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- While 12% commented on the economic value of the mining industry and its value to the Yukon economy, 10% commented on the value of the tourism industry, and included both the economic value as well as value that tourism has on awareness and the value of that on conservation.
 - In addition, 7% showed a lack of trust in the stated economic value of mining.
- Comparing online comments from Yukoners vs. non-Yukoner shows very little difference.
 - Yukoners are slightly more likely to be concerned about the pollution or damage created by the mining industry.

5 Conclusions

This report comments only on the attitudes of people who voluntarily came forward to express their opinions at a public meeting or on-line. This sample is not random, nor is it designed to be representative of Yukoners. It only represents those who took the time and made an effort to comment either at a public meeting or online.

The format used to collect attitudes was inconsistent between the public meetings and the online form. In addition, the online form was complex, and generated a combination of duplicated comments and non-specific comments due to the wording of the questions. DataPath has removed duplication in the results quoted above and has used responses only when they were specific enough to unambiguously reveal the respondent's intent.

However, reviewing the actual comments of over 383 people (in the online and public meetings) plus 982 petitions shows extremely strong support for 100% protection of the Peel Watershed.

- At least 3/4 support 100% protection (and 100% of the 982 petitions)
- Only approximately 10 -15% support a compromise position
- Only 3 - 15% support no protection or restrictions

The graph below is a simple illustration to show the overwhelming support of protection for the Peel Watershed.

