

Walk Softly

Newsletter of the Yukon
Conservation Society
June 1999



INSIDE: rocks ♦ trees ♦ water ♦ air

What's Happening at YCS?

Katimaviktim Released!

YCS is saying goodbye to another successful Katimavik participant. Wendy Schneider has been helping out in the YCS office since March and is now on her way home to Alberta. Thanks a lot Wendy; we'll miss you.

Forestry Slide Show

We had a great turn-out for the maiden voyage of our forestry slide show, with lots of comments and discussion. (Thanks again to Suat for donating the Alpine Bakery space!) We're looking forward to taking the slide show out to the communities over the next few months.

Bike Swap

On Saturday May 15, wheels were turning at Raven Recycling, site of Whitehorse's first Bike Swap. Mountain bikes, road bikes, kids bikes, accessories...the sale offered something for everyone and many great purchases were made. Thanks to Kirsten, Rosa, Michael, Ian, Sadie and Philippe for making it happen.

Mining Watch Canada

The first board and staff meeting of Mining Watch Canada took place in May. Stay tuned for more on, "The Real Costs of Mining."

DAP Workshops

YCS and CPAWS cohosted a half day session in May for First Nations, NGOs, Renewable Resource Councils and others to update people on DAP

and highlight some key issues. Everyone then tromped over to a day and a half session hosted by the Yukon government on environmental assessment experiences in other parts of the country. YCS is also developing some DAP case studies. We are reviewing projects that were assessed under CEAA and looking at how some of the problems might be dealt with differently under DAP.

Leadership Training

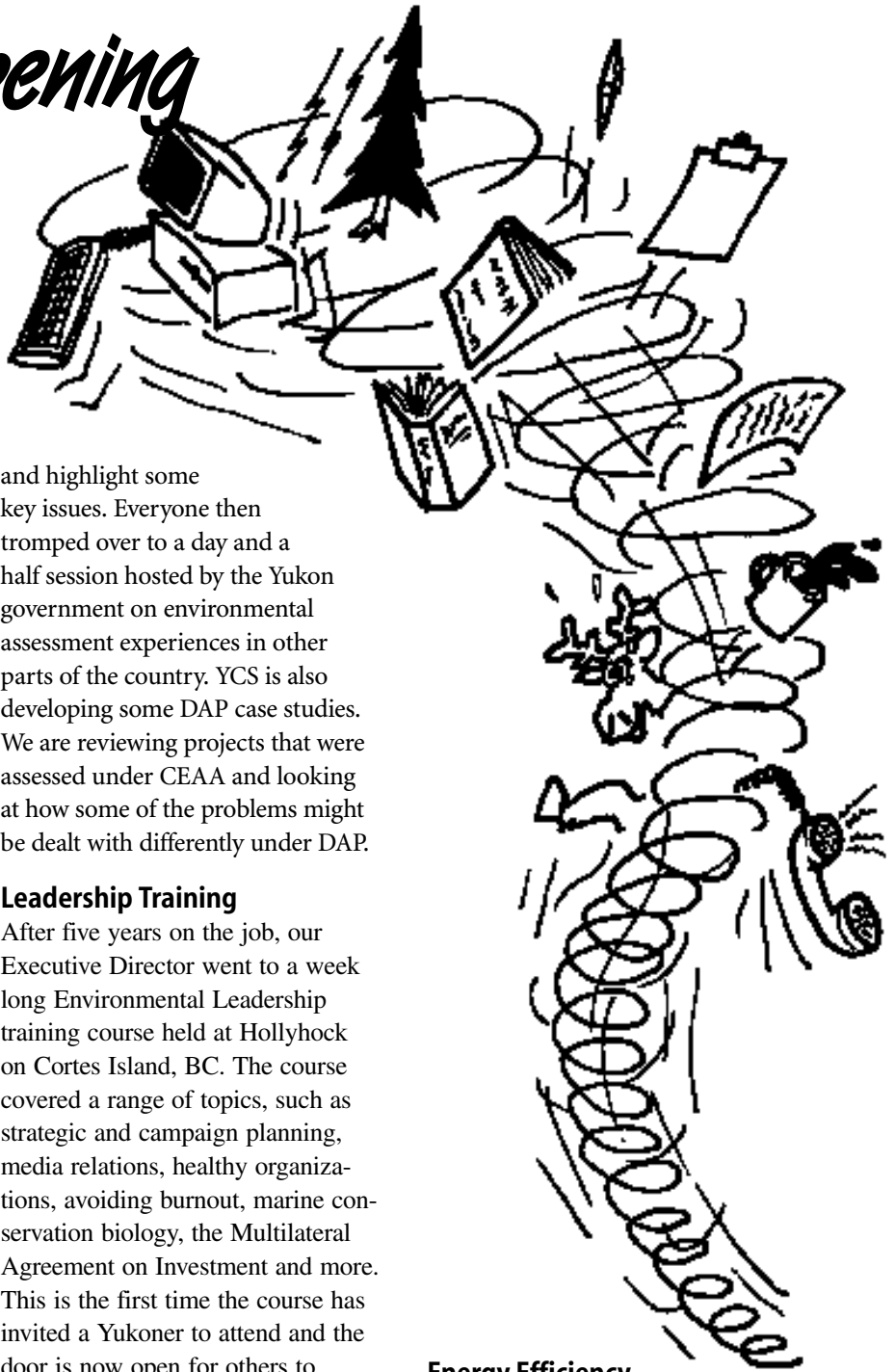
After five years on the job, our Executive Director went to a week long Environmental Leadership training course held at Hollyhock on Cortes Island, BC. The course covered a range of topics, such as strategic and campaign planning, media relations, healthy organizations, avoiding burnout, marine conservation biology, the Multilateral Agreement on Investment and more. This is the first time the course has invited a Yukoner to attend and the door is now open for others to access this training in the future!

Salmon Enhancement

Croucher Creek Juvenile Salmon Study, a joint project with Kwanlin Dun and YCS has been fully funded by the Habitat Restoration and Salmon Enhancement Program (DFO).

Energy Efficiency

Craig Olsen, our jet setting energy sleuth has just returned from Ottawa where he attended an Energy Efficiency Conference. Craig is working on developing YCS educational programs aimed at reducing energy use and contributions to climate change.





Wild Rice – yummy, but nasty?

In March the Bird Club alerted YCS about a water license application to grow wild rice in Swan Lake. We had to instantly come up to speed on wild rice, and decide whether this delicious culinary treat poses a threat to Yukon ecosystems, and to Swan Lake in particular.

On the surface wild rice growing seems rather harmless — I've always felt rather good about eating wild rice; visualizing First Nations people in canoes pursuing a traditional way of life, harvesting a natural crop with no pesticides, no herbicides and no disturbance. But of course wild rice is not native to the Yukon so wild rice harvesting here would be neither traditional nor disturbance free. There are several potential impacts.

According to the application proponent, due to factors like p.H. and sediment type, Swan Lake is the only local lake suitable for wild rice cultivation. Of course, as anyone who has read Helmut Grünberg's *Birds of Swan Lake* (available at YCS) knows, Swan Lake has a very rich and diverse bird population. 157 bird species have been recorded there, and this is thought to be the largest number of bird species in the Yukon for an area this size. Approximately 65 bird species nest or have nested there, making the area one of the most diverse ecosystems in the southern Yukon. Part of the reason for this diverse bird population is thought to be the lake's relative lack of human disturbance in conjunction with a rich diversity of habitat.

Clearly, no matter how the sowing and harvesting of a wild rice crop is done, there would be some disturbance to bird populations. In his application the proponent did not state seeding and harvesting dates, nor the methods he would use.

Disturbance during nesting time or other important parts of bird species' life cycles would likely have adverse effects. Normal wild rice seeding methods are probably quite non-destructive, as hand seeding from a canoe seems to be common. However, harvesting in places like northern

Saskatchewan is generally done with air boats. Presumably airboat harvesters would create similar amounts of noise and disturbance as normal motorboats. This is likely to disturb bird populations, especially since harvesting is done several times within the harvesting season.

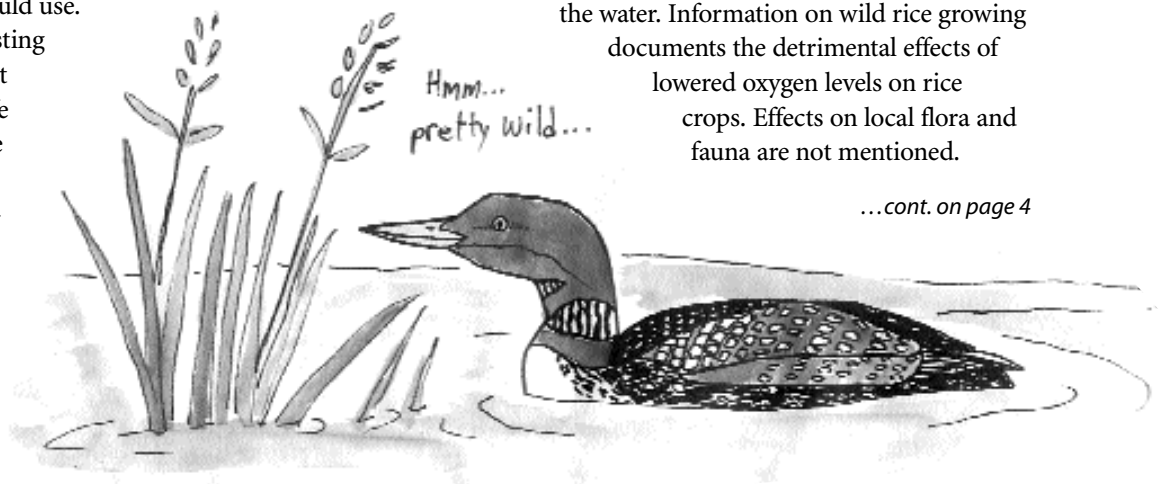
In wild rice growing operations cultivation methods like raking and drag chaining the lake floor are sometimes employed, and sometimes the rice crop is thinned part way through the growing season. The application gives no details about whether the proponent has such activities in mind. Cultivation would obviously disturb native plants and animals, and thinning would mean added disturbance to bird populations throughout the summer.

But probably the most disturbing thing about growing wild rice in the Yukon is the potential disruption to the ecosystem through the introduction of an exotic species to a natural Yukon lake. Wild rice grows quite thickly — evidently a good crop is about 30 plants per square meter. This suggests that rice could take the place of native plants, disturbing a whole chain of processes and wildlife dependent on the native species.

In addition, wild rice produces a thick straw mat. From 1,660 to 5,400 kg/hectare of straw can be produced every year. It is known that if this mat stays floating it can shade out new rice seedlings. If it sinks, it can smother rice seeds, preventing germination. If the rice straw mat is this hard on its own seedlings, its effects upon native plants can be imagined!

A straw mat can take up to 3 years to decompose, and the decomposition process reduces oxygen levels in the water. Information on wild rice growing documents the detrimental effects of lowered oxygen levels on rice crops. Effects on local flora and fauna are not mentioned.

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Actually, thanks to our bracing climate there may be no great worry about an insidious infestation of delicious but deadly wild rice smothering lake after Yukon lake. Evidently there have been a few attempts at wild rice growing in the Yukon in the past, but they have been unsuccessful. Still, it would be interesting to take a look at the lakes where it has been tried and assess whether there were any impacts. It would also be worthwhile to see whether any studies have been done in other jurisdictions to ascertain

the impacts of wild rice growing on lakes where it does not naturally occur.

The Water Board will probably not make its decision on the wild rice proposal until some time in June. But it seems unlikely that it will be approved since there has been considerable opposition to the plan, and especially since the area in question is interim protected Category "A" Settlement Land within the pending Ta'an Kwach'an Final Agreement. The Ta'an have committed to protecting the birds and habitat of Swan Lake.

Considering the potential impacts of introducing an exotic species to a lake of such high bird values, YCS opposed the water license application.

But my big question is — do I have to feel guilty now about eating wild rice? In how many of the lakes where it is grown in Saskatchewan and elsewhere is wild rice indigenous? Good thing it's too expensive to be a major part of an environmentalist's diet!

karen baltgailis

*YCS Forestry Coordinator &
YCS Whole Grain Cooking Expert*

Three legged stools?

Well we've all heard the arguments about jobs, jobs, jobs before. We've all also heard about the need to attract investment dollars. Then there's the one about people first before the environment.

Well, how 'bout this one? There was a public lecture and workshop with Ray Rasker in Whitehorse in April. You may have gone, in which case quit reading now. Seems that areas that still have intact wilderness and are scenic (in spite of the aforementioned arguments to destroy it that we have heard all too much of) are in transition. Areas that were heavily oriented towards resource extraction are growing rapidly. The twist is there is no new growth and even negative growth in the extraction oriented sectors of those locations. Interesting? Hmmm? Well when economists actually look closely at those areas, the community structure is changing rapidly. There is a change from the classical labour oriented jobs to professional jobs (service jobs where you needn't get dirty if you will).

With today's global village approach many people can work anywhere they want provided that there is a good internet connection and an airport. These people want a

nice place to live. What do they look for? Good schools, health-care, scenery, wildlife, high quality of life, bike paths, clean city/town, and on and on. If they find those attributes in, for example, Whitehorse, they will set up shop in Whitehorse. Many of these people are retirees who want to settle where they are comfortable, business-folks who can do their business over the internet, and investors — types that make their money work for them.

A healthy, growing economy in the absence of the traditional 3-legged "forestry, mining, agriculture" stool (alternating with tourism) is not one dreamed of at all when the economic focus has been tuned towards resource exploitation. All of the arguments against value-added products being produced in small, isolated towns, i.e. economies of scale, are blown away by the yuppie engineer with a laptop in his/her backpack who adds value via modem.

These people aren't all necessarily going to have a strong environmental ethic, but what they have in common is a shared vision for what kind of place they want to live in. It's an interesting flip in circumstances to try to get the investor to come to live in the Yukon to enjoy the wilderness rather than try to lure their investment dollars for extraction activities.

craig olsen



Editorial

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A couple of months ago, mining company Redfern Resources got hold of a campaign strategy environmental groups had developed. The strategy outlined how the groups planned to protest Redfern's proposed construction of a mine and 160 km road south of Atlin. Redfern angrily accused environmentalists of unfairly interfering with local decision making as the groups were raising funds from American foundations and calling on the US government to intervene in Canadian affairs.

Meanwhile in the Yukon, discussions about who should be involved in the assessment of development projects under the new Development Assessment regime have been ongoing. While everyone agrees local people should be involved in discussions about projects planned for their area, some people raise concerns about non-locals influencing projects that won't directly affect them.

The "outsiders" that people are usually concerned about are environmentalists from Whitehorse or the South. Opponents of these groups don't like the idea that people who live hundreds, and even thousands of miles away might influence local processes.

These critics, however, seldom seem to be concerned about how a developer from "outside" can dramatically affect a community and its environment. They fail to recognize, for example, that mining developments are financed from outside the territory and that the motivation of larger companies operating here is to make profits for people who live elsewhere. They also seem to miss the point that while developers' primary interest is making money, environmentalists' primary interest is the health of the planet.

Seldom is any community completely united on a new proposal for their area. In Atlin, Redfern has hired a local spokesperson, hired many consultants to develop reports, is spending resources lobbying the BC government, and is drawing on the support of the BC Chamber of Mines. What are Atlin residents who oppose the proposed road and mine supposed to do to? Are they supposed to hold bake sales and raffles to hire the consultants to critique the mountain of reports or to oversee the fairness of the review process? Why is it seen as unreasonable if they work with others from outside the community to raise concerns about a proposal of an outside mining company?

And what boundaries are environmentalists supposed to place on ourselves? Is protesting oil and gas development in Alaska's Arctic Refuge too far from my Whitehorse home? Do I have to hike every year in the Tombstones before I can collect signatures on a petition against mining in the area? At what point on the atlas should I and others at YCS stop caring?

YCS fully supports local people having a strong voice in decisions that affect them and much of our work on DAP focuses on ensuring a fair and accessible public process. But we are part of the public and, together, our voices can help ensure the best decisions for the Yukon and its environment are made.

jennifer ellis



Mining Industry Confidence: The B.C. Example

The figures used in this article are part of Natural Resources Canada's data series on mineral exploration in Canada. The data is collected through detailed surveys of mining companies. (A total of 2,486 surveys went out in 1997, and 98% were returned). The 1998 figures are a forecast based on the survey of the companies' investment intentions done in late 1997 and early 1998. The actual figures for 1998 (to be compiled in 1999) will likely be quite different. The difference between actual and intended expenditures has varied from +84% (in 1987) to -23% (in 1992). Variations result from such things as changing mineral prices, stock market conditions, new mineral discoveries, etc. The investment intentions are still a good indicator of industry confidence at the time of the survey however.

Representatives of the mining industry often assert that industry confidence is a delicate flower and in need of careful nurturing. They often issue stern warnings, warnings that, unless Canada (or any particular province or territory) becomes more "mining friendly" mineral industry investment will simply go elsewhere. That elsewhere includes Latin America (a popular refrain in the early and mid 1990s was that Canada's mining industry was migrating there en masse) and such mining friendly jurisdictions as Nevada in the U.S. Any dip in exploration investment is seized on as conclusive proof that industry confidence requires bolstering with everything from looser environmental regulations, to tax breaks, to greater security of tenure, more "certainty" or more subsidies. Is mining industry confidence quite so delicate? Is Canada destroying its industry with over-regulation and general lack of mining friendly policies?

It does not appear to be doing so. Canada as a whole continues to jockey with Australia for honours as top destination in the world for mineral exploration investment as it has for several decades (the U.S. holds down third spot). Total mineral exploration expenditures in Canada rose from \$385.3m in 1992 to a peak of \$894.8m in 1996, an increase of 132%. Expenditures were forecast

to decline to \$767.4m in 1998, still nearly double the 1992 figure. This large increase and steady position as a top investment destination, has occurred despite large increases in investment in Latin America and other areas of the world.

If Canada as a whole seems to be doing all right, what about that favourite whipping boy of the mineral industry, British Columbia? It is accepted as an article of faith both in the industry and by many outside it that the NDP government of B.C. badly damaged its mining industry by short circuiting established processes and expropriating the Windy Craggy deposit in 1993. Indeed, some still make the claim that mining in B.C. is effectively finished. Exploration is in such a steep decline that, as existing deposits are exhausted, there will be none in the pipeline to replace them. Oddly enough, this strong and persistent perception is not supported by the pattern of mineral exploration expenditures in B.C. since 1992. The table below shows the percentage share of total Canadian exploration expenditures in selected provinces and the territories from 1992 to 1998.

Percentage of total Canadian mineral exploration expenditures

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997(p)	1998(f)
BC	18.6	13.8	13.5	11.1	11.7	12.0	13.4
Que.	24.4	22.2	20.7	17.2	15.3	17.4	20.0
Ont.	20.1	15.8	18.0	18.1	21.8	21.6	17.3
Nfld.	2.9	1.9	2.0	9.9	10.3	8.6	6.0
Man.	8.3	5.7	6.5	4.5	4.6	4.9	5.5
NWT	11.1	21.1	23.8	24.0	21.7	19.0	20.4
YT	2.5	4.0	4.1	5.5	5.2	4.6	4.8

While B.C.'s share of total Canadian exploration did drop from 18.6% in 1992 to 11.1% in 1995, it has since begun to climb and the province's share was expected to be 13.4% in 1998. During the same period, the NWT's share more than doubled before slipping, Newfoundland's more than tripled, Quebec's share has followed a similar pattern as B.C. (though less marked), and Manitoba's was nearly halved before recovering somewhat. The large increases in the NWT's and Newfoundland's shares (the result of the diamond rush and Voisey's Bay respectively) had to result in a decreased share for other jurisdictions



in Canada. B.C. in no way stands out as having destroyed its mineral industry. Over the longer term, B.C. appears to be particularly vulnerable to wide swings in its share of Canadian exploration dollars. Its lowest recorded point came in 1986 (under the mining friendly Social Credit government) with a share of 10.3% while in 1990 it took in a high of 29.2%.

When put in dollar terms, exploration expenditures in B.C. present an even stronger argument that the Windy Craggy decision did not result in plummeting mineral exploration in the province. Indeed, the reverse appears to be true.

Exploration expenditures (millions of dollars)

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997(p)	1998(f)
BC	71.6	66.0	85.0	79.4	104.9	96.8	103.1
Que.	94.1	106.1	130.3	123.3	137.2	140.3	153.6
Ont.	77.4	75.6	113.0	129.7	194.9	173.9	132.7
Nfld.	11.1	8.9	12.4	71.1	92.5	69.0	46.0
Man.	32.0	27.4	40.5	32.6	41.2	39.3	42.1
NWT	42.7	100.7	149.5	172.1	194.5	151.9	156.4
YT	9.7	19.2	25.7	39.3	46.4	37.2	36.8

Since the Windy Craggy decision, mineral exploration in B.C. has increased in dollar terms by about 50%. Is this a sign of a jurisdiction that has killed off its mineral industry?

The one indicator that B.C.'s mineral industry may indeed be in decline is the ratio of grassroots exploration to advanced work. Currently, 58% of B.C. exploration goes to grassroots activity compared with the 70% Canadian average. Newfoundland does even worse, at 52%. How much of this relatively poor showing in grassroots exploration results from lack of industry confidence and how much from other factors such as very low copper and gold prices (the two major minerals in B.C.) and a relative lack of generous government subsidy (until new subsidies began in April 1998) is unclear. If industry confidence in B.C. has been shattered since 1993, why is any grassroots exploration taking place at all?

The Fraser Institute's annual survey of mining companies asks companies to rate the investment attractiveness of all the provinces and territories, some of the U.S. states, and a few jurisdictions in Latin America. In the survey B.C. rates near the top in mineral potential and in the mid range for infrastructure but in every other category it is rated last, often spectacularly so. These other categories include: environmental regulation, protected areas uncertainty, federal-provincial regulatory overlap,

First Nation land claims, taxation, labour regulation, and general government policy. Things are apparently so bad in B.C. that the province's overall ranking is below even that of Wisconsin's as a desirable destination for mineral exploration investment. This is more than a little astonishing as Wisconsin has a blanket moratorium on mining. Again, if things are that bad, why is any exploration taking place? Who invested more than \$50m in grassroots exploration in 1997 and intended to up that to about \$60m in 1998?

Mineral exploration is a very high risk business, and most of the major factors influencing that business (e.g., geological potential, mineral prices, the stockmarket) are outside industry control. The one factor open to industry influence is the grab-bag of laws and regulations that govern the industry. It is unsurprising that the industry works very hard to influence that factor in its favour, and uses the argument of potential damage to confidence as a favourite tool. Such arguments are by their nature self-serving and should be viewed with a skeptical (though not cynical) eye. Why not cynical? Because environmental regulations, tax regimes, issues of certainty, etc. do affect industry confidence and so on investment decisions. It just appears that industry spokespeople tend to overstate that level of influence, especially in relation to geological potential and mineral prices.



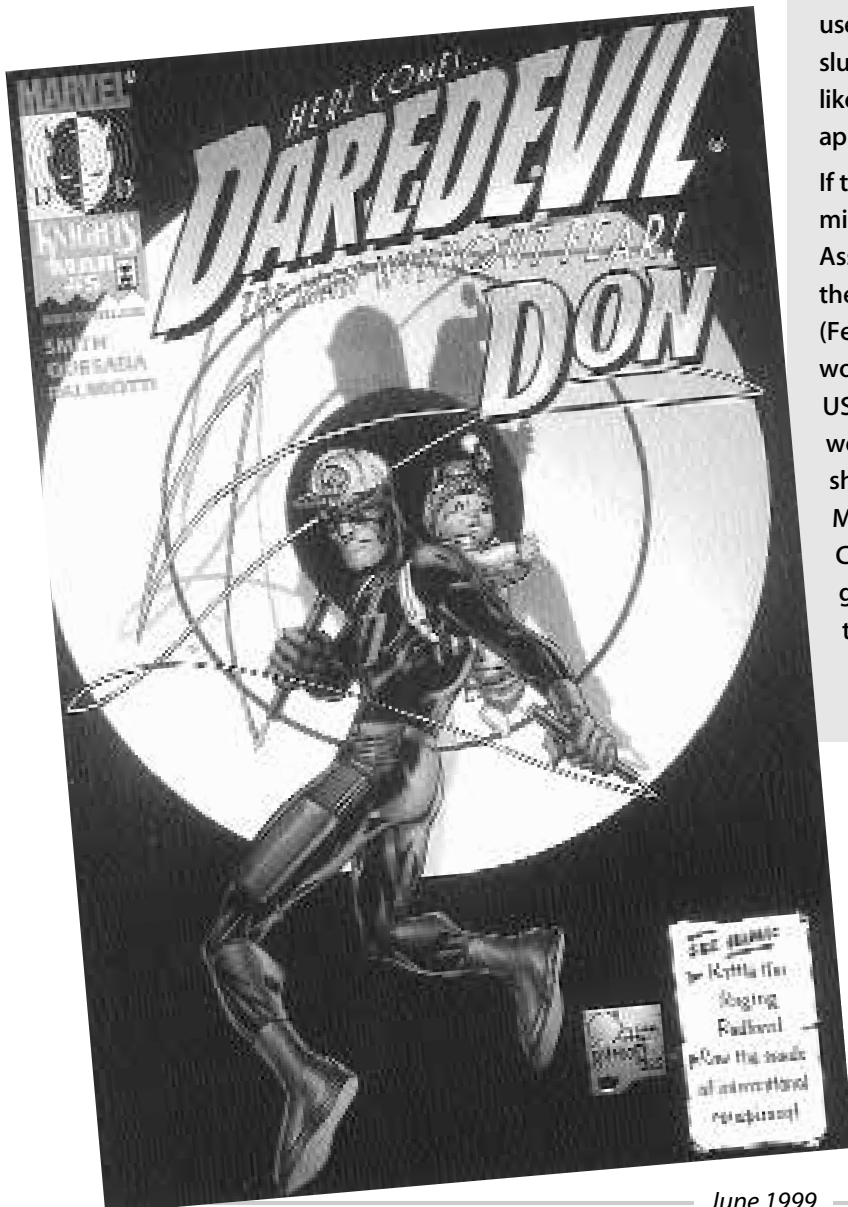
Mining industry confidence appears to be a hardier plant than industry people would like outsiders to believe. B.C. continues to be held up as the prime example of a shatterer of that confidence, yet exploration spending continues

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and even increases. It is also commonplace for mineral exploration to go on in countries that are subject to enormous political risk and wide-spread corruption. Any jurisdiction suffering a sustained drop in mineral exploration spending (or a drop in its share of national spending) might wish to examine policies that have a negative influence on industry confidence, but only after a close hard look at all the factors outside of its control that might be causing the drop. If, for example, mineral prices are extremely low, if a fiasco like Bre X is making it difficult to raise money, if there is a new, exciting discovery elsewhere which siphons off spending, it is highly unlikely that mineral exploration levels will jump in response to an easing of environmental regulations or an extra subsidy.

malcolm taggart



Windy Craggy and the Price of Copper

A strong note of caution is in order when examining the potential economic benefits of a project such as Windy Craggy. Since its demise, proponents have spoken of the potential economic benefits as though they were a sure thing if the park had not been created. There are, of course, no such guarantees in the mining (or any other) business. Geddes Resources based its cost and benefit estimates on a copper price of US\$1.18 per pound. Calculations were made that the mine, given certain favourable production conditions could break even at prices as low as US\$0.85 to \$0.90 per pound. (Those conditions included maximum mining by open pit and the use of trucks to haul concentrate rather than a slurry pipeline to Haines, neither of which was likely to be granted even if the mine was approved).

If the mine had been approved in late 1993, it might have begun production early in 1996. Assuming production began in February 1996, then over its first 38 months of production (February 1996 to March 1999) Windy Craggy would have faced an average copper price of US\$0.79 per pound. For the past three years it would have either been bleeding red ink, been shut down, or would still be awaiting start up. Mining people have often labeled Windy Craggy as a world class deposit and it is, in geological terms. It does not, however, appear to be a world beater in economic terms.

This modified comic book cover was given to Don Weir, an activist in Atlin, to cheer him up after he was personally attacked in the media for his work to stop the proposed Redfern mine and 160 km road into the Taku watershed. Intimidation and vandalism of property are things that many small town activists may experience (for related commentary, see the editorial on page 5). Graphic doctoring by Tanya Handley.



Tombstone Park Update

The Tombstone Park Steering Committee, appointed by the Yukon Government according to the terms of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement, is in the process of developing a boundary recommendation. The four-member team hopes to have the final draft ready for public review by mid-October and a final recommendation by November 24th. The committee has been meeting in Dawson City with local residents, interested stakeholders, and with the technical experts and consultants who prepared the initial studies to the government back in 1993. The committee's goal is to fill information gaps and make sure all the values have been considered.

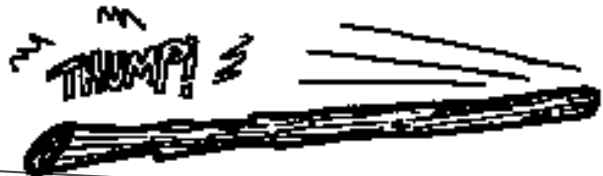
The committee is also hosting a series of public presentations in Dawson City. Public consultation is an important component of the committee's work; they want to hear from you. By June an office will be established in Dawson City with all the communication avenues, including a website. Until then, you can contact them at: Box 183, Dawson City, Yukon Territory Y0B 1G0. Send them your comments, get on their mailing list and watch for public meetings in Whitehorse late summer and fall.

Although the Steering Committee wants to hear what you think about mining and the Park, it is not the place to address the concerns about the controversial claims that have been staked and are being worked on by Canadian United Minerals, Inc. in the heart of the future park. The committee has no authority to stop the work being done there. The Yukon Government has just sat back and let Canadian United Minerals continue its work this spring. This has, of course, not only compromised the wilderness value of the park but has raised the price of what the company might ask for as compensation for expropriation.

The NDP sure haven't lived up to their campaign promises regarding the protection of the area for the creation of the park. It seems they are more worried about trying to get votes they never had than they are about losing ones they did.



A large bite that extends into the core area has already been taken on the west side to accommodate the Marn Claims staked by Noranda in 1978. This is unfortunate because the middle section of the Chandindu River, a culturally rich area, has been cut out. It was also discovered to be an important salmon spawning river only last summer. The Yukon Government needs to hear from Yukoners now that we are concerned about the integrity of the proposed park. We want a whole park not a donut with a mine in the middle.



Let the Yukon government know you want them to act to stop mining in Tombstone Park area. Contact:

Piers McDonald,
Government Leader
Government of Yukon
Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon Territory Y1A 2C6
Phone: (867) 667-8415
Fax: (867) 667-8424
Email: piers.mcdonald@gov.yk.ca

Send copies of your comments to DIAND, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in in Dawson City and the YCS.

Update: Timber Harvest Planning in the Whitehorse/Southern Lakes Area

Forest Resources is currently doing forest harvest planning for the Y05 Forest Management Unit which covers the Whitehorse/Southern Lakes area. The area poses some difficult problems for forest management because of the interface between a relatively high human population and the year round range of the Southern Lakes caribou herd. Although timber harvesting has historically been fairly small scale in the region, it has gone on for a long time with resulting cumulative impacts on the caribou.

According to local elders, the Southern Lakes caribou herd once numbered in the tens of thousands. It now numbers less than 2,000. The herd is important to local First Nations culturally, and as a food source. It also provides excellent winter wildlife viewing opportunities, with important ramifications for tourism. Because caribou require large tracts of intact mature forest, they are considered a keystone indicator species for intact old growth ecosystems.

Under the Southern Lakes Caribou Recovery Program the herd is protected from licensed hunting in the Yukon, and local First Nations are voluntarily refraining from hunting. This has helped, but the herd is still threatened by habitat destruction and fragmentation, and human disturbance. Forest Resources intends to limit logging in caribou wintering areas to the period from spring conditions to Dec. 30. Some wildlife biologists, however, feel that Dec. 1 would be a safer date to avoid overlap with the caribou.

Most of the Harvest Planning Areas in Forest Resources's plan already have access, and small sawlog volumes of under 1,000 cubic meters are planned for them. The plan is to phase out some of the HPAs over the next few years because timber volumes are nearing depletion. It may be a good idea to do this sooner rather than later. Where the wood supply is nearing depletion it does not make sense

to continue harvesting operations until the last possible cubic meter has been extracted, when new sources of wood have to be found in the future in any case.

In some areas there is also concern that fuelwood harvesting over the years has depleted the concentration of coarse woody material and snags to a point where there could be repercussions for wildlife and forest regeneration. Woody debris and snag amounts need to be surveyed to determine whether fuelwood harvesting needs to stop in some areas.

But the biggest areas of concern are the Lewes Marsh and West Teslin River HPAs. Forest Resources is suggesting that up to 34,000 cubic meters per year could be cut in

either of these two HPAs. Lewes Marsh has had sawlog and fuelwood harvesting for the last five years, but only about 400 cubic

meters per year, and logging has been limited to the northern

edge of the HPA. There is key caribou habitat in the HPA, and it is one of the few core wintering ranges in the area that has not been significantly impacted by human disturbance.

The West Teslin River HPA currently has no easy access. It is much used by local people for subsistence hunting and fishing and by the Teslin Tlingit First Nation for traditional activities. The Teslin River is also very popular with canoeists and boaters.

The area is not an issue as far as caribou are concerned, but it features numerous salmon spawning streams. The forests there are structurally complex, as indicated by the presence of northern goshawks and boreal owls. Logging in the area would create serious impacts in terms of both access and changes to the habitat.

In 1997/98 the timber harvest in the Forest Management Unit was 6,038 cubic meters of commercial fuelwood, 11,869 cubic meters of sawlogs and building logs, and 8,400 cubic meters of personal fuelwood. It is obviously politically and socially difficult to redirect personal fuel-





wood cutters and small business operators to areas which are further away. For small businesses, a longer haul can push an operation beyond the limits of economic viability. But timber harvesting in an area with such a high human population and such high wildlife values should be limited to very small operations, and only local ones. Unfortunately commercial fuelwood harvesting in the area may have to stop.

Obviously logging levels in the area need to be reduced in a way that is as painless as possible for local people. What boggles the mind is that Forest Resources is proposing to increase the harvest instead. The highest

rate of logging in the Southern Lakes area so far was last year at 26,300 cubic meters — Forest Resources plans to raise that to 34,000 cubic meters! The 34,000 number comes from the draft Timber Supply Analysis. But in the next draft of the TSA the harvest ceiling is almost guaranteed to go down due to caribou and other concerns. Forest Resources should not create expectations for wood volumes that are not likely to be available under the next draft of the TSA, and that are clearly beyond the carrying capacity of the land.

karen baltgailis
YCS Forestry Coordinator

If the Trees Die in Our Faces, Does Anybody See?

My nine year old friend Faith has done a kind of inventory of the trees in our neighbourhood. She'll gladly scamper around showing you which is the best for climbing, and where low spruce boughs droop to create a cozy shelter hidden from pesky adults. We all have an affinity for trees. Most conscious Albertans must be aware that the boreal forest of northern Alberta, one of Nature's great legacies, is being decimated as fast as the mowing down of the Amazon. Less than 10% of the boreal forest area can still be considered wilderness. But there's more than one way to fell a tree. Just recently that I have become aware that the trees I hug are often diseased and dying.

It looked to me like all was well as spring arrived and trees burst into bud. Now I'm learning to see the forest, and the trees, with new eyes. On Sunday thirty tree-hugging environmentalists from around the province schemed at Bennett Environmental Centre in Edmonton's river valley community of Cloverdale. It was a meeting of the Alberta Environmental Network's Clean Air Caucus, and the stories being told were chilling. Pollution from gas flares is affecting cows' reproductive capacities. Poisonous ground level ozone and microscopically tiny particles are causing heart disease and death. The rapidly expanding strip mining of Alberta's north is throttling nature's regenerative capacity. But all the talk came home to roost when St. Albert dairy farmer Bill Bocock spoke up. "Look out the window" he said, "that maple tree is malformed and hanging down, and that mountain ash is the same way. That birch is nine parts dead, and that

green ash is producing way too many seeds. It's under severe stress, and soon will die." A few weeks back I heard a similar, chilling evaluation from Lee Morin, 56 years old, who has 45 years of trapping under his belt. He's a keen observer of nature and a passionate advocate for birds and trees. While I walked around his property near Wembley, Alberta he pointed to the core of tree branches and firewood. Core rot — everywhere. "I've handled this stuff all my life and I've never experienced this core rot before" he pined. "It's probably acid rain for one thing, ground level ozone, perhaps a combination. All the trees are being affected." And sick trees affect other beings. "The rabbits aren't eating the tips — they're eating the bark. The tips are their favourite part. I feel it's quite toxic and it bothers them... I've never seen this in my life. There's something wrong."

Clearly, Morin is disturbed by what he sees. "Come here in five years and I won't have anything left. It's all going to be dead, five years from now, the way it's going." Maybe he's exaggerating. But maybe not. He's certainly not alone in his concern. A few years back author Charles Little, who spent thirty years as an environmental policy analyst, wrote a book entitled: *The Dying of the Trees: The Pandemic in America's Forests*. It is a chilling account of sick and dying forests across the United States, an epidemic that is taking place everywhere — a pandemic. Some forests are dying due to acid rain, others from clearcutting. Smog is a big killer as are pesticides and toxic heavy metals. Roots might not be able to get nutri-

...cont. on page 15



Southeast Yukon: Where Biodiversity Abounds

The extreme southeast Yukon is the home to a unique assemblage of plants and animals, the composition of which is found no where else in the world. The area teems with wildlife. Northern Chorus Frog and numerous bird species make the La Biche and possibly the southern reaches of the Beaver River home and reach their northern limits here. Last summer the Dusky Flycatcher was another new bird species whose known range was extended to the north and west, into the southeast Yukon (Eckhert, 1998). In terms of its diverse vegetation, over 455 species of plants have been recorded in the area and at the hot springs of the Beaver River. These included 11 new native species for the Territory, 4 new introduced species and 95 that are considered rare, many of which are found nowhere else in the Yukon.

Several factors converge to produce the unique configuration of the southeast Yukon. One explanation for this area supporting a diverse flora not found in nearby locations is the microhabitat and the apparent lack of the large-scale fire regimes common to the boreal forest systems. Stand replacing fires are not a big factor in the La Biche but became increasingly apparent in the plateau areas to the south and the boreal forest areas to the west. Elliot (1979) in Hopkins et al. (1981) notes that “vegetatively reproducing clones of trees or large shrubs are vulnerable to extermination by fire. Many local relict groves of spruce in the barren ground of Canada have perished by fire.” The relative absence of fire in this area may account for species survival during drier climatic periods.

The influence of the mountainous terrain that slams into the Liard Plateau also plays a critical role in creating the unique assemblages of the region. The mountain range to the west is the Beavercrow ridge with the notable peaks of Mt. Merrill and Mt. Dickie. To the north dividing the Yukon and Northwest Territories extends the Kootaneelee Range with its southern terminus being Mt. Martin. Both these ranges are part of the larger Mackenzie Mountain Range. The main river systems are the Beaver, La Biche and the Kootaneelee all of

which flow into the mighty Liard. The surrounding areas to the south and the east are part of a broad flat region known as the Muskwa Plateau Ecoregion. The extreme Southeast Yukon is the northern reach of this vast plateau, but the dynamics of the areas are quite different. This small area where the mountains meet the plateau has been compared to the Waterton Lakes region on the border of BC, Alberta and Montana. It is the meeting place of various species that are at the northern, southern, eastern, or western limits of their distributions. This is illustrated in the findings of various vegetation surveys carried out as part of a forest bird study conducted by the Canadian Wildlife Service with the assistance of the Yukon Territorial Government. On the first trip in 1995 it was found that the plants making up these systems were quite different from other vegetation assemblages in the Yukon. Some species were more typical of the coastal systems of British Columbia and the southern Alaska panhandle. At that time, little information was available about vegetation systems directly to the south of the study areas. It was assumed that the species discovered represented northern range extensions of more southerly populations. Further investigation, however, showed that some of these species were in fact not northern range extensions but were at the southern, eastern or western limits of their ranges. Some may argue that the species found here are just part of a larger community extending into BC and the NWT that border the region. However, at least 8 species found here are not known from the NWT, and 4 are unknown in BC.

Consequently, in the southeast Yukon one can find Arctic species whose spread has been thwarted by the northward expansion of the boreal

forests, restricting them to mountain top and bog habitats, as well as southern species trying to recolonize their old haunts from where they were separated by the glacial icesheets. Porsild's Poa (*Poa porsildii*) is an example of an Arctic species found in the southeast Yukon. It is an endemic species of grass restricted to the “un-glaciated mountains of central Alaska and central Yukon Territory





and on the east slopes of the Mackenzie and Richardson mountains in the District of Mackenzie.” (Cody, 1996). This distribution therefore suggests the presence of an ice-free corridor along the eastern edge of the Mackenzie Mountains through which this species could have spread from Beringia. Porsild’s Poa was discovered on the summit of Mt. Martin in the La Biche river valley (Zoladeski, et al., 1996).

In addition, disjunct populations of plants can be found around the Beaver River and Larsen Creek hot springs. The uniqueness of the plants inhabiting these hot springs was first described by Scotter and Cody (1979). These systems contain

species far removed from the southern populations. For example, Poison Ivy (*Toxicodendron rydbergii*) was known as far north as Edmonton, Alberta 54°N (Moss, 1983) and around Spences Bridge, British Columbia 52°N (Pinder-Moss, 1998). Both locations are 1,000 km away from the hot springs populations. Poverty Grass (*Danthonia spicata*) is known from several widely scattered populations in northern Alberta, but is only known south of 55°N in BC. Wirestem Muhly (*Mulenbergia mexicana*) is infrequently found in southeastern BC (Douglas, et al; 1994) and is not known in the north other than at the Beaver River hot springs. Red Indian Paintbrush (*Castilleja miniata*) is quite common south of 57°N in the Peace River Drainage in BC and Alberta, but then jumps a few hundred kilometers to the southern Yukon (Taylor, 1974; Moss, 1983). There is now the question on how these disjunct populations of plants came to be where they are and what their extent is.

The unusual nature of the area is under particular threat as resource extraction expands into areas that until recently have remained largely undisturbed due to their remoteness. This area is well known for its oil and natural gas potential. So far, a large number of seismic lines, a few airstrips, a road system and the Kotaneelee gas plant, have been the result of the oil and gas industry. Vast areas of the southeast Yukon, and the surrounding Northwest Territories and British Columbia have already been permanently altered through clear-cut logging practices and increasing road access. Although Russ Fillmore, regional manager of forest resources, claims that “there is no



clearcut logging going on there” (Mostyn, 1998), 4 aspen trees remaining/hectare is as close to a clearcut as technically possible (see figures). Plans are presently underway to expand forestry activities in the area by 216%. A new road has just been put in along the Liard River. Few similar habitats are expected to be found in BC, however it is likely that similar communities are yet undiscovered in the NWT. There is an urgent need for scientific studies, prior to further land allocations for resource extraction.

Better understanding of the extent of these unique systems, especially in the NWT is required to ensure their continued survival. An improved

awareness of the biological uniqueness of these species is fundamental to conserving representative areas in these ecoregions. Only then can informed decisions be made to balance industrial activities with maintaining ecosystem functioning and further our understanding of our world, our past and our present.

bruce bennett & randi mulder

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All That Glitters

Some very interesting developments have been happening in international gold markets. And these developments have resulted in the continuing collapse of the price of gold. All this means the mining of this metal is becoming more and more unprofitable, which in turn will hopefully mean less of the Yukon will be stripped bare to dig up this “rare” metal. Who knows, perhaps even the miners in the Tombstone Range will have to pack up shop and go home.

The price of gold is going down because central banks have realized they can earn more for a country’s reserves by purchasing foreign currencies and bonds than by having the metal sitting in their bank vaults. The former two can either appreciate in value dramatically or earn interest, the latter does not. An example of a central bank that has realized this is the Bank of England. It will sell over half its gold reserves over the next four years. This means it is going to reduce its stockpile from 715 tonnes to 300 tonnes.

Other central banks are unloading gold for other reasons. The Swiss National Bank (which has 1,300 tonnes sitting in a vault somewhere in the Alps) has designated 500 tonnes to the Solidarity Foundation Compensation Fund. The refusal of the Swiss banks to release funds to the relatives of those victims of Nazism who had Swiss bank accounts has finally caught up with them. The Solidarity Foundation will be used to provide funds to the surviving relatives.

Even the International Monetary Fund is not immune from the rush to reduce the amount of gold it holds. The IMF is selling gold to raise money to help third world countries get out of their huge debts.

It is hoped some organizations will purchase gold. Asian central banks are reported to be holding very little gold in comparison with their European and North American counterparts. Given the state of their economies, it is doubtful whether they will go on a buying spree soon.

Gold can be used in machinery and computers. With the lower price of gold, it might find wider circulation in the industrial and manufacturing field. The lead time for the demand of the metal in this sector to raise gold prices will be years, so the price of gold should not be affected until the middle of the next decade.

In summation, gold is going through a bear market. And not just a weensy black bear, we are talking about being ripped apart by a Kodiak grizzly. With the drop in gold prices, a lot of mines will have to either be mothballed or closed permanently.

Which bring us back to the Yukon. Now is the time for the government to buy out all those mineral claims that are infringing on proposed Territorial Parks. If the claim is for a mineral that is dropping in price, it isn’t going to cost too much to buy the claim out. The miners might be singing the blues, but for the environment the outlook is golden.

lewis rifkind

Happy Trails to You, And You, And You...

Environmental education is growing in a sunny corner of the YCS basement. With the help of local nature buffs and YCSs trail guides, YCS can better assist you in getting to know the rich environment that surrounds the city. Thus begins my role in the YCS picture: coordinating the Trail Guide Program for it’s 19th year and designing the fall educational series.

Once again the Trail Guiding Program is alive with the coming of summer. Our trail guides will be offering free guided hikes in Miles Canyon, Canyon City, Grey Mountain, Hidden Lakes and along the Yukon River. We are presently considering new hikes that will be added to

the program that will differ from week to week. This will add some fresh new hikes for those locals out there that have joined our programs in the past. The Ed-Ventures Program has been a great success over the past few years and we will be offering these programs again to children and their parents. With the help of the trail guides we hope to create an interpretive library. If any of you would like to offer your time by assisting us with this please come and chat with me.

I am excited about the programs we will be offering this summer and fall. We hope to provide dynamic interpretive hikes that will reveal the natural and human history as well as the present environmental issues of the Yukon. Please watch for our summer schedules or come by and visit me.

From that sunny corner of the basement,

tanis davey



There's Something Rotten In the State of...

And it might just be 'sour' or H₂S hydrogen sulfide gas from oil and gas wells. It looks like the Yukon is going full steam ahead in granting exploration rights to oil and gas companies on blocks of land around Eagle Plains, which presents conservationists with a fait accompli. Unless the courts rule, and they might, that the oil and gas exploration violates land claims, we're stuck with the activity.

But it sure is happening at an interesting time. This is the year that major criminal investigations were launched by the RCMP in Alberta into acts of oil well sabotage, amid rumours that the force had collaborated with the Alberta Energy Corporation in an entrapment scheme built around a well-head explosion engineered...by the RCMP. Disturbing though these allegations may be, what's more important for the Yukon is the fact that the Alberta government has finally conceded that long-term exposure to hydrogen sulfide or 'sour gas' has impacts on farm animals. By commissioning a western-Canada-wide study on animal health effects of H₂S, one can almost hear the squeaky sound of the Alberta government backpedalling on the H₂S issue. Clearly, if there are animal health effects detected, and based on anecdotal evidence from veterinarians it seems certain that there will be, then the Alberta study is designed to spread the blame over as many jurisdictions as possible in Western Canada...in government, misery loves company, and blame is most happily defused over many, many shoulders...

What does this have to do with the Yukon? Well, if nothing else, it means that a year from now, when some of the

oil and gas exploration will be beginning, there is likely to be a much different appreciation by the public of the hitherto under-reported risks to human and animal health of industry practices such as 'flaring' or incompletely burning toxic well-head waste gasses. It means that a year from now we may regret how close well sites have been placed to key wildlife corridors, or heritage rivers. In short, by next year, the bloom may well be off the oil and gas 'rose.'

And H₂S gas has always 'stunk'. It seems light-years ago when I was a researcher on the Atlantic Canadian offshore oil and gas fields. But even then, H₂S was such a threat to life, that I was ordered to shave my beard so that the mask of the Scott Air-Pak would make a clean seal around my face, to provide life-giving clean air in the event of an oilfield blow-out or fire. A spoonful of H₂S-laden liquid condensate, leaking through my beard under the mask, would be enough to kill me, I was told...

On the North Sea, the Norwegians have been recovering and piping ashore these toxic gases that in Canada are 'burned,' however incompletely. One wonders if and when the Yukon, in its rush for the quick riches of exploration work, will catch up with the best practices in the North Sea. And I can't help but wonder whether a year from now, we'll all wonder whether the risks to human and animal health of oil and gas exploration, were really worthwhile...

paul davis

...cont. from page 11

ents due to pollutants falling from the air or the rain. Climate change is taking a toll. These stresses combined leave the trees unable to ward off disease. Morin concludes: "What's coming is horrible. What's going to happen when all the trees are dying in Alberta and B.C. (British Columbia) — we'll run out of oxygen...It's very scary, I am scared. This is quite depressing but the evidence is right here." One of Edmonton's prime attractions is its trees. While campaigning for office I loved walking

around, passing pamphlets and picking a pocket of purple plums, or munching crispy, crunchy Bonnie Doon apples. An apricot tree blooms in Cloverdale, believe it or not. An old Chinese saying goes: "If you are thinking a year ahead, sow seed. If you are thinking ten years ahead, plant a tree. If you are thinking 100 years ahead, make people aware. By sowing seed once, you will harvest once. By planting a tree, you will harvest tenfold. By opening the minds of people, you will harvest 100-fold."

tooker gomberg



1998 Yukon Amphibian Report

Amphibians are sentinels of environmental changes that may some day affect our own lives. They are especially vulnerable because their eggs lack protective shells and are usually laid in water, and their skin is permeable to gases and water. At various stages of their life they may be sensitive to UVB radiation, and air or water borne chemicals and other toxins. A local example of their vulnerability occurred last summer when several hundred thousand Boreal Toad metamorphs died near Cassiar when exposed to a road sealant. These assaults may also act to lower natural immunities to diseases and parasites. In the past four years deformed frogs have become prevalent in many areas of North America. The deformities usually involve missing or extra limbs. Additional factors leading to population declines are wetland and upland habitat loss and the introduction of predators, most notably fish and exotic species of frogs and turtles (such as bullfrogs and red-eared sliders in the west).

We are continuing to collect whatever information we can on northern amphibians. This year, with support from the Northern Research Institute of Yukon College, Lee Mennell continued his research on Columbia Spotted Frogs in the Log Cabin area of northwestern B.C. Breeding pond monitoring was expanded from 4 to 20 ponds with the help of high school experiential science and outdoor education classes and will be continued annually. Breeding sites have shown shifts in usage, with some sites being used by more or fewer breeding pairs. Some sites were completely abandoned while new sites were established. Pond frog populations have fluctuated since 1994 with no overall trend detected for the metapopulation. Despite breeding at typical dates, both Wood Frogs and Columbia Spotted Frogs metamorphosed 2 to 3 weeks early in 1998, in response to the warm summer. The summer was also dry, contributing to less inter-pond movement. The focus of the 1998 research was an investigation of frog movement patterns in relation to insect availability.

Warm dry weather in the Yukon caused some Wood Frog breeding ponds to dry up before metamorphosis was complete, providing a feast for birds. I conducted amphibian surveys in the Wolf Lake area, 200 km east of Whitehorse, a candidate area for a National Park. Wood Frogs were abundant and no other amphibian species were detected. The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society supported the surveys. I hope to monitor the rare

winter breeding phenomenon of Boreal Toads at the Atlin warm springs more closely in February to April 1999. Any information on this population would be appreciated.

I welcome amphibian sightings from any location as this kind of reporting will help improve our scant database. Please make note of species, date, location, habitat, numbers seen or heard and what life stages were observed. Provide any comments you feel are important. Remember that amphibians are very sensitive. Do not keep them as pets and release them where they were captured when they have been identified and studied — do not move them to foreign ponds. Handle them as little as possible and remember that insect repellent on your hands can harm amphibians which breath through their skin.

brian slough

Brian Slough, Yukon Coordinator
Canadian Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Network
E-mail: bslough@yknet.yk.ca
Phone: 867-668-3295

Recent reports and publications on northern amphibians:

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Mennell, R.L. 1998c. Status of the Boreal Chorus Frog (*Pseudacris triseriata maculata*) in Yukon. Prepared for the Canadian Wildlife Service, Whitehorse, YT. 11pp.

Copies are available from:

Northern Research Institute
Yukon College
Box 2799, Whitehorse, YT Y1A 5K4
Canadian Wildlife Service
Mile 917.6B Alaska Highway
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 5X7
Habitat Conservation Trust Fund
P.O. Box 9354
Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, BC V8W 9M1



Yukon Environmental Training Trust Fund now accepting applications!

In March, the Yukon Government signed an agreement to provide \$150,000 for a training trust fund dedicated to enhancing the skills and employability of members of the Yukon environmental community. The fund is administered by a committee of representatives from four Yukon ENGOs.

Though a training plan for the environmental community is still to be developed, the committee is now accepting applications for support of training through the Fund. Interim funding criteria and application forms are available at YCS, CPAWS and Raven Recycling.

This training trust fund is labour market oriented—it exists to promote and encourage the training of employ-

ees of environmental groups in the territory, or individuals working on environmental issues or activities in the Yukon.

To be considered, applicants must demonstrate how they meet the labour market and environmental objectives of the fund, indicate the support of a Yukon ENGO, and demonstrate capability of budgeting and accounting for eligible costs. Additional criteria have also been provided for applicants to gain extra merit, though they are not mandatory and may not apply to all training opportunities.

The Environmental Training Trust Fund Committee will meet every two months to review applications. Please pick up a copy of the criteria and application forms for further details and feel free to contact a committee member if you have any questions.

Ahhh Summer... A Time to READ

As a child I thought one of the coolest things about summer holidays was that the school librarian permitted us to sign out books for the whole summer. That very long time between the end of June and the start of September needed a few books in it because otherwise it would just never end. These days my perception of summer has changed slightly but I still relish the thought of summer reading, and try to pick out one book to torture each July.

This year I am looking for a book to inspire the environmentalist in me. I snooped around YCS to see what other greenies are reading. Karen Baltgailis refused to be separated from her copy of *Wild Harmony: The Cycle of Life in the Northern Forest* by William O. Pruitt Junior (Western Producer Prairie Books), but told me that if I could find my own copy I would understand. While describing the book Karen was unable to speak in coherent sentences and could only blurt out things like “Excellent! Book of the year! Oh Yeah” and nod knowingly. The book describes the boreal forest and the interconnectedness therein from the perspectives of different forest critters and plants. I was intrigued.

In the basement, Tanis Davey whipped off a list of three books that I shouldn’t miss, namely *Recollected Essays* by



Wendell Berry, *Shadows in the Sun: Essays on the Spirit of Place* by Wade Davis, and *The Geography of Childhood* by Nabham, Trimble and Coles.

Thinking that I would need to take longer holidays than I had planned to get through these four books, I queried email about what other folks were reading. I got many responses, the most interesting by Paul Davis, which made me conclude that the phrase “light summer reading” means different things to different people. According to Paul, *The Diamond Age* by Neal Stephenson is a dystopia based on the premise of a stateless international consumer society with Victorian social values and nano-tech engineering perched on the coast of post-communist China, and well worth reading. Yikes.

So there you have it, a few suggestions for inspirational reading this summer.

christine cleghorn

WANTED!

The Yukon Conservation Society always has a wide range of tasks for volunteers to jump in and tackle. We have short-term tasks, long-term projects and lots of in-between stuff. Some will take an hour or so, some a lot longer. Some require a few skills, many offer new skills to be learned and all offer the feeling of accomplishment! Below are a few jobs we need help on. If something grabs your interest or if you have ideas of your own, please drop in or give our office a call.

Interested in learning more about ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT? Water Board Licensing Applications, Mining Land Use Regulations and Land Use Permit Applications all come through the YCS office for review. Training and assistance will be provided for anybody who is interested in learning how to review these applications and formulate a response.

FEELING HANDY? YCS is still on the look out for a handy person to help out on an as-needed basis. This position varies with the household catastrophes that occur in the YCS office and adjacent tenant suite. Currently we are looking for help erecting a partial trellace to afford our hard working executive director a slight aspect of privacy.

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS! Over the past few months we have been building a structured office volunteer program at YCS. These hard working volunteers have taken over reception duties and also contribute to a myriad of office support tasks. If you are interested in working one or more days/week or adding your name to our auxiliary list, please drop by the office and arrange for an orientation session.

Enthusiasm and organizational skills are what we are looking for in a volunteer willing to take on the challenge of coordinating this year's ANNUAL YCS GARAGE SALE.



This is a short term volunteer task with appreciable results. Talk to the office coordinator if you are interested. **PREFER WORKING OUTDOORS?** Do we have a job for you! The YCS deck is in dire need of a paint job. This weekend task is sure to win you popularity among the staff and volunteers, and just might call for a wee deck party in celebration. Talk to the office coordinator if you are interested.

Spring is here and the YCS GARDEN is in need of donations. Our hard working volunteer gardener (Georgina) is looking for; soil, trees, compost, shrubs, compost bins, gravel for paths, plants and flowers, planters or boxes and newspaper for mulching. All donations can be dropped off at the YCS office.

👉 VOLUNTEERS! 👈

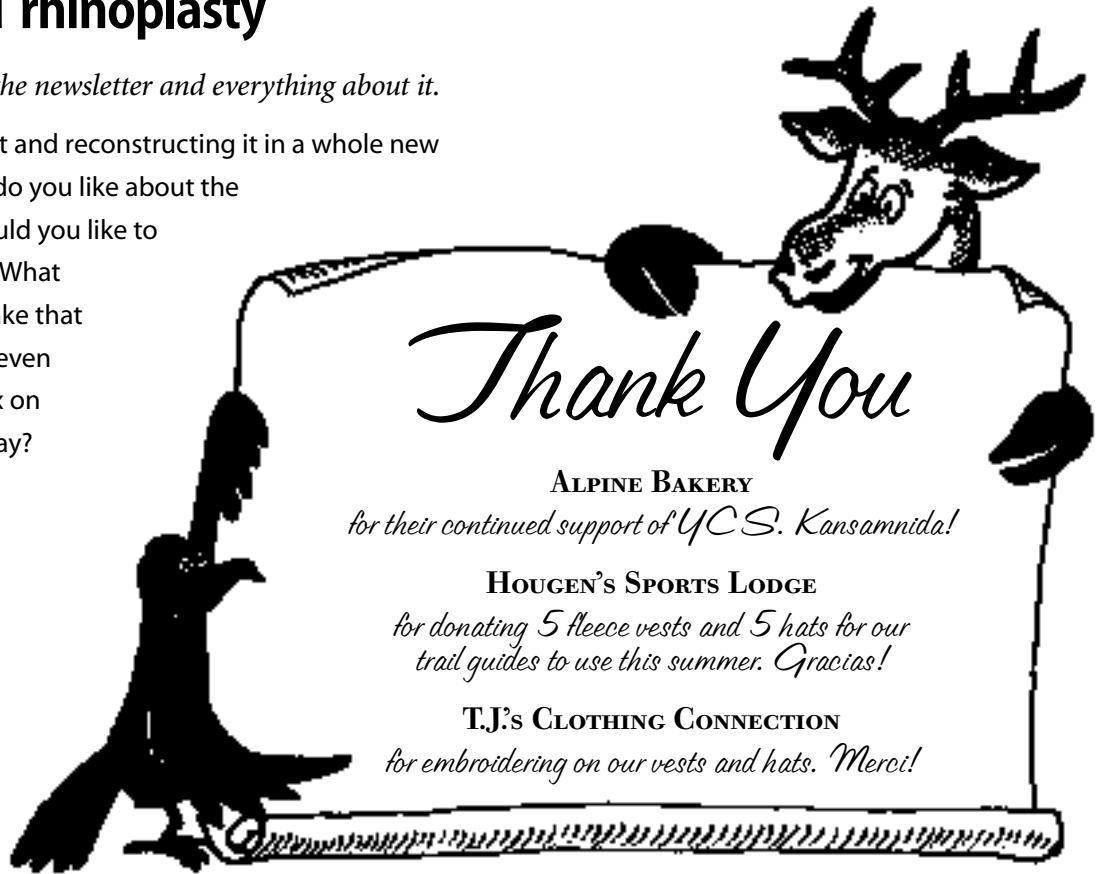
Walk Softly plans liposuction, face peel, and rhinoplasty

At YCS we are reviewing the newsletter and everything about it.



We are tearing it apart and reconstructing it in a whole new way — maybe. What do you like about the newsletter? What would you like to see more of? Less of? What changes could we make that would make you run even faster to your mailbox on *Walk Softly* delivery day?

Tell us — at ycs@polarcom.com, call us at 668-5678, or drop us a note in the mail.



YES! I want to help protect the Yukon's environment and support YCS!

I'd like to make a tax deductible gift!

- \$50 \$100 \$500 \$1000 \$ Other _____

Sign me up as a 1999 member (or renew my current membership).

Membership includes getting *Walk Softly* newsletter four times a year. Memberships run January to December.

- \$10 student \$15 individual \$25 family
 \$25 subscriber (receive *Walk Softly* without membership rights)

new!

- I am donating \$100 or more so I get a free YCS membership for the year!
 I am donating \$1000 or more so I get a YCS lifetime membership!

PAYMENT METHOD: Total \$ _____

- Cheque enclosed (payable to Yukon Conservation Society)
 I'd rather charge my VISA:

VISA # _____ Expiry date ____/____

Signature for VISA: _____

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

POSTAL CODE _____ PHONE _____

- Yes, add me to the YCS members email list (and get no more than two informative emails a month on Yukon issues or YCS activities).

EMAIL _____

Mail your form to Yukon Conservation Society, Box 4163, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 3T3

Advocacy → Research → Environmental Education → Planning → Consultation

Did you know?

...



Humans move more earth by mining than is carried to the sea by all the world's rivers.



It is acknowledged by both the UN and OECD that to achieve sustainability, resource efficiency must be greatly improved, and that the extraction and use of metals must decline.



Around the globe, the mining sector is heavily subsidized by government, offsetting much of the taxes and royalties paid by mining companies. There are no rigorous studies exploring the extent to which mining is subsidized in Canada.

Conservation → Sustainable Communities → Grassroots → Non-profit → Volunteers

Yukon Conservation Society

Box 4163, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 3T3

