

9 March, 2005

Robin Sharples
Environmental Assessment Coordinator
Forest Management Branch
Whitehorse, Yukon

RE: Haines Junction Planning Area 2, Operating Unit 3

Thank you for providing the Development Plan for Planning Area 2. Our Department has completed our review and offers the following comments.

We support the project as a means of providing an ongoing wood supply for local operators while higher-level planning occurs. We recommend that this development plan remain open to change should alternate strategies be required as a result of the Fire Risk Abatement and Regional Assessment work that is presently occurring.

As a general comment for future projects, the Yukon Forest Management Branch Operations Maps should be upgraded. The present broad classification - white spruce, trembling aspen, and wetlands, is not suitable for assessing forest change and the integration of values such as habitat, fuel abatement or timber harvest.

Specific Comments:

1. The road beyond 3G should not be upgraded as it will pass through an important wetland area. We support the efforts to reclaim all spur roads for in block development. We further recommend that an access plan be developed that provides clear direction on the standard, purpose and life span of the roads and trails. Access development continues to be a serious problem for wildlife managers.
2. The statement on page 4 regarding the two blocks that encroach on the Quill Creek wildlife corridor (presumably 3F and 3H) and the anthropogenic development actually indicates a cumulative negative impact and should be reviewed as such.
3. The shelterwood system appears to be the most suitable for the area and the blocks that are to be harvested. The key will be how well the protection of the spruce understory and non-merchantable hardwoods is carried out.

If you require additional information or clarification on any aspect of the above, please do not hesitate to call me at 667-5093.

Yours truly,

Ken Kiemele
Environmental Affairs