

October 20, 2005

Robin Sharples
Environmental Assessment Coordinator
Forest Management Branch
Government of Yukon

**Re: Draft Forest Development Plan for Quill Creek Bench
Harvest Planning Area in the Haines Junction Area**

As residents along the Haines Highway, we are very concerned about all of the proposed logging plans south of Haines Junction.

We are completely opposed to these plans and would not support a logging industry in this area.

Logging in all of the proposed areas is not viable in the long-term due to the short growing season and the thin, acidic soils and their limited capacity to produce much biomass. Hence, any plans to have a sustainable forest industry, for both continued harvests and long-term job creation, is impossible given this ecosystem. It would be completely short-sighted to removed large stands of trees when it is known that their regeneration to moderate sizes takes close to a century. It seems imprudent to place so much time, energy and money into a plan that does not blend with the area (i.e. a national park and world heritage site) and will not create long-term jobs.

The issue of job creation is an important one for any small community. The Haines Junction area currently benefits from approximately 70 wilderness tourism operators. These operators not only put money back into Haines Junction, they also bring tourists through many of the proposed logging areas. If the proposed logging plans were implemented, many tourist businesses would inevitably move elsewhere. This would be a huge economic loss to Haines Junction.

If large scale clear-cut blocks and their accompanying roads are established, the impact of this will be felt not only by large mammals and birds, but the myriad other species that eek out an existence in the taiga.

Tourists, who spend time in this area, would be climbing mountains and flight seeing only to view ugly blocks of cut trees, something they would likely be shocked to see because they are coming to the Yukon to view pristine wilderness, not the impact of ill-thought out logging plans that are completely unsustainable.

On an international scale, the negative impacts of clear cutting the taiga have now been demonstrated. Let's not let Haines Junction be an example in the global spotlight of economic development gone terribly wrong. Let's not proceed with a business plan that

is destined for failure, one that would destroy other currently viable businesses and limit the potential of the wilderness and First Nation's cultural tourism in the area.

As a community with all of the stakeholders, let's move forward towards supporting industries and economic development that will truly be good for our economy in a way congruous with our geographic and cultural heritage.

Sincerely,

Brenda and Terry Berezan