



Draft Strategic Forest Management Plan

Community Directions for a Sustainable Forest

OVERVIEW, november 2005
for the Teslin Tlingit Traditional Territory.

Strategic Forest Management Plan

The purpose of the Teslin Strategic Forest Management Plan (SFMP) is to provide a sustainable development strategy for the forests of the Teslin Tlingit Traditional Territory. The SFMP establishes what issues and concerns, values and interests must be addressed as forest resource development moves forward in the region. This plan is intended to contribute to a sustainable forest-based economy, a key component of regional economic stability, while protecting and integrating ecological, traditional, resource, heritage and other community values. It is also intended to provide a clear framework and practical guidance for forest managers and planners.

In developing the plan, the values and views of the region's residents, the Teslin Tlingit Council (TTC), the Teslin Renewable Resources Council (TRRC), and the Yukon Government (YG), as well as those of stakeholders and Yukon non-governmental organizations, have been considered. Their views and values about forest management, particularly forest harvesting, have been expressed in consultation, community surveys and public meetings over the past several years.

The plan is also intended to identify and address major forest resource-related issues and to develop goals, objectives and indicators regarding these issues. It is also intended to meet the definition of "forest resources management plans" in Section 17.5.0 of the TTC Final Agreement.



The Need and the Challenge

The plan is in response to an on-going need for forest management in the region. The Teslin area resident survey that resulted in the report entitled Talking to the People (Yukon Government, 2000) identified the core values of the people of the region.

The Core Values are:

1. water
2. the land
- 3 the bush, and
- 4 wildlife.

This document also indicated that logging initiatives in the Traditional Territory generated both strong support and opposition. Residents who viewed 'logging' as close to 'jobs' and 'future generations' also tended to see it as closer to the four core values. Of the survey results, the grouping 'small scale' and 'commercial' indicated that 'logging' is viewed as a commercial activity and a source of employment, but with a preference for controlled and small-scale operations.



There has been some tension in the region about forest harvesting (logging) that this SFMP can help resolve, so long as the core values are well managed.

Forest management planning has been recognized as both a need and a challenge in the Yukon for some time, as indicated in the report by George Tough (former Deputy Minister of Natural Resources in Ontario) to the Federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs in 2002:

“The lack of regional forest management plans [in the Yukon] is particularly troublesome, and those plans must be a priority for forest managers. Until those plans are completed, no new annual allowable cuts should be established for the areas in question, and no large-scale, long-term tenures should be negotiated. While these regional plans are being prepared, all reasonable efforts, including contingency area planning, should be made to provide timely and sufficient wood, within annual allowable cut (existing harvest) ceilings to local mills.”

Currently, the Yukon has a limited forest policy and forest legislation base, relying on the Lands Act and Yukon Timber Regulation to issue the necessary authorizations for fuelwood and timber harvest. Over time, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is committed to developing a forest policy framework, new forest legislation and regulations.

Once such forest policy, legislation and regulations are in place, the forms of forest tenure will be determined. Tenure is the legal mechanism by which the annual allowable cut (AAC) is formally allocated. Annual allowable cut may be defined as the volume of timber that may be cut yearly. An AAC is an essential consideration in helping to achieve future economic stability in the region. Once an AAC is determined, the types of tenure and timber supply options would be determined. This is normally followed by policy directives that establish the procedures, timeframes and criteria used for eligibility and selection. Tenure systems are usually area or volume-based and issued by either contract or legislation.

The SFMP will also help provide direction for the regional land use plan and the timing of its implementation.



Planning Region and Time Frame

The Teslin SFMP planning region covers those Yukon portions of the Teslin Tlingit (TT) Traditional Territory that do not overlap other First Nations' traditional territories. The planning region is located in the south-central Yukon. It includes all crown (federal), public (territorial) and settlement (First Nation) lands in the TT Traditional Territory, excluding overlap lands.

The planning region covers approximately 19,330 square kilometres of land, including forested areas, lakes, rivers, wetlands, rock, and human developments. The SFMP has been developed for all forestland in the study area including settlement lands. This area includes most of the Y04 forest management unit and portions of the Y03, Y05 and Y08 management units. The planning boundary may have to be adjusted and expanded, as Traditional Territory overlap issues are resolved. However, no significant differences to the plan are expected.

The SFMP is being developed with a 20-year life expectancy. It should be reviewed and updated whenever necessary to accommodate major and unforeseen changes in the forested landscape. Revisions may also be necessary based on the results of monitoring. In order to provide for the long-term sustainability of the region's forests and the needs of future generations, the planning timeline for some values, such as timber resources, is two forest rotations (200 to 300 years). A forest rotation is defined as one cycle of the predicted number of years between the start of a forest stand and the harvesting of that stand at a specified stage of maturity.



Forest Planning Partners

Approval Bodies

The approval bodies for the SFMP are the Yukon Government on public lands and the TTC on Settlement Lands. They make final decisions to approve and implement the plan that is recommended by the TRRC (Chapter 17.5 of the TTC Final Agreement).

Planning Team

The Planning Team consists of representatives of the TRRC, the Yukon Government's Department of Energy Mines and Resources, and the TTC. These representatives coordinate their respective agency's participation in the development of the plan. The TRRC performs the lead coordinating role in the development of the plan.

Community Participation



The TRRC facilitates public participation in the planning process by sponsoring open houses and information meetings, developing information materials, doing community surveys, and providing formal opportunities for public consultation on forest management planning and the plan.

Planning Framework

Setting up sustainable forest management in the planning region will take time. It will require several distinct planning stages that gradually narrow the decisions and direction from the general goals through basic landscape level arrangements down to specific harvest block location and design.

Stage 1 – Sustainable Forest Management Planning is

a first and important step that sets out what issues and concerns, values and interests must be addressed, as forest planning moves forward through subsequent stages to more integrated and detailed planning for forest resource development in the planning region. It represents a set of directions, based on a general consensus between governments (Yukon and TTC) and people within the Traditional Territory. That in turn will guide forest planners and managers with respect to how they should approach future resource development and subsequent planning. It establishes the public benchmarks against which forest planning and management in the planning region should be evaluated in the years to come.





The SFMP is being developed jointly for both public and TT Settlement Lands, which are each managed with their own specific resource objectives. The resource objectives for Settlement Lands are different than for public lands. The objective is to manage R-blocks with the intent of maintaining and protecting traditional values, sites and land uses.

This will influence the type of silvicultural application and may require additional measures, such as creating reserve or exclusion zones around important traditional sites.

The next closely linked stages following the SFMP are:

Stage 2 – Integrated Landscape Planning that will include the identification of broad areas available or not for forest development, and strategies for reducing or eliminating significant negative effects on other resources and values. A Timber Supply Analysis (TSA) is done at this time. TSA inputs such as forest inventory, growth and yield data, regeneration, and other forest management assumptions and design criteria, typically form the primary technical information used in the analysis. This is followed by a determination of the Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) for the planning region.

Stage 3 – Harvest Development Planning that designs the general harvest activities consistent with the outcomes of landscape planning (e.g. main road location, harvest block location).

Stage 4 – Site Planning that field checks and engineers harvest block boundaries, landings, volumes and exact road locations, consistent with the higher level plans.

Chronology of Key Steps

Jul 1998	Teslin RRC consideration of DIAND's Nisutlin Timber Supply Analysis
Oct 1998	Establishment of Forest Management Steering Group
Nov 1998	Forestry Steering Group makes recommendations to TRRC
Jan 1999	TRRC and TTC meet to discuss Timber Supply Analysis
Jan 1999	DIAND draft Forest MOU discussed with TRRC
Mar 1999 to Jan 2000	Meetings to discuss values Teslin area people hold in relation to land and resources.
Apr 1999	Meeting between DIAND and TRRC to discuss Y-05 Resource Report
Aug 1999	Public meeting on THA document
Mar 2000	MOU signatories' meeting to create a SFMP for the TT Traditional Territory
Mar 2000	Publication of <i>Talking to the People</i>
Oct, 2000	Open House on the Teslin Forest Management Plan
Jul, 2002	Workshop on SFMP
Aug 2002	Workshop on SFMP
Dec 2002	Workshop on SFMP
Jun 2003	Public review of SFMP documents
Early, 2004	Workshop on SFMP
Fall, 2004	Discussion by Planning Team of a comprehensive SFMP document
April, 2005	Discussion by Planning Team of comprehensive SFMP document
Oct 2005	Publication of draft comprehensive SFMP document

Contents of the Plan

The Teslin SFMP is available through printed copies as well as through the internet. The contact information for planning team members is located on the back cover.

The plan contains the following sections:

Introduction

What the plan is, why it was made and how to use it.

The Planning Region

A description of the planning region environment- including forests, economy, wildlife and special places.

Principles of Forest Management

A statement of the forest management plan vision, and a set of vision statements based on local values and goals of people in the region.

Strategic Directions from Planning and Legislative Initiatives

Following the signing of the TTC Final Agreement in 1993, a number of planning activities related to wildlife, land and resources management took place, including passage of resource legislation by the TTC. All of these will have a bearing on forest management planning in the region. Principles, goals and recommendations set out or derived from these activities and pieces of legislation will help guide and direct the development of forest management plans in the planning region.

Forest Management Goals and Objectives

A statement of five goals and related objectives to guide forest management planning in the Region. Local indicators are identified for each objective to evaluate implementation and progress towards goals and objectives.

Goals of Teslin SFMP are:

1. Conservation of Biological Diversity
2. Forest Health
3. Soil and Water Conservation
4. Multiple Benefits
5. Society



Planning Areas

An overview of 15 landscape units including, strategic land use designation, community ranked forestry activity levels and recommended time frame for activity.

Strategic Directions from Key Issues

A description of forest management issues and strategy to address each issue.

Plan Implementation and Review

Future roles of planning partners as the plan moves into implementation and strategic direction for next planning steps.

Maps

Maps showing planning region, landscape units, fire history, forest cover and Strategic Land Use Designation.

Strategic Directions - Highlights

Within the plan there are 62 strategic directions. The highlights are:

Landuse Planning

Consistent with the general goals and principles of the Teslin Regional Land Use Plan (when it is completed and accepted), the principles, goals, objectives and directions of the SFMP shall provide the basic guidelines for forest management and forest resources development in the region (Sections 11.4.5.8 and 17.6.1, TTC Final Agreement).

Priorities of Teslin Tlingit Council

Forest management planning shall consider approaches to forest planning, management and development that contribute to the self-reliance of the Teslin Tlingit citizens.

Community Core Values



Ensure the protection and conservation of the bush, the water, the land and wildlife in order to ensure that traditional values and activities including culture, hunting fishing and gathering remain unimpaired for future generations.

Ensure the community is provided with information about the state of the impacted area following disruption of the natural environment. This includes information on the status of access roads after harvest, restoration programs of harvested sites, and pre-and post-harvesting activities.

Diversify Local Economy

The SFMP shall help establish certainty for investment in the forest sector. The plan supports stable and secure access to forest resources as a foundation to a healthy forest industry. The plan supports diversity as a community economic strategy, and supports tenure allocation procedures that provide opportunity to a variety of industry applications.

Biodiversity

Management should try to reflect natural disturbance regimes or, understand where management activity is deviating from the patterns created by natural disturbances.

Utilize a variety of opening sizes consistent with the principle of ecosystem-based management. Consider concentrating logging in some areas, and leaving other areas undeveloped (reduces land use conflict caused by road access and human caused disturbance).





Woodland Caribou

Maintain the quality of core caribou winter range habitats by deferring harvesting timber within the Core Caribou Winter Range for the period of this plan, unless required for road construction or essential control of insect infestations, wildfire or diseases.

Moose

Manage timber harvesting in moose winter and calving areas to provide important attributes of moose key winter and calving habitat (forage, snow interception, visual screening).

Visual Quality

Maintain aesthetically pleasing visual values to support recreation, tourism and quality of life. The Teslin, Wolf and Nisutlin river corridors and Teslin and Quiet lakes require visual management.

Teslin Local Planning Area

That a quantity of timber (10,000 m³ to 15,000m³) for community use be made available for permits up to 200m³ per year near the community of Teslin. Areas to consider are Strawberry Creek, Demonstration Forest and stands surrounding the community where forest fire hazard reduction and timber values are overlapping.

Priorities for Plan Implementation

In consideration of the Landscape Unit information the following forest management planning priorities and activities are generally recommended:

Strategic Directions:

- Focus forest planning on Pine Lake, Teslin, Sidney Lake, East Teslin River and North Nisutlin River LUs for the next five to 10 years.
- Establish a strategy for the implementation of forest plans in Pine Lake, Teslin, Sidney Lake, East Teslin River and North Nisutlin River LUs, consistent with the identified stages for lower level planning, that identifies:
 - Integrated resource management values and management strategies to accommodate the values.
 - Zonation of harvest and exclusion areas
 - Silviculture strategy:
 - Suitable tree species and treatments
 - Meet timber and non-timber values
 - Long-term resource capacity and future productive use



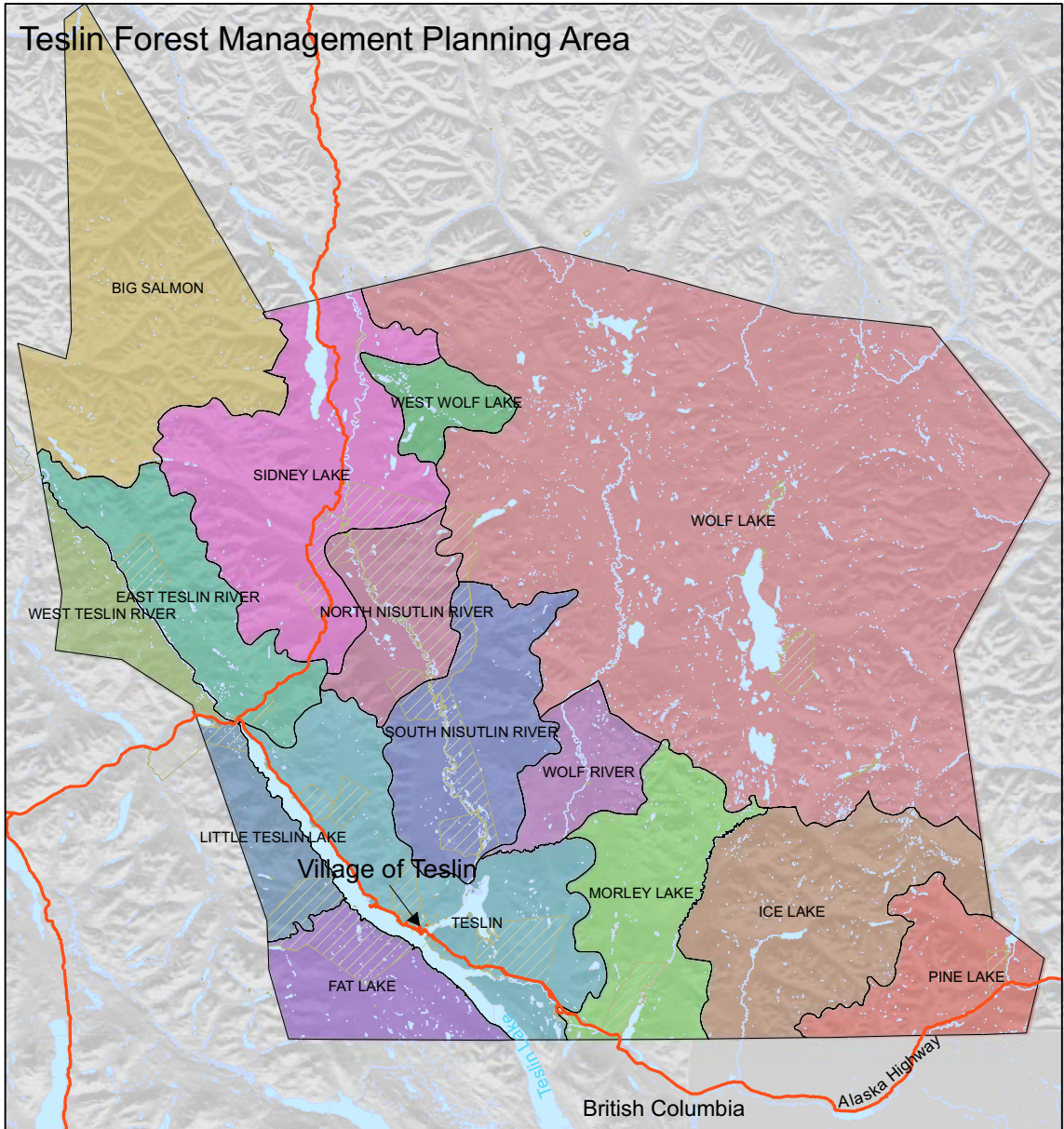
- Activities; forest practices – values to be incorporated into landscape and site-level treatments (e.g. visual quality, cultural heritage, habitat, recreation and tourism opportunities and regeneration strategies); harvest design and prescription
- Maximization of post-harvest benefits (e.g. recreation trails, traditional use opportunities, hunting and trapping opportunities, habitat conservation and restoration, etc.)
- Refer lower level planning priorities and activities to the TRRC for review.

Tenure holders in good standing when the plan is approved, and affected by the plan, shall be accommodated under the plan for the period covered by their license or tenure.

- It is recommended that in the implementation of the Teslin Strategic Forest Management Plan, an adaptive forest management strategy be adopted that follows the general framework identified above.



Teslin Forest Management Planning Area



Map Scale 1 : 900 000





0 3.75 7.5 15 22.5 30
Kilometers

Fire History compiled by YG and the Canadian Forest Service from a variety of sources. Fire History represents fires reported and mapped by Community Services district officers in support of the fire suppression program and not total fire occurrence.

National Topographic Data Base (NTDB) compiled by Natural Resources Canada at 1:50,000. Reproduced under license from Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, with permission of Natural Resources Canada.

First Nations Settlement Lands obtained from Natural Resources Canada 1:30,000 maps; recomplied by Yukon Environment against 1:250,000 NTDB.

Forest Management Branch is not responsible for the accuracy of data obtained from other agencies

-  Road
-  First Nation Settlement Lands
-  Waterbody
-  Landscape Unit Boundary



Planning Team Contact Information:

If you would like more information regarding the Draft *Teslin Tlingit Traditional Territory Strategic Forest Management Plan*, please contact

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