

Government gravel reserves

General info:

www.emr.gov.yk.ca/lands/info

Map viewer:

maps.gov.yk.ca/imf.jsp?site=miningLands

One of a series of info sheets published by the
Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

April 2007

This info sheet explains how gravel reserves are established by the Yukon government. Reserves are not for public use.

The Government reserve system

The system of identifying and setting aside reserves ensures that gravel resources are protected for long-term maintenance and construction projects. For example, the Department of Highways and Public Works uses approximately 650 gravel pits throughout the Yukon for construction and maintenance of highways and airports. Reserves are proposed based on a 50-year projected need. Gravel pits are developed as needed.

Borrow pits and community pits are also established through the reserve process. Borrow pits are generally one-time-use pits that provide common material for construction projects. Community pits are pits that are open to the public for personal use.

How is a Government reserve selected?

Suitable areas are identified by reviewing air-photos. Sampling is then done to see if the gravel has the strength and durability to be used in transportation structures.

Ideally, gravel pits are located close enough to projects (within 15 km) to keep hauling costs to a reasonable level.

How are Government requests reviewed?

A request to identify a potential gravel source is reviewed through the land application review process. If approved, the reserve is mapped on the Lands Branch land tenure maps.

What happens after a reserve has been approved?

Establishing a gravel reserve does not grant approval to develop a pit. Nor does it assume the entire reserve will be developed as a pit or that a pit is to be developed immediately.

Geotechnical tests are required to prove that the reserve is suitable for development. Tests are generally not undertaken until there is certainty of a nearby project that needs aggregate.

Environmentally sensitive areas within reserves are protected. Reserve areas can also be modified to accommodate other land use interests.

Before activity takes place

A quarry permit is required from the Lands Branch or EMR district office before taking material from community pits. (*See Info Sheet 9: Quarry permits.*)

If the quarry activity is subject to Yukon Environmental Socio-economic Assessment Act (YESAA) review, it would be directed to the appropriate YESAA Designated Office. You will be required to complete a YESAA Project Proposal

ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTIONS

YUKON GOVERNMENT

Controls the majority of all vacant land in the territory.

ENERGY, MINES AND RESOURCES

Lands Branch accepts applications to sell, lease, develop and use land under Yukon government control.

Agriculture Branch administers Yukon agricultural and grazing programs.

Minerals Management Branch administers placer and quartz claims, rights and use in the territory.

Forest Management Branch administers timber permits and forestry planning.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Community Land Planning

Branch develops Local Area Plans, manages zoning regulations in rural Yukon and administers subdivision outside Whitehorse and Dawson City. Also provides mapping services.

YUKON FIRST NATIONS

Control their own settlement lands.

MUNICIPALITIES

Administer lands, community plans and zoning bylaws within their jurisdictions.

Whitehorse and Dawson City also control subdivision within their boundaries.

The Government of Canada, through Natural Resources Canada, Canada Centre for Cadastral Management provides maps and plans for a fee.

Form and attach the project description. The YESAA Designated Office, Project Assessor will notify government agencies and other interested parties, receive comments, prepare an assessment and forward a recommendation to the appropriate department.

The assessment ensures that important environmental and operational considerations are addressed, including the following key issues:

- suitability of the aggregate source for development and proposed uses;
- potential impact on area aesthetics and environmentally sensitive areas including hydrology, fish and wildlife;
- potential impact on other land uses, including archeological sites; and
- site cleanup, restoration and re-vegetation.

A development plan will be produced that identifies each issue and its associated solution. The project is then tendered to a private contractor and production is guided by the development plan. The aim is to extract the required gravel while keeping environmental impacts to a minimum.

What is the process when a gravel pit closes?

Operations will cease at a gravel pit when all the required material has been extracted, or if the supply has been exhausted.

Operations may also cease temporarily if material is not required on a constant basis, as is the case with many highway maintenance pits. When closed temporarily, the Highways and Public Works, Transportation Branch ensures that adequate clean up is done to address erosion, drainage or contaminated soils within the pit. Some pits may appear abandoned as they are only used every five to 10 years.

When a pit is closed permanently, the developer must follow a reclamation plan which includes removal of all garbage and debris from the site, erosion control and treatment of any contaminated soil. Seeding, planting and fertilizing may then take place and the access road reclaimed and access from the highway removed.

For more information, contact Geotechnical Services, Highways and Public Works.

CONTACTS

YUKON GOVERNMENT

ENERGY, MINES AND RESOURCES

Lands Branch

Tel: (867) 667-5215

Toll free: 1-800-661-0408, ext 5215

Fax: (867) 667-3214

land.disposition@gov.yk.ca

- land applications

- sale of developed lots

- land use permits

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Community Land Planning Branch

Tel: (867) 667-8945

Toll free: 1-800-661-0408 ext 8945

Fax: (867) 393-6258

- building and construction permits

(outside Whitehorse)

JUSTICE

Land Titles

Tel: (867) 667-5612

Toll free: 1-800-661-0408 ext 5612

Fax: (867) 393-6358

YUKON HOUSING CORPORATION

Loans Administration

Tel: (867) 667-8114

Toll free: 1-800-661-0408 ext 8114

Fax: (867) 667-3664

- lot financing

- A/S program

OTHER AGENCIES

CITY OF WHITEHORSE

Planning Services

Tel: (867) 668-8335

Fax: (867) 668-8395

- development cost charges

- land planning and zoning

Building Inspection

Tel: (867) 668-8340

Fax: (867) 668-8395

CITY OF DAWSON

Tel: (867) 993-7400

Fax: (867) 993-7434

- subdivision approval

- land planning and zoning

NRCAN CANADA CENTRE FOR CADASTRAL MANAGEMENT

Tel: (867) 667-3950

Fax: (867) 393-6707

- legal survey maps, plans, approvals

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Tel: (867) 667-8391

Fax: (867) 667-8322

- septic systems

Yukon

Energy, Mines and Resources