

Ddhaw Ghro

006247

Ddhaw Ghro Habitat Protection Area: a special place

The name Ddhaw Ghro, meaning "many lookouts," refers to an area about 50 kilometres across which is dominated by the mountains of the McArthur Group. Located between the Stewart and Macmillan rivers in Central Yukon, this special place was once known as the McArthur Game Sanctuary. Named after Joseph McArthur, a surveyor during the Gold Rush period, the sanctuary was established in 1948 primarily to protect the unique Fannin sheep population.

However, the area was used by the Northern Tutchone people and other visitors long before McArthur's arrival in the Yukon. In addition to being an important fall sheep hunting area, hot springs in the area were a destination for many. People came for the medicinal plants that grew near the warmth of the springs and to soak in the healing waters.



A MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS

You are invited to take part in a management planning process for the Ddhaw Ghro Habitat Protection area. It's your chance to have a say in how this special area will be managed.

Chapter 10 in the final agreements of the Selkirk First Nation (SFN) and the

First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun (NND) outlines that this area will be designated as a Special Management Area. The Selkirk agreement notes that one of the objectives of this designation is to "conserve and protect important Fish and Wildlife habitat for the benefit of all Yukon people."

The planning process will consider a range of issues. What types of activities should be allowed in Ddhaw Ghro? What special measures might be put in place to learn about and conserve the area's fish and wildlife? What research should happen? These issues and many others will be addressed in this process.

Come to the community workshops on May 22, 24 and 25, 2001. Details on back page.

We need your help

The Ddhaw Ghro Steering Committee has outlined a workplan and begun collecting available information on the area. It is also organizing a series of workshops to review existing information, identify gaps that need to be filled, and gather more information on the issues that are important to Northern Tutchone people and the Yukon public.

Community workshops

Public consultation on the management plan will take place through a series of community workshops in Mayo, Pelly Crossing and Whitehorse. Workshops will be held at three stages in the planning process.

Stage 1, Spring 2001: provide background information and identify issues. Maps and displays will be available.

Stage 2, Winter 2001/2002: review management options and begin work on a draft management plan.

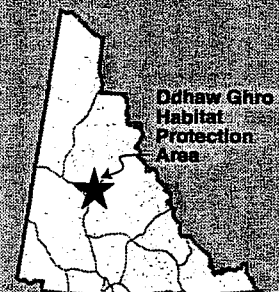
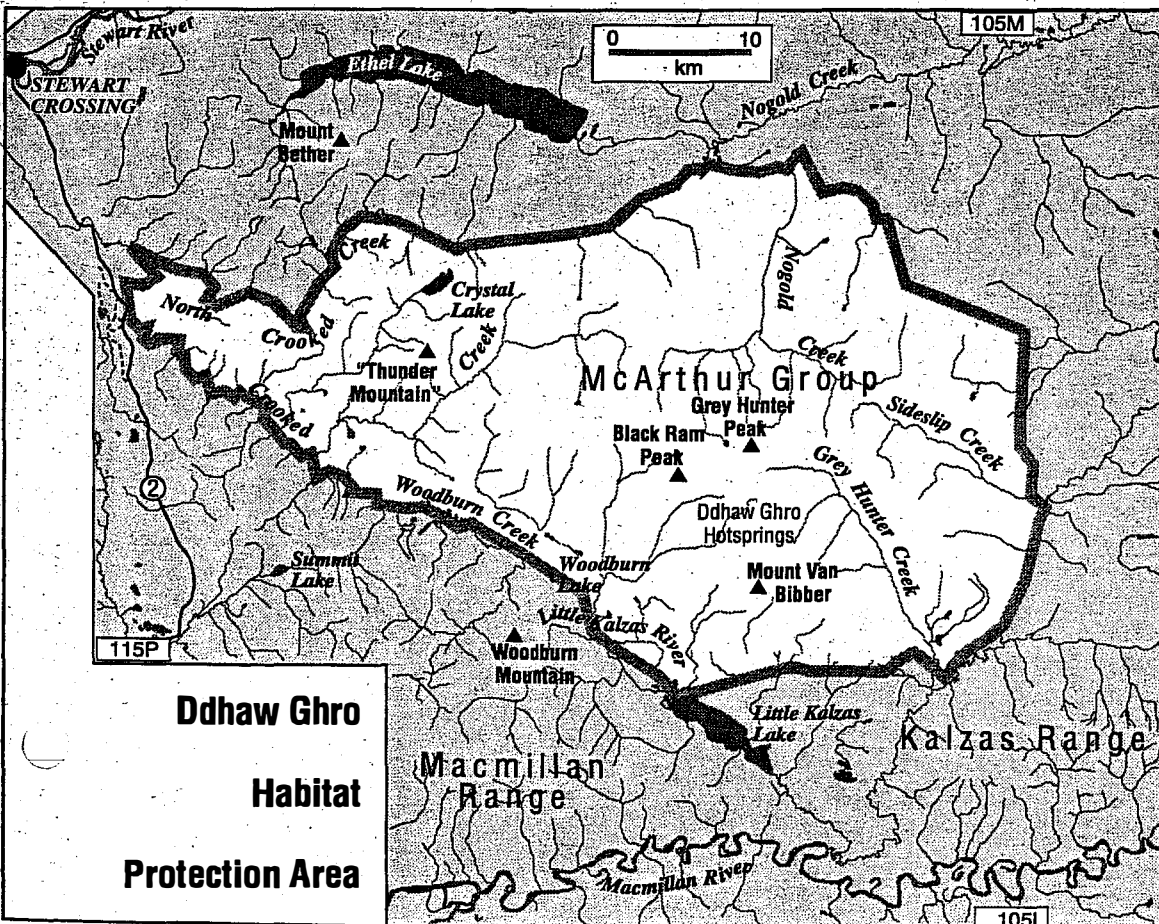
Stage 3, 2002: review the draft management plan.

The Steering Committee will recommend the final draft management plan to the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, the Selkirk First Nation and the Yukon government for approval. Once approved, the Yukon government will designate Ddhaw Ghro as a Habitat Protection Area under the *Wildlife Act*, as required by the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement (Chapter 10, Schedule A, Section 4.3). The federal government will then transfer the land to the Yukon government.



THE STEERING COMMITTEE: The Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement requires that a steering committee be established to develop a management planning process. This committee of six, set up in 2000, has two representatives nominated by the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, two from Selkirk First Nation and two from the Government of the Yukon. Ddhaw Ghro Steering Committee members are:

- Fred Green (SFN)
- Frank Patterson (NND)
- Bob Kuiper (YTG)
- Darin Isaac (SFN)
- Mikolay Peter (NND)
- Mark O'Donoghue (YTG)



Boundaries: The current boundaries of the Habitat Protection Area are slightly smaller than the original McArthur Game Sanctuary because the southeast corner was removed during land claim negotiations.

Additionally, a parcel of about 50 hectares around the hot springs is not included in the Habitat Protection Area and is designated as "Developed Settlement Lands" under the Selkirk First Nation agreement. Any changes to the boundaries must be agreed to by the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, the Selkirk First Nation and the Government of Yukon.

What we know about Ddhaw Ghro

Fish and wildlife

- The Ddhaw Ghro area is known for its Fannin Sheep population. The Yukon government has mapped late-winter distribution and mineral licks. More work is required to identify lambing and rutting habitats.
- The critical habitats for the Ethel Lake caribou herd have been well-mapped and the survival of calves has been monitored since the early 1990s. This is a small accessible herd that needs continual monitoring.
- Late winter moose habitat was mapped in 2001.
- Grayling are abundant in Crystal Lake.
- Several elders are very familiar with Ddhaw Ghro and we are now documenting their knowledge of wildlife habitats.



Vegetation

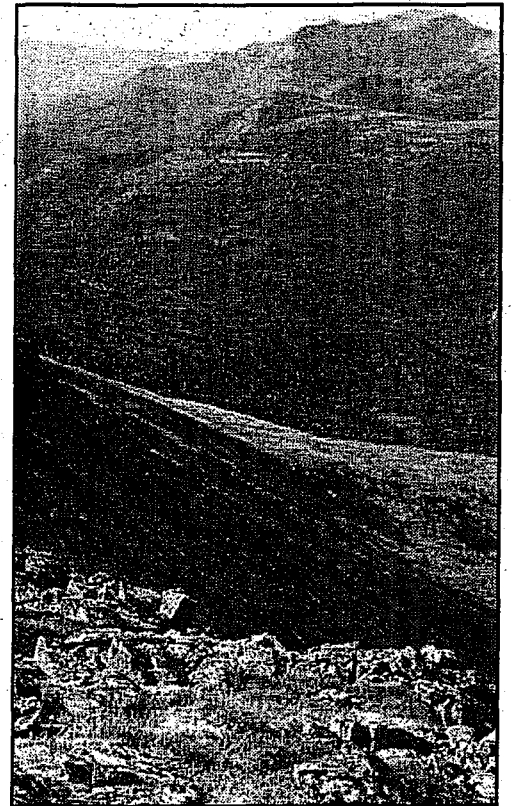
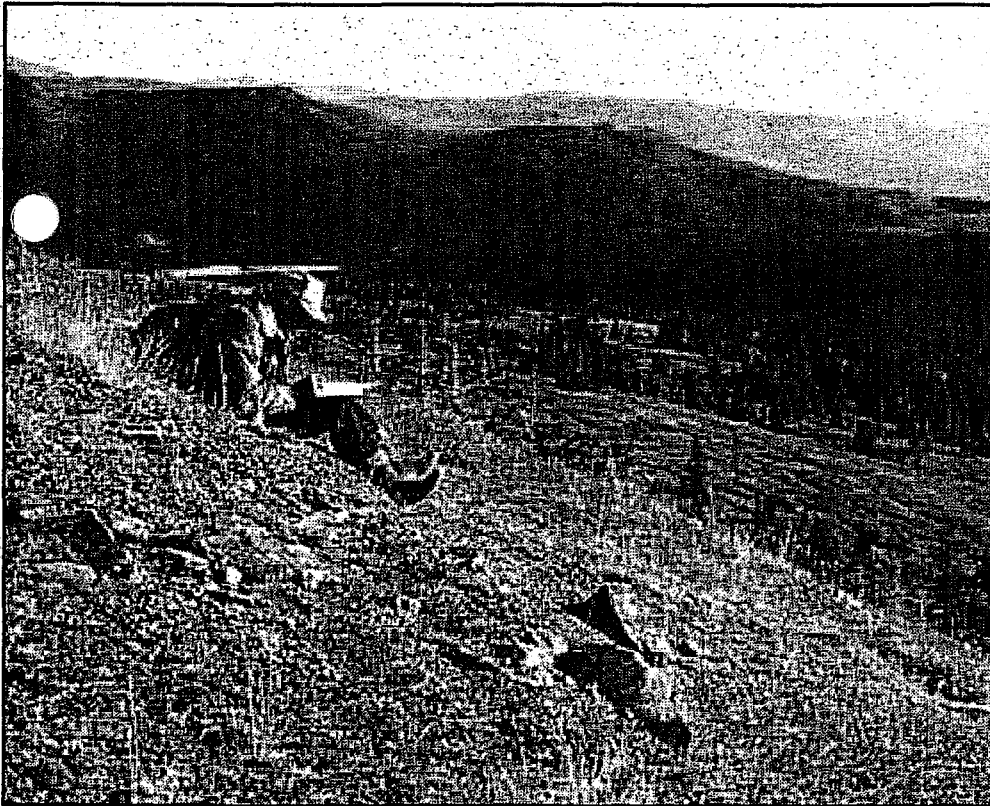
- A survey of the vegetation at Ddhaw Ghro and the surrounding area, including the unusual plants near the hot springs, was completed in the late 1980s.

Resources

- Geological work was carried out in 2000.
- The area has been withdrawn from mineral, petroleum and coal exploration and development until the management plan is approved. There are no existing mineral claims in the area.
- There is no inventory of forest resources.

Heritage

- In August 2000, interviews with elders were conducted at the hot springs. Information was recorded on rules for proper site use and development, and some information was collected about historic site use. A preliminary map of traditional and historic sites and trails in the Ddhaw Ghro planning area was drafted.



Field work planned for 2001

A few field activities are planned for the upcoming year. The need for additional work may be identified during public consultations.

- Geological fieldwork, including microfossil sample collection, will be carried out to help prepare geological and mineral potential maps.
- A general heritage inventory with NND and SFN elders is planned.
- Sheep distribution will be surveyed during lambing and rutting periods.
- Abundance and calf survival rates for the Ethel Lake caribou herd will be assessed in the fall.
- Little Kalzas and Crystal Lakes will be surveyed for freshwater fish.
- Vegetation mapping will be completed based on earlier fieldwork.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Objectives: Chapter 10, Schedule A of the Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement, which also forms part of the Nacho Nyak Dun Final Agreement, outlines the following objectives for the Ddhaw Ghro Habitat Protection Area:

- To establish the Ddhaw Ghro Habitat Protection Area to conserve and protect important Fish and Wildlife, and Fish and Wildlife habitat for the benefit of all Yukon People;
- To recognize and protect the use of the area by the Selkirk People and Nacho Nyak Dun, and to facilitate their interest in sharing the area with Little Salmon/Carmacks People and other Yukon Indian People;
- To provide for the management and protection of the area;
- To protect the full diversity of wildlife populations and their habitats in the area from activities which could reduce the area's capability to support Wildlife; and
- To encourage public awareness of, and appreciation for the natural resources of the area.

Special Management Areas (SMA): Chapter 10 of Yukon First Nation Final Agreements sets out the provisions for establishing a "Special Management Area." One of the requirements of Chapter 10 is that there must be a public consultation process when SMA management plans are prepared.

Habitat Protection Area (HPA): The Yukon's *Wildlife Act* allows for Habitat Protection Areas to be established to protect important fish and wildlife and their habitats. The level of protection is defined in an approved management plan. The Ddhaw Ghro HPA will be protected under this legislation once the management plan is completed.

Yukon Protected Areas Strategy (YPAS): Ddhaw Ghro is not a creation of the Yukon Protected Areas Strategy. It is a land claim initiative under the Selkirk and Nacho Nyak Dun Final Agreements.

Plan to attend the first round of workshops in your community

To help identify the issues the management plan should address, make sure you attend the first round of workshops. These will be held in Pelly Crossing, Mayo and Whitehorse.

WHITEHORSE

Tuesday, May 22, 2001

1:00-4:00 pm, 7:00-9:00 pm

Gold Rush Inn, General Store

PELLY CROSSING

Thursday, May 24, 2001

9:00 am to 4:00 pm

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Community Hall

MAYO

Friday, May 25, 2001

9:00 am to 4:00 pm

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Community Hall

For more information

Ddhaw Ghro Steering Committee
c/o Bruce McLean
Habitat Section, Renewable Resources,
Government of Yukon
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

phone 867-667-5803, 1-800-661-0408,
bruce.mclean@gov.yk.ca



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