

Mineral exploration and mining

- Mineral potential mapping should be performed in support of the LUP Commission's goal of minimizing land use conflicts and promote sustainable development.
- Mineral commodities are hidden, and cannot be counted like wildlife or trees. Prudent planning should take into account the potential for finding undiscovered mineral deposits, through the use of regional mineral potential maps.
- Regional mineral potential map of the Yukon is not appropriate for land use planning within a smaller area. Mineral potential rank is relative to the size of the study area.
- Minimum time necessary to complete a regional mineral potential map of the North Yukon Land Use Planning region: 1 year after determination of southern boundary.
- Regional geochemical data (RGS surveys) not complete in the NYLUPR. Complete RGS surveys are necessary in order to evaluate mineral potential adequately.
- Detailed mineral assessments (for areas where any level of protection is considered) cannot be performed without RGS surveys, and may require geological fieldwork in selected areas. Where RGS data not available, minimal time to complete mineral assessment is two years.
- Geological mapping in northern Yukon was performed at a scale that is too coarse for local land use planning, pre-dates the current geoscientific knowledge, conflicts with similar scale mapping in Alaska, and is therefore considered antiquated.
- The *Yukon Quartz Mining Act* ensures the right of access to mining claims in good standing. Access corridors to claims that are in good standing should be designed in any LUP.
- Access to highways, roads, winter roads, and airstrips are critical for exploration work.
- The *Yukon Quartz Mining Land Use Regulations* (MLUR; effective since December, 1998) ensures that environmental effects of disturbances caused by exploration activities are minimized, and helps government to comply with the requirements of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.
- In order to discover new deposits, exploration companies need a large landbase to explore. 42% of the NYLUPR landbase (using Vuntut Gwitchin Traditional Territory as southern boundary) is currently withdrawn from staking. If the overlap area with Tr'ondek Hwech'in FN is excluded from the NYLUPR, 48% of the landbase is currently withdrawn from staking.