

YPAS NEEDS TO BE FIXED

Our organizations support a Territorial wide program to create protected areas provided we have a balance between economic and conservation interests which will allow our communities to continue to develop. The process to create these parks must be clear, consistent and provide effective representation to all Yukoners whose livelihoods will be directly affected by withdrawing public lands from resource development.

WE WERE PROMISED...

"In connection with the Yukon Protected Areas Strategy Implementation Review, our Government is committed to providing a clear process that will balance conservation and development interests in the Yukon." - Premier Pat Duncan; (Jan. 22, 2001)

We think all Yukoners agree with the Premier. Our organizations hoped this government would end the conflicts and provide us with the certainty we need to operate, invest and grow.

WHAT IS PROPOSED IS NO SOLUTION

The Territorial Government's solution to the problems with YPAS is to tinker with a few procedures and ignore the deeper problems. We have tried to discuss serious YPAS problems with the government including:

- **A LACK OF BALANCE** — Resource user interests will be accommodated in park creation only if, in the opinion of the Department of Renewable Resources, "reasonable options exist". A department with a balanced mandate should be making these decisions.
- **A RUSHED AND ARBITRARY PROCESS** We have been told that the government is prepared to identify an additional 16 protected "areas of interest" within the next 2 years — with or without resource user input. There is no procedure for comparing economic with environmental impacts.
- **THIS WILL BE THE SINGLE MOST SIGNIFICANT LAND USE DECISION EVER MADE IN THE YUKON** The current version of YPAS proposes to create 16 new parks and withdraw up to 80,000 square kilometres. When this is finished, there will be an enormous patchwork of parks and protected areas covering the Yukon. These protected areas could block off access to much larger areas. What will this do to mining exploration, forestry, agriculture and oil & gas exploration and pipelines, Yukon outfitters, trappers and wilderness tour operators? Why won't the Territorial Government agree to a full Territory-wide assessment of the economic impacts of YPAS?

Over the past year, our organizations have offered constructive suggestions to improve the YPAS. Instead of inviting us in to address the serious problems with YPAS and work on possible solutions, we have been asked to discuss only how the currently flawed process should be enshrined in legislation. For this reason, we withdrew from the meeting on February 8.

We all want to build a Yukon with a healthy economy, to support our communities and to act in away that supports a healthy environment. The YPAS has failed to meet these objectives. We are asking the Territorial Government to develop a protected areas process that will deliver on its promises.

**Yukon Chamber of Commerce,
 Yukon Prospectors Association,
 Yukon Agricultural Association,
 Yukon Chamber of Mines,
 Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce,
 Yukon Forest Industry Association,
 Klondike Placer Miners Association**

