

# Kwanlin Dün First Nation

*Traditional Territory Land Vision*



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Kwanlin Dün First Nation *Traditional Territory Land Vision*  
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**A note from artist and art historian Ukjese van Kampen:**

*Throughout this booklet you will see various decorative designs and patterns that come from the first of three periods in Yukon First Nations' art history. This work is from the Geometric Period, referencing the geometric decorative imagery created in the Yukon subarctic region until the 1898 Klondike Gold Rush. After the adoption of the beaded floral designs established by the 1880s, and the influences of Yukon colonization, these early motifs were largely forgotten, but are now re-emerging through use in various First Nation self-government initiatives.*

*Motifs representing the sun, stars and the moon were often used, as were repeating geometric designs like dots, checkers, zigzags, meanders and chevrons. The "X" motif was commonly used for a very long time with the earliest example being 11,500 years old from the Upward Sun River Archaeological site in Alaska. Two designs used in this document are linked to old stories. Catherine McClellan identifies the symbol of a dot within a circle as the Big Headed Starman and the concept of creation may have been represented in the four-direction designs.*

*These geometric designs were used on implements including bone spoons, knives, projectile points and drums as well as on adornments, such as pendants and breast bands and on clothing. They were carved into bone and painted onto hide or used to colour porcupine quills. The patterns in which these designs were applied appear to be unique expressions of individual artists.*

## Approval of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation *Land Vision*

WHEREAS the *Kwanlin Dün First Nation Self-Government Agreement* recognizes the right of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation to plan for its settlement lands; and

WHEREAS the *Kwanlin Dün First Nation Final Agreement* assures the Kwanlin Dün First Nation's involvement in land and resource planning and the management in its entire Traditional Territory; and

WHEREAS the *Lands and Resources Act* (Kwanlin Dün First Nation) requires land use plans for Kwanlin Dün First Nation settlement lands; and

WHEREAS the intent of establishing a *land vision* is to ensure that there is a consistent approach to the planning, management and use of all land throughout the Kwanlin Dün First Nation Traditional Territory based on the values and principles of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation community; and

WHEREAS the *Land Vision* provides guidance to a hierarchy of plans within the Kwanlin Dün First Nation Traditional Territory, from regional planning through to the planning of Kwanlin Dün First Nation community land parcels within the City of Whitehorse and to individual site development plans.

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT the Council adopts the Kwanlin Dün First Nation *Land Vision*, attached to this Resolution as Schedule A, as the guiding document for all land use planning and land and resource decision-making within the Kwanlin Dün First Nation Traditional Territory.

Approved by Council on May 10, 2016

CR-2016-18

## Acknowledgements

The KDFN Elders Council encouraged this work and expressed their support to maintain lands for young people to pursue traditional activities, while at the same time, creating opportunities for employment.

Council supported the *Land Vision* through endorsement of this project as a departmental priority and through participation in the community sessions.

This *Land Vision* was built with community direction through meetings and workshops followed by summer field camps to further discuss land stewardship. Over 100 community members participated in these discussions.

Financial and personnel support for the *Land Vision* was provided by the Kwanlin Dün Lands and Resources Department, augmented by contributions from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Yukon Government Northern Strategy Trust Fund.

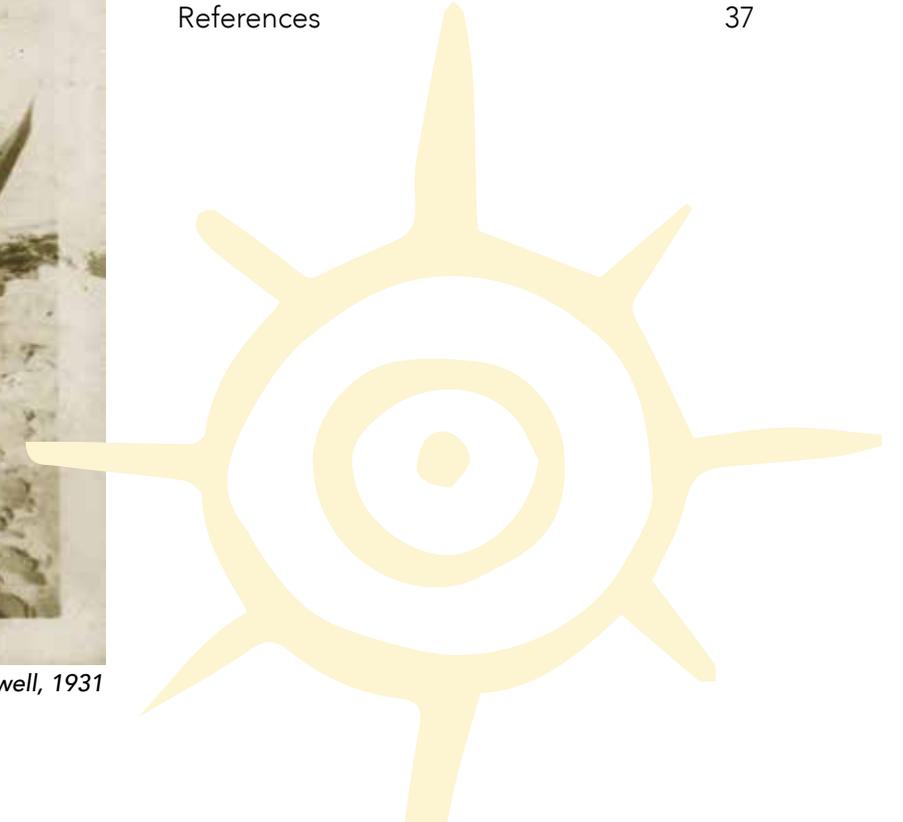
The *Land Vision* project would not have proceeded as smoothly as it did without the capable organizational work of Tammy Joe and Melonie Jim. The meetings and workshops were facilitated by Mark Nelson of Cambio Consulting. Maps were prepared by Richard Vladars and photos were contributed by John Meikle, Richard Vladars and Geoff Cowie. The document was written by John Meikle and Geoff Cowie. Motifs and their descriptions were drawn and written by Ukjese van Kampen. Document design and layout was produced by Dan LeBrun of Reactive Design, and was printed in Whitehorse by Arctic Star Printing.



Dorothy, Jack and Elsie Baker on the Teslin River at Boswell, 1931

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## Executive Summary

The need to plan for the use of Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN) land has been recognized since long before the conclusion of its treaty in 2005. The Final Agreement assures KDFN of a role in land and resource planning throughout the Traditional Territory. This includes provisions in the Final Agreement for regional land-use planning and local area planning, protected area establishment, heritage, wildlife, water, forestry and other resource management and planning.

The Self-Government Agreement enables KDFN to establish laws and to manage its settlement land. In 2014 KDFN passed the *Lands and Resources Act* which contains provisions that require land to be planned to best meet the needs of the community.

In 2014-15 the KDFN government, through the Lands and Resources Department, initiated the *Land Vision* project to develop a guiding vision for KDFN settlement land and Traditional Territory. The purpose of the *Traditional Territory Land Vision* is to provide the KDFN government with direction from the community to support detailed planning for settlement lands and better equip KDFN to work with other governments throughout its Traditional Territory.

The *Land Vision* puts forward four main land-based goals and ensures that there is opportunity to maximize each of them. The four goals are:

- **Community Development:** to provide land for KDFN residential and infrastructure needs.
- **Wildlife:** to conserve areas of high ecological value and maintain the health of wildlife populations.
- **Heritage:** to conserve areas of high heritage value while maintaining and creating opportunities for continued traditional use of the land.
- **Revenue Generation:** to make lands available to generate revenue for the benefit of the KDFN community.

The community provided the following key messages during the development of the *Land Vision*:

- Lands must be dedicated to protect important heritage areas and ensure their continued use for traditional activities.
- Certain C Lands and portions of R Blocks should be used for revenue generation.
- Remote R Blocks, and their adjacent areas, should be managed primarily for traditional uses. Developments should be minimal, with no new road access.

- Some lands should be set aside for use by future generations.
- Citizen residential needs should be met on settlement lands: higher density subdivisions within Whitehorse; and lower density residential development on road accessible R Blocks.

- KDFN Institutional and Government needs should be met largely on settlement land. Uses include administrative buildings on KDFN land within Whitehorse, and general assembly sites, campgrounds and culture camps on KDFN land outside of Whitehorse.



The *Land Vision* was developed through community discussions like this one held during a field camp at M'Clintock Lakes in 2015.

## Kwanlin Dün First Nation

Traditional Territory Land Vision

### Introduction

#### Background

Land use planning for the Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN) Traditional Territory presents distinct opportunities and challenges. Developing lands for the benefit of the KDFN community is the priority opportunity. While maintaining healthy wildlife populations and places for continued traditional practices are the predominant challenges. Therefore, planning is essential to make the best use of the limited KDFN settlement lands, which represent only six percent of the total KDFN Traditional Territory, and for developing a community consensus for land use throughout the entire Traditional Territory.

• **The intent of establishing a *Land Vision* for the KDFN Traditional Territory is to ensure that there is a consistent approach to the planning, management and use of settlement land that is based on the values of the Kwanlin Dün community.** The planning of settlement land is a necessary first step in order to achieve numerous objectives of the First Nation. These objectives are

varied but include the provision of land to citizens for residential use, identification of lands for economic development, and support for traditional activities on the land.

The *Land Vision* will provide guidance for all planning initiatives undertaken in Kwanlin Dün's Traditional Territory. The *Land Vision* is intended to establish the values and principles which will guide subsequent, longer-term, more detailed planning for all settlement land, and to inform all planning and management for adjacent non-Kwanlin Dün lands that are within the Traditional Territory.

#### Project Rationale

Until recently, KDFN has not been included in major decisions affecting its Traditional Territory. These include the establishment of Whitehorse, the building of the Alaska Highway, and the construction of hydroelectric projects at Whitehorse, Lewes Marsh and Fish Lake. Similarly, smaller, incremental land allotments and developments have been led by proponents or territorial and municipal governments, again without input from the First Nation. Having finalized the *Kwanlin Dün First Nation Final Agreement* and *Kwanlin Dün First Nation Self-Government Agreement* in 2005, it is now legally



Sarina Sydney on the ridge east of Grey Mountain during the M'Clintock Watershed archaeology project in 2010. R-82B surrounds the south side of Cantlie Lake, seen in the background.

required that KDFN be fully engaged in the planning and development of both settlement lands and surrounding public lands. As part of the Final Agreement, KDFN selected numerous settlement land parcels for revenue generation, particularly within Whitehorse. Other settlement lands were selected by KDFN so that citizens could continue to pursue traditional activities. In addition to providing opportunities for revenue generation and traditional activities, lands were also selected to address the needs of citizens for residential lands and of the government for community infrastructure.

KDFN has self-government authority for settlement lands, and as land stewards, requires an overarching community consensus that establishes land use objectives for its settlement lands. For KDFN to be effective in land and resource planning within its Traditional Territory there must be clarity on these land use objectives. The purpose of the *Land Vision* is to create a guiding vision, based upon a consensus within the Kwanlin Dün community, for planning and land use decisions on settlement and non-settlement land throughout the Kwanlin Dün Traditional Territory.

- **The Kwanlin Dün First Nation Final Agreement ensures that KDFN has a role in the planning of its Traditional Territory beyond its settlement land.** However, as the majority of land within the Kwanlin Dün Traditional Territory is non-settlement land, KDFN will have to work collaboratively with other governments to ensure that the goals of the *Land Vision* are achieved.



The Rose Creek delta, within R-37B, is a fall staging area for trumpeter swans and other waterfowl.

## Methodology

Elements of a *Land Vision* have been present within the Kwanlin Dün community for some time and are reflected in important documents such as the Final Agreement and the Constitution. To date these elements have never been fully documented or consolidated into a formal vision to guide Kwanlin Dün's land planning efforts. This document draws upon the traditional values and direction expressed by Elders over many years and consolidates the land and resource decisions made through the Final Agreement. Furthermore, the *Land Vision* is based upon intensive discussions with the community which took place during 2014 and 2015.

To develop a guiding vision for KDFN settlement land, the Lands & Resources Department (LRD) staff first reviewed foundational documents, including the *Kwanlin Dün First Nation Final Agreement*, *Kwanlin Dün First Nation Self-Government Agreement*, the

*Constitution of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation*, and KDFN's *Lands and Resources Act*. Together they establish the framework for the management and use of settlement land. These documents provide some indication of the values and principles that KDFN has committed to in regards to the management and use of settlement land. In addition to reviewing foundational documents, LRD staff reviewed audio recordings and maps produced from work conducted with Elders and other community members since the mid-1990s.



Sophie Smarch explains the use of stone hammers to Violet George and others gathered at Fish Lake in 2015 to discuss the *Land Vision*.

Next, the LRD hosted community workshops in the fall of 2014 and the winter of 2015 based around four central themes: community development, wildlife, heritage, and revenue generation. Citizens identified which lands were most suitable for each theme examined. This input from the community was then synthesized. Notes were compiled and a series of maps were produced. This synthesis formed the basis of a draft *Land Vision*. This draft was reviewed and refined by the community in the spring of 2015.

During the summer of 2015, three multi-day field camps were held with community members at Rose Lake, M'Clintock Lake and Fish Lake. The focus of these camps was on documenting KDFN traditional land use and involved further discussion of the draft *Land Vision* with participants. Based on the input provided by community members through the public workshops and the summer field work, the draft *Land Vision* was further refined and then presented to the KDFN Council for approval in the spring of 2016.

The direction contained in this *Land Vision* is not entirely new. For a long time, the message from Elders has been that there is both a need for employment for young people and a need to maintain opportunities for traditional activities on the land. The *Kwanlin Dün First Nation Final Agreement* reflects this approach as many of the settlement land selections within Whitehorse were chosen for development potential, while lands were selected in remote areas for their high heritage and wildlife values.



The confluence of the Boswell and Teslin Rivers is a traditional camping area and was used in the early to mid 1900s as a homestead and supply point for mineral exploration.

## Values, Guiding Principles & Goals

KDFN's *Land Vision* is based on the values and principles expressed in foundational documents, KDFN publications and documentation, interviews with Elders, discussions with community members and traditional land use mapping. Taken together, these sources provide a basis upon which values can be identified, guiding principles developed and goals established. The Kwanlin Dün community is diverse, embracing people from a variety of Yukon First Nations reflecting four language groups, and is composed of families with longstanding ties to particular areas within the Traditional Territory. Common across this diversity within KDFN are key overarching values and guiding principles.

### Values

#### Well-being of the land

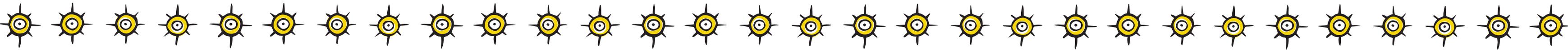
This includes a broad spectrum of values and ideas relating to respecting the land and animals, honouring people's historical use of the land, taking care of the land and maintaining a spiritual relationship with the land.

#### Well-being of the people

This includes a range of values and ideas that relate to using the land in a respectful way to provide for people's needs, and ensuring that the land and animals will be there for future generations to benefit from.



Elder Ann Smith, gathering caribou horn lichen for medicine on Joe Mountain.



### Guiding Principles

**Respect**  
The land and all animal life must be respected. Decision-making and the use of land must reflect a respectful relationship with the land.

**Caring for the land**  
People have a responsibility to care for and protect the land.

**Considering future generations**  
All land use and decision-making must take into consideration the ability of future generations to continue to benefit from the land.

**Cooperation**  
Planning and decision-making should be a cooperative undertaking between people and government to ensure that all interests are taken into account when decisions are made.

**Community**  
Planning and decision-making must ensure that the needs and interests of the community are properly balanced with the needs and interests of individuals.

### Goals

Based on the values and the guiding principles, the *Land Vision* establishes four main goals for the planning and management of the KDFN Traditional Territory.

**1. Community Development:** to provide land for KDFN residential and infrastructure needs.

One of the most important components of this goal is the provision of land for residential use by KDFN citizens.

This was the intent of numerous land selections, and is a clear need in the community. There is also significant potential on Kwanlin Dün settlement land



*Settlement land provides opportunity for KDFN to develop infrastructure, such as elder housing and government buildings, for the benefit of the Kwanlin Dün community.*

for a wide range of infrastructure projects, such as a new administration building or the expansion of land based healing initiatives, which would benefit the Kwanlin Dün community and satisfy the government's program delivery needs.

**2. Wildlife:** to conserve areas of high ecological value and maintain the health of wildlife populations.

Areas throughout the Traditional Territory that have high ecological value should be conserved and wildlife populations managed to ensure their continued health. As Kwanlin Dün settlement land is



*Some elders were taught that bears are our brothers and that they are sacred. Wildlife populations require large areas to remain intact, something the Land Vision encourages.*

only a small percentage of the land within the Traditional Territory, this goal will only be realized through cooperation with other governments in the planning and management of all land throughout the Traditional Territory.

**3. Heritage:** to conserve areas of high heritage value while maintaining and creating opportunities for continued traditional use of the land.

The areas throughout the Traditional Territory that have significant heritage value should be respected and conserved. At the same time, the planning and management of land in the Traditional Territory should ensure the continued ability of Kwanlin Dün people to pursue their traditional activities on the land.

**4. Revenue Generation:** to make lands available to generate revenue for the benefit of the KDFN community.

Settlement land holdings within Kwanlin Dün's Traditional Territory are large enough to meet the demand for land from Kwanlin Dün citizens and government, while also contributing to revenue generation for the KDFN community. Kwanlin Dün's settlement lands, particularly within Whitehorse, have significant potential for revenue generation through land leasing and various development opportunities.

## Context

Before discussing management directions which support the identified goals, it is helpful to briefly describe the historical and current context of Kwanlin Dün First Nation.

In 1956, for administrative purposes, the Department of Indian Affairs brought together indigenous people living throughout the Marsh Lake and Lake Laberge area, along with other indigenous people who were residing in Whitehorse, to create the Whitehorse Indian Band, known today as the Kwanlin Dün First Nation. Although Kwanlin Dün has only existed since the 1950s as a modern political entity, the ancestors of the Kwanlin Dün people have had a history on the land for millennia. Archaeological work has uncovered evidence of human habitation in the Whitehorse area going back more than 9,000 years.

In 2005, Canada, Yukon and Kwanlin Dün signed the *Kwanlin Dün First Nation Final Agreement* and the *Kwanlin Dün First Nation Self-Government Agreement*. These two agreements establish a land and resource management relationship between Government and Kwanlin Dün and provide the framework for modern self-governance. It is within this context, of a modern community with ancient roots in the land, that the guiding vision for Kwanlin Dün's Traditional Territory was developed.

## Natural Setting

The Kwanlin Dün First Nation's Traditional Territory is in the headwaters of the Yukon River in southern Yukon. The Traditional Territory is centred on the valley from Marsh Lake to Lake Laberge and extends from the Teslin River in the east to Kusawa Lake and the Takhini River in the west. It is part of the Yukon Plateau, through which major north to northwest valleys have been carved by regional glaciers. Throughout this area smaller glaciers and streams have given shape to the mountains. In addition to the large lakes, numerous smaller lakes and wetlands occupy mountain valleys. Spruce dominated forests extend upslope to 1,200 metres where they give way to subalpine shrub and alpine tundra. This range of ecosystems supports animals common throughout the boreal mountains, including moose, caribou, black bear, grizzly bear, wolf, beaver and ground squirrels. Mule deer are increasing in range and numbers, while elk have been introduced recently. Freshwater fish species include pike, lake trout, lake whitefish, round whitefish and grayling while Chinook salmon migrate up the Yukon and Teslin Rivers.

## Heritage

The Kwanlin Dün community is composed primarily of Southern Tutchone, Northern Tutchone, Tagish and Inland Tlingit people. The heritage of the Kwanlin Dün community reflects the use of key resource centres, including year-round fish and mid-summer salmon harvest sites in big eddies on the Yukon and Teslin Rivers, along with sites on smaller streams; open water sites in winter for access to freshwater

fish and early spring waterfowl; alpine areas for the harvest of caribou and sheep; and lowland and subalpine areas for the harvest of moose. Travel corridors between resource areas were important traditionally for opportunistic large and small animal harvest and for gathering medicines, ceremonial resources, berries and other foods. The pattern of land use is widely dispersed, with few large centres of occupation, reflecting the distributed nature of resources across the landscape.



One goal of the Land Vision is the maintenance of healthy populations of moose and other wildlife and the conservation of their habitat.

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## Settlement Land

As part of the Kwanlin Dün Final Agreement, Kwanlin Dün retained title to 1,042 square kilometres of land. These lands are all located within Kwanlin Dün's Traditional Territory and are classed as either Site Specific, Rural or Community Land Selections. Site Specific Land Selections were made for traditional and current camps and cabin sites, cemeteries and other important sites throughout the Traditional Territory. They are generally small parcels of less than 10 hectares. Rural Land Selections are organized into Category A and Category B settlement land, where Kwanlin Dün owns the surface and sub-surface rights on Category A land and only the surface rights on Category B land. These parcels are the largest land selections of the First Nation. Community Lands Selections are primarily located within Whitehorse, with some along the Hot Springs Road and others southeast of Whitehorse. Within the municipal boundaries of Whitehorse, Kwanlin Dün's Community Land Selections total approximately 24 square kilometres and are classified as being either Type 1, 2 or 3. Kwanlin Dün enjoys full self-government powers on Type 1 lands, while Type 2 and 3 lands are subject to increasing requirements to conform to existing zoning.

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## Administrative Boundaries

The Traditional Territory of Kwanlin Dün is overlapped by the Traditional Territories of five other First Nations: Ta'an Kwäch'än, Champagne and Aishihik, Little Salmon Carmacks, Teslin Tlingit and Carcross Tagish. In addition to the overlapping Traditional Territories of the neighbouring First Nations, Kwanlin Dün's Traditional Territory encompasses Whitehorse, the Ibex Valley and Mount Lorne hamlets and the unincorporated community of Marsh Lake.



*Fish Lake is one of the most important traditional areas in the KDFN Traditional Territory. R-4A is on the west side (left) of the lake.*

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## Traditional Economy

The traditional economy of subsistence hunting, fishing and trapping is no longer a mainstay of the Kwanlin Dün contemporary economy. However, many Kwanlin Dün people continue to hunt, gather and fish in order to supplement their food supply and augment traditional practices of medicine and ceremony, and to a lesser extent trap to generate income.

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## Market Economy

Kwanlin Dün people participate in the local wage economy in a wide variety of roles. The Kwanlin Dün government is a large employer of both Kwanlin Dün citizens and non-citizens. At the same time, a major goal of the First Nation is to improve education and training for citizens who are not fully integrated in the wage economy and to support job creating initiatives.

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## Resource Potential

The traditional way of life made use of resources such as fish, wildlife, medicinal or ceremonial plants and trails. Settlement land parcels were selected, in part, for these resources. In the early contact period, furs and copper became major tradable resources, followed by gold and other metals. Opportunities for mining continue to be explored. More recently, resource value has been placed on rivers for hydroelectric potential and on aggregates for road building and construction. Some settlement land parcels were selected for resource potential in the market economy. Resource value in land will continue to change in support of servicing urban needs and evolving recreational and industrial interests. The summary below highlights some of the current market economy resources.

### Forests

The forestry potential in the Kwanlin Dün First Nation Traditional Territory supports fuelwood harvesting along with small-scale cutting of saw logs and cabin logs. The resource is not suited to large-scale industrial forestry.

### Minerals

There is a history of copper mining in the Copper Belt within Whitehorse. Interest has been expressed in mining tailings for molybdenum in the Whitehorse area. Prospecting continues to take place for gold and other precious metals throughout the Traditional Territory. Placer mining in the Livingston Creek area has a 100-year history, and continues today.

### Hydrocarbons

A coal seam runs north from Coal Lake, extending northwest of Fish Lake and has had limited extraction years ago. Coal leases are still held, but commercial exploitation has not been undertaken recently. The Whitehorse Trough has potential for gas reserves, however only preliminary exploration of this potential resource has taken place.

### Hydroelectricity

There are two generating sites within the KDFN Traditional Territory. One is located on the Yukon River in Whitehorse, which produces 50 megawatts of power. The other uses water diverted from the Ibex drainage and Porter Creek on the Fish Lake Road,

which produces 2 megawatts. Additional potential sites have been identified within the Traditional Territory and further generating capacity is possible at the Whitehorse Dam through the development of additional upstream storage.

### Agriculture

Agricultural potential exists throughout the Traditional Territory in the large valleys. On a seven-level national agricultural land capability scale, the highest level of soils within the Traditional Territory is level 5. Soils in this class are suitable for growing seeded forage and market gardening is possible with irrigation. Agricultural dispositions occur throughout the highway-accessible large valleys of the Traditional Territory, particularly north and west of Whitehorse.

### Aggregates

Gravel resources have been mapped along the existing highway network as well as for Whitehorse and the surrounding area. These gravel resources occur in the large valleys as glaciofluvial deposits.

### Development Footprint/Zone of Influence

The central portion of the Traditional Territory is the most heavily populated and developed area of the Yukon. It includes Whitehorse and peripheral developments such as rural residential subdivisions, agriculture, and light industrial land uses. Wood cutting and recreational trails spread out from these developed lands. The only two control structures (The Whitehorse Rapids Dam and the Lewes Dam) on the Yukon River occur here, impacting salmon migration and habitats of other species, such as muskrat.

### Kwanlin Dün Demographics Today

As of 2017 Kwanlin Dün First Nation has 1,035 citizens (692 beneficiaries). The Kwanlin Dün community and government buildings are centered within the McIntyre Subdivision. McIntyre Subdivision was developed in 1988 when Kwanlin Dün moved from the Lot 226 site referred to now as the Old Village. At present there are a smaller number of Kwanlin Dün residences on Crow and Swan Streets, while many other Kwanlin Dün citizens reside elsewhere on private and settlement land, or outside the Yukon.



Much of the land near Whitehorse, is used for agriculture and rural residential purposes, such as the Mayo Road area south of Lake Laberge.

## Management Directions

### Community Development: to provide land for KDFN residential and infrastructure needs

• **One of the most important issues identified by the community is the need of settlement land for KDFN citizen residential use.** Within McIntyre Subdivision, located on Community Land Selection 41B (known as C-41B), there is substantial room for additional residential development. There is also demand from the community for opportunities to live on KDFN lands outside of McIntyre Subdivision. Land could be provided to Kwanlin Dün citizens in a number of ways, from formalizing authorizations for those presently occupying Kwanlin Dün land, to enabling citizens to develop other settlement land parcels. An organized approach to allocating land to Kwanlin Dün citizens is required to ensure that settlement land is well planned and the land allocation process is fair and transparent. The development of KDFN residential subdivisions would be one way to ensure that land is allocated fairly to the Kwanlin Dün community while at the same time allowing residential development to take place in a well-planned and orderly manner.

A further goal of the *Land Vision* is to identify those lands which could be developed to support the needs of the Kwanlin Dün community and government. These infrastructure needs may include administration buildings, a general assembly site, recreation buildings, culture camps, community campgrounds, a group home and youth transitional centre, and other required government buildings.

Existing Kwanlin Dün government infrastructure, such as government buildings, the Jackson Lake healing camp, and cemeteries, allow the provision of programs and services to the community. Kwanlin



Some of the Community Lands, such as C-41B where McIntyre Subdivision is located, were originally selected for the residential use of KDFN citizens.

Dün community infrastructure, such as the skating rink and ball field, are facilities developed by the KDFN government for the direct use by the Kwanlin Dün community. Based upon input received from community members, the infrastructure required to service Kwanlin Dün government and community needs should be primarily developed within McIntyre Subdivision, as well as on several locations on settlement land identified outside of the subdivision.

### Summary of Constraints

There are a number of potential constraints for the development of KDFN government and community infrastructure. These include limited financial capacity of KDFN to undertake significant infrastructure development projects, competing demands within the KDFN government for limited financial resources, and the need to achieve consensus within the community and government on the location of potential facilities.

### Summary of Opportunities

Locations for potential KDFN residential subdivisions are identified within Whitehorse (C-42B, C-143B, R-40A, C-24B, C-5B and C-100B) and within three main nodes outside of Whitehorse at Marsh Lake, Ibex Valley /North Klondike Highway and the South Klondike Highway. The parcels identified at Marsh Lake include R-9A, R-78A, R-77B, R-5A and R-1A. The parcels identified along the South Klondike Highway include R-20B and R-25A. The parcels in the Ibex Valley/North Klondike node include R-79B, C-1B, C-177B, C-2B and C-159B. These locations were identified by community members during the workshops held in the fall of 2014. They were also identified by the Lands and Resources Department in an earlier planning project which looked at potential residential subdivision locations throughout the Traditional Territory.



KDFN is fortunate to have a large portfolio of settlement lands to accommodate the range of infrastructure needs identified by community members during the land visioning workshops. McIntyre Subdivision is the primary location suggested for the majority of KDFN government and community infrastructure. A wide-ranging variety of facilities suggested by community members for McIntyre Subdivision include a woodworking workshop, archery range, community centre, greenhouse, church, youth transitional centre, recreation centre, cultural camp and an expansion of Elder housing. There is ample room within McIntyre Subdivision for these facilities as the majority of the subdivision's surveyed lots are currently undeveloped. In addition to expanding into undeveloped areas



*The Health Centre in McIntyre Subdivision is an example of KDFN infrastructure required to provide services to its citizens.*

of the subdivision, there are opportunities for infill development within the already developed areas of the subdivision.

Additional infrastructure was identified by community members for KDFN lands outside of McIntyre Subdivision. These sites are grouped into three main nodes: Marsh Lake; Fish Lake; and Alaska Highway West. At Marsh Lake the following parcels were identified for potential infrastructure development:

C-38B – campground

R-5A, R-7A, S-164B/D – cultural camp

R-8A – healing centre

R-5A – community centre

In the Fish Lake area the following parcels were identified for potential infrastructure development:

R-75A, R-4A, – healing centre, campground and culture camp

R- 4A – campground and culture camp

R-40A – campground.

In the Alaska Highway West area, the following parcels were suggested for potential infrastructure development:

R-25A – culture camp

S-353B/D – culture camp, healing centre

S-77B – culture camp

R-12A – culture camp

R-62A – culture camp, campground

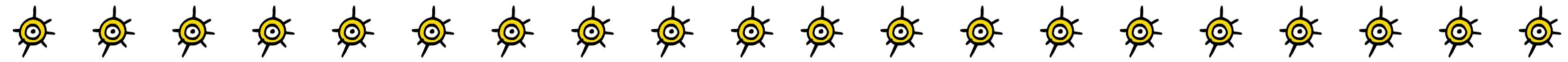
**Wildlife:** to conserve areas of high ecological value and maintain the health of wildlife populations

Healthy wildlife populations have sustained the Kwanlin Dün people since ancient times. Although the Kwanlin Dün community no longer relies exclusively on hunting and fishing for survival, healthy wildlife populations are still important for the community. Many citizens continue to supplement their diet

through hunting and fishing which remain important traditional activities for the community. The health of animal populations is directly tied to the state of the land so any attempt to ensure the health of wildlife populations must also protect their habitat. The land and animals continue to be of significance for the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and land planning must clearly reflect their importance within all decision making.



*Ground squirrels were an important traditional food source. Elders believe it is important to conserve the populations of small mammals as much as the large species, such as caribou and moose.*



## Summary of Constraints

Development and harvest continue to be the two main pressures on wildlife habitat and populations. For fish and aquatic mammals like muskrat, hydroelectric developments have altered habitat and restricted migration. This pressure is particularly acute on the population of chinook salmon that relied on Michie Creek, and secondary spawning sites in tributaries to Marsh Lake and beyond. Chinook salmon populations in the Takhini and Teslin Rivers have been impacted by over-harvesting within the region, as well as downstream and in the oceans, where other impacts are also a factor. In the 20th century, freshwater fish have been impacted by human consumption, commercial harvest for fox farming, and more recently, by recreational harvest. Similarly, animals have had habitats destroyed or dramatically altered by urban, industrial and agricultural development, and made less effective by roads, trails and fire suppression. The range of the barren ground caribou 40 Mile herd entered the Traditional Territory until the late 1930s but the caribou are now absent from the area. Mountain woodland caribou populations, particularly the Carcross herd, have been significantly depleted. Moose have been harvested at unsustainable rates and there is a growing concern about the health of sheep populations which is reflected in the restrictions placed upon licenced sheep harvesting.

## Summary of Opportunities

Attempts are being made to recover and better manage some of these impacted wildlife populations throughout the Traditional Territory, particularly near developed areas and in those areas accessible by road. Additionally, this *Land Vision* seeks to maintain healthy habitats and populations in areas beyond the zone influenced by development and easy access. These areas include the west side of Marsh Lake, Lake Laberge, the M'Clintock River Watershed and plateau to the north, and the northwest and eastern portions of the Traditional Territory.

### **Heritage:** to conserve areas of high heritage value while maintaining and creating opportunities for continued traditional use of the land

Ice patch records show environmental changes that very likely caused significant impacts to First Nation societies and land use. Oral history, as recounted by the Elders, goes back to ancient times well before the arrival of Europeans. The stories told by the Elders also recount more recent events that have caused significant change such as the influences of coastal trade and commercial trapping, the impacts of the gold rush and World War II, and the establishment of Whitehorse. The *Land Vision* does not strive to go back in time or attempt to undo these changes — but

rather, based upon the input from the community, proposes lands to be set aside where citizens can still have opportunity to pursue traditional ways of life.

## Summary of Constraints

The main constraints on achieving this goal arise from changes to the economy and the corresponding impacts of these changes upon heritage and the traditional use of the land.

As a consequence of the external forces that took people off of the land during the 20th century, and through people's choices to live with modern

amenities, the economy of KDFN citizens has changed dramatically. So too has the identification with traditional land uses. Opportunities are now desired for weekends or other short reprieves from the cash economy with the result that there is now more interest in accessing places with modern means. Consequently, the community's relationship with traditional land uses has changed, with formerly traditional subsistence use being replaced by recreational use. For many citizens there is simply less time and opportunity to experience the land, and when on the land, citizens now face direct competition with other land users.

Additionally, places central to the seasonal circuit of traditional activities have been altered. This has been most intensive along the Whitehorse waterfront where the hydroelectric dam and urban development have diminished the food resources and fundamentally changed the nature of the area. Community members identified both Fish Lake and the M'Clintock Watershed as two additional key areas that have been significantly altered.



William Smith explains the medicinal uses of spruce pitch at a camp on R-37B near Rose Lake.

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## Summary of Opportunities

The opportunities to maintain areas for traditional land use are similar to those of maintaining wildlife habitats and populations. For short-to-medium duration traditional land use, interest was expressed in areas close to Whitehorse and areas with easy accessibility. For longer duration traditional land use, interest was expressed in accessing more remote areas by way of traditional trails.

Although heritage values are associated with all lands throughout the Traditional Territory, there are certain areas of particular significance, both historically and for the present day. The *Land Vision* identifies opportunities for heritage and traditional activities primarily for large areas. Smaller sites, such as fish camps within the Whitehorse boundary, will be identified in subsequent plans.

During the course of the Land Vision project, the key large areas identified as having retained value for ongoing experience on the land include the M'Clintock Watershed, Teslin River, and the Lake Laberge area east to the Teslin River. Secondary sites, either smaller or more impacted by human activity, include the M'Clintock River at Marsh Lake, Lewes Marsh, Fish Lake and the Watson River.

## Revenue Generation: to make lands available to generate revenue for the benefit of the KDFN community

In discussions with the Kwanlin Dün community there was strong support that the majority of revenue generating activities should be centered on those Kwanlin Dün lands within the City of Whitehorse. In keeping with the original designations within the Kwanlin Dün First Nation Self-Government Agreement, settlement land within Whitehorse should be the primary focus of economic development. KDFN urban lands have significant potential for development, ranging from residential to commercial and light industrial. While revenue generating opportunities are certainly possible on KDFN lands outside the City of Whitehorse, given the range of development potential associated with KDFN settlement land in Whitehorse the primary focus of a KDFN economic development strategy should center on developing the KDFN lands within the city.

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## Summary of Constraints

One of the primary ways of generating revenue for KDFN will be through land leasing to KDFN citizens and the general public. However, providing land to Kwanlin Dün citizens and others is dependent upon

the Kwanlin Dün government having the necessary plans, policies and internal processes in place to allow for a land allocation process that is fair and transparent. Land planning, regulations, policies and internal capacity building will take time but without these fundamentals in place, Kwanlin Dün would risk allocating land in ways that were unfair and poorly planned.

Those issues that could constrain the ability of Kwanlin Dün to utilize its lands within the City of Whitehorse for revenue generation may include the state of the Yukon economy, the financial capacity of KDFN, the effectiveness of the KDFN development corporation and the nature of KDFN's relationship with the City of Whitehorse.



Located close to downtown Whitehorse, C-31B is one of the land parcels with significant potential to generate revenue through leasing land for residential use.

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## Summary of Opportunities

- KDFN's urban lands provide a wide range of economic development opportunities for both the Kwanlin Dün government and citizens. The KDFN lands within the City of Whitehorse were selected primarily for their economic development potential and as such are well placed to generate income to KDFN through a range of potential uses. Land leasing to both KDFN citizens and the general public present significant opportunities for revenue generation, particularly given the income tax sharing provision within the Final Agreement allowing for KDFN to share in the taxes paid by those people living on KDFN settlement land.

KDFN lands situated along the Alaska Highway and in downtown Whitehorse offer significant potential for mixed use residential, commercial and industrial development. After the City of Whitehorse, KDFN is the largest landowner within Whitehorse. It is anticipated that KDFN land leases will be available to KDFN citizens, non-citizens and businesses.

## Traditional Territory Land Vision of Kwanlin Dün First Nation: Summary and Proposed Vision

The vision for settlement land reflects the unique opportunities Kwanlin Dün First Nation has as a consequence of being centred in an urban area while having healthy surrounding lands suitable for hunting, gathering and other traditional activities.

Based on the input received from the community, there is a consensus that some Community Land Selections within and near Whitehorse should be reserved for community and KDFN government infrastructure. Just as importantly, the community endorses use of the remaining Community Land Selections for revenue generation for the First Nation.

For settlement land outside of Whitehorse, the management direction indicated by the community is determined, to a large degree, by the current road access and the level of development impacts. Parcels near the highways should be focused on KDFN residential and institutional uses. Parcels that are remote should be retained for traditional pursuits and preservation of wildlife habitat.

While opportunities remain for citizens to pursue traditional activities outside of Whitehorse and other built-up areas, many citizens commented that wildlife was declining throughout the Traditional Territory and that the opportunities for hunting, fishing and other traditional activities were being hampered by overhunting and increased access to the roadless areas. The growing pressures upon wildlife and the landscape of the Traditional Territory highlight the need to protect and prioritize the remote KDFN land parcels. This is essential to ensure that opportunities will remain for Kwanlin Dün citizens to practice traditional activities.



Robert Suits and Joan Viksten at the Mount Byng ice patch, a significant heritage site within KDFN Traditional Territory.

In order to accommodate opportunities for community development, wildlife, heritage and revenue generation the *Land Vision* establishes priorities for land use. These priorities are intended to guide more detailed future planning and development project review. The *Land Vision* recognizes that these priorities need not always be exclusionary and that, at times, different land uses may be able to take place upon the same lands.

For example, while urban lands are to be focused on revenue generation and KDFN residential or government needs, there is still opportunity for heritage interpretation and experience within the city. Similarly, while remote parcels are to be managed primarily for heritage and wildlife, development will be considered where impacts on traditional values can be mitigated.



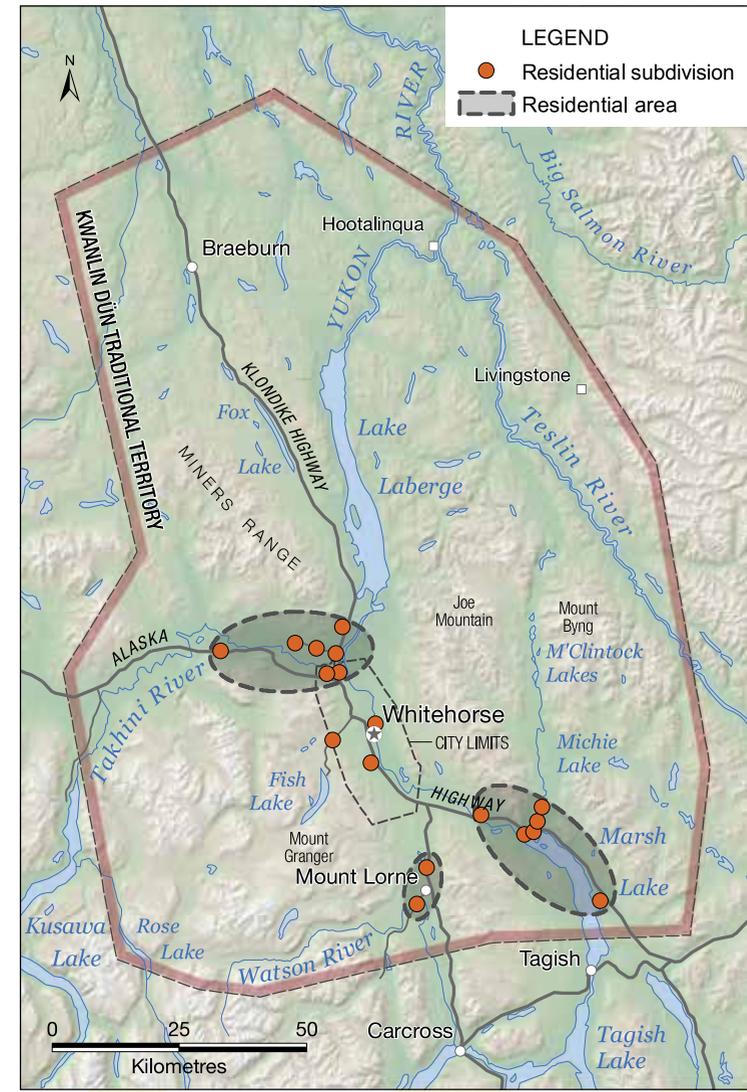
Rose Lake, situated at the southwest corner of the KDFN Traditional Territory, is within Kusawa Park. The Tlingit Trail, an ancient trade route, passes through the valley.



**Community Development:** to provide land for KDFN residential and infrastructure needs

**KDFN residential needs**

The *Land Vision* recognizes the desire of the Kwanlin Dün community to develop lands outside of McIntyre Subdivision for residential development. Based on the input received from Kwanlin Dün citizens, and supported by previous planning work done by the Lands and Resources Department, six land parcels (C-5B, C-24B, C-42B, C-100B, C-143B and R-40A) were identified within Whitehorse that could be set aside for this purpose. In addition to these six parcels, 12 land parcels were identified outside of the municipal boundaries that could be set aside for KDFN citizens. These 12 parcels are situated in three main areas: Marsh Lake (R-1A, R-5A, R-9A, R-77B, and R-78A), Ibx Valley/North Klondike Highway (R-79B, C-1B, C-2B, C-159B and C-177B) and the South Klondike Highway (R-20B and R-25A). Of these 18 land parcels in total, only a few parcels may need to be developed in the short-term to satisfy the needs of citizens. The remainder could be reserved for the use of future generations. The land parcels identified through the *Land Vision* project could potentially be developed using a subdivision model to allow for a well-planned and organized method for allocating land to citizens both within and outside of Whitehorse.

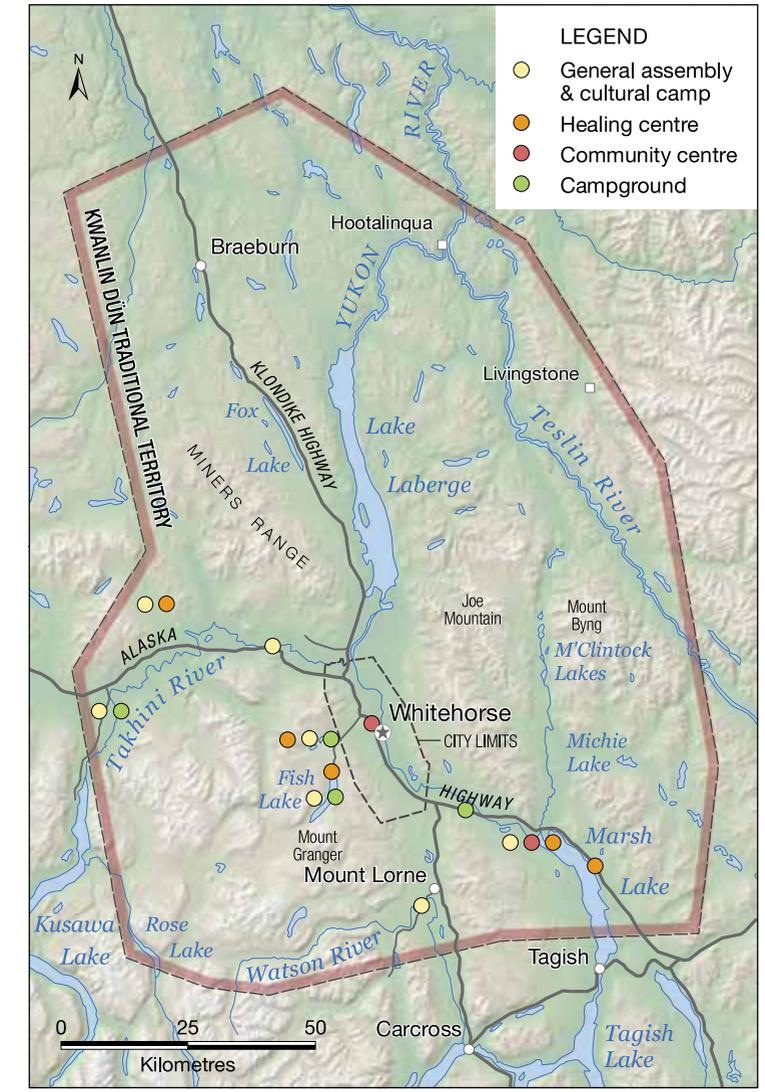


**KDFN Residential**

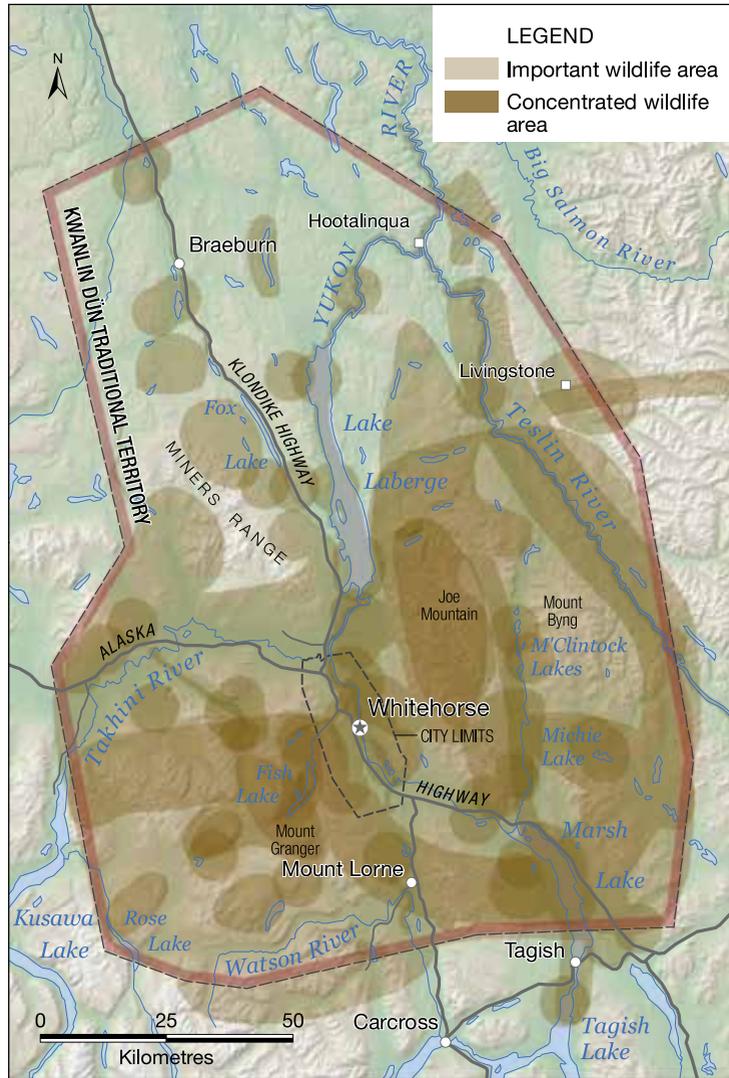
**KDFN infrastructure needs**

As part of the *Land Vision* project, citizens were asked to identify what infrastructure is required to support the needs of the KDFN community and government, as well as which land parcels they thought would be most suitable for the infrastructure identified. Citizens provided a wide range of suggestions. McIntyre Subdivision was the recommended location for most of this infrastructure, ranging from an administration building to a youth transitional centre.

**Outside of McIntyre Subdivision, infrastructure needs identified were a general assembly site, culture camps, a community centre and campgrounds.** A range of land parcels were suggested by the citizens for these particular uses. These parcels were grouped in three main areas: Alaska Highway West, Fish Lake and Marsh Lake and specific parcels were suggested for particular infrastructure. Many of the parcels identified are large areas of which only a portion would be needed to accommodate the proposed infrastructure. Outside of McIntyre Subdivision, 15 individual parcels were identified for infrastructure needs. These parcels provide more than enough land to satisfy KDFN's short-term infrastructure needs as identified by the community. Short-term and long-term infrastructure needs should be further discussed and a longer-range plan developed to identify which lands could be developed immediately and which lands should be reserved for the infrastructure needs of future KDFN generations.



**KDFN Infrastructure**



Wildlife

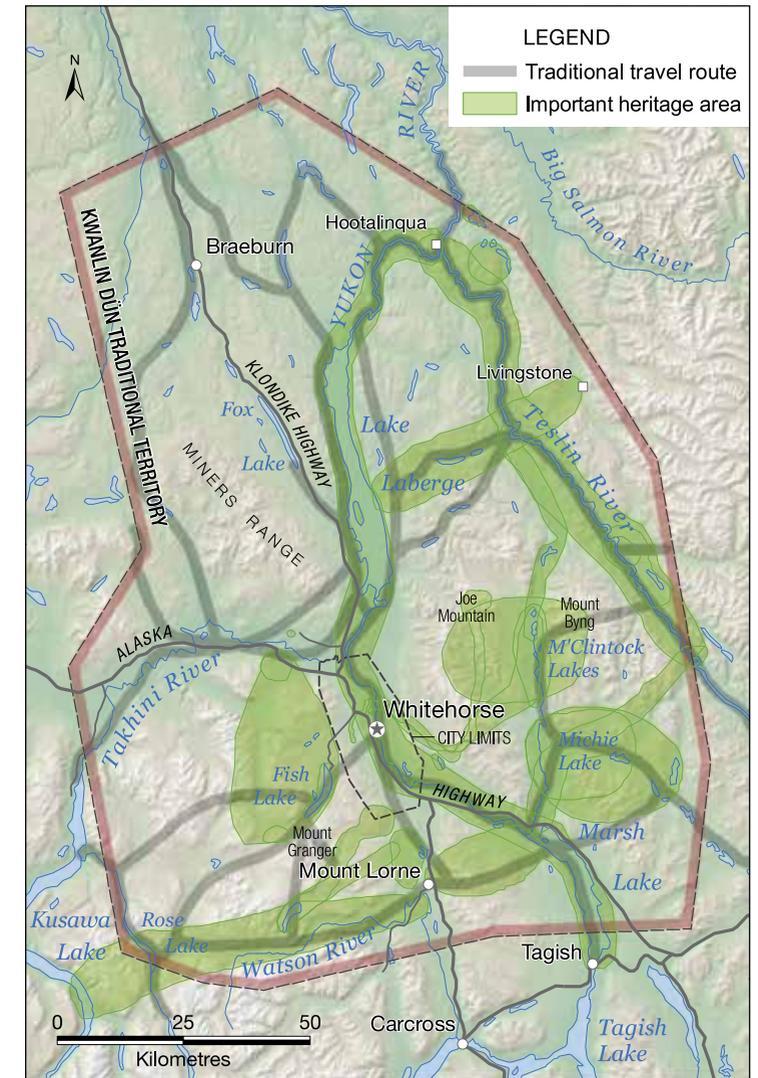
**Wildlife:** to conserve areas of high ecological value and maintain the health of wildlife populations

Opportunities for wildlife harvest have been negatively impacted by development. Elders have spoken about the great winter migration of caribou that ended in the late 1930s. This was most likely the 40 Mile Caribou herd that was estimated to be 500,000 strong, but was reduced dramatically by overharvest during the height of the gold rush period. Salmon migration on the Yukon River was significantly impacted by the construction of the Lewes and Whitehorse dams. Meanwhile, the growth of land use in the valleys and trail access into the mountains has compromised habitat and increased hunting pressure on caribou, moose, sheep and other species. These impacts heighten the need to proactively manage the settlement lands and the portions of the Traditional Territory that remain undeveloped. Opportunity remains to limit further development and trail extensions into the area south and west of Whitehorse, including Fish Lake and the Ibex and Watson valleys and mountains. Citizens commented during the project workshops that the area to the northwest of the Traditional Territory, the 37 Mile River area, is becoming increasingly disturbed by human activity. Concern was also expressed about the increasing off-road vehicle access into the M'Clintock

Watershed. The largest area of the Traditional Territory that is without road access, and the one area that presents the greatest opportunity for heritage and wildlife values, remains the lands east of the Yukon River valley.

**Heritage:** to conserve areas of high heritage value while maintaining and creating opportunities for continued traditional use of the land

KDFN citizens want continued opportunities for traditional pursuits and experiences. The Land Vision proposes that KDFN lands outside of Whitehorse, not including those land parcels identified for community and government infrastructure, should be primarily managed for heritage. The Kwanlin Dün community has long connections to the land and water throughout the entire Traditional Territory. Proposing heritage and wildlife as the primary values for settlement land outside of Whitehorse reflects the historic significance of these lands and the ongoing importance of this entire landscape to the Kwanlin Dün community. Specific areas within the Traditional Territory such as Michie/M'Clintock Lakes, Fish Lake and Marsh Lake are particularly important to the community. Many citizens stressed the importance of the heritage significance of all lands within the Traditional Territory. Opportunities for experiencing



Heritage

traditional activities now depend on where those lands are located. Opportunities for heritage experience are different for urban areas, road-accessible areas and more remote areas with no road access. The urban context may offer opportunities for heritage experience such as exhibits, using traditional place names, and interpretive signage while areas with road access present opportunities for citizens to engage in traditional gathering activities within close proximity to Whitehorse and, lastly, the more remote lands offer opportunity for the community to pursue traditional activities within relatively undisturbed landscapes.

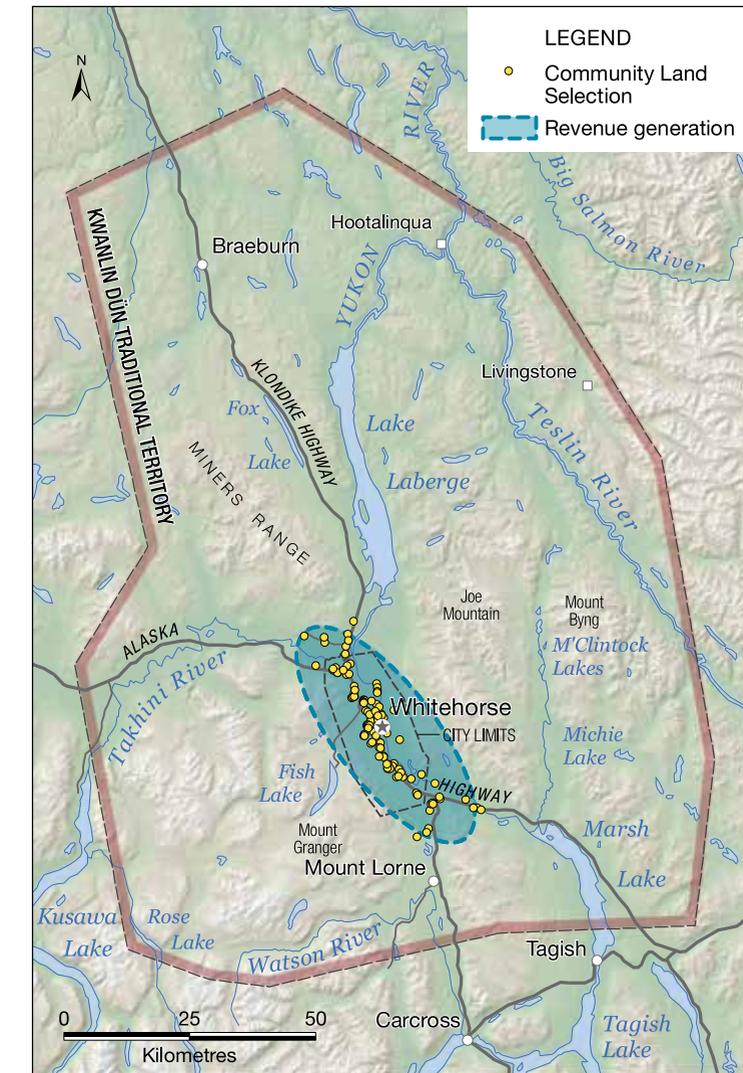
**Revenue Generation:** to make lands available to generate revenue for the benefit of the KDFN community

The *Land Vision* recognizes the fact that KDFN urban lands within Whitehorse were primary selected to generate revenue. The Community Land Selections are designated in the *Kwanlin Dün First Nation Self-Government Agreement* as either residential, commercial, light industrial, industrial or institutional. These broad designations allow for a wide variety of land uses within each designation and provide KDFN with ample opportunity to generate revenue. In particular, given the income tax sharing provision within the Final Agreement allowing for KDFN to share in the taxes paid by those people living on settlement land, land leasing to both citizens and the general public present significant opportunities for revenue generation. While the *Land Vision* proposes that KDFN's economic development efforts

be focused on settlement lands within Whitehorse, the development potential of KDFN lands outside of Whitehorse is also recognized. Based on the input received from the community, the *Land Vision* recommends that development on KDFN land outside of Whitehorse be only allowed to proceed if the development impact upon wildlife and heritage values can be successfully mitigated. Heritage and wildlife values on KDFN's urban lands in Whitehorse, while still important, are less of a priority in order to facilitate economic development opportunities.



KDFN planning work, such as this development option prepared for S-367B and C-77B, confirms the significant potential of KDFN lands within Whitehorse.



Revenue Generation



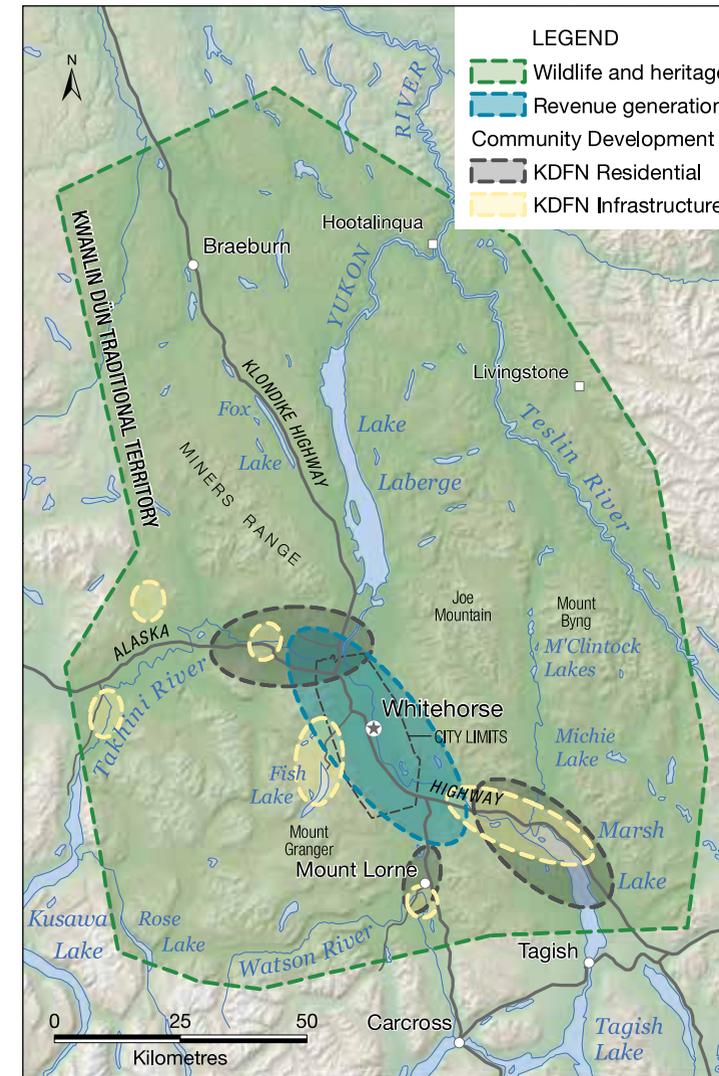
## Conclusion and Next Steps

The Land Vision is summarized in the accompanying map. The four main goals are represented by different colours on the map to illustrate where each goal could be best achieved within the KDFN Traditional Territory. The colours reflect the general areas where each goal may be best realized. They are, however, not intended to indicate that the priority goal is the only goal to be supported in a particular area. For example, most KDFN lands within Whitehorse can contribute to revenue generation. Yet celebrating heritage is also important within Whitehorse, as illustrated by the construction and use of the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre on C-70. Likewise, while remote areas provide the best opportunity for traditional activities and the protection of wildlife, it is recognized that, in time, KDFN may support responsible revenue generation on these lands.

The Land Vision was developed based upon the input of the Kwanlin Dün community. The project was completed by the Lands and Resources Department to prepare the way for the fair and orderly development of land and to ensure the long-term safekeeping of those land values held by the community. The Land Vision will be implemented

through a detailed plan for the KDFN Community Land Selections within Whitehorse. This plan will be the basis for choosing lands for KDFN citizen and government use, and for identifying those parcels that should contribute to revenue generation for KDFN. Secondly, the Land Vision will be implemented beyond the Whitehorse city limits through the preparation of a detailed plan for the entire Traditional Territory. This plan will assist KDFN in responding to development proposals through the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board and other processes. It will also enable KDFN to participate more meaningfully in planning led by other governments, such as local area plans and regional land use plans.

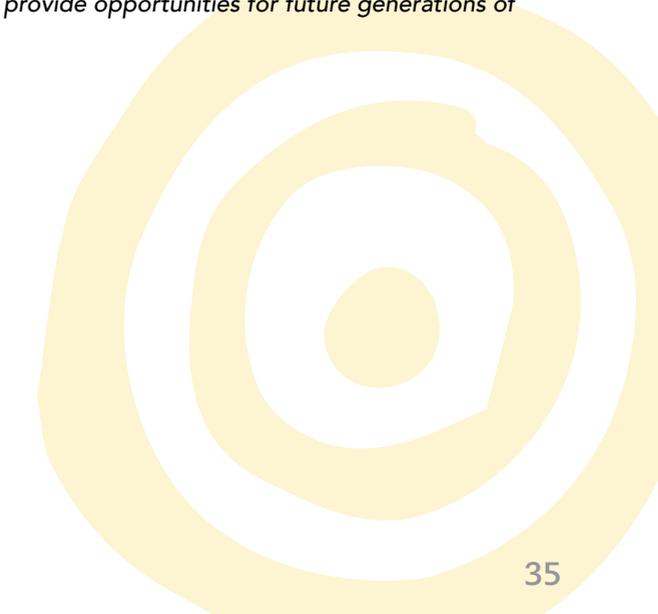
Kwanlin Dün First Nation is well situated to take advantage of its urban lands in Whitehorse for their development potential while, at the same time, having opportunities to conserve wildlife and heritage values and pursue traditional activities on its lands outside of the city. With careful planning KDFN could ensure the best of both worlds: a strong revenue stream from its urban lands while maintaining opportunities for traditional lifestyles and conserving the remarkable human and natural heritage of the Traditional Territory.



Traditional Territory Land Vision



The intent of the Land Vision is that areas, like the Miner Range, will continue to provide opportunities for future generations of KDFN citizens.





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## Participants

The following community members and staff participated in one or more of the meetings, workshops and camps held in 2014 and 2015:

Doris Bill\*

Ronald Bill

Whitney Boss

Charlie Burns

Jennifer Burns

Russell Burns

Susan Burns

Amanda Calbery

Dennis Calbery\*

Effie Campbell

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Charlene Charlie\*

Elsie Charlie

Floyd Charlie

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Harold Dawson Sr

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Kathleen Dawson

Loretta Dawson

Pricilla Dawson

Shirley Dawson

Barb Fred

Doronn Fox

Jacine Fox

Jeanine George

Violet George

Judy Gingell

Abigail Gordon

Rayn Grant

Hank Henry

Helen Holway

Dustin Huebschwerlen

Linda Huebschwerlen

Rudy Huebschwerlen

Joe Jack

Dennis Jackson

Dinah Jim

Frank Jim

Melonie Jim

Wayne Jim

Blade Joe

Patricia Joe

Tammy Joe

Shawn Johnnie

Judith Kuster

Lorne Lawson

Maxine Lindsay

Howard MacIntosh\*

Michael MacIntosh

Rhonda McIntyre

Margaret McKay

Gerald McLeod

Chandel O'Brien

Charles O'Brien

Rick O'Brien

Margaret Petersen

Nancy Porter

Gary Profeit

Heather Profeit

Carl Sam

Irma Scarff

Delores Scurvey

Johnnie Scurvey

Sweeny Scurvy

Dustyn Shorty

Jason Shorty

Steven Shorty

Ray Sidney

Gary Smarch

Sophie Smarch

Ann Smith

Annie Smith

Ashley Smith

Brian Smith

Dianne Smith

Eugene Smith

John Smith Jr

Joshua Smith

Justin Smith

Lisa A Smith

Louie Smith

Nina Smith

Sean Smith\*

Shirley Smith

Stanley Smith

Trevoughn Smith

William Smith

Robert Suits

Debra Thibodeau

Gertie Tom

Karee Vallevand

Wayne Vallevand

Alysia Vance\*

Crystal Vance

Dawn Waugh

Jenny Webb

Albert Webber

Bill Webber

Cindy Webber

William Webber Jr

Lester Wilson

Joan Viksten

Freda Bankhead

Ron Holway

Brian Walker

Derek Hardy

Paddy Jim

Babe Johns

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Rae Mombourquette

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Dave Sembsmoen

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