

Final Draft - October 2011



Nan Geenjit Gwitr'it T'agwàa'in

Working for the Land



Gwich'in Land Use Plan

Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board ??? 2011



**Nan Geenjit Gwitr'it T'agwàa'in /
Working for the Land**

Gwich'in Land Use Plan

Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board

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Approval

We the undersigned are pleased to have given approval on behalf of the Gwich'in, the Government of the Northwest Territories, and the Government of Canada, in accordance with Section 43 of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act to Nan Geenjit Gwitr'it T'agwàa'in/Working for the Land - Gwich'in Land Use Plan. It is considered to be in effect as of _____ .

President
Gwich'in Tribal Council

Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources
Government of the Northwest Territories

Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
Government of Canada

Letter of Transmittal

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The Gwich'in are as much a part of the land as the land is a part of their culture, values, and traditions. In the past they were stewards of the land on which they lived, knowing that their health as people and a society was intricately tied to the health of the land. In response to the Berger enquiry of the mid 1970's, the government of Canada made a commitment to recognise this relationship by establishing new programmes and institutions to give the Gwich'in people a role as stewards once again. One of the actions taken has been the creation of a formal land use planning process.

Many people from all communities in the Gwich'in Settlement Area have worked diligently on land use planning in this formal process with the government since the 1980s. Throughout these years people have continued to put their time and energy into land use planning because of their commitment to taking care of the land and their children's future. The Gwich'in helped to set the framework for the 1983 Basis of Agreement on Northern Land Use Planning. The first attempt to develop a Land Use Plan was through the Mackenzie Delta Beaufort Sea Land Use Planning process which was appointed in 1987 and included Gwich'in representatives. The Mackenzie Delta Beaufort Sea Land Use Plan produced in 1991 was not approved or implemented by government. After the signing of the Gwich'in Land Claim in 1992, the Gwich'in Interim Land Use Planning Board was given the task to begin land use planning again. However, it was not until the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act was passed in 1998 that there was the legal authority to produce a Gwich'in Land Use Plan.

The Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board (Planning Board) is proud to present the first revised edition of *Nan Geenjit Gwitr'it T'agwàa'in/Working for the Land - Gwich'in Land Use Plan*. We would like to thank all the board members, staff, community members, government and industry participants who have worked on land use planning over the last 25 or so years. When reviewing the list of people they wished to acknowledge, the Board was saddened to observe that some are no longer with us. We leave their names in the list as a small tribute to the work that they did for future generations by sharing their knowledge about the importance of the land.

Current Planning Board Members include Bob Simpson (Chair), Charlie Snowshoe (Vice-chair), Ian McLeod, Fanny Greenland and Fred E. Koe. Other people who have contributed as Board Members include Karen LeGresley Hamre, Hal Mills, Margaret Donavan, Piet Van Loon, Robin Aitken and Norman Sancartier. The Planning Board would like to especially thank Charlie Snowshoe who has served on the Planning Board from its beginning. Charlie's interest and passion for land use planning stems from his love of the land and the Gwich'in people. He first became involved in the Mackenzie Delta Beaufort Sea Land Use Planning process and has continued in land use planning ever since. Charlie is an

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untiring source of energy, always ready to work and motivate those around him. We thank him for his dedication.

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The Planning Board would like to thank the following people for their participation, support and work in developing the Plan:

AKLAVIK

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Lastly, the Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board would just like to say a Mahsi' Choo (big thank you) to all participants throughout the many years of planning processes because without everyone's support, this *Gwich'in Land Use Plan* would not have been possible. We look forward to working with you on the implementation of an even better *Nan Geenjit Gwitr'it T'agwàa'in/Working for the Land - Gwich'in Land Use Plan*.

Susan McKenzie
Land Use Planner ———, 2011



Kids enjoying Midway Lake during the music festival (photo: Robert Alexie, Jr.)

1.0 Introduction

1.1 What is in the Gwich'in Land Use Plan?

There is no prescribed format for a regional land use plan. The following content and structure of this document is based on the Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board's best efforts to make the Gwich'in Land Use Plan clear, effective, and easy to use. It is based on the first approved plan but has some small changes as the Board continually strives to refine the Plan to be an even better regulatory tool.

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter provides background on land use planning, the Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board, and the context for land use planning in the Gwich'in Settlement Area.

Chapter 2 Information about the Gwich'in Settlement Area

Chapter 2 describes the Gwich'in Settlement Area and its resources. This chapter outlines the significance of resources, how they are being used and what demands are on resources of the Gwich'in Settlement Area.

Chapter 3 Land and Water Regulation

The Land and Water Regulation chapter outlines land ownership in the Gwich'in Settlement Area, what groups are managing land and resources, and what regulations are in place to manage resources.

Chapter 4 Land Use Plan for the Future: Vision and Land Zones

Outlined in Chapter 4 is the Planning Board's perspective on land use planning and its vision for the future as well as the Land Zones for the Gwich'in Settlement Area. This is where the conditions and zoning that regulators will use to guide land use on a regional scale are found.

Chapter 5 Procedures for Implementing the Land Use Plan

Chapter 5 deals with the rules for implementing the Land Use Plan like: "Under what special circumstances will an exception to the Land Use Plan be considered?" or "What is meant by a five year review of the Land Use Plan?"

Chapter 6 Land Use Plan for the Future: Land Use Issues and a Regional Plan of Action

The first part of this chapter describes the direction the Board uses for dealing with various land use issues. Since the Gwich'in Land Use Plan is only one part of the regulatory system, the Planning Board intends to develop a companion document to help identify and monitor the larger issues around integrating resource management. Chapter 6 also discusses the content and structure of this document which will be called a Regional Plan of Action.

1.2 What is a Land Use Plan?

A Land Use Plan is one tool for taking care of the land and people of the Gwich'in Settlement Area today and in the future.¹ "Taking care of the land" means more than just looking after the ground beneath us. For people in the Gwich'in communities, taking care of the land means taking care of the whole environment including people, land, water, air, wildlife, heritage and other resources. Land has spiritual values as well as physical values. Taking care of the land means understanding and maintaining connections between all parts of the land. Land includes natural processes like migration of animals, the break-up and freeze-up of rivers and lakes, and fire.

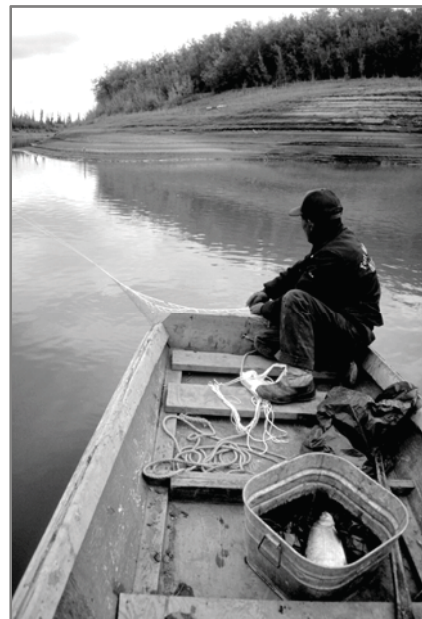
An important part of land use planning is preparing to deal with future situations that may affect the land. Land use planning provides an opportunity to think about how land should be used today and in the future. In a land use plan there are goals for land use and recommended actions for meeting goals. A land use plan also sets aside different areas for different uses, and describes what is allowed and not allowed in specific areas.²

Why call it the Gwich'in Land Claim?

Even though it is really an agreement, most people still say 'the Claim' when they are talking about the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement. To be consistent, the Land Use Plan also refers to the agreement simply as the Gwich'in Land Claim.

The Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board (Planning Board) has been given the authority to develop a Gwich'in Land Use Plan by the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement (Gwich'in Land Claim) and the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act. The Gwich'in Land Claim establishes land ownership and sets up a system for land management. The Land Use Plan is one land management tool for the Gwich'in Settlement Area. The Planning Board has worked with the communities, Gwich'in, government, co-management, business and non-government groups to develop the Gwich'in Land Use Plan.

According to the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, Gwich'in, government, and other regulatory authorities will be obligated to carry out their powers in accordance with the Gwich'in Land Use Plan, after it receives formal approval. Proposed land use activities will be required to conform to the Gwich'in Land Use Plan. The Planning Board will carry out a comprehensive review of the Gwich'in Land Use Plan no later than five years after it receives formal approval, in order to consider new issues, information, opportunities and user needs. The Plan will continue to be reviewed every five years unless the Gwich'in, the federal minister and the territorial minister agree to review it at a different time.



Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board

1.3 What is the Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board?

The Planning Board is a public board comprised of five members. Two are nominated by the Gwich'in Tribal Council, one by the territorial government and one by the federal government. The chairperson is chosen by these four members. All are appointed by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. They hold three year terms and serve the interest of the public rather than just representing the interest of their nominator.

Why use the term co-management board?

The boards set up under the Gwich'in Land Claim are institutions of public government. However, since most people in the area call them 'co-management boards', the same term is used in the Land Use Plan.

The Planning Board receives funding through the implementation of the Gwich'in Land Claim. It allows the Board to have an office, one or two staff, hold Board meetings, and consult with the Gwich'in, communities, government and other stakeholders. The Board has sought and received funds from other sources so that we could better fulfill our mandated responsibilities.

1.4 What are the principles guiding the development of the Land Use Plan?

The principles and objectives guiding the development of the Land Use Plan are found in the Gwich'in Land Claim.³ The Planning Board uses these principles and objectives as a guide for its work. Similar objectives and principles are also found in the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act.⁴

1.4.1 Objectives from the Land Claim Agreement Guiding Planning

1. To recognize and encourage the Gwich'in way of life which is based on the cultural and economic relationship between the Gwich'in and the land (Section 1.1.3).
2. To encourage the self-sufficiency of the Gwich'in and to enhance their ability to participate fully in all aspects of the economy (Section 1.1.4).
3. To provide the Gwich'in the right to participate in decision making concerning the use, management and conservation of land, water and resources (Section 1.1.7).
4. To protect and conserve the wildlife and environment of the settlement area for present and future generations (Section 1.1.8).
5. To integrate planning and management of wildlife and wildlife habitat with the planning and management of all types of land and water use in order to protect wildlife and wildlife habitat (Section 12.1.1f).



Gwich'in Land and Water Board

1.4.2 *Planning Principles in the Land Claim Agreement*

1. The purpose of land use planning is to protect and promote the existing and future well-being of the residents and communities of the settlement area having regard to the interests of all Canadians (Section 24.2.4a).
2. Special attention shall be devoted to:
 - i) protecting and promoting the existing and future social, cultural and economic well-being of the Gwich'in;
 - ii) lands used by the Gwich'in for harvesting and other uses of resources;
 - iii) the rights of the Gwich'in under this agreement (Section 24.2.4b).
3. Land use planning shall directly involve communities and designated Gwich'in organizations (Section 24.2.4c).
4. The plan developed through the planning process shall provide for the conservation, development and utilization of land, resources and waters (Section 24.2.4d).
5. Water resources planning within the Mackenzie Valley is an integral part of land use planning (Section 24.2.5).



Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board

1.5 What is the Land Use Planning Process?

The Planning Board identifies six stages to the planning process it uses. They are:

1) Information Gathering

The Board continually gathers and updates information about wildlife, forests, heritage sites, current land uses, etc., but at this stage decisions are made about selecting information to use for planning. Also at this stage, formal consultations begin with Gwich'in, communities, government and industry (the stakeholders) to identify issues that should be addressed in the Plan.



2) Plan Options

What needs to be in the Plan? Here the Board presents ideas for solutions to potential land use issues based on the best information that is available.



3) Draft Land Use Plan

This is the first effort at proposing the content and structure of the Plan document. The Board distributes the document and collects comments from the stakeholders.



4) Final Land Use Plan

After all stakeholders have had a chance to comment on the draft plan, the Board produces the Final Plan. The Board submits the finalised document to the Gwich'in Tribal Council, the territorial government, and the federal government for approval (the signatories). The Board will consider all of the comments the signatories make. If the Board decides to change the final plan based on the comments, then all three have to agree.



5) Plan Implementation

At this stage, the Plan is put into use by regulatory agencies for making decisions about land use and resource management. The Board has a responsibility to monitor how the Plan is used and if it is effective.



6) Review and Amendment

After the approval of the Plan in 2003, the Board is now required to facilitate a review of the Plan once every five years. This gives the Board an opportunity to continually improve and update the Plan and to ensure it is meeting the goals and objectives. This document is the result of the first review process and as soon as it was approved the Board began the cycle again at stage one for review number two.

The consultation work of the Planning Board is critical to all stages of the planning process. It ensures we have useful direction on goals, land use issues, and the land use zoning system. Because Gwich'in, communities, government and business groups are more directly involved in the planning process, we feel there will be better support for, and understanding of the Plan. This is what will make a successful land use plan.

Appendix A contains a summary of meetings, a list of stakeholders, and documents produced from the development of the plan. A similar summary for the five year review is in Appendix B.

1.6 How was the Gwich'in Land Use Plan Formally Approved?

The Gwich'in Land Use Plan was approved by three signatories. The first group required to approve the Plan was the Gwich'in Tribal Council. The second was the territorial government and the third was the federal government. This is the same process that is required for the approval of any proposed revisions during the 5-year review.

1.7 “Conformity with the Land Use Plan” What does it mean?

“Conformity with the Gwich'in Land Use Plan” means groups are legally obligated to follow the Land Use Plan. All groups including the Gwich'in, federal government, territorial government, co-management boards and business groups are required to conform to the approved Land Use Plan. The Plan is written so that land users can look at the Plan and figure out for themselves whether a proposed land use is likely, or is not likely to conform to the Plan.

Regulators, like the Gwich'in Land and Water Board, cannot issue a licence, permit or authorization until it is established that the proposed activities are in conformity with the Land Use Plan. If there are questions about conformity, the Planning Board will decide if the activity conforms to the Land Use Plan. Best practices for conformance checks are outlined on page 48.

From the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act:

46. (1) The Gwich'in and Sahtu First Nations, departments and agencies of the federal and territorial governments, and every body having authority under any federal or territorial law to issue licences, permits or other authorizations relating to the use of land or waters or the deposit of waste, shall carry out their powers in accordance with the land use plan applicable in a settlement area.

Chapter 1 References

¹ GNWT Comments: Gwich'in Settlement Area Land Use Plan-Plan Options Paper, 1997 p.1

² Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Fact Sheet: Land Use Planning Boards (1999).

³ Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement (1992), Sections 1, 24 and 25.

⁴ Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act (1998), Sections 35, 58, 64, 114, and 115.

2.0 Information about the Gwich'in Settlement Area and its Resources



Campbell Hills

Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board

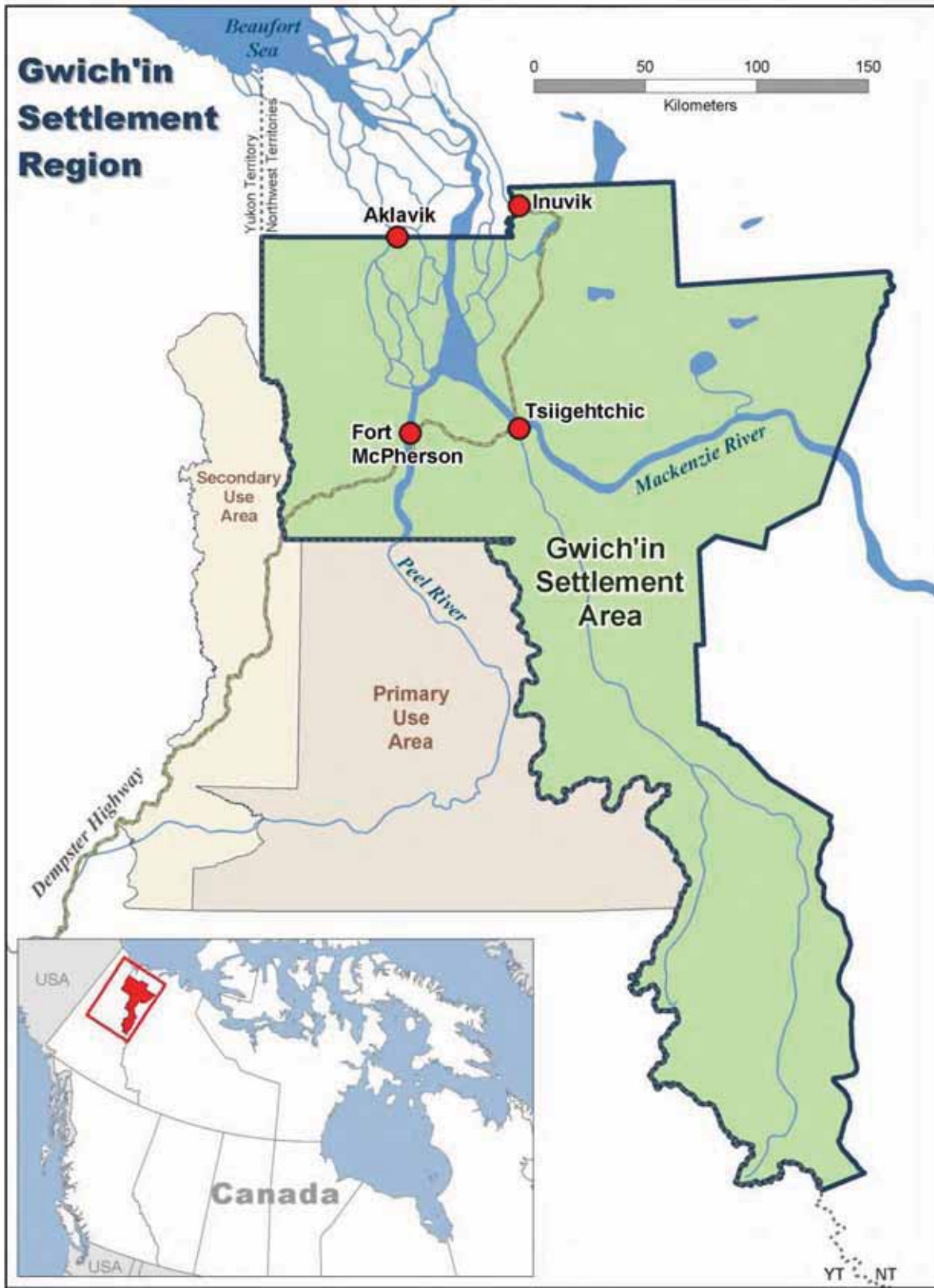
2.1 Gwich'in Settlement Area

2.1.1 Boundaries

The Gwich'in Land Claim was settled in 1992, creating the Gwich'in Settlement Region. The Gwich'in Settlement Region is made up of the Gwich'in Settlement Area, the Primary Use Area and the Secondary Use Area (see Figure 1). The Gwich'in Settlement Area is entirely in the Northwest Territories and is approximately 56,935 km².¹ The Planning Board is responsible for land use planning in the Gwich'in Settlement Area, excluding municipal lands.

Both the Primary and Secondary Use Areas are west of the Gwich'in Settlement Area, in the Yukon Territory. The Primary Use Area is 21,988 km² in size and encompasses much of the watershed of the Peel River.² It is an overlap area between the Nacho N'yak Dun of Mayo and the Teetl'it Gwich'in of Fort McPherson. The Secondary Use Area, 11,456 km² in size, is a traditional use area in the Richardson Mountains.³ The three main groups that use the area are the Vuntut Gwitchin of Old Crow, the Teetl'it Gwich'in of Fort McPherson and the Ehditit Gwich'in of Aklavik.

FIGURE 1: GWICH'IN SETTLEMENT REGION



The responsibility for land use planning in the Primary and Secondary Use Areas falls to the Yukon Land Use Planning Council, which sets up commissions to develop regional land use plans. The Yukon Transboundary Agreement states that the Yukon Land Use Planning Council will consult with the Planning Board on any land use planning initiatives in the Primary and Secondary Use Areas.⁴ The Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board has had open discussions with both the Peel River Watershed Land Use Planning Commission and the North Yukon Planning Commission. The North Yukon land use plan was approved June 29, 2009. The Peel River Watershed Land Use Plan was submitted for approval in December 2009, but the Yukon government has concerns about the high level of conservation zoning.

The Gwich'in Settlement Area is bordered by the Inuvialuit Settlement Region to the north. A parcel of Gwich'in Settlement Land around Aklavik overlaps into the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (discussed in more detail in Section 3.1.1 and shown in figure 16). The Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board has no jurisdiction for this land. In the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, there are Community Conservation Plans instead of land use plans. They were developed by the Inuvialuit Game Council (IGC) of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation. These conservation plans are due for an update, but because the ILA is not working on them at this time there has been little discussion between the IGC and the Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board of transboundary issues.

The Sahtu Settlement Area borders the Gwich'in Settlement Area to the southeast. In the Sahtu Settlement Area, the Sahtu Land Use Planning Board is in the middle of developing a Land Use Plan. The Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board has open discussions with the Sahtu Land Use Planning Board about transboundary issues and concerns.

2.1.2 People

There are approximately 2,500 participants in the Gwich'in Land Claim, with 60% of the people living in the four communities of the Gwich'in Settlement Area. Aklavik (population 645) is a mixed community of Gwich'in and Inuvialuit, while Inuvik (population 3,586) has a mixed population of Gwich'in, Inuvialuit and non-aboriginals. The two predominantly Gwich'in communities are Fort McPherson (population 791) and Tsiigehtchic (population 136).⁵

Gwich'in live in an area that includes north-east Alaska, the northern Yukon and the north-western part of the Northwest Territories. Two of the original Gwich'in groups are found in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. The Gwichya Gwich'in live primarily in Tsiigehtchic, and the Teet'it Gwich'in live primarily in Fort McPherson. Gwich'in in Aklavik and Inuvik have formed their own bands in the past 20 years: the



Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board

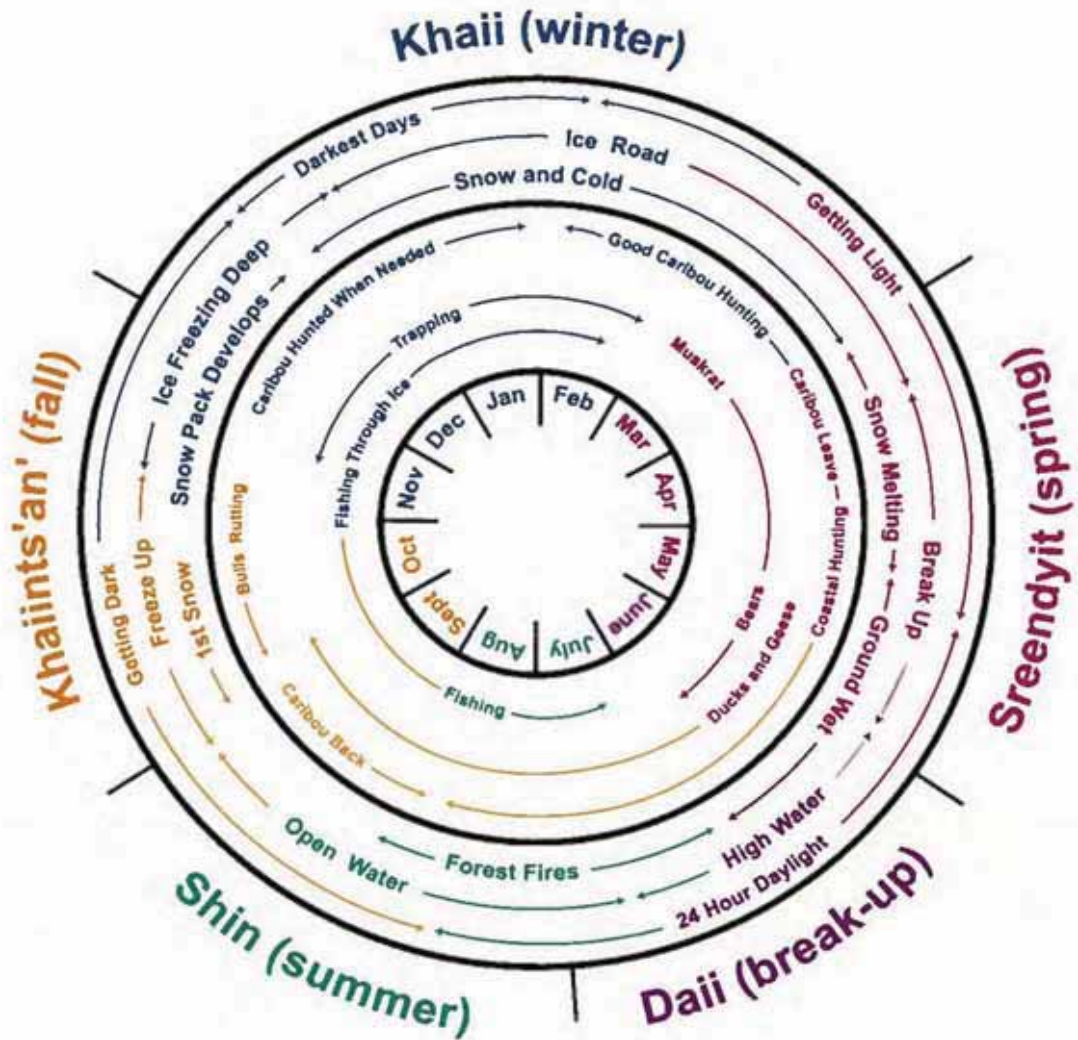
Ehdiitat Gwich'in in Aklavik and the Nihtat Gwich'in in Inuvik.

2.1.3 Economy

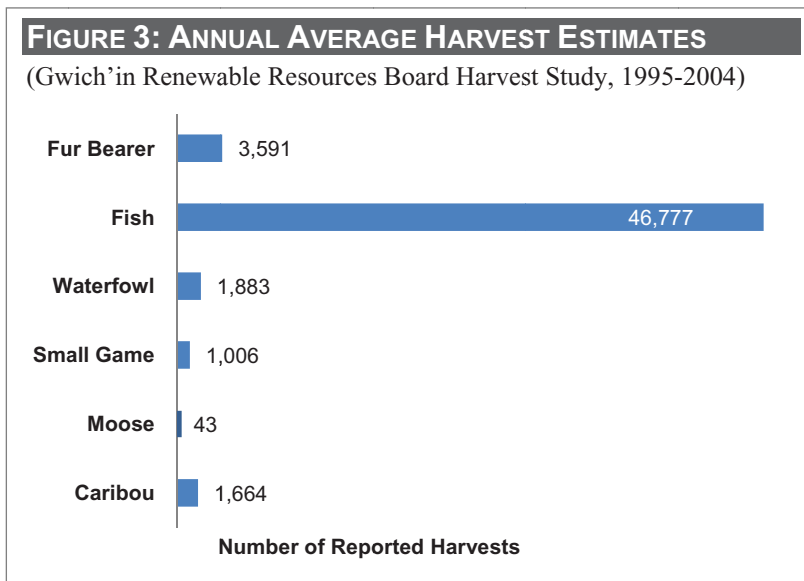
The economy of the Gwich'in Settlement Area includes the “traditional economy” based on the harvesting of plants and animals and the “wage economy” based on part and full time employment.

The traditional economy is associated primarily with the annual harvesting of renewable resources. Figure 2 shows the seasonal land uses for Ehdiitat Gwich'in of Aklavik as one example of the annual harvesting of wildlife associated with the traditional economy. Trapping, hunting, fishing and vegetation harvesting are traditional activities guaranteed to the Gwich'in through the Gwich'in Land Claim.⁶ The Gwich'in also have the right to travel and maintain hunting, trapping and fishing camps.

FIGURE 2: GWICH'IN SEASONS



The amount of wildlife being harvested from 1995 to 2004 was recorded through the Gwich'in Harvest Study. This study, conducted by the Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board, provides a profile of the types and approximate numbers of wildlife harvested in the Gwich'in Settlement Area (see Figure 3). There is also subsistence forest harvesting occurring for a variety of uses (fuel, building material, etc.).⁷ Traditional medicines from trees and plants are still used today, and other vegetation, like berries, are harvested.^{8, 9, 10}



The wage economy of the Gwich'in Settlement Area is dominated by government and Gwich'in Land Claim related employment (see Figure 4). The private sector businesses that operate in the Gwich'in Settlement Area rely heavily on government contracts. The economy associated with oil and gas is very much tied to the proposed Mackenzie Gas Pipeline project at this time. This sector is currently quiet but if the pipeline project proceeds, there will likely be an increase in exploration activity.

Trapping, which anchored the economy for the first half of the twentieth century, is now a small contributor to the local economy. Tourism has yet to contribute substantially to the Gwich'in Settlement Area economy, but is viewed as a potential growth area. The labour force of the Gwich'in Settlement Area possesses skills associated with renewable resource harvesting and management, water and land transportation, oil and gas activities, construction, tourism and traditional arts and crafts.



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Wage and traditional economies are linked in many ways. Trapping, considered as a traditional activity, is an extension of the cash economy. Subsistence hunting and fishing, as they are currently practised, require an income source to cover costs of fuel, boats, guns, snowmobiles, etc.

Robert Alexie, Jr.



Returning from checking nets on the Mackenzie River at Tsiigehtchic

The Gwich'in continue the historic pattern of deciding whether to participate in the traditional or wage economy or a mix of the two. Communities are now much more dependent on the wage economy than they were earlier this century, but in periods when the wage economy is not strong, traditional activities can take care of many basic needs: food, fuel and shelter. The social and

cultural importance of traditional activities could also be considered a basic need and is an important factor in these economic choices.

FIGURE 5: HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATION IN TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES (2008)

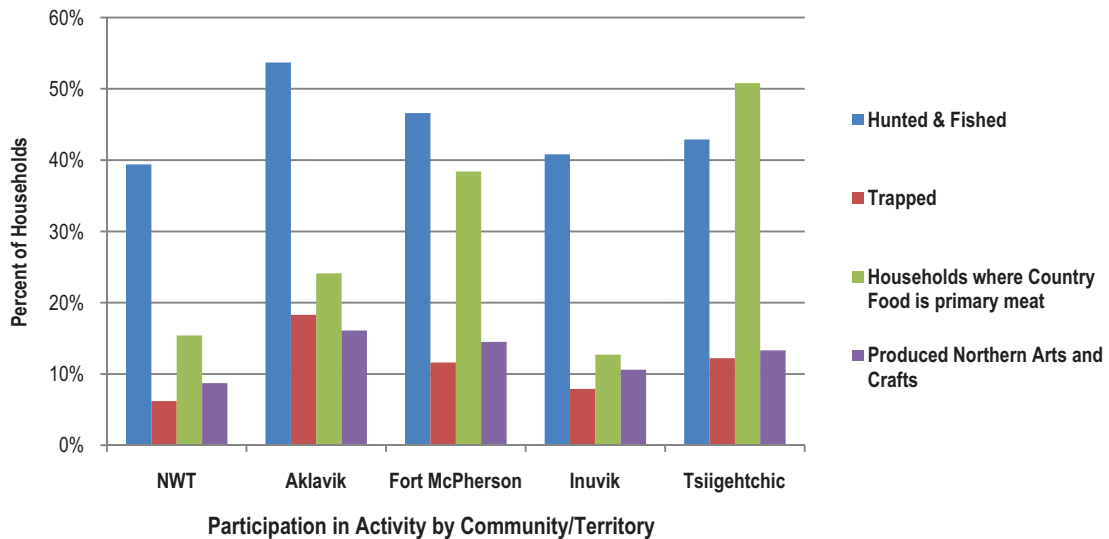


Figure 5 shows the percentage of households in the Gwich'in communities that participate and rely on traditional activities, and compares it to the overall participation rate in the Northwest Territories.¹¹

The average personal income in the Gwich'in Settlement Area communities in 2007 ranged between \$27,000 and \$50,000 (see figure 6).¹² The average income of the Northwest Territories may be higher than most across Canada, but the cost of living in the Gwich'in Settlement Area is much higher than many other areas in Canada.

FIGURE 6: AVERAGE PERSONAL INCOME (2007)

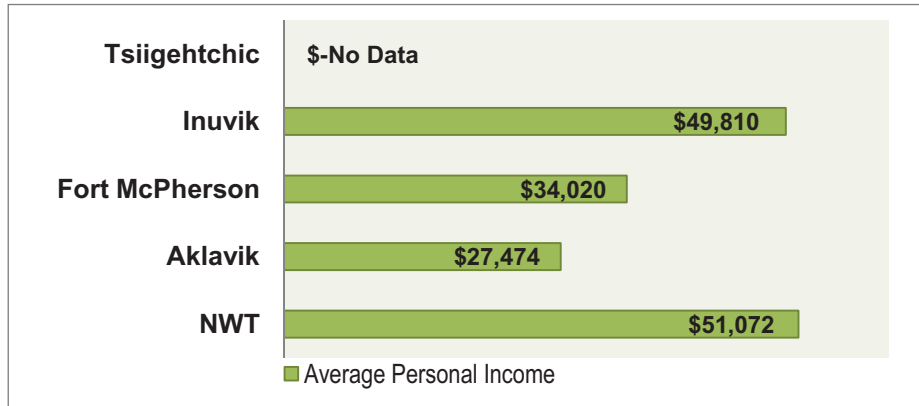
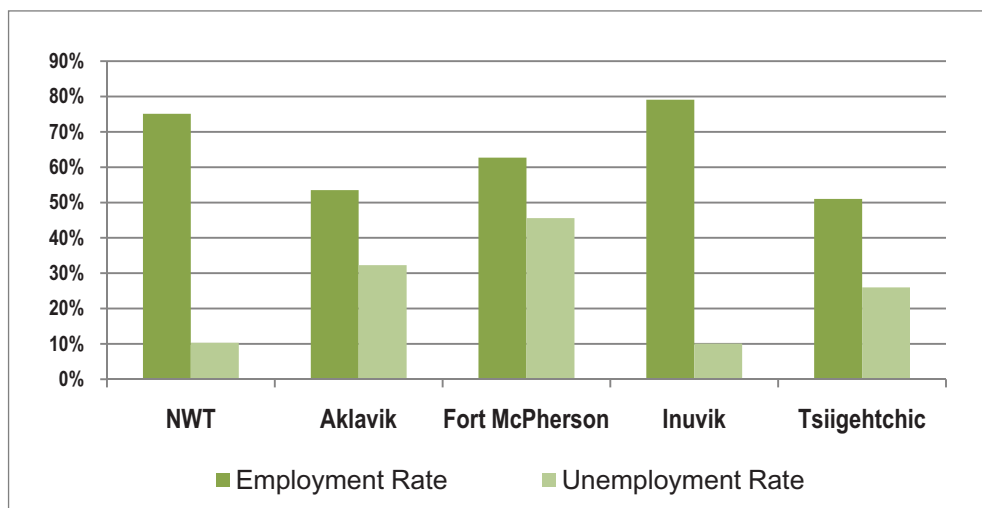


FIGURE 7: FEDERAL ISOLATED POST LIVING COST DIFFERENTIALS (2009)¹³

Community price index ranges:	
<i>Edmonton = 100</i>	
Yellowknife	115-120
Aklavik	165-170
Fort McPherson	155-160
Inuvik	145-150
Tsiigehtchic	160-165

The 2009 average unemployment rate in the Gwich'in Settlement Area was about 19%, but the rate varies significantly between communities (see Figure 8).¹⁴

FIGURE 8: UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (2009)



2.1.4 “The Land” As the Environment

“The land”, or the environment, includes all parts of the natural and cultural landscape. People are a part of the environment, as well as landforms, water, air, fire, minerals, plants and animals. How all these components work together as natural and social systems is also part of the environment.

The natural landscape of the Gwich’in Settlement Area is diverse and sustains a large variety of plant and animal species for its latitude in North America. This is primarily because the settlement area is positioned along the tree line and supports both arctic and sub-arctic species. In general, the Gwich’in Settlement Area is considered a sub-arctic area.

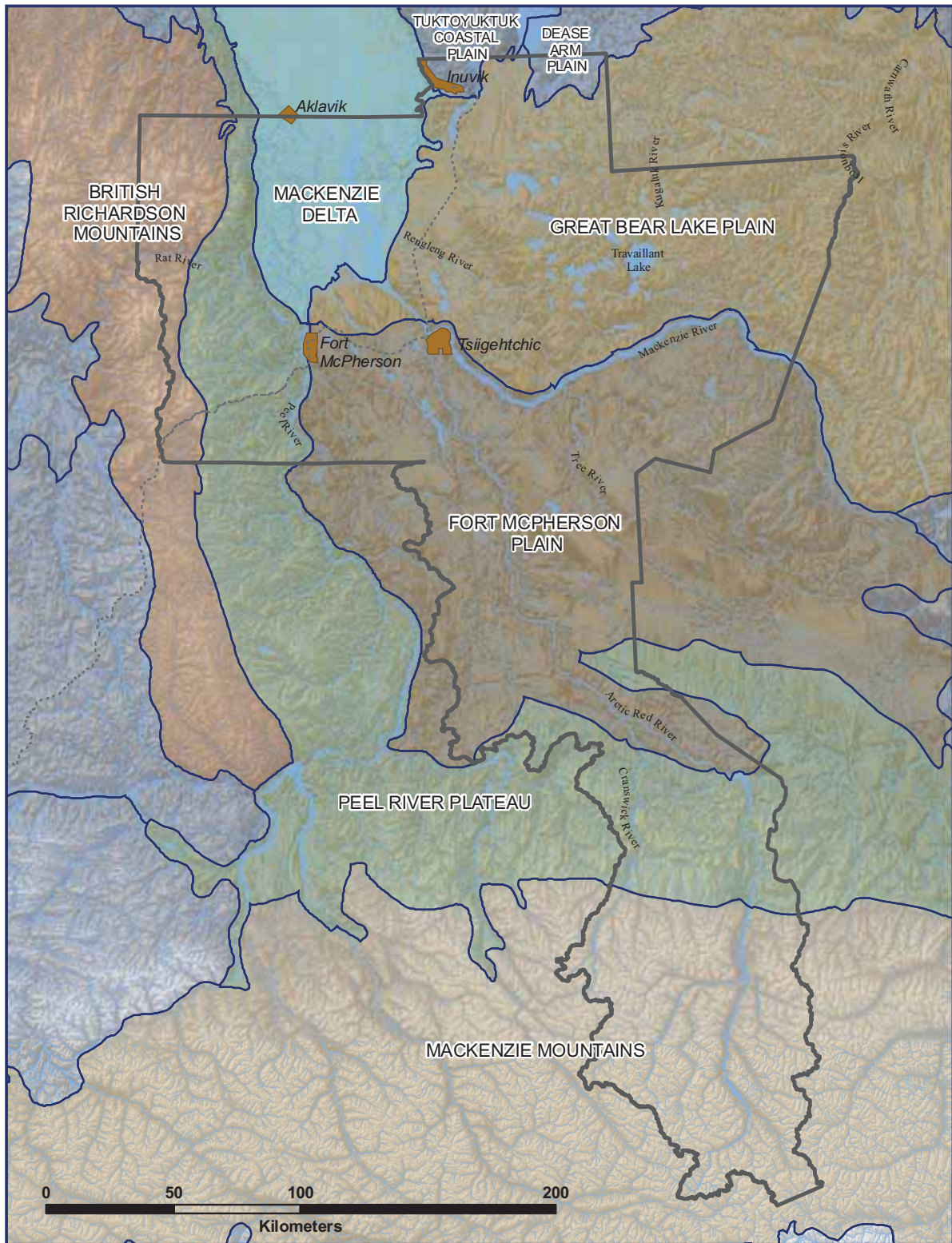
The natural landscape can be divided into different zones based on similar land, water, plant and animal features. These zones have been developed by the “National Ecological Framework for Canada” and are called ecoregions. There are six major ecoregions within the Gwich’in Settlement Area (see Figure 9). The ecoregions include the Mackenzie Delta, Peel River Plateau, Great Bear Lake Plain, Fort McPherson Plain, British-Richardson Mountains and Mackenzie Mountains.*

Gwich’in would not recognize most of the names associated with these ecoregions. They do not divide the land based solely on natural features but combine the natural landscape with cultural divisions. The English names now commonly used to describe the broadest landscapes in the Gwich’in Settlement Area are “the Delta” (Mackenzie Delta), “the mountains” (Richardson Mountains) and main valleys of the three major rivers: “the Peel, Arctic Red and Mackenzie”. Few people would recognize the name Mackenzie Mountains to describe the mountains at the headwaters of the Arctic Red River.

The Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute has been documenting Gwich’in place names and has found that historical Gwich’in place names are far more extensive and detailed than those used today. Their ongoing work is revealing that Gwich’in culture, like the Gwich’in Settlement Area physical landscape, is diverse and has its own features.

** The 1996 *National Ecological Framework for Canada* classifications presented in this document are being revised through the GNWT department of Environment and Natural Resources’ Ecosystem Classification Program. Future planning work by the Gwich’in Land Use Planning Board will use the reports from this program.

FIGURE 9: ECOREGIONS



2.2 Heritage Resources

The Gwich'in have lived in the settlement area for thousands of years and they have a distinct history and culture. Throughout this history, contact between Gwich'in and other groups has occurred, influencing Gwich'in culture. There are many links to Gwich'in history and culture that can be found on the land and in Gwich'in oral history.

Gwich'in heritage resources include locations of cultural value, burial sites, archaeological and historic sites, artifacts, and documents and records related to

Gwich'in culture and history. Locations of cultural value include sacred sites, named places, traditional camps, trails, berry picking areas, harvesting areas (medicines, wildlife, fish), meeting places and caribou corrals.

Heritage resources provide a record of Gwich'in use of the land through time and are of spiritual, historical, cultural, religious and educational significance. Oral history is a vital part of heritage resources for the Gwich'in. Elders have

a vast knowledge of the land from both personal experience and oral tradition, and the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute has been working with them to document extensive trail systems and hundreds of place names. These important places often have oral history connected to them that has preserved information through time about sacred places, legend locales, culture, rules and values.



Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute

*Over 350 Gwich'in and English place names have been recorded for trails, areas, and topographic features. These names tell us about how people lived, where they traveled, and their in-depth knowledge of the land. They are like windows into the traditional culture, history, and values. The majority of these names describe places in terms of their physical appearance, specific resources, or the type of technology used to capture the resource. For example, many names refer to the use of fish traps; a few refer to the use of nets or jigging. Other place names are associated with particular individuals, or with both legendary and historical events. In several cases, the names are so old that they have either lost all or part of their meaning over time. The elders refer to these place names as ts'ii dejj meaning "stone age," and indicated that these names are at least 500 years old (Andre and Kritsch 1992; Kritsch and Andre 1993, 1994; Kritsch et al. 1994; Kritsch 1994). Stories and legends accompanied many of the place names. Indeed, the names appear to serve, as Andrews (1990), Basso (1984), Cruikshank (1990), Harwood (1976), Rosaldo (1980) and others have suggested, as "mnemonic devices" or "mnemonic pegs" on which to hang traditional narratives.**

*Kritsch, Ingrid and Alestine Andre. 1997. "Gwich'in Traditional Knowledge and Heritage Studies in the Gwich'in Settlement Area." In: *At a Crossroads: Archaeology and First People in Canada*. Pp. 125-144. Edited by George Nicholas and Thomas Andrews. Archaeology Press, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, B.C.

2.3 Renewable Resources: Water, Wildlife, Forests and Tourism

2.3.1 Water

“Water is the lifeblood of the environment. Without water no living thing, plant or animal, can survive”.¹⁵ Water is recognized as crucial to the environment and people of the Gwich’in Settlement Area.¹⁶ It is integral to Gwich’in culture as it maintains wildlife and fish that are used in traditional activities. Water also provides essential travel routes. Human uses of water in the Gwich’in Settlement Area include: transportation, waste disposal, industrial activities, forest fire control, fisheries, recreation and domestic use.

Water flows from the south into the Gwich’in Settlement Area and eventually into the Arctic Ocean. The Gwich’in Settlement Area is part of the Mackenzie River Basin, which encompasses portions of Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories (see figure 10). Much of the water that reaches the Gwich’in Settlement Area has been used extensively by other groups in the Mackenzie River Basin.

The three main river channels in the Gwich’in Settlement Area are the Mackenzie River, Peel River and Arctic Red River. The Mackenzie River is the ninth longest river in the world and has the second largest arctic delta. In comparison to other rivers its size, it is undeveloped and unpopulated.

There are also a number of smaller important rivers such as the Rat River, Rengleng River, Travaillant River, Kugaluk River, and Tree River. Other notable water related features in the Gwich’in Settlement Area include wetlands, groundwater areas, and headwater areas. A small portion of the headwaters of the Anderson River lies within the GSA.. The Anderson River, which was an important historical travel route, is northeast from Thunder River via the Iroquois and Carnwath Rivers.

FIGURE 10: MACKENZIE RIVER BASIN



2.3.2 Wildlife and Fish

Wildlife and fish are vital resources of the Gwich'in Settlement Area and significant parts of the environment. Wildlife and fish play a central role in Gwich'in cultural heritage. Gwich'in depend on a variety of wildlife and fish for hunting, fishing and trapping. Wildlife and fish also provide opportunities for commercial hunting and fishing, tourism and recreation. There are a diverse number of wildlife and fish species in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. Known to occur in the Gwich'in Settlement Area are approximately 38 species of mammals, 151 species of birds, and 32 species of fish.

Gwich'in Words for Fish and Wildlife

Teet'it and Gwichya are the two dialects of Gwich'in spoken in the Gwich'in Settlement Area

English	Teet'it	Gwichya
caribou	vadzaih	vadzaii
Dall's sheep	divii	divii
grizzly bear	shih	sheh
moose	dinjik	dinjik
wolverine	nehtruh	nehtryuh
whitefish	luk zheii	luk zhii
coney	sruh	sryuh
char	dhik'ii	dhik'ii
waterfowl	dats'an	dats'an
birds	dzhiig	dzhiig

Mammals important to the communities include Porcupine caribou, Bluenose West caribou, Dall's sheep, grizzly bear, moose and furbearers in general. Most waterfowl are also of importance to cultural activities in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. There are many fish species locally such as whitefish, inconnu and dolly varden char that are significant for traditional, commercial and recreational activities.

There are concerns with the size or distribution of the populations of some of the species in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. At the federal level, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) uses a process based on science, aboriginal traditional knowledge and community knowledge to assess the risk of extinction for wild species. Species identified by COSEWIC may then qualify for legal protection and recovery under the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA).¹⁷ The government of the Northwest Territories, as part of an accord regarding the implementation of the federal SARA, also has a role in monitoring, assessing, and reporting on the Territories' wild species.

The government of the Northwest Territories also has responsibilities under the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* which came into force February 1st, 2010. The *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* identifies, protects, and recovers species at risk in the NWT. The Act applies everywhere in the Northwest Territories, on both public and private lands, including private lands owned under a land claim agreement. The *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* establishes the mechanisms to assess species status at the Territorial level, identify the threats facing the species in the NWT, and identify what actions are necessary to protect, conserve and recover that species -- which could differ from the national level.¹⁸

Regional organisations such as the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board work with both levels of government on these activities. The status of some of the species in the Gwich'in Settlement Area that are listed under the above acts are summarised in the following table.

FIGURE 11: SPECIES IN THE GSA LISTED UNDER THE SPECIES AT RISK ACTS^{19, 20}

Species of concern	COSEWIC	federal SARA	NWT SARA
<i>Mammals</i>			
Barren-ground caribou: Porcupine, Bluenose West, and Cape Bathurst herds	not listed	not listed	Sensitive
Woodland Caribou, boreal population	Threatened	Threatened	Sensitive
Woodland Caribou, northern mountain population	Special Concern	Special Concern	Secure
Wolverine	Special Concern	not listed	Sensitive
Fisher	not listed	not listed	Sensitive
Grizzly Bear	Special Concern	not listed	Sensitive
<i>Birds</i>			
Eskimo Curlew	Endangered	Endangered	At Risk
Short-eared Owl	Special Concern	Special Concern	Sensitive
Northern Pintail	not listed	not listed	Sensitive
Lesser Scaup (blue bills)	not listed	not listed	Sensitive
Brant Goose	not listed	not listed	Sensitive
Long Tailed Duck	not listed	not listed	Sensitive
Trumpeter Swan	not listed	not listed	Sensitive
Scoters - 3 species (black ducks)	not listed	not listed	Sensitive
Eider Ducks - 2 species	not listed	not listed	Sensitive
Peregrine Falcon	Special Concern	Special Concern	Sensitive
<i>Fish</i>			
Walleye (Pickerel)	not listed	not listed	Sensitive
Dolly Varden	not listed	not listed	Sensitive
Inconnu (Coney)	not listed	not listed	Sensitive
Arctic Grayling	not listed	not listed	Sensitive

There is such concern over the barren ground caribou herds and dolly varden char that harvesting restrictions and stricter management policies are being implemented. The department of Environment and Natural Resources of the territorial government, the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board, and community Renewable Resources Councils are involved in this process within the Gwich'in Settlement Area. Measures to prevent these "Sensitive" species from becoming "At Risk" includes community support of voluntary reduced char harvesting and 'bulls only' caribou harvesting.

These conservation measures are not related to the type of land use permits, water licences, or other authorizations subject to the Gwich'in Land Use Plan so no issues of conformance arise. If an area of critical habitat were identified for protection under SARA in a General Use or Special Management Zone however, it would be considered a non-conforming use because it restricts development in a multi-use zone. Since SARA restrictions are not applied lightly and are made through a highly consultative process, the Board would consider an amendment or exception to the land use plan in a timely manner to address any applications of SARA that might not conform to the Gwich'in Plan.

2.3.3 Forests

The boreal forest plays a significant role in the environment and in Gwich'in traditional life. In the Gwich'in Settlement Area there are diverse forested areas



Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board

supporting many species of plants and animals, as well as stabilizing soils, enhancing water quality, and controlling water levels. Fish and wildlife populations depend on the responsible use of forests. Gwich'in also rely on forests for essential materials. Products from the region's forests include fuel wood, material for houses, cabins, toboggans, snowshoes and many other necessities including medicine. Forest areas are used for hunting, trapping and fishing. There is little commercial forestry taking place in the Gwich'in Settlement Area.

Generally, forest stands are found throughout the Gwich'in Settlement Area excluding the mountainous regions. Potential commercial forest stands are sporadic and located along banks of the Peel, Arctic Red and Mackenzie Rivers, including the Mackenzie Delta. The main forestry species are white and black spruce. Other species include white birch, tamarack, aspen, alder and willow.

The Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board is awaiting final approval for a recently completed a Forest Management Plan that provides guiding policy on all forest resources.

2.3.4 Tourism

Tourism is growing in the Gwich'in Settlement Area and has the potential to become an important source of income for residents. The Gwich'in Settlement Area provides tourists with the opportunity to have wilderness, recreational and cultural experiences.

Tourist surveys confirm that the number of visitors to the Gwich'in Settlement Area is increasing and that the tourists are enjoying their travels. Tourists come to the area to canoe, boat, hike, sport hunt and fish, look at wildlife, and tour the communities. Examples of events that draw tourists are the communities' spring festivals, Inuvik's Great Northern Arts Festival, and Fort McPherson's Midway Lake Music Festival. Scenic attractions include the Mackenzie Delta, and the Mackenzie and Richardson Mountains. The Dempster Highway is another attraction unto itself. Not only is it very scenic and provides access to the Gwich'in Settlement area, but is considered by many tourists as a once in a lifetime experience to drive so far into the northern wilderness.

There are a few tour operators licenced to conduct business in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. Tourism is diversifying to include winter activities such as snowmobiling, dog team mushing, and cross country skiing tours. Facilities range from lookout sites, community parks and Territorial Parks.

2.4 Non-Renewable Resources: Oil, Gas, Minerals, Sand, Gravel and Crushed Rock

2.4.1 Oil and Gas

Oil and gas are two of the world's greatest sources of non-renewable energy. Significant oil and gas discoveries have been made in the Beaufort Sea/Mackenzie Delta Region. Substantial oil reserves are located in the southern Beaufort Sea. It is estimated that about 15% of Canada's proven oil reserves are found in the Beaufort Sea/Mackenzie Delta Region.

At this time, there are minimal oil and gas activities in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. Generally, there is low potential for oil discoveries in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. There is some oil potential along the Eskimo and Trevor Fault, between Aklavik and Fort McPherson. Oil and Gas potential (see Figure 12) is more widely distributed encompassing all the Interior Platform in the Gwich'in Settlement Area.

The Gwich'in Settlement Area is not a major oil and gas area in comparison to the Beaufort Sea Region. However, the Gwich'in Settlement Area has the potential to be a vital transportation link for oil and gas if the Beaufort Sea oil and gas reserves are developed.²¹ In the past, several pipeline corridors have been identified through the Gwich'in Settlement Area in connection to oil and gas production in the Beaufort Sea Region. The three main identified pipeline corridors are the Mackenzie Valley corridor just north of the Mackenzie River, the Mackenzie Valley corridor south of the Mackenzie River, and the Dempster Highway lateral corridor. At this time, the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project for a natural gas pipeline would run north of the Mackenzie River to Norman Wells and then closely follow the oil pipeline corridor from there into Alberta.

2.4.2 Minerals

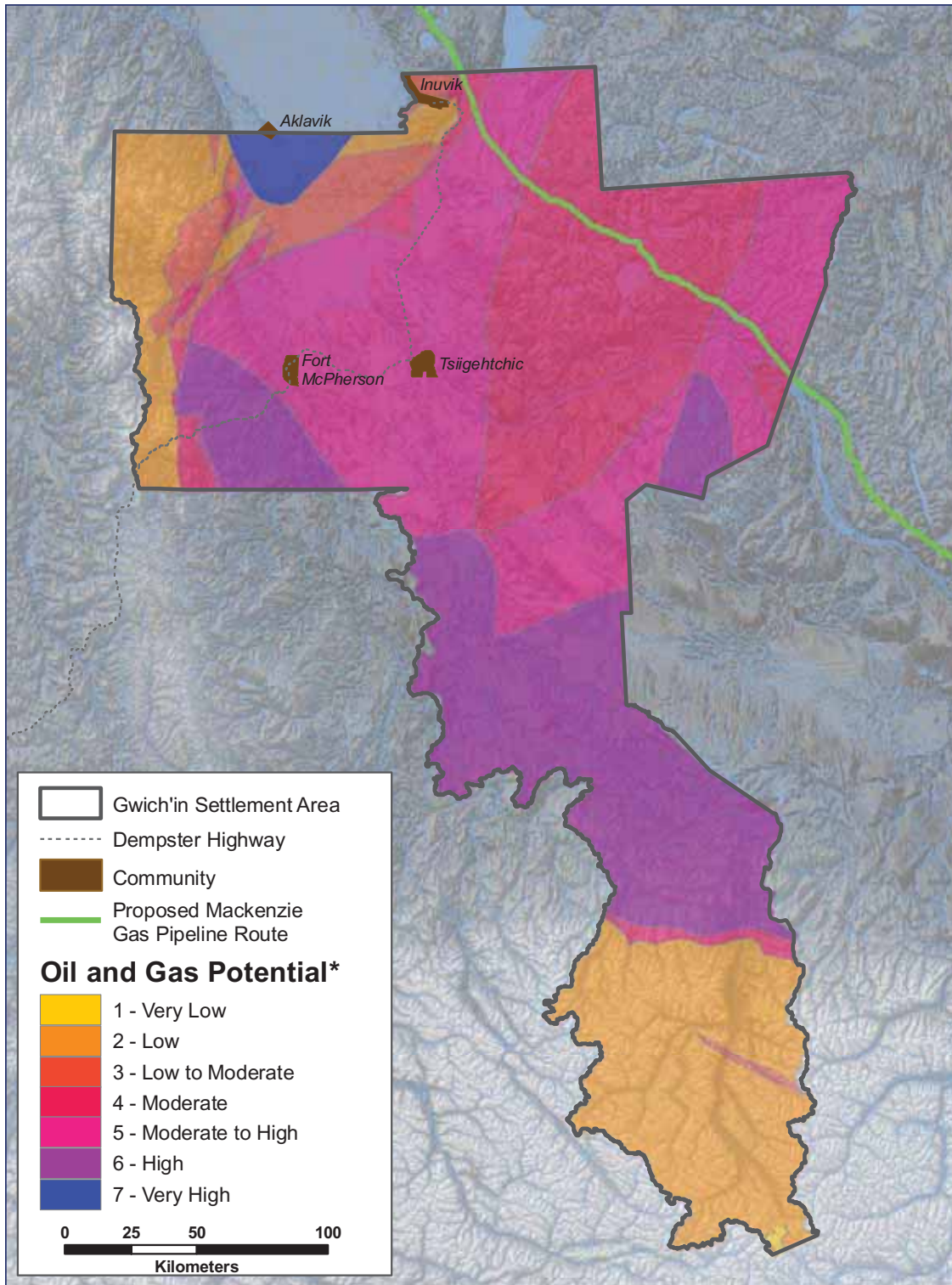
The mineral potential of the Gwich'in Settlement Area is thought to be concentrated in the Mackenzie Mountains and Richardson Mountains. In general, the Mackenzie Mountains have higher mineral potential than the Richardson Mountains.

Deposits that may be found in the Mackenzie Mountains in the Gwich'in Settlement Area include iron ore, lead, zinc, and copper. In particular, the Gayna River Lead-Zinc deposit found along the Sahtu/Gwich'in border is of significance.²² There is a significant crest iron ore deposit in the Mackenzie Mountains adjacent to the Yukon border. However, the majority of the iron resources are found in the headwaters of the Snake River in the Yukon Territory outside of the Gwich'in Settlement Area. There may be other significant deposits in the Mackenzie Mountains, but as the area is remote there has been less exploration in this area in comparison to other areas in the Northwest Territories.



Ron Cruikshank

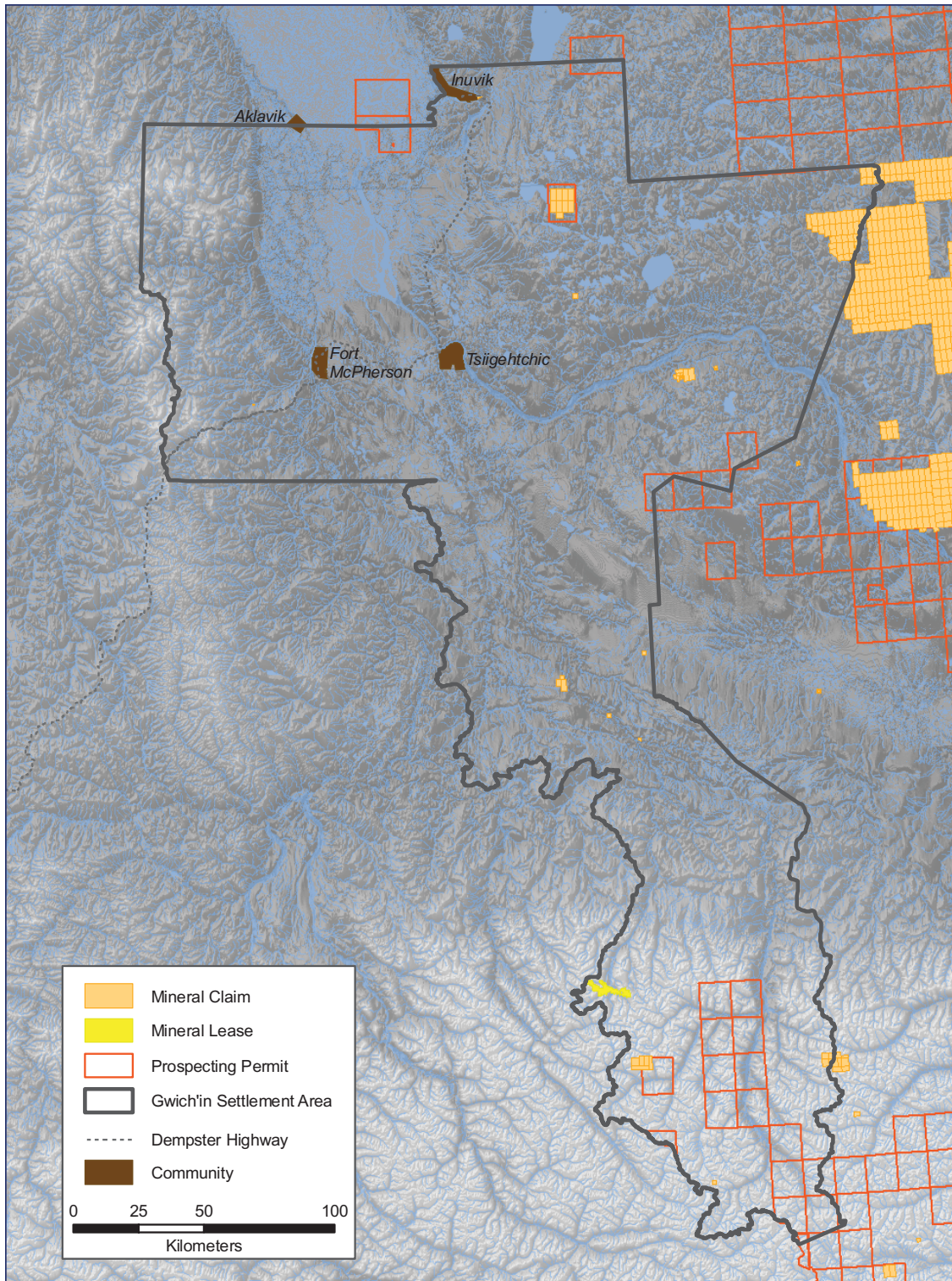
FIGURE 12: OIL AND GAS POTENTIAL



* Gal, L.P. and Udell, A.J., 2005. Compiled Hydrocarbon Play Polygons for mainland Northwest Territories, ArcView .shp format files: Sahtu Settlement Area, Gwich'in Settlement Area, mainland Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Dehcho Territory; Northwest Territories, Canada; Northwest Territories Geoscience Office NWT Open Report 2005-004

FIGURE 13: MINERAL TENURE

(A snapshot of mineral tenure from April 2010)



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There are minor mineral occurrences of copper and gypsum in the Richardson Mountains within the Gwich'in Settlement Area. There are also some coal deposits near the town of Aklavik that could be used for domestic use. Diamond indicators have been found in the Gwich'in Settlement area, but so far a source for these materials has not been identified in the region.²³

There are no active mines in the Gwich'in Settlement Area, but some prospecting and staking is taking place. This includes the headwaters of the Arctic Red River in the Mackenzie Mountains and a few places in the eastern portion of the Gwich'in Settlement Area. (see Figure 13)

2.4.3 Sand, Gravel and Crushed Rock

Topsoil, sand, gravel and crushed rock are the main types of materials removed from pits in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. Topsoil pits extract organic soils from the land surface. Sand and gravel is generally extracted from glacial deposits. Crushed rock pits use rock that is blasted and crushed into smaller sizes.

There are approximately 38 pits in the settlement area. Not all pits are being actively quarried; some are just used for stockpiling with the rest inactive. Access to adequate sources of sand, gravel and crushed rock is important for the maintenance of the Dempster Highway and community infrastructure. (Fig. 14)

2.5 Transportation and Communication

Transportation networks play a crucial role in the economy and life of the people of the Gwich'in Settlement Area. There is an extensive traditional network of travel routes used by the Gwich'in. Many households have boats and/or snowmobiles for off-road travel. Modern transportation options include barges along the major waterways, boats, motorized land vehicles and aircraft. Goods and supplies are brought in by commercial aircraft, truck traffic, and barges. Ice roads are used the winter to access camps and harvesting areas.

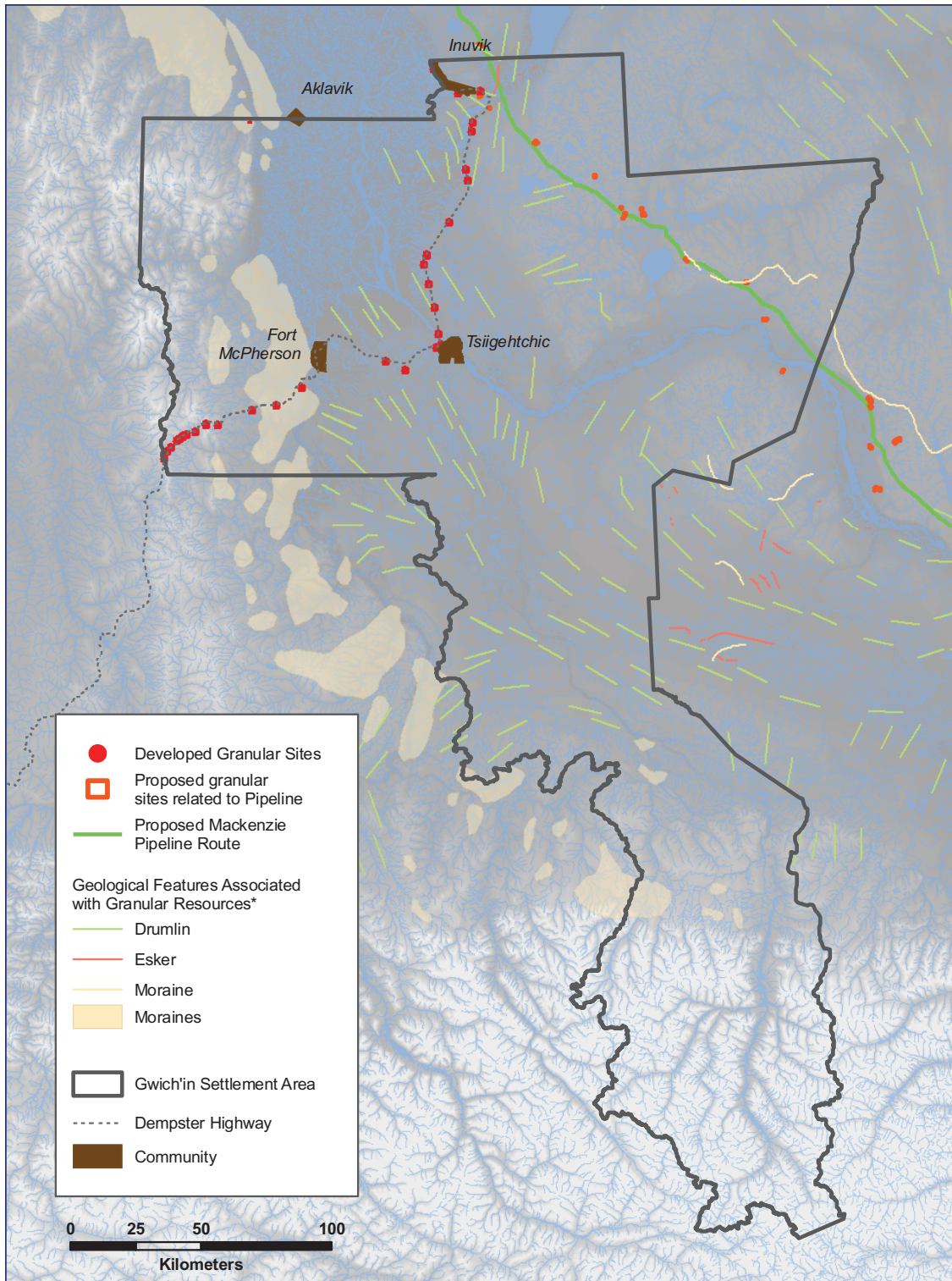


Lawrence Norbert

The Dempster Highway connects Fort McPherson, Tsiigehtchic and Inuvik to the Yukon Territory and the rest of Canada. It is the most northern public highway in North America and is open year round except for short periods of time during river freeze up and ice break-up. Ice roads created in the winter provide seasonal highway links to Aklavik and Tuktoyaktuk.

Workers flooding river ice to build it up and smooth it out for an ice crossing on the Dempster Highway

FIGURE 14: ROCK AND GRAVEL



* Fulton, R.J., compiler
1995: Surficial materials of Canada, Geological Survey of Canada, Map 1880A, scale 1:5 000 000

Dylan Spencer



Motorcyclists touring on the Dempster Highway

The main travel options for people coming into the area are the Dempster Highway and aircraft. Inuvik is the centre for air travel with a jet accessible airport while Fort McPherson and Aklavik each have small airports. Many households in the Gwich'in Settlement Area have boats and/or snowmobiles for off-road travel.

Communication in the Gwich'in Settlement Area is provided primarily through telephone services and internet access in all communities. Cell phone service is limited to around the communities; it doesn't extend along the length of the Dempster highway. Satellite phones can be fairly reliable throughout the region with the right service provider, but are not commonly

used because of the cost. Although maybe not used as much as they once were, bush radios are still an important part of communication for the area. They are an inexpensive way for people to stay in touch while on the land.

Accessed through satellite feeds or the internet, there are no real limits to radio and television programs available to provide local, national and international news, and entertainment for the Gwich'in Settlement Area.

2.6 Existing Designated Areas

Several areas within the Gwich'in Settlement Area have conservation or commemorative related designations (see Figure 15).

Peel River Preserve

Established in the 1920s under regulations pertaining to the Wildlife Act to provide hunting rights to the Gwich'in within its boundaries. The Peel River Preserve, although still in place, is not considered a significant designation today because traditional hunting rights are guaranteed by the Gwich'in Land Claim.

Arctic Red River Canadian Heritage River

Established in 1993 through the Canadian Heritage Rivers System. The designation gives national recognition to Canada's outstanding rivers. Heritage River status promotes coordinated management of the river but does not use legislation to set aside land for conservation. The river management area extends one kilometre on each side of the river from Archie Lake to the confluence with the Mackenzie River.

Gwich'in Territorial Park

Established in 1996 by the Government of the Northwest Territories through the Territorial Parks Act. This is a small park (88 km²) near Inuvik on Campbell Lake created to provide economic and recreation opportunities, and to conserve wildlife habitat and heritage values. This small park is the only designated area in the Gwich'in Settlement Area with a partial conservation mandate. The park has significant wildlife habitat (peregrine falcons, waterfowl and fish).

An example of the beautiful views found at Gwich'in Territorial Park

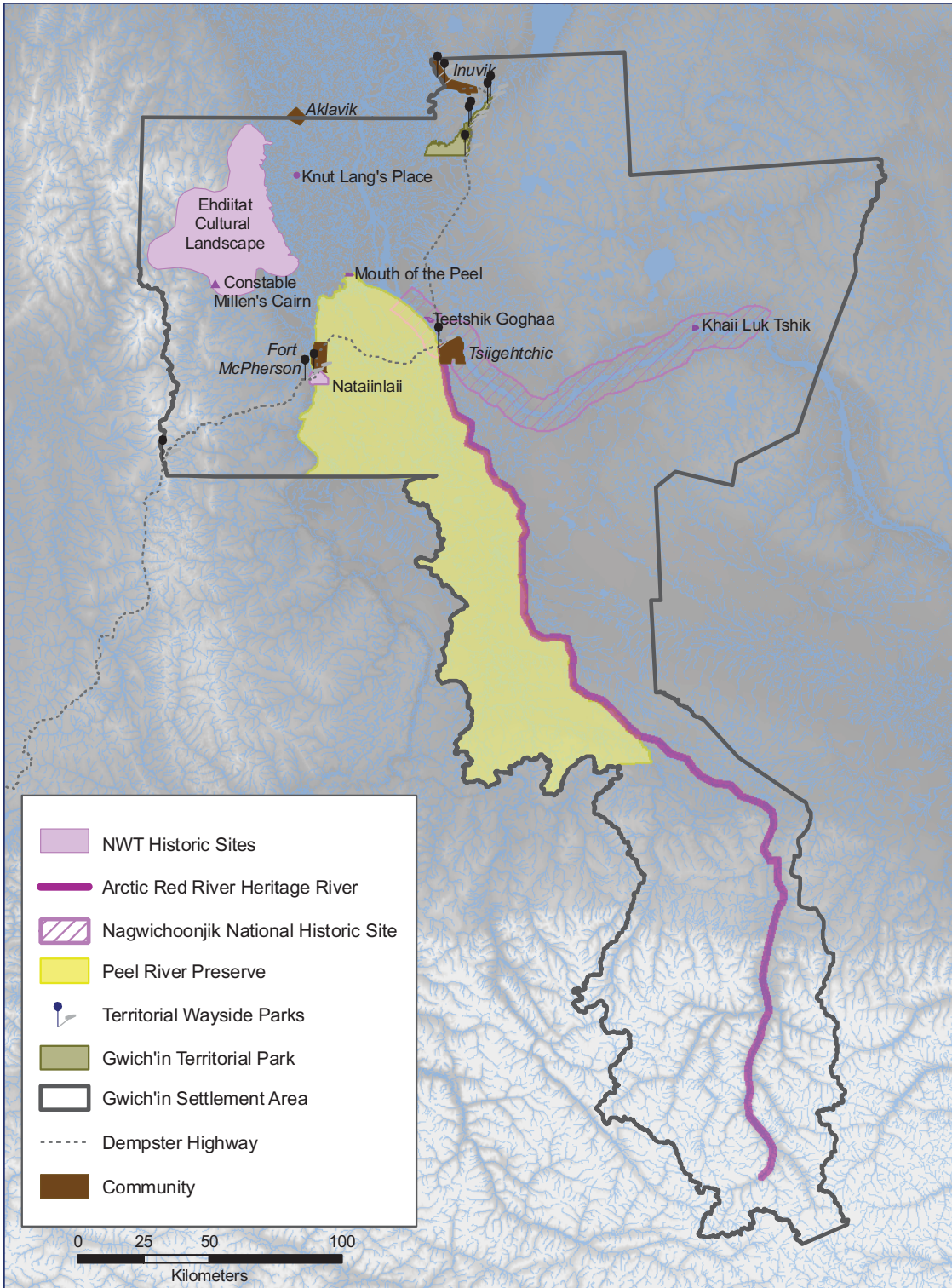


Ron Cruikshank

Nagwichoonyik (Mackenzie River) National Historic Site

Established as a National Historic Site in January 1998. This section of the Mackenzie River from Thunder River to Point Separation will be commemorated by a number of trilingual plaques along the designated stretch of the river. This site was chosen as a National Historic Site due to its cultural, social and spiritual significance to the Gwich'ya Gwich'in. There is still some work required by the site's working group and Parks Canada to finalise the designation and management plan.

FIGURE 15: DESIGNATED AREAS



Fort McPherson National Historic Site

This site was designated a national historic site of Canada in 1969.²⁴ Official recognition refers to the boundaries of the community of Fort McPherson as it was mapped in 1898. The history that it recognises includes:

- the hill with its spectacular views has been part of traditional Teetl'it Gwich'in lands for many generations;
- for over fifty years it was the principal trading post in the Mackenzie Delta region;
- it was a centre of Anglican and Roman Catholic missionary activity after 1860; and,
- it was the place of the first Royal Northwest Mounted Police post in the Western arctic.

Lost Patrol Memorials

There is a monument at the base of Gwaatlit Hill on the Peel River marking the location of where the bodies of Constables Kinney and Taylor from the Royal Northwest Mounted Police “Lost Patrol” were found. The monument is a log pyramid with a wooden plaque. This is across from the place recognised by the Teetl'it as Nji' haii chii enùugwat (‘upper-rock-sloping-down’), which is on the Peel River about 1.6 km north of the NWT/Yukon Border. There is a second monument approximately 10 miles down-river across from an island named Njuu aalaa and marks the location where the bodies of Inspector Fitzgerald and Special Constable Sam Carter were found. A third monument in the Fort McPherson cemetery marks the graves of all four men who perished in February 1911.



Territorial Wayside Parks

There are a number of small wayside parks along the Dempster Highway. Wayside parks provide facilities to tourists and recreational opportunities for local residents. The parks are identified in regulations under the Territorial Parks Act and are maintained by the government of the Northwest Territories.

Trans Canada Trail

A portion of the Trans Canada trail that travels south from the trail head at Tuktoyaktuk passes through the Gwich'in Settlement Area. It is a water route along the Mackenzie River as the trail heads towards the Alberta border. Branching off at Inuvik where the east channel of the Mackenzie River passes by the town, an overland route follows the Dempster Highway to the Yukon border. This national trail project is overseen by the Trans Canada Trail Board (founded by Dr. Pierre Camu and William Pratt). Individual segments of the trail network are developed and managed by partner groups across Canada; in the Northwest Territories this is the Northwest Territories Recreation and Parks Association, a non-profit organisation.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HISTORIC SITES

The following sites were nominated by the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute for recognition under the NWT's Cultural Places Program.²⁵ The Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre administers this program, using the process under Section 2 of the Historical Resources Act. While all these sites have received the designation of a Territorial Historic Site, it is commemorative only and does not provide legal protection. Regardless of any official designations, these sites have archaeological and cultural values which should be respected. Two additional sites, Pokiak and Vik'ooyendik, are within municipal boundaries and have not been included in the list below because the land use plan does not apply to municipal lands.

Knut Lang's Place

The heritage value of this site is associated with an important economic development phase of the Northwest Territories; the period when some independent traders such as Knut Lang worked with different local groups in supplying the global fur economy. This designation also commemorates a relationship of respect between non-Natives and the local Aboriginal populations. Knut operated his trading post from 1936 to 1964, and is remembered for his caring and generosity. More recently, the site has been used as a drug and alcohol program facility and a science camp.

Nataiinlaih (Eight Miles)

This place was the scene of several battles between the Teet'it Gwich'in and the Siglit* during the early historic period. Over the years, the place developed into an important fishing village. Its existence is closely related to the establishment of Fort McPherson and the presence of the Hudson's Bay Company in the area. Today, the village is 'home' to many Teet'it Gwich'in elders who have established cabins and fish houses there and continue to live their traditional lifestyle.

This historic site overlaps with heritage conservation zoning and special management zoning of the same name in the Gwich'in Land Use Plan.

Melanie Fafard, Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute



Some cabins in the village at 8 miles

* "The Siglit were an Inuit group who lived between the Mackenzie Delta and the Arctic Coast at the time of contact with Euro-Canadians. In the early 1900s, the Siglit were joined by Alaskan Inuit and today are known collectively as the Inuvialuit."²⁶

Nagwichoo Tshik (Mouth of the Peel Village)

Nagwichoo Tshik is associated with events that have shaped the history of the Northwest Territories. These are related to the fur trade and most particularly, the growth of muskrat trapping during the early twentieth century. The place is also

Ingrid Kriisch, Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute



representative of the Teetl'it Gwich'in way of life and tradition, as it became a major fishing location for them during this period. The Mouth of the Peel is the only historic village still standing in the Gwich'in Settlement Region.

This historic site overlaps with heritage conservation zoning of the same name in the Gwich'in Land Use Plan.

Khahi Luk Tshik (Travaillant Creek)

The site encompasses about 2.5 km² on the north shore of the Mackenzie River surrounding the mouth of Travaillant Creek. Khahi Luk Tshik was a thriving trading community during the early to mid twentieth century and in legendary times. It is the head of a traditional trail leading to the wintering country of the north. Physical records of the rich history and current use of the site include archaeological sites, buildings and graves.

This historic site lies within the Travaillant Lake, Mackenzie River and Tree River Conservation Zone in the Gwich'in Land Use Plan.

Teetshik Goghaa (Old Arctic Red)

In pre-contact times this site was a traditional fishing and gathering place for the Gwichya Gwich'in. It later became the site of one of the first Roman Catholic Missions in the vicinity. The most visible human features left today are the remains of an old stone fire place (*photo on the right*) and several wooden grave markers that are recorded as an archaeological site.

This historic site overlaps with heritage conservation zoning of the same name in the Gwich'in Land Use Plan.



Ingrid Kriisch, Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute

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Constable Millen's Cairn

A grey log pyramid marks the spot where RCMP Constable Edgar “Spike” Millen, who was in charge of the Arctic Red River Detachment at the time, was killed in the line of duty on the morning of January 30, 1932. As part of an RCMP search party, he was mortally wounded during an altercation with the man they were attempting to apprehend. That man was Albert Johnson, who was also known as “The Mad Trapper”.

This historic site lies within the Rat River/Husky Channel/Black Mountain Conservation Zone in the Gwich'in Land Use Plan.

Ehdiitat Gwich'in Cultural Landscape:

Chigwaazraii, Sreih Nitsik, Ddhah Zhit Han and Eneekaii Han (Black Mountain, Red Mountain, Rat River, and Husky Channel)

This landscape encompasses several important cultural features. This landscape plays an important role in tradition and mythology for the Ehdiitat Gwich'in and continues to be used for subsistence fishing and hunting, as well as, recreation by Aklavik residents today. The modern and historic use of the area, tied together with trails, is culturally bound in a collection of stories and legends which all celebrate the unique relationship the Gwich'in have with this special landscape.

Most of this historic site is within the Rat River, Husky Lakes, Black Mountain Conservation Zone in the Gwich'in Land Use Plan, with the remaining portion covered by the Mackenzie Delta Special Management Zone and Canoe Landing.

Dylan Spencer



Chapter 2 References

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