

# PROJECT REPORT

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## The Difficulties with Devolution: Community-Based Forest Management Planning in the Yukon under Comprehensive Land Claims

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**The Difficulties with Devolution:  
Community-Based  
Forest Management Planning  
in the Yukon  
under Comprehensive Land Claims**

**SFM Network Project: A Yukon Perspective: The  
Role of the Alsek Renewable Resource Council in  
Community-Based Forest Management Planning**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This report examines the role of the Alsek Renewable Resource Council in Yukon's first forest management plan, and the challenges associated with the devolution of forest management planning responsibilities from the Federal, Territorial and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations' Governments to a community agency – the Champagne and Aishihik Traditional Territory Forest Management Planning Team. Finalization of Yukon First Nation Comprehensive Land Claims and the subsequent formation of Renewable Resource Councils has created a framework for the involvement of communities who desire a meaningful role in Yukon forest management and policy development. This community-based forest management plan is being developed on two million hectares of Champagne and Aishihik's Traditional Territory in southeast Yukon. Data for this project was collected primarily through interviews with community, forest industry, and government representatives. The results show that Yukon community members face a daunting task. The experiences of the Alsek Renewable Resource Council and the Champagne and Aishihik Planning Team illustrates that if community-based forest management planning is to succeed in the Yukon a number of conditions are required. Government must acknowledge that RRCs have a legally mandated role in forest management decision-making by developing specific policy for implementing RRC recommendations. Government must acknowledge that community-based groups have the capability to make informed decisions that will benefit both the community and the forests. In order to accomplish this foresters must work cooperatively with community members to ensure that the best possible forest data is made available to the participants in community-based forest management planning processes. New Government policy must be formulated to accommodate the recommendations of the community-based organizations. The investigators believe that for community members to remain actively involved in community-based management they must observe that their recommendations are implemented by Government. The investigator's are of the opinion that in order to accomplish these criteria Government policy must strive to strengthen and maintain a trusting relationship between community and government partners.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This project would not have been possible without the assistance of a number of organizations and individuals. We would first like to thank the members of the Alsek Renewable Resource Council and the Champagne and Aishihik Traditional Territory Forest Management Planning Team and the other participants in this project for their candid and insightful comments. We hope we have done a credible job of reporting their story. Secondly, we would like to thank the Sustainable Forest Management Network for financial support to conduct the research for this project and to present our findings. Initial project findings were presented at an Arctic 2000 Circumpolar Science Conference in Whitehorse, Yukon (September 2000). The Primary Investigators and Research Assistant have presented project findings and conclusions at an International Boreal Forest Ecosystem Management Conference in Edinburgh (June 2001). We are appreciative of the opportunity to present our findings and hope they will contribute to the knowledge and understanding of community-government forest management relationships.

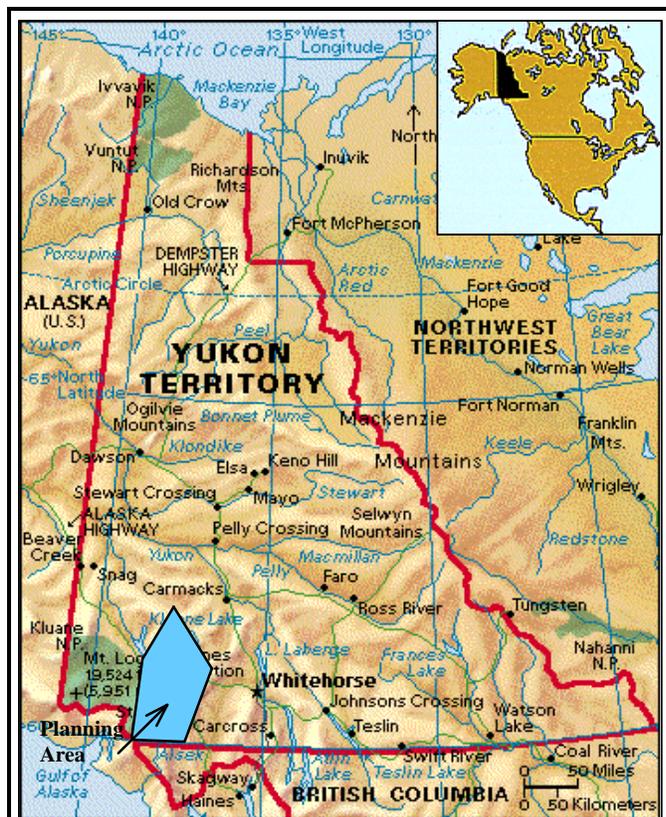
## **Introduction**

This project explores the role of the Alsek Renewable Resource Council (Alsek RRC) in Yukon's first forest management plan, and the challenges associated with the devolution of forest management planning responsibilities from the Federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND), Yukon Territorial Government (YTG) and Champagne and Aishihik First Nation (CAFN) Government to a community agency. The finalization of comprehensive land claims in the Yukon have created a framework for the meaningful involvement of community agencies in forest management planning and management. This project will also serve to inform other boreal forest communities in the Yukon and Northwest Territories about the considerations and options associated with community-based decision-making as the responsibility of forest management is transferred from government to a community level.

Forest management paradigms concerned solely with the sustained yield of timber are no longer considered to be socially or politically acceptable (Gordon 1993, Maser 1997, M'Gonigle 1996). Forest managers must now consider the social as well as economic and environmental values and systems of the forest ecosystem. Evidence of this paradigm shift in Canada are the increasing number of community forests, public forest advisory committees and co-management projects initiated by First Nations and forest companies. Community members are becoming increasingly involved in management decisions concerning the forests that surround their homes. The fact that community groups, such as the Alsek RRC, are beginning to take an active role in the formulation of forest management plans indicates a major shift in the way the Yukon's forests are managed.

In the past, DIAND bureaucrats and forest scientists have told the residents of Yukon communities what operational activities are allowed in their forests. The options were limited. Federal legislation governing Yukon's forests only provide for the issuance of timber harvesting permits and the collection of timber dues (Territorial Lands Act, Section 17 & 18, R.S.C. 1985 c. T-7, see Appendix B).

The Yukon entered a new era in 1993 when the first Comprehensive Land Claims were signed. One of the first four included the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations' (CAFN) Final Agreement. Since 1993, seven out of fourteen comprehensive land claims have been finalized. The negotiations are formalized in the Umbrella Final Agreement (UFA), and the individual First Nation's Final Agreements, Implementation Plan and Self Government Agreements. These documents provide



**Figure 1:** Map of the Yukon Territory showing the approximate size and location of the Champagne and Aishihik Traditional Territory forest management planning area. Source: Adapted from [www.yesnet.yk.ca/schools/fhcollins/yukonmap.html](http://www.yesnet.yk.ca/schools/fhcollins/yukonmap.html)

the First Nations jurisdictional responsibilities on their Settlement Lands and to a lesser degree over their Traditional Territories. With the signing of the UFA, between the Government of Canada, Council of Yukon Indians and Government of the Yukon, a foundation was established for community-based management and planning of renewable resources in the First Nations' Traditional Territories. The primary mechanism is through the creation of Renewable Resource Councils (RRCs). The RRCs have a broad mandate which includes making recommendations to Federal, YTG and First Nations government leaders about the forest management legislation, policies, plans, and programs in the respective First Nation's Traditional Territories (DIAND 1993a, 1993b; Appendix B includes Section 17.4 of the UFA and CAFN Final Agreement which outlines the responsibilities of the Asek RRC in respect to forest management.)

The Asek RRC and other Yukon RRCs act as co-management boards. The UFA states that these boards are comprised of both First Nation and non-First Nation representatives of the communities in which they are located and independent of Government<sup>1</sup>.

The Champagne and Aishihik Traditional Territory Forest Management Planning Team (CATT Planning Team) was formed at the request of the Federal government under the auspices of the Asek RRC. The CATT Planning Team is comprised of members from the Asek RRC, the Village of Haines Junction town council, conservation groups, forest stakeholders within the planning

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<sup>1</sup>When the word Government is capitalized and used in this manner it refers to the three governments involved in this study: The Federal Government, the Yukon Territorial Government and the First Nations Government.

area, as well as Federal, Territorial and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations Government representatives. The Alsek RRC chairs the CATT Planning Team and coordinates its budget, which it receives from the Federal Government. The objective of the planning process is to develop a community-based forest management plan for CAFN's Traditional Territories. Figure 1 provides an approximate location and size of the planning area in relation to Haines Junction.

The Alsek RRC and the CATT Planning Team face a daunting task. They have the responsibility to make recommendations to three governments concerning the joint management of the forest resources on two million hectares of forested land. This is the first forest management plan for this area and the first community-based forest management planning process in the Yukon. What transpires in Haines Junction will directly affect forest management planning in other areas of the Territory and is being followed closely by Yukon First Nations, Government agencies, other Renewable Resource Councils, the public, conservation groups and the forest industry.

## **Research Objectives**

The objectives of this project are to examine:

- the organizational challenges facing community groups, specifically the Alsek RRC and the CATT Forest Management Planning Team, who desire a meaningful role in the development of a local forest management planning process, and
- the factors affecting the ability of the community groups to make decisions and influence forest policy and management.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

Data for this study was collected in three ways. The majority of data was obtained from semi-structured interviews with members of the Alsek RRC and CATT Planning Team. These groups include both community members and representatives of the three government agencies with jurisdictional responsibility for forested land in southeast Yukon. Additional interviews with community, forest industry and other government representatives were also conducted to supplement the research data. A total of thirty interviews were conducted during the course of this project. The second source of data was generated by attending and observing both CATT Planning Team meetings and community meetings organized by the Alsek RRC, CATT Planning Team and DIAND Forest Resources to discuss forestry issues within the study area. A third source of data was print and

photographic information about the Haines Junction area, the forest environment and the planning process.

Data from the observations and collected printed material was used to triangulate the findings from the interviews. By combining three distinctly different types of data, the validity of each data source was tested, strengthened and verified (Berg 1998, p4-6). Triangulation has also served as a means to reduce researcher bias.

The interview questions were developed using the following four broad topic areas. (See Appendix A for examples of the interview guides used in this project.)

- The preferred delegation of responsibility between the Alsek RRC and CATT Forest Management Planning Team, and First Nations, Federal and Yukon Governments, as perceived by the different government agencies and community members.
- The organizational challenges of alternative forest management institutions, specifically RRCs or community planning teams when they are supported by comprehensive land claim agreements;
- The perceived needs and priorities of community organizations in preparation for increased requests for timber harvesting and other land use activities within the First Nation Traditional Territories in the Yukon; and
- The organizational, human resource and forest planning priorities of the Alsek RRC and CATT Planning Team to function effectively in forest management planning.

One of the objectives of the data collection was to interview as many of the people involved with the Haines Junction forest management planning process as possible. The choice of interview subjects was purposive rather than random. We sought out persons who were knowledgeable about or directly involved in the planning process. To that end, interviews were conducted with eight members of the Alsek RRC. This included all active members as well as the past and present administrative staff members. Nine out of the twelve active and three past members of the CATT Forest Management Planning Team were interviewed. We also purposely chose people who represented specific community stakeholder groups and the government agencies. Interviews were conducted with members of senior management in each of DIAND, YTG Department of Renewable Resources and CAFN and with government personnel involved in the administration and funding of Yukon's RRCs. Also interviewed were the facilitators who took part in CATT Planning Team meetings, and persons involved in the forest industry were in the last group interviewed.

Analysis of interviews, field notes, observations, and collected material, started as data began to accumulate. Interviews were reviewed shortly after they were transcribed, looking for recurring patterns or themes. In-depth analysis of the data, with the assistance of *QSR NUD\*IST (Qualitative Solutions and Research, Non-numerical Unstructured Data \* Indexing Searching and Theorizing)*, a qualitative analysis software package, began after all interviews were completed. With the assistance of this software, themes were identified and explored. An increasingly complex group of categories with multiple branches and relationships quickly developed.

## **Constraints**

The research for this project concentrated primarily on data collected during the eight months from May to December 2000. This relatively short period of time provides only a snapshot of the lengthy and often troubled community-government planning process. During this period the Research Assistant (RA) who conducted all the interviews for this project was also employed full time with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DIAND). Even with these time constraints the majority of people directly involved in the development of the forest management plan were interviewed. The RA's contact with other Haines Junction community members, not directly involved with the planning process, was limited to public meetings, chance encounters on the street and brief conversations in local stores. The data collection, although extensive, would have been enriched by interviewing additional community and government representatives.

As a result of the planning process taking place in a First Nation Traditional Territory we had expected to find a significant number of First Nations people involved. There are, however, only two CAFN members actively involved on the Alsek RRC and none on the CATT Planning Team. Four additional non-First Nation's persons working for the CAFN sawmill, in senior management positions in the CAFN government, and on the Council of Yukon First Nations, were interviewed. The majority of people (both First Nation and non-First Nation) interviewed neither expressed a concern about the limited number of First Nation representatives, nor did they feel this would be an obstacle in the development or implementation of the plan. Interviewing additional First Nation persons, however, may indicate why they were not involved and the possible implications of a lack of First Nation representation in forest management plans.

The RA's employment and long time residency in the Yukon provided an intimate knowledge of the local political scene, inner workings of the DIAND, the social actors and environmental conditions relevant to this project. We found similarities to observations made by Beckley and

Korber (1995) in a northern setting. The authors noted that it was important, especially in remote locations, for the research to have insights into the first hand experiences of the participants and stakeholders. Turner (1999) observed that “outsiders” were often unable to understand the “face-to-face” social relationships between the various players of both the inter- and intra-community relations. The RA’s first hand knowledge of the participants in the forest management planning process taking place in Haines Junction, and the relationships between the various players, helped at a number of critical points in the research. For example, the RA’s entrance into the field was eased by previous relations with many of the persons interviewed and a letter of support that was solicited from the Alsek RRC. Original concerns that some respondents would be uncomfortable answering the RA’s questions because of her employment with DIAND proved to be unfounded.

The RA’s training in qualitative research methods, advice from the primary investigators and other researchers helped reduce research bias. Triangulation of interview data, observations and collected printed material also served to validate the data interpretation analysis.

### **Dissemination of Research Findings and Conclusions**

This project is reported in greater detail in Wortley’s MSc. Renewable Resource Thesis (anticipated completion December 2001). The initial findings have been presented by the RA at the Arctic 2000 Circumpolar Science Conference in Whitehorse in September, 2000. The projects findings and conclusions were also presented in Edinburgh, Scotland at the Social and Economic Perspectives of Boreal Forest Ecosystem Management Conference (June 2001).

A final report will also be made to the Alsek RRC and the CATT Forest Management Planning Team. The forest management planning process taking place in Haines Junction is the first of its kind in the Yukon. How the process evolves; how conflicts are resolved; how relationships between government and community agencies unfold; and how the final recommendations are received by the three governments is being closely followed by other Yukon RRCs, communities and the forest industry.

## **CONTEXT AND GUIDING THEORY**

### **Community-based forest management in the Yukon**

Community-based forest management is a collaborative or cooperative form of decision-making in which government and community agencies form a partnership to administer, plan or manage forest resources (Berkes et. al. 1991; Berkes1994; Borrini-Feyerabend 2000). The partnership arrangement is formed between the agencies with jurisdictional responsibilities and community agencies, usually local residents, resource users and stakeholders (Roseland 1998, p190). An agreement is reached between the partners which “specifies and guarantees their respective function, rights and responsibilities” (Borrini-Feyerabend 2000, p7). A partnership does not mean, however, that all participants have the “same level of power, rights or management authority” (Roseland 1998, p190). In the Yukon, for example, the governments maintain legislative authority over their respective land-bases. They may have devolved a certain amount of decision-making power to the Alsek RRC and the CATT Planning Team for the preparation of the forest management plan, but the final authority remains with the governments.

There are various degrees or steps of collaboration in community-based management that describe the government-community arrangement. This relationship is a continuum between two extremes. At one end of the continuum government has total control of the resource, while at the other end the community or stakeholders have total control. (See Borrini-Feyerabend 2000, Berkes, et.al. 1991 and Berkes1994 for examples of the government-community co-management continua.)

Federal and Yukon Government documents indicate support for communities taking a meaningful role in forest management activities in the territory. This view has also received the endorsement of Yukon First Nations and environmental organizations such as the Yukon Conservation Society. Federal government reports going back to the early 1980s recommend that renewable resources for the Yukon and Northwest Territories should be “prepared jointly by the government agencies concerned and the community councils” (Grenier 1982, p33). The Yukon Conservation Society (YCS), a Territorial-based environmental advocacy agency, developed a paper for the Yukon Government outlining sustainable management options for renewable resources. The authors recommended that “a sustainable development approach to forestry should entail small-scale community forestry with the land base under local control and management” (Yukon Conservation Society1987, p 14). Over a decade later, a Yukon Government publication, *The Yukon Forest Strategy* re-emphasised the importance of the link between communities and government management and stated that forest managers should “build cooperative forest management approaches” (YTG 1998, p 2).

Since 1982, one of the consistent recommendations concerning forest management and

planning of Yukon's forested land base is the involvement of communities in the decision-making process. Extensive public consultation carried out by the Yukon Government in the preparation of the *Yukon Forest Strategy* clearly showed that the majority of Yukoners support community-based planning. Ratification of Yukon's comprehensive land claims, and the subsequent formation of Renewable Resource Councils, provides the obvious mechanism for bringing the three governments and numerous communities together to implement community-based forest management.

### **Devolution of Forest Management Responsibilities to Communities**

Community-based management is essentially the devolution of government managerial responsibilities to community organizations. The government's desire to transfer power to local government or community agencies is based on a democratic doctrine that stresses the importance of the participation of local people in the governance of their own affairs (Ostrom, et.al. 1993, p164). Devolution, or decentralization – the words are often used interchangeably, describe the transfer of administrative, planning, decision-making, or management responsibilities from a central government agency to another organization. This transfer of power is best described as a continuum, similar to the co-management continua described by Borrini-Feyerabend and Berkes. On one side the government maintains near total control, transferring only a minimum of power to the community organisations, seeking only comments or advice from community members. At the other extreme, communities receive extensive rights and responsibilities and act as decision-makers. "Real devolution" to communities organizations cannot occur unless government is willing to change their policies to accommodate the objectives important to the communities (Fisher 1999). Where the devolution process fits on the continuum is dependent on the permanency of the transfer. If the government-community relationship is temporary, or can be withdrawn by government, the balance of power remains with government, not the community. The devolution continuum is discussed in greater detail in D. Wortley (2001) MSc. thesis.

Communities face a wide range of challenges when forest management responsibilities are transferred to local agencies. If community organizations do not have legal status or a legislative mandate to support their new responsibilities, the decisions made by these groups may be revoked or ignored by government. This, in turn, results in mistrust between government and community agencies (Ostrom 1993, Fisher 1999, Inglis 1999). The first step in successfully devolving authority to community groups is to build trust and develop a solid working relationship between government and the community groups. A lasting partnership is necessary because even when the responsibility for forest management decisions are devolved to communities, it is uncommon for the ownership or

control of the land-base to be included in the transfer. This is the case in the forest management plan being developed in CAFN Traditional Territory. The Alsek RRC and CATT Planning Team have been tasked with the responsibility of developing a forest management plan, but the final approval of the forest management plan and current control of the land-base remains with the individual governments.

Governments often refuse to take the forest management aspirations of communities seriously. When the Forest Commission initiated “community engagement” policies in Scotland, state foresters hesitated to trust communities because of community members’ lack of formal training (Inglis 1999). Experience in Asian countries has shown that government forest authorities simply do not trust community members to make the right decision. It is also not uncommon for forest practitioners to feel their authority or positions are being usurped by community members (Fisher 1999). Government authorities may feel they will have a reduced forest management role or will be left to correct problems created by community-made decisions. Mistrust can easily turn to resentment, making a working relationship even more difficult.

Even when sufficient authority exists, governments very seldom are willing to give up financial control to the community agency. In her fifteen years of working with the Federal Government the RA has found that it is extremely difficult for government to fund programs or projects that are out of the norm. A good example is obtaining consistent or sufficient Federal funding for Renewable Resource Councils to develop forest management plans on not only Crown lands, but also on Yukon Territorial or First Nations’ lands. Government officials who support this approach to forest planning often do not have the funds within their existing budgets.

### **Trust, an essential component of Community-Based Forest Management**

Trust is one element often overlooked or which receives only passing comment in community-based or co-management literature. It is the belief of the investigators involved in this project that building and maintaining trusting relationships between community groups, such as the Alsek RRC and the CATT Planning Team, and Government, is one of the most difficult challenges facing community-based forest management in the Yukon.

Trust touches all aspects of human life. It is the foundation of our religious beliefs, our ability to communicate, the economic structure of societies, our ability to live with others and our ability to determine right from wrong (Misztal 1996; Gambetta 2000, p219). Trust can be given freely,

promised, or earned—but it cannot be ordered or purchased (Lieberman 1981, p134). Without trust, common social interactions such as cooperation and communication, which we take for granted, would simply not be possible (Luhmann 1979, p88; Bok 1979, p26-27; Good 2000, p32).

Trust is resilient and difficult to destroy because it is an inherent part of human existence. People will often continue to convey trust even when there is no longer an apparent reason to continue. “People born with the habit of cooperation do not lose it easily, even if the basis for trust has started to disappear” (Fukuyama 1996, p321). This sense of optimism and tenacity are qualities that are necessary for participants of community-based initiatives. Community-based processes are often long and community members are expected to give a considerable amount of their free time. They often encounter many set-backs and resistance from both the community and government.

Motivation to trust results from strong personal bonds, rational reasons, or an enhancement of personal goals, but usually results from a combination of one or more of these motives. (Luhmann 2000, p94; Misztal 1996, p 21; Lewis and Weigert 1985). Community respondents in this study have stated that they became involved in this forest management planning process for various reasons: to protect the forest ecosystem, to improve the economic stability of the community, to represent institutional concerns<sup>2</sup>, or to safeguard lifestyles. These are only a few compelling reasons why the community members endeavour to work collaboratively with government rather than leaving the decisions up to “the whimsies of the government process” (Bernard and Young 1997, p199). Even if individuals have adequate motivation to trust there is still a need for knowledge and a rational reason to trust the other parties’ motives (Lewis and Weigert 1985). Gambetta (2000) stresses, however, that knowledge alone does not result in trust.

Fukuyama (1996) argues that mutual trust is created when social actors support one another and form a community<sup>3</sup>. He states that high-trust communities are based on ethical habits and reciprocal moral obligations. Luhmann supports this theory and says that the expectation of trust is lessened if moral or natural order is destroyed, if the technical competence of the actors is questioned, or if the actors place their interests ahead of others (Luhmann 2000, p93-94). Groups lacking in trust lose the “ability ... to work together for common purposes” (Fukuyama 1996, p9-10). The ability

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<sup>2</sup>All members of both the Alsek RRC and the CATT Planning Team work for, or represent, a Government (DIAND, Parks Canada, YTG, CAFN, or the Municipality of Haines Junction), environmental (Yukon Conservation Society), or community (the local sawmill, small economic interests, RISK, REDS) agency.

<sup>3</sup>The community Fukuyama refers to is a socio-economic community and not necessarily one with common physical boundaries.

to associate with one another is vital to every aspect of social existence and depends on shared norms and values. Trust also depends on the ability of societal members to put the community's interests ahead of individual interests. Out of such shared values and a sense of the familiar comes trust and a strong community (Fukuyama 1996, p10, Luhmann 2000, p94).

Trust in complex situations, such as relationships between communities and government, can be enhanced by strengthening trust on a micro, or person-to-person level (Misztal 1996, p15). Luhmann argues that trust is vital in interpersonal relations but is not as important in more complex situations. In more complicated circumstances a sense of confidence, rather than trust, starts to become more important. "A lack of confidence will lead to feelings of alienation" (Luhmann 2000, p103) and will eventually result in actors withdrawing from the discussions or negotiations. He goes on to state, however, that trust and confidence are interrelated and cannot be easily separated. From the perspective of the CATT Planning Team, this implies that if the community members trust the government representatives on the planning team, and are confident in the planning process, they will be more likely to remain actively involved. This strengthening of trust at the community level will also result in a higher level of confidence being placed in Government.

The reverse is also true. If Government commits an act that lessens or destroys the trust of community members, such as enacting legislation, policies or plans that negate previous promises, the confidence placed in local government employees is damaged or destroyed. This highlights one of the difficulties with maintaining trust. Governments have historically created policies that weakened "the ability of people to work together for common purposes"(Fukuyama 1996, p9-10), essentially depleting the social capital of the community. In the extreme, government policy may actually destroy the social structure that allows its citizens to achieve their goals. For example, DIAND Forest Resource policies guiding the issuance of commercial timber permits in the Yukon have changed so often and become so time consuming in recent years that small local logging operators are often unable to apply for and receive a timber permit in the same fiscal year. This has resulted in local logging companies and sawmills closing their doors, financial hardships and bankruptcy for individuals and forestry dependent companies, and jeopardizes the social structure of rural communities as its members are forced to relocate to find employment. Once such policies are created and trust begins to breakdown, government has difficulty understanding how to replenish or rebuild it (Wallace and Wolfe 1999, p359). As social capital decreases so does societies ability to act cooperatively (Fukuyama 1996, p11).

To strengthen trust in community-government relationships government must create policy

that provides opportunities for “shared deliberation and constructive opportunities for the active involvement” of individuals (Misztal 1996, p219). Government policy must facilitate three conditions that will allow the community members to become active players in shared deliberations such as the community-based forest management planning process taking place in Haines Junction. Individuals first require resources such as knowledge, skills, information, time and well-being to be effective partners in community-based management. To be effective participants the community-groups also require opportunities that arise from the devolution of authority from Government, such as having an active voice in planning processes of the forested lands that surround Yukon communities,. And finally, they must be provided with motivation to take part and stay active in an often onerous process (Misztal 1996, 219 and Oldfield 1990, p145).

Luhmann (1979, p94) argues that it is not possible to directly transfer the type of trust that exists on a micro-level, such as in families or between individuals, to more complex societal situations. But, it is possible to begin to understand and analyze the more complicated social institutional relationships by studying friendship networks, patron-client relations and individual interactions. Social actors involved in negotiations or discussions with large government institutions benefit from strong micro-level relationships because it reduces the uncertainty caused by social complexity (Misztal 1996, p74-75).

Negotiations and discussions that take place in the community-based forest management planning process are often lengthy. The Haines Junction groups have been meeting for over two and half years. Although not as multifaceted as the situations Fukuyama, Luhmann and Misztal describe in their work, individuals involved in the forest management planning process often find the topics and discussions overwhelming. Members of the Alsek RRC and the CATT Planning Team are asked to not only understand complicated forest ecosystems, but also the implications of the unrelenting spruce bark beetle attack on the forests. They must weigh the effect their decisions will have on both the summer tourist trade and the new logging industry. They are asked to empathize with the spiritual and traditional values the First Nation’s people place on the land and forests. They are asked to understand not only the words, but the spirit of the Champagne and Aishihik Final Land Claims Agreement. They are asked to understand, and sympathize with, Government funding and timber permitting processes, which are designed to accommodate community decisions. And, they are asked to make decisions that are often unpopular with their friends and neighbours.

Trust is essential for facilitating effective problem solving and decision-making in these types of community-based management scenarios. Trust encourages the exchange of information between

the parties involved in the process and determines whether participants will allow others to influence their decision and actions (Misztal 1996, p12; Carnevale and Wecheler, 1992, p471) and that community interests are placed before self-interests. In the high-trust socio-economic communities described by Fukuyama (1996) members are more likely to make decisions that benefit the community, rather than the individual, resulting in stronger and more cohesive communities.

It is only through partnerships based on trust that Government agencies, who possess the scientific expertise and jurisdictional responsibility, and community members, who possess local and traditional knowledge, can create an atmosphere in which effective community-based management can occur. In order for community members to take an active role in community-based initiatives and make informed decisions, there must be not only a high-level of confidence in the information each group supplies, but a high-level of trust that Government will accept and implement the decision made in the community. Community members must have confidence that their decisions and recommendations will be accepted and implemented by Government.

The process of trusting requires that social actors accept some degree of risk. In order to trust, they must accept there is a chance that the situation in which they are involved may not result in a personal benefit or have the expected resolution. To lessen the degree of risk, the participants in community-government negotiations rely on past and shared experiences (Luhmann 2000, p103). For example, many of the participants on the CATT Planning Team also took part in a DIAND initiative in the mid-1990s to create a forest management plan for the area of severe infestation by the spruce bark beetle. Government, the Alsek RRC and community members met regularly and were making progress towards the finalization of the plan. This all came to an abrupt end when DIAND Forest Resources' senior managers announced at one meeting that they were going against the wishes of the community members and issuing timber permits in an area close to Haines Junction. This decision by DIAND resulted in the Alsek RRC threatening legal action should the Federal Government proceed with the issuance of the timber permits. Both the Alsek RRC and community members learned two valuable lessons from this exchange when the planning process stopped and the timber permits were never issued. First, that community members must be wary of the Federal Governments' commitment to the community's involvement in similar planning exercises, and second that the Alsek RRC and community members have means and the ability to effectively express their displeasure with Government decisions.

In the forest management planning process taking place in Haines Junction the distinction between confidence and trust is evident. The community members on both the Alsek RRC and the

CATT Planning Team do not have the capacity – financial, technical knowledge, skills or time, to research and analyze the type of information required to prepare a forest management plan. They must place trust in Government to supply the information and then have a high degree of confidence that the information is both truthful and accurate. If the community members are confident the information is presented in good faith, then trust is strengthened and they will risk making the complex decisions necessary to formulate the forest management plan. “A lack of confidence may mean, without further reflection, a lack of trust, and a lack of trust means that behaviour which presupposes trust will be ruled out” (Luhmann 2000, p103).

In Haines Junction, the Alsek RRC and the Yukon Government have successfully developed a number of wildlife management plans. RRC respondents in this study generally expressed confidence that this type of positive relationship would continue in the future. On the other hand, DIAND has a legacy of broken promises and unsuccessful negotiations with the Alsek RRC. Respondents from both the Alsek RRC and the CATT Planning team expressed concern about the level of distrust that exists between the community groups and the Federal Government agency. In both cases the community members have learned from past encounters that they cannot always rely on the promises or commitments made by Government to act upon recommendations made by the community groups. These experiences have lowered the level of confidence and trust the community members place in the Government agencies.

## **Research Findings**

The two primary elements responsible for enabling community-based forest management planning in the Yukon are the resolution of Comprehensive Land Claims Agreements and the devolution of responsibility for forest planning from Federal, Yukon and First Nations Governments to community groups such as the Alsek RRC and the CATT Planning Team.

### **The role of Comprehensive Land Claims in community-base forest management planning**

The Alsek RRC receives its mandate from the UFA and CAFN Final Agreement. The roles and responsibilities of the Council, in respect to forest management, are entrenched in these legal documents. Section 17.4 of the Comprehensive Land Claims UFA have vested Yukon RRCs a responsibility to

make recommendations to the Minister and the affected First Nation with respect to Forest Resources Management on Settlement Land and Non-Settlement Land within the Yukon First Nation's Traditional Territory (DIAND 1993a, p197;1993b, p263).

Sub-section 17.4.1 states that the RRCs' responsibility extends to making recommendations about the coordination of forest management activities, the content and timing of forest resource management plans, the development of policy and legislation, forest fire suppression, the allocation, use and harvesting practices, forest tenure and proposals for forest research within the First Nations Traditional Territory. Appendix B contains the wording of Section 17.4, Renewable Resource Councils, from the CAFN Final Agreement, which is the exact rendition of the same section in the UFA.

These statements have considerable implications to forest management in the Yukon. For the first time non-governmental agencies, the community-based Renewable Resources Councils, have been granted a legal right to have an active, meaningful and on-going role in forest management on not only Federal Crown, but also Yukon Territorial and First Nations Settlement lands. The Alsek RRC created as a result of CAFN's Land Claims Agreement, provides the Champagne and Aishihik people a voice in forest resource planning and management within their Traditional Territories<sup>4</sup>. In addition, the membership structure of the RRCs also provide a mechanism for the non-First Nations members of Yukon communities to become actively involved in forest management. RRCs are made up of equal representation from both the First Nation's and non-First Nations members of the community. (See Section 16.6.3 of the UFA. DIAND 1993a.)

Even though the UFA and CAFN Final Agreement grant the Alsek RRCs considerable authority, the Land Claims documents do not provide direction concerning how these goals will be accomplished or instruction to Government concerning how the recommendations should be used. The lack of direction has resulted in the Federal, Territorial and First Nations Governments having different interpretations of the meaning of these clauses and the role of RRCs in forest management activities.

First Nations' respondents in this study see the Land Claim documents as a blueprint or foundation for a new relationship with the Federal and Territorial Governments. The UFA and

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<sup>4</sup>First Nations' Traditional Territories include land over which not only the First Nations have legal authority, but also land under the jurisdictional of the Federal and Territorial governments.

individual Final Agreements essentially create a third government in the Yukon, giving First Nations jurisdictional responsibilities over their Settlement Lands (see CAFN Self Government Agreement, DIAND 1993c) and an active role in the management of the renewable resources, including the forest resources, within their Traditional Territories. This implies that with the finalization of land claims agreements in the Yukon, the government agencies responsible for forest management should automatically involve the First Nation's governments as partners in forest planning and management initiatives. First Nations people have not see this occur. A First Nation respondent in this study expressed the frustration with the Federal Government of not actively involving CAFN people in the development of long term forest management planning.

Within the context of the UFA and the First Nation Final Agreement, I think the Government in charge should be sitting down with the First Nation to really take a look at what type of forest management they really want to employ. [First Nation's people want] to see in the long term planning (CAFN Respondent).

The CAFN First Nations view the Alsek RRCs as a community-based organization comprised of both First Nations' and non-First Nations' members whose purpose is to protect First Nations' traditional uses, facilitate long term planning for the benefit of both First Nation's and non-First Nation's members of the community, and to ensure Government respects the contents of the UFA.

The priority of the Alsek Renewable Resource Council is making sure Government recognizes their responsibilities according to the UFA, that is one of our primary ... responsibilities, as well as providing a community voice. These are the very reasons why were set up (Alsek RRC respondent).

Yukon Government appears to view Yukon RRC's as partners. YTG has worked with the RRCs, including the Alsek RRC, to develop a number of successful community-based wildlife management plans. YTG, Department of Renewable Resources is also responsible for providing financial and administration support for the Yukon RRCs. The Alsek RRC's and CATT respondents generally described the relationship with YTG as better than with DIAND, but stated there were still times when YTG officials appeared to overlook the role of the RRCs in renewable resource management issues.

[There are examples] of YTG just forgetting, I mean, you know, ... what they consider little projects that they think they can just go ahead and do... YTG just comes up with new plans without consulting the community (Alsek RRC Respondent).

Overall, however, respondents in this study felt there was a productive relationship between the Alsek RRC and YTG.

Their [the Alsek RRC and Yukon Government employees] working relationship, their ability to communicate and integrate each other's needs seems to be very, very healthy (CATT Planning Team respondent).

DIAND officials feel both the UFA and the role of the RRCs needs to be re-evaluated, that the present interpretations by the First Nations and RRC members infringes on the Government's ability to manage the forest resources.

There will have to be a reconfirmation of what the Umbrella Final Agreement means. They [the RRCs] go outside the process. The Umbrella Final Agreement says that [forest] planning should take place, but doesn't say how. The Renewable Resource Councils and First Nations see their mandate as being bigger than it is (Senior DIAND Respondent).

Concern was expressed by both Alsek RRC members and First Nation respondents that DIAND often did not comply with either the word or spirit of Land Claims Agreements concerning forest management issues. This has resulted in an escalation of conflict and distrust between the Alsek RRC and DIAND.

We're [the Alsek RRC] still having conflict ... with the federal government [DIAND] not seeing their total role in the whole scheme of things with the UFA, and stuff, and not recognizing their responsibilities (Alsek RRC Respondent).

Senior DIAND officials acknowledge the conflict but feel this is a period of transition and contend the relationship between Government and the RRCs is improving. They place the blame for the tumultuous beginning on the fact that neither the Land Claim negotiators nor Federal Government officials fully realized the extent to which comprehensive land claims would impact government programs or the management of renewable resources.

I think because the UFA and Renewable Resource Councils are so new, DIAND didn't take time to learn what they were all about. What we had to do [was understand] what we had for responsibilities. We [DIAND and the Alsek RRC] just started off fighting right off the bat. Everyone was interpreting everyone else's roles, so we had to get on a level playing field. It was really problematic. But once we did

[begin to develop an understanding], we kept using it as a model of cooperation. I think one of the biggest problems with the UFA and the committees, such as the RRC, that get established is that when government negotiates agreements ... everyone just walks off. Everyone forgets that there's a period of transition (Senior DIAND Respondent).

By their own admission, DIAND officials were not prepared for the impact of Land Claims Agreements would have on government programs or management initiatives and feel the First Nations governments and RRCs have overstepped their negotiated role. Currently the relationship between DIAND and Alsek RRC is at somewhat of an impasse. On one hand, if DIAND does not seek input from the RRC they risk being seen as not following the intent of the UFA, i.e., breaching the spirit as well as the word of the Comprehensive Land Claims process. On the other hand, if Government does engage the Alsek RRC in meaningful forest management discussions they must be prepared to implement recommendations coming from the community groups. During the period of time in which data was collected for this project, this was not evident.

The hidden cost of not actively involving the Alsek RRCs in meaningful forest management decision-making is a loss of trust and a breakdown of communications between the Alsek RRC and DIAND. By not taking the Alsek RRC's role in forest management seriously, DIAND has lost the confidence of the Alsek RRC.

### **Devolution of authority from government to community-based groups.**

The Yukon public has stated at forestry public forums, in responses to surveys and in letters to Yukon newspapers, their desire to become partners in the management of Yukon's forests. This increasing demand from Yukoners to be both fairly represented in forestry decisions and have an active role in forest management planning inspired one of the Vision Statements in the Yukon Government's 1998 Yukon Forest Strategy.

All Yukoners will have the opportunity to contribute in meaningful ways to decisions that are important. Decisions affecting the forest will consider the entire spectrum of interests in a fair and open manner (YTG 1998, p3).

Also in the Yukon Forest Strategy (1998), Yukon First Nations state that community members living closest to forested areas should be included in management decisions as well as receive maximum benefit from those decisions. The CAFN Government clearly supports this philosophy.

Local people should have a primary role in forest management in the region where they live, and local economies should receive maximum benefit from the use of their neighbouring forests (YTG 1998, p4).

Community based management goes beyond the final agreement. ... One of the objectives of the final agreement is to develop responsibility of the community for decision making and this empowers communities by bringing and getting them actively involved (CAFN Respondent).

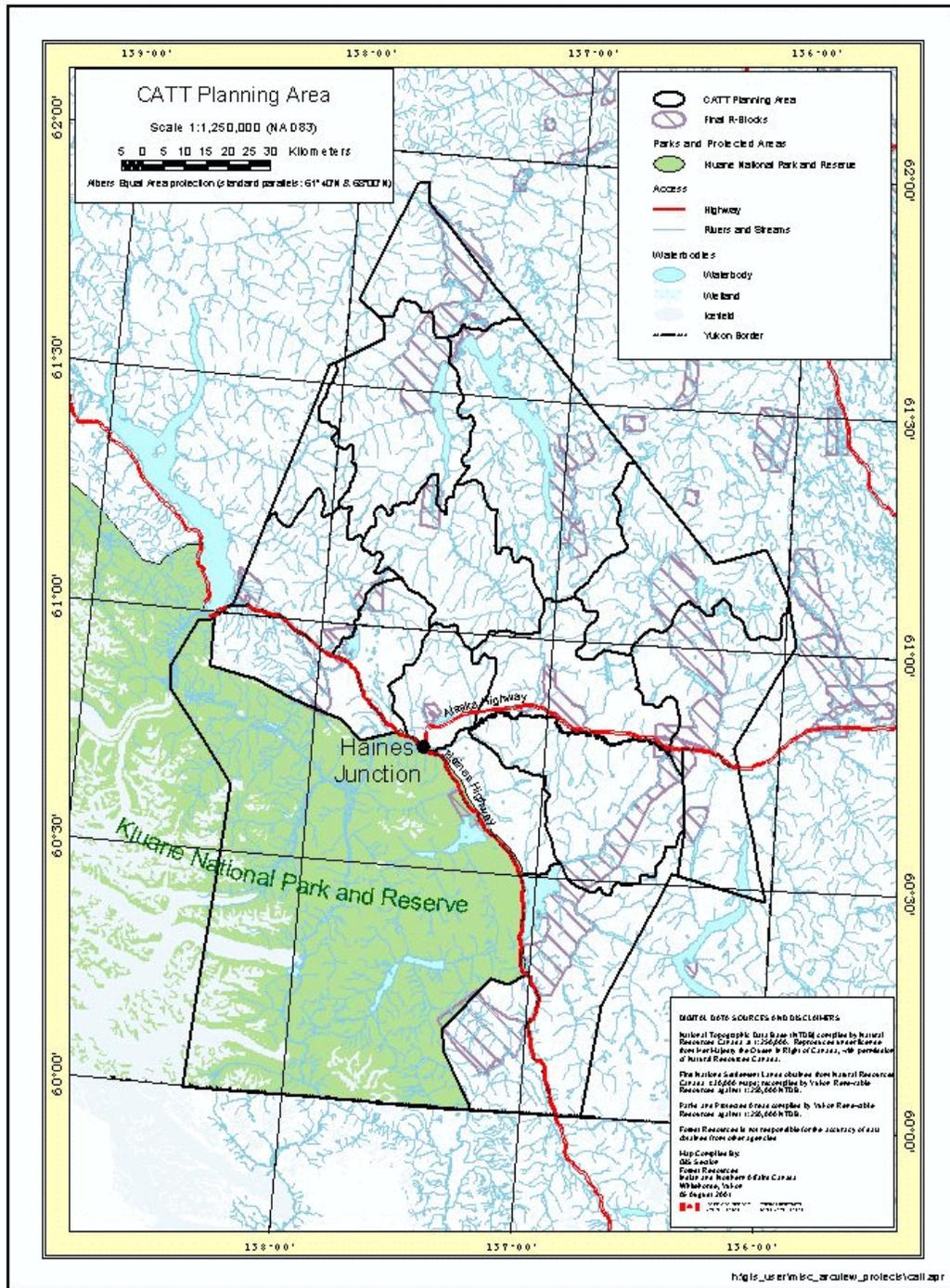
DIAND has stated that it supports this “key principle” in the Yukon Forest Strategy, and in a 1999 report on the status of forest management planning in the Yukon stated that “DIAND is committed to community-based forest management planning” (Van Randen 1999, p10). YTG, DIAND and Yukon First Nations view the RRCs as established community agencies capable of fulfilling the objective of actively involving Yukon community members in meaningful forest management planning.

The Renewable Resource Councils are specifically formed as a requirement of the Umbrella Final Agreement ... to ensure clear and balanced community representation to renewable resource initiatives and issues in the area [the First Nation’s Traditional Territory], ... so there is a clear community voice (DIAND Respondent).

In 1998, DIAND approached the Alesk RRC and requested that, because of their Land Claims mandate, the RRC assist in the coordination of forest management planning in southwest Yukon. The three Governments and the Alesk RRC signed a Letter of Understanding (LOU) creating the Champagne and Aishihik Traditional Territory Forest Management (CATT) Planning Team. The CATT Planning Team was established specifically to address DIAND’s desire to develop a landscape forest management plan in southwest Yukon. Although brief, the LOU describes the level of cooperation necessary for government and members of the CATT Planning Team to develop a forest management plan. Elements of the LOU require participants to: demonstrate a willingness to exchange and share information, provide assistance to other members, improve relationships between government and the community, respect the three government’s jurisdictional responsibilities, share the cost of the planning process, develop a plan that reflects the wishes of the community, and strive to achieve the principles of ecosystem management (Alesk RRC 1998). Appendix C contains a copy of the LOU.

The LOU between the three Governments and the Alesk RRC, in essence, devolves authority from each Government for landscape level forest management planning in CAFN’s Traditional

Territory to the CATT Planning Team. The responsibility for forest management for the majority of land within the CATT planning area rests with DIAND Forest Resources. Figure 2 shows the boundaries of the planning area (the dark outline in the centre of the page) as well as the smaller planning units. Within the CATT planning area the majority of the area, 89% (approx. 1,750,000 ha), is Federal Crown Land, either in Kluane National Park (the green shaded area in Figure 2) or controlled by DIAND (shown in white). Less than 1% (approx. 4,000 ha) falls under the jurisdiction of YTG and the remaining 10% (approx. 200,000 ha) is CAFN Settlement Lands (the lighter, purple hatched areas), over which the First Nation has legal authority. Area of CAFN Traditional Territory that overlap with neighbouring First Nations Traditional Territories have been excluded from this planning process. It is not surprising then that virtually all the conflict and frustration concerning Government's management of the forest resources and the planning process is directed at DIAND. As mentioned in the previous section, respondents in this study expressed very little concern about either CAFN's or YTG's role in the forest management planning process.



**Figure 2:** Champagne and Aishihik Traditional Territory Forest Management Planning Area.  
 Source: DIAND Forest Resources

On the surface it appears that the three Governments support the idea of forest management planning undertaken by local people, and feel that Alsek RRC is the most appropriate community agency to tackle this role. In reality, however, the CATT Planning Team's authority and ability to conduct forest management planning is tenuous. The CATT Planning Team has no legal status and it may be disbanded at any time by either Government or the Alsek RRC.

Much of the benefit of a letter of understanding is not contained within the text of the agreement but more in the conversation and discussion that occurs when you're developing it [the letter of understanding]. Because all those things really are gratuitous promises [of the agreement that] can be breached by any party at any time, there are no legal consequences. But, a relationship is established when you start talking about common visions and common goals and common objectives (CAFN Respondent).

The CATT Planning Team is totally dependent on Government for financial support. The LOU and the Terms of Reference state costs will be shared by the three Governments and the Alsek RRC. YTG and CAFN, however, only provide in-kind contributions, such as the salaries and travel costs for their employees, and the Alsek RRC is not in a financial position to provide support for such an ambitious and lengthy process. As a result, monetary support for the planning process comes solely from DIAND Forest Resources. The transfer of funds from DIAND to the RRC has been haphazard and dependant on specific requests from the Alsek RRC and the availability funds within DIAND Forest Resources' existing budget. DIAND Forest Resources has not had its budget increased to keep pace with the new community planning initiatives. Therefore, before funds are transferred to the Alsek RRC, funding for other forestry programs must be reduced. Even after funds are promised, months may transpire between when the initial request is made and funds are received by the Alsek RRC. This places a considerable financial burden on the RRC.

One of the reasons for the Government representation on CATT Planning Team is to ensure Government objectives and policies are represented. The partnership between Government and community members should ensure that the final forest management plan is acceptable to both Government as well as the community.

The people that the Governments are sending to the [CATT] planning team have credibility in our government and they are exercising the delegate jurisdiction from our governments so if the planning team recommendations are not accepted then you better fire the staff that you sent because they weren't representing your interests

(CAFN Government Respondent).

It is important that senior Government managers not only have confidence in their representatives, but also that the Alsek RRC and CATT Planning Team members trust the information senior managers bring to the planning discussions. The community members lack the capacity to provide and analyze the information necessary to develop a forest management plan for two million hectares of ecologically and geographically diverse land. The Terms of Reference for the CATT Planning Team places the majority of responsibility for data with Government.

The Federal and Territorial Governments will provide technical information, conduct analysis and develop map products based on existing available information (Alsek RRC 2000, p6).

DIAND Forest Resources provides forest inventory, ecological, policy, silviculture, forest health data as well as the forest policy and procedures for the issuance of timber permits on the vast majority of the planning area. YTG brings wildlife management and recreation information and economic development concerns and priorities of their Government to the Planning Team. CAFN is responsible for making information about the First Nations traditional knowledge known to the committee members. The First Nation also represents the interests of Dakwakada Forest Products, the CAFN owned and operated sawmill. In addition, the Terms of Reference also places responsibility on all members “to provide information and resources that will assist in planning discussions” (Alsek RRC 2000, p6).

This is not to say that the community members lack the capacity to understand the information presented at planning team meetings. In fact, since many members of the CATT Planning Team have renewable resource educational backgrounds they are able to critically analyze the information supplied by the Government agencies. They are limited however in their capacity to commit either the time or finances to gather the information themselves. They have not expressed a desire to attempt this herculean feat. The CATT Planning Team members feel that it is the Governments responsibility to provide the technical information and professional expertise. As one of the CATT members so eloquently stated:

Would you go ask a milkman how to build your house? You would ask the janitor how to fix your car? Because in many cases you're going to ask the guy on the street on how we should log this area. I'm saying as forestry people, educated people in the field, they should be able to say this is the best method to log this. This is the best returns that you will get on that timber, if you use this saw and if you harvest in this manner. This is the best for the environment, the land and ... the forestry people

should tell me that (CATT Planning Team member).

The feeling among some in the Federal forestry agency is that the community representatives on the CATT Planning Team or Alsek RRC do not have a sufficient understanding about forest management issues to make a meaningful contribution and they feel justified in accepting only the recommendations and comments that conform with their current plans. Many DIAND managers reported that the community members' role should be kept to a minimum and their recommendations should have little or no bearing on the final management plans.

The Planning team lacks the basic understanding of forest management and the workings of a forest (Senior DIAND Respondent)

If the confidence and trust in the information and government representatives erodes because of actions taken by the central Government agencies, the whole planning process is jeopardized. This happened in December 2000.

An obvious area of contention is the how, and when, community recommendations should be incorporated in DIAND Forest Resources' short-term forest management plans. DIAND Forest Resource's policy is to first release draft reports about potential harvest areas to other government agencies and to the public for consultation. The Department then incorporates what it feels are relevant comments and finalizes the report. In December 2000, DIAND Forest Resources proposed a plan to harvest forest stands that had been attacked by the spruce bark beetle near Haines Junction. The Alsek RRC and CATT Planning Team were initially encouraged by these plans seeing them as an ideal interim measure to satisfy the local forest industry until the long-term forest management plan was finalized. The CATT Planning Team, in order to gather information for both their planning process and to provide DIAND with data about community values, decided to hold a public meeting. The understanding of the community members was that the information gathered at the meeting would be incorporated by DIAND Forest Resources in its draft report on the harvest areas. The draft report, with the community's input would then be released by DIAND for regular consultation. Despite the CATT Planning Team initiatives DIAND Forest Resources still planned to proceed as per its policy, releasing the report at the public meeting.

On the surface, the order of events may appear to be a minor issue. However, the community members saw this a major break in the fragile trust that had developed between the Alsek RRC and CATT Planning, and DIAND Forest Resources. Not only was DIAND Forest Resources unwilling to change its internal policy and wait to incorporate input from the Alsek RRC and the CATT

Planning Team but, the report was worded in such a way as to give the impression that the community groups were in full support of the reports' contents. As a compromise, DIAND Forest Resources gave the CATT Planning Team two days to summarize the results of the public meeting and were told their comments would be added as an appendix. The joint chair of the Alsek RRC and CATT Planning Team sent an email to DIAND expressing the consternation of the community members of both the Alsek RRC and the CATT Planning Team.

They [the Alsek RRC and CATT Planning Team members] feel that DIAND Forest Resources is circumventing the community, the Alsek Renewable Resource Council and the [CATT] Planning Team ... by introducing the ... Plan as is. [The report] indicates that it is a joint effort and has received the support of the Planning Team and the Council. This is not true. Adding a "feel good" statement ...at the end of the ... plan .. does nothing more than pay 'lip service' to the community's input and [forest management] planning process. (Alsek RRC, December 2000)

By amending Forest Resources internal policy to accommodate the recommendation information gathered by the CATT Planning Team in a meaningful and transparent manner, the relationship between DIAND and the CATT Planning Team would have been strengthened rather than damaged. If the report had been released with the communities input, the community members would have viewed this as validation of the community-based planning process.

It would be incorrect to say that the breakdown in trust between the community groups and DIAND Forest Resources was caused solely by DIAND's response to the CATT Planning Team's attempt to contribute recommendations and comments to the short-term harvesting plans, but it is certainly one of the major contributing factors.

Because of the current situation between the Alsek RRC and DIAND Forest Resources, there is a lot of distrust. If you do not have trust you have a break down of the [forest management] planning process. It takes a long time to rebuild the trust (DIAND Respondent).

Following the Federal Government's actions the Alsek RRC and the CATT Planning Team withdrew their support of DIAND's proposed interim harvest plans. It took over 6 months for DIAND and the Alsek RRC to reach agreement on how to proceed with either the interim or long term planning processes. The CATT Planning Team have met only twice between December 2000 and August 2001, the Chair of the CATT Planning Team and Alsek RRC has stepped down, the

Yukon Government representative has moved to a new position, the DIAND representative has resigned and not been replaced, and no harvesting has taken place in the Haines Junction area. The changing of the key players in this planning process has also clearly jeopardized the organizational implementation of community-based management in southwest Yukon.

Even though DIAND Forest Resources initiated the community-based planning team and have publicly stated they support community members' input as well as the RRCs expanded role in forest management planning, there are still members of senior management who feel the decisions and recommendations originating from the community-based organizations should not impact their own decision-making ability. The RA observed that Forest Resource's managers felt the Alsek RRC and CATT Planning Team infringed on the roles and responsibilities of the Federal forestry agency. Managers stated they felt the Alsek RRC's and CATT Planning Team's role was to comment on plans prepared by the Department, not to have an active role in the development of forest management plans.

The members of the CATT Planning Team and Alsek RRC are receiving mixed messages from DIAND. On one hand community members are given the impression through statements and actions that Government, including DIAND, supports the community's desire to have an active and meaningful role in forest management planning, while at the same time the community members of the Alsek RRC and CATT Planning Team observe that DIAND Forest Resources managers do not incorporate or implement their recommendations. The empty commitment of actively involving the community in the development of forest management planning and the contradictory behaviour of DIAND staff have caused a strain, not only between the community members and the Federal Government, but within DIAND Forest Resources as well.

If, as Ostrom (1993), Fisher (1999) and Inglis (1999) suggest, the criteria for real devolution is a solid trusting relationship between government and community organization and a demonstration on the part of Government that community decisions will be accepted, then the transfer of authority to the CATT Planning Team has not occurred. The LOU does not compel either government or the Alsek RRC to accept the recommendations of this group, and so far there has been no indication that Government will change internal policy to accommodate their decisions. It would appear in fact that the opposite is true. Government is not compelled to accept the recommendations of the community groups and only appear willing to incorporate the community's recommendations when they coincide with existing plans.

## MANAGEMENT APPLICATIONS

This study charts the progress of community-based forest management planning in the Yukon Territory. Examined are the role of Alsek RRC's, a community-based organization formed as the result of comprehensive land claims agreements, and the CATT forest management planning team, formed as the result of DIAND Forest Resources' request for community involvement in forest management planning. The processes that empower each of these community groups are explored, as well as the factors that affect their decision-making ability and the potential influence the community-based groups may have on future forest management and forest policy decisions. The challenges facing these two community groups are numerous and at time disconcerting for its members.

Even though CAFN Comprehensive Land Claims were finalized in 1993 and the Alsek RRC formed in 1995, DIAND senior managers still consider this as a period of transition. This study shows that DIAND is still uncertain about what role Yukon RRCs have in forest management or how to incorporate decisions made by the community-based group into current forest management planning, practices, or policy. The request in 1998 for the Alsek RRC to coordinate a community-based forest management planning team was one of the attempts DIAND Forest Resources made to meet both its Land Claims obligations and to begin large-scale planning in the Yukon. So far, unfortunately, the CATT Planning Team has failed to meet either of DIAND's objectives. DIAND, by not taking the role of the community-based organizations seriously, has neither fulfilled its Land Claims obligations nor obtained a forest management plan for CAFN's Traditional Territory. The investigators involved in this project feel one of the leading reasons for this failure is the lack of trust between community groups and DIAND.

Fukuyama (1996) stated that trust is not only difficult to destroy but that individuals have an inherent desire to trust. This study has shown, however, that trust is easily damaged and once damaged, takes a considerable amount of time to rebuild. Evidence of a breakdown in a trusting relationship between Government and the community groups are numerous: fewer planning team and community meetings, departure of community members from both the Alsek RRC and CATT Planning Team, resignation or reassignment of Government staff members, and lengthy delays in finalizing the Federal Government harvesting plans.

In order for community-based groups, such as the Alsek RRC and the CATT Planning Team, to successfully become involved in forest management planning, government must institute policy

designed to strengthen and maintain a sense of trust between community members and Government. This policy must create an atmosphere in which both parties feel they have an opportunity to actively participate in decision-making (Misztal 1996; Oldfield 1990). Community-based organizations must have sufficient resources, such as knowledge, skills, time and finances to facilitate informed decision-making. There must be a devolution of authority for planning from Government to the community groups. And there must be motivation for community members to become active participants and to stay involved in the planning process.

The investigators believe the responsibility for providing sufficient resources for the community-based planning processes should rest with the organization that stands to benefit the most from the final product, and has the greatest capacity to resource such a plan. In this case that is clearly DIAND. The Alsek RRC is not in a position to fund such a lengthy and complicated process. The Yukon Government controls less than 1% of the forested land base, and the CAFN Government has limited staff and finances to contribute towards forest management planning. On the other hand, DIAND possesses and generates the bulk of the technical data about the forest environment, has jurisdictional responsibility over the majority of the forested land base, has the largest budget and employs the greatest number of trained forest science professionals, and ultimately will benefit the greatest from a forest management plan for a large portion of southwest Yukon.

This study illustrates that community members have confidence in the forest data DIAND has provided. The Department has failed, however, to provide other resources the community groups require. Knowledge of the forest environment is not the only resource required to create this type of plan and the community members on the CATT Planning Team lack the capacity to create a plan of this magnitude without further assistance from their Government partners. The CATT Planning Team also requires secure and consistent financial assistance as well as sufficient time to obtain community input and formulate their recommendations. While DIAND is not in a position to guarantee this funding – they are in a position to assist by continuing to supply technical data and professionals to assist in the planning processes. The investigators found that the CATT Planning Team has a great advantage over many other community-based resource planning organizations because many of its members, through employment and education, have renewable resource backgrounds that allow them to understand the technical information presented by Government forest scientists.

The investigators assume that in order to ensure that sufficient resources are available for community based forest management planning, each of the signatories to the LOU creating the CATT

Planning Team must accept more responsibility. The investigators recommend that DIAND institute a policy that establishes a separate line of funding, outside DIAND Forest Resources' normal budget, for community-based forest management planning. These funds should be made available to the community groups at the beginning of each fiscal year. The RRCs coordinating the forest management plans should not only be accountable for the allocated funds, but should also provide a work plan, a yearly budget and at the end of each fiscal period, and an account of how the funds were spent. YTG, because it already has an administrative support body to assist Yukon's RRCs, should extend this assistance to the Planning Teams that are coordinated by RRCs. The three Governments should continue to supply both the technical data and analysis of information required for the preparation of the forest management plans. The other forest stakeholders, such as local forest industry and hamlet representatives, must be encouraged to voice their concerns as well as add their knowledge to the planning process. First Nations governments should ensure that not only traditional knowledge and forest use be incorporated into the final plan, but that more First Nation persons participate in the process. The CATT Planning Team must resume meeting on a regular basis and keep community members from Haines Junction and surrounding hamlets informed of the content of the plan as it progresses.

Misztal's (1996) and Oldfield's (1990) second criteria for strengthening and maintaining a trusting relationships is the devolution of authority to the community organization. In theory each of the three Governments have devolved a portion of their authority for forest management planning to the Alsek RRC. This transfer of authority has in turn facilitated the formation of the CATT Planning Team. In reality, however, this appears to be an insincere commitment on the part of DIAND.

In order for meaningful devolution to take place, Government must have a clear vision of how the decisions made by the community-based groups will be implemented. This study has shown that DIAND lacks this vision. The investigators discerned there to be three reasons for the ambivalence on the part of the Federal Government. First, DIAND Forest Resources does not have a coordinated approach for the overall planning of Yukon's forest resources. The Yukon does not have long-term, large-scale forest management plans for any area of the Territory. The plan that the CATT Planning Team is struggling to create is not only the first of its kind in the Yukon, it is Yukon's first landscape-level forest management plan. Current planning is usually crisis driven and focuses primarily on identifying short-term wood supplies for the local forest industry. The investigators opined that if DIAND Forest Resources does not look beyond the limited scope of the Territorial Lands Act and begin to coordinate the objectives of its other planning activities, i.e., short-term wood supply and new tenure guidelines with community-based recommendations, it will continue to flounder.

Second, this study illustrates that the three Governments differ on how the final Champagne and Aishihik Traditional Territory Forest Management Plan will gain approval from their respective elected officials. Both YTG and CAFN senior government respondents stated that they have procedures in place to approve the final plan and expect few complications. DIAND, on the other hand, does not have policy or guidelines in place for the formal acceptance of the forest management plan. DIAND senior management respondents said they had not yet determined how, or even if, the recommendations in the CATT Plan could be implemented.

The momentum is there now as the [forest management] plan is being developed. But, it will take time for Government to review the plan. By that time the plan may be obsolete. Timing is the issue. ... And, there may be a problem with Governments capacity to react because the [CATT forest management] plan is the first community-based forest management plan. (DIAND Senior Management Respondent)

The members of the CATT Planning Team have a clear vision of how Government should react to their final plan.

The final [forest management] plan will be signed off by the representatives of the core group [DIAND, YTG, CAFN and the Alsek RRC]. This means that both the community and the Governments involved agree with [the contents of the] Plan. Hopefully, the Government people [on the CATT Planning Team] are keeping their bosses up-to-date with what is proposed and nothing is put in the plan that goes against policy. The plan is a blueprint for how the forests will be managed in the Traditional Territories of CAFN (CATT Planning Team Respondent).

If DIAND is serious about incorporating the recommendations of CATT Planning Team the Department must prepare guidelines that will determine how the plan will be adopted as well as minimizing the length of time between the plan's completion and its implementation.

Third, this study illustrates a belief among some of DIAND Forest Resources staff that the community members on the CATT Planning Team do not have sufficient knowledge nor understanding of the forest environment, or the complexity of planning issues to formulate a forest management plan. These same staff members also acknowledge that decisions made by the Alsek RRC and CATT Planning team infringe on the government forester's rights and ability to manage Yukon forests. It is the investigators' opinion that these views lead to a reluctance on the part of DIAND Forest Resources to incorporate the initial recommendations of the CATT Planning Team in the December 2000 interim harvesting plans. DIAND's autocratic move has led to the stagnation

of the planning process and heightened the conflict between the community members on the Alsek RRC and CATT Planning Team and DIAND. This is very similar to the circumstances Inglis (1999) described when the Forest Commission in Scotland first devolved forest management authority to community organizations. The state foresters simply did not trust the community members to make the right decisions and ignored their recommendations.

To regain the trust that has been lost between the Alsek RRC and CATT Planning Team and DIAND the devolution of authority for forest management planning must be “real”, which means that Government must demonstrate a willingness to implement the decisions made by the community-based groups (Fisher 1999). DIAND managers must be seen to take the recommendations of the community groups seriously. In order to accomplish this, the investigators recommend that senior government managers meet with representatives of the Alsek RRC to both clarify the approval process for the final plan and to state how the plan will be implemented within the jurisdiction of each government. Guidelines, which include time lines, should be prepared that clearly show what each government’s approval process entails. Each Government must formulate policy that demonstrates how the recommendations of the community groups will be implemented. These guidelines and policies should be included as an appendix in the final forest management plan. Government managers should be accountable, not only to the Alsek RRC, CATT Planning Team, and Haines Junction community members, but also to the Yukon public for their commitment to implement community-based forest management planning. DIAND should establish a new section within Forest Resources whose job it will be to coordinate all the federal government’s forest planning initiatives. This section would include the person whose primary responsibility is to liaise with the community groups developing forest management plans. This position should be filled as soon as possible as it has been over five months (current date: 14 August 2001) since DIAND has had a designated representative on the CATT Planning Team. The qualifications of this person should include a familiarity with community-based initiatives and a knowledge of the difficulties facing community groups who wish to have a meaningful role in forest management. DIAND Forest Resources should also utilize the DIAND Field Operations<sup>5</sup> staff who live and work in the communities where planning is taking place.

Government foresters must move beyond their belief that community members do not have the capability of making the right decisions about forest management and should not have a significant role in how Yukon’s forests are managed. These foresters must come to realize that community

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<sup>5</sup>Field Operations is another Branch within DIAND. There is not direct reporting authority between Forest Resources and Field Operations.

members working with their government partners will make informed decisions. ... decisions that benefit both the community and the forests. Evidence presented by Fukuyama (1996) and Luhmann (1979 and 2000) show that members of high-trust societies were inclined to make decisions that benefit the community, not the individuals. This may be one of the most difficult ideas for some foresters to accept, schooled in the old paradigm of sustained yield timber management rather than ecosystem or sustainable forest management.

Finally, this study highlights an urgent need for new forest management legislation and policy in the Yukon. Current legislation is forty years old and only provides a mandate for the Federal Government to issue timber permits, collect timber dues and fight forest fires. The existing regulations, although recently updated, still fall within these narrow parameters. DIAND has delayed updating the Territorial Lands Act because of the impending transfer of forest management responsibilities to the Yukon Government. The investigators strongly recommend that the Federal, Territorial and First Nations Governments join forces with the Renewable Resources Councils to begin work on a new Yukon Forest Act.

Misztal (1996) and Oldfield's final criteria for creating policy to strengthen trust is to ensure there is motivation for community members to become and remain active participants in endeavours such those assigned to the CATT Planning Team. This study has shown there are many of the reasons why community members may choose to not become involved in this type of planning process – the primary reason being that community members have not seen evidence that their recommendations have been implemented by Government. The investigators are of the opinion that if the recommendations made in this report are instituted, and if community members are convinced that their recommendations affect forest management activities, a relationship built on the foundation of trust will slowly form. Such trust will commit community members to remain actively involved in community-based forest management.

## **CONCLUSION**

The objects of this project were twofold: to examine the organizational challenges facing the Alsek RRC and CATT Planning Team when forest management planning authority is devolved from Government to the community level, and to examine the factors affecting the decision making ability of the community groups.

The experiences of the Alsek RRC and the CATT Planning Team illustrates that if community-based forest management planning is to succeed in the Yukon a number of conditions are required. The broad mandate of the RRCs must be acknowledged by the Federal and Territorial governments. Government must look beyond using the RRCs and planning teams as agencies to provide community input, and recognize them as legitimate decision-makers. Government foresters must be trained to learn how to develop and earn trust between themselves and community-based groups, such as the Alsek RRC and CATT Planning team. Evidence that community-based groups can and will make informed decisions that benefit both the community and the forests needs to be part of the training process for all persons responsible for implementing community-based management. Government policy must accommodate the recommendations of the RRCs and forest management planning teams working under their direction. Architects of Government policy should strive to strengthen and maintain a trusting relationship between community and government partners. This policy must include elements that will provide sufficient resources for the community groups, devolve authority for planning and motivate individuals to become, and remain, actively involved in the process.

The investigators are confident that the findings of project will serve to inform other boreal forest communities about the considerations and options associated with community-based decision-making as the responsibility of forest management is transferred from government to a community level. This project will also contribute to academic literature about community-based forest management in the Yukon and Canada.

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# Appendix A

1. Interview Guides
2. Consent Form
3. Information Sheet

## **Interview Guide for Renewable Resource Council Members**

### **General**

1. Would you tell me about your involvement with the RRC?
2. Tell me about the Alsek Renewable Resource Council (ARRC) ?
  - When was it formed?
  - How are members chosen?
  - How long do they sit?
  - How often does the council meet?
  - Are meetings open to the public?
3. How well does the ARRC represent the community?
4. How did you become involved with the ARRC?
5. Are you involved in any other organizations or groups?

### **Delegation of responsibility for forest planning**

6. Can you describe the nature of the relationship between ARRC's and:
  - the federal government?
  - the Yukon government?
  - Champagne Aishihik First Nation government?
  - The Haines Junction community?
7. How have these relationships changed over the last year?
8. How has the nature of these relationships affected the forest management planning process?
9. Would you describe the ARRC's involvement in the forest management planning process?
  - How long has the planning process been going on?
  - How often are there planning meetings?
  - Are there people, besides the ARRC members, involved?
  - How were these people chosen?
  - Why were they chosen?
  - Does the public attend meetings?
10. Can you describe some of the positive aspects of the forest planning process?
  - What have been some of the negative aspects?
11. How do you think forestry matters in the Haines Junction area should be handled until there is a forest management plan in place?
  - How long do you think it will be until there is a plan?

### **Implications of co-management decisions (in light of Comp. Land Claims)**

12. In respect to forest management in the Haines Junction area, what do you think the role of government should be in the future?
  - Federal, Territorial, Champagne Aishihik First Nation.
13. Do you think the forest management plan will impact the economy of Haines Junction? How?
14. How do you see forest management planning impacting the ecosystem in the Haines Junction area?
15. In your opinion what are the best type of forest operations for the Haines Junction area now?
16. Who are the main users of the forests around Haines Junction now? Who do you think the main users of the forests will be in the future?

### **Perceived needs and priorities or the RRC**

17. What are the current priorities of the ARRC?
  - Have the priorities changed during the past year?
18. Does the RRC have enough resources (human, financial, time) to meet its obligations?
19. Are you familiar with any other planning process in which the ARRC has been involved? Would you describe them? (eg. Wildlife Management planning, Spruce Bark Beetle plan)
20. How does the ARRC and forest planning committee reach decisions?
  - How are conflicts resolved?
  - If consensus is required, what happens if consensus is not reached?
21. Do you think this type of process could be used elsewhere in the Yukon? Outside Yukon?
22. Do you think this type of planning process would be taking place in the Haines Junction area if Champagne Aishihik's Land Claims had not been finalized?

### **Follow-up, summation, clarification (more questions may emerge from initial interview data analysis)**

23. How does the ARRC (and the planning committee) keep the community informed about the progress of forest planning?
24. Would you describe the forests around Haines Junction now? What do you think the forests will look like in 25 years?

## **Interview Guide for Planning Team Members**

### **General**

1. Could you tell me how you became involved with the forest management planning team?
  - How long has the planning process being going on?
  - How often are there planning meetings?
2. How were you chosen? How were other members chosen
3. Do you represent a community organization on the planning team?
4. How well do you think the planning team represents the community of Haines Junction?
5. Would you describe the ARRC's involvement in the forest management planning process?  
What is the ARRC's relationship with the planning team?
6. Tell me about the Aisek Renewable Resource Council?
  - When was it formed?
  - How are members chosen?
  - How long do they sit?
  - How often does the council meet?
  - Are meetings open to the public?
7. How well does the ARRC represents the community?

### **Delegation of responsibility for forest planning**

8. Can you describe the nature of the relationship between the planning team and:
  - the federal government?
  - the Yukon government?
  - Champagne Aishihik First Nation government?
  - The Haines Junction community?
9. How has the nature of these relationships affected the forest management planning process?
10. Can you describe some of the positive aspects of the forest planning process?
  - Negative aspects?
11. How do you think forestry matters in the Haines Junction area should be handled until there is a forest management plan in place?
  - How long do you think it will be until there is a plan?

### **Implications of co-management decisions (in light of Comp. Land Claims)**

12. Do you think the forest management plan will impact the economy of Haines Junction?  
How?
13. How do you see forest management planning impacting the ecosystem in the Haines Junction area?
14. In your opinion what are the best type of forestry operations for the Haines Junction area?

15. Who are the main users of the forests around Haines Junction now? Who do you think the main users of the forests will be in the future?

**Perceived needs and priorities or the RRC**

16. What are the current priorities of the ARRC? Of the planning team?
17. Does the planning team have enough resources (human, financial, time) to meet its obligations?
18. How does the forest planning committee reach decisions?
19. How are conflicts resolved? Has this method worked?
  - Who has the final say?
  - If consensus is required, what happens if consensus is not reached?
20. Do you think this type of process could be used elsewhere in the Yukon?

Follow-up, summation, clarification (more questions may emerge from initial interview data analysis)

21. How does the ARRC (and the planning committee) keep the community informed about the progress of forest planning?
22. Would you describe the forests around Haines Junction now? What do you think the forests will look like in 25 years?

## **Interview Guide for Government Employees (Territorial, Federal, First Nations)**

### **General**

1. Would you describe what your role has been (or is) in relations to forest management planning?
  - How long have you been involved with the planning process?
  - Do you have any previous experience in forest management planning?
2. Are you involved with the forest management planning process in Haines Junction?
  - How?
  - In any other locations?
3. Have you been involved in any other community-based planning initiatives?
  - In the Yukon or elsewhere.
4. Can you tell me about the Alsek Renewable Resource Council (ARRC) ?
  - How and when was it formed?
  - How are members chosen?
  - Are meetings open to the public?
5. How well do you think the ARRC represents the community?
  - The Planning Team?

### **Delegation of responsibility for forest planning**

6. Would you describe the nature of the relationship between RRCs and
  - the federal government?
  - the Yukon government?
  - Champagne Aishihik First Nation government?
  - The Haines Junction community?
7. How have these relationships changed over the last year?
8. How has the nature of these relationships affected the forest management planning Process?
9. Would you describe the ARRC's involvement in the forest management planning process?
10. How long has the planning process been going on?
  - How often does the planning team meet?
  - Are there people, besides the ARRC members, involved in the planning process?
  - How (or why) were these people chosen?
11. In your opinion what are some of the positive aspects of the community based (forest) planning process?
  - negative aspects?
12. How do you think forestry matters should be handled prior to a forest management plan?
  - How long do you think it will be until there is a forest management plan?

### **Implications of co-management decisions (in light of Comp. Land Claims)**

13. In respect to forest management in the Haines Junction area, what do you think the role of government should be in the future?
  - Federal, Territorial, Champagne Aishihik First Nation.
14. How do you see forest management planning impacting the economy of Haines Junction?
15. How do you see community based forest management planning impacting the ecosystem?
16. In your opinion, what type of forestry operations would be best suited for the area around Haines Junction? Do you think this will change in the future?
17. Who are the main users of the forests around Haines Junction now?

### **Perceived needs and priorities or the RRC**

18. What do you think are the current priorities of the ARRC?
  - Have these priorities changed during the past year?
19. Do you think RRCs have sufficient resources (human, financial, time) to meet its obligations?
  - The planning team?
20. Are you familiar with any other planning process in which the ARRC has been involved? Can you describe them? (e.g. Wildlife Management planning, Spruce Bark Beetle plan)
21. How does the ARRC and forest planning committee reach decisions?
  - How are conflicts resolved?
  - If consensus is required, what happens if consensus is not reached?
22. Do you think this type of forest management planning process could be used elsewhere in the Yukon?
23. Do you think this type of planning process would be taking place in the Haines Junction area if Champagne Aishihik's Land Claims had not been finalized?

### **Follow-up, summation, clarification (more questions may emerge from initial interview data analysis)**

24. How does the ARRC (and the planning committee) keep the community informed about the progress of forest planning?
25. How do you think the forests around Haines Junction will look 25 years from now?

# Appendix B

1. Section 17 and 18 of the Territorial  
Lands Act
2. Section 17.4 of the and Champagne and Aishihik First Nation  
Final Agreement and Umbrella Final Agreement:  
Renewable Resource Councils

# **Territorial Lands Act**

Chapter T-7: Sections 17 and 18

An Act respecting Crown lands in the Yukon Territory, the Northwest Territories and Nunavat.

## **TIMBER**

R.S., c. T-6, s.12.

### Cutting timber

17. No person shall cut timber on territorial land unless that person is the holder of a permit.

R.S., c. T-6, s.13.

18.(1) The Governor in Council may make regulations.

- a. respecting the issue of permits to cut timber and prescribing the terms and conditions thereof, including the payment of ground rent, and exempting any person or class of persons from the provisions of section 17;
- b. providing for the suspension or cancellation of permits for contravention of any of the terms or conditions thereof or for contravention of any provision of this Act or the regulations;
- c. prescribing fees for the issue of permits and prescribing the dues to be paid in respect of timber cut pursuant to a permit;
- d. providing for the making of returns by holders of permits;
- e. providing for the recovery of dues, including the taking of security therefor, and the seizure, forfeiture and sale of timber unlawfully cut on territorial lands.

### Definition of “dues”

18.(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), “dues” means all ground rents, royalties, duties, fees, rates, charges or other moneys payable by any person to the Crown under and by virtue of a lease, licence or permit.

# Champagne and Aishihik First Nations Final Agreement<sup>6</sup>

between

THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA,  
THE CHAMPAGNE AND AISHIHIK FIRST NATION  
and  
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE YUKON

## **CHAPTER 17 - FOREST RESOURCES**

### Section 17.4.0 **Renewable Resource Councils**

17.4.1 A Renewable Resource Council may make recommendations to the Minister and the affected Yukon First Nation with respect to Forest Resources Management on Settlement Land and Non-Settlement Land within that Yukon First Nation's Traditional Territory, including:

- 17.4.1.1 the coordination of Forest Resources Management throughout the Yukon and in the relevant Traditional Territory;
- 17.4.1.2 the need for, and the content and timing of Forest Resources inventories and management plans;
- 17.4.1.3 the policies, programs and Legislation which affect Forest Resources;
- 17.4.1.4 proposals for Forest Resource research;
- 17.4.1.5 forest fire suppression plans, including the human, technical and financial resources required, the definition and establishment of priority zones for fire fighting and procedures for the monitoring, periodic review and amendment of the plans;
- 17.4.1.6 the allocation and use of Forest Resources for commercial purposes, including the terms and conditions of tenure, standards of operation, rates of harvest and means of access to Forest Resources;
- 17.4.1.7 employment opportunities and training requirements in Forest Resources Management and commercial Forest Resources harvesting;
- 17.4.1.8 measures for the control of forest pests and diseases; and
- 17.4.1.9 other matters relating to the protection and management for Forest Resources.

17.4.2 Upon request by a Renewable Resource Council, the Minister and a Yukon First Nation may make available to the Council information in their possession with respect to the following:

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<sup>6</sup>The wording of Section 17.4 in the CAFN Final Agreement is the same wording as the wording of Section 17.4 in the Umbrella Final Agreement.

- 17.4.2.1 Forest Resources inventories;
  - 17.4.2.2 Forest Resources Management plans;
  - 17.4.2.3 proposals for Forest Resources research; or
  - 17.4.2.4 information on policies and programs related to Forest Resources.
- 17.4.3 Renewable Resources Councils shall cooperate with each other and with Yukon First Nations in matters of common concern and shall explore means of coordinating their activities.
- 17.4.4 Yukon First Nations shall cooperate with each other and with Renewable Resource Councils in matters of common concern and shall explore means of coordinating their activities.
- 17.4.5 A Renewable Resource Council may submit a budget for costs of carrying out its responsibilities under this chapter as part of the budget submitted under 16.6.7.

(DIAND 1993a, p263-264)

# Appendix C

1. Letter of Understanding creating the Champagne - Aishihik Traditional Territory Forest Management Planning Team

**LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING  
ON  
DEVELOPMENT OF  
FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANS ON  
CHAMPAGNE and AISHIHIK FIRST NATION TRADITIONAL TERRITORY**

We, the undersigned, agree to work together on the development of forest management plans for the Champagne and Aishihik First Nation Traditional Territory. The following are the guiding principles to be considered:

1. Willingness to exchange and/or share forest resource information;
2. Willingness to help each other in terms of technical expertise;
3. Willingness to be open and transparent to the community;
4. To strive to improve the relationship among all parties and those of the community;
5. To cover our respective costs and to share costs where appropriate and agreed;
6. To revisit these principles to reflect the wishes of all parties and community at large;
7. To coordinate the development, adoption and implementation of Regional Forest Management Plans on Champagne and Aishihik First Nations Traditional Territory;
8. To be respectful on the jurisdictions of each party;
9. To strive towards four fundamental principles underlying ecosystem-based forest management in the development of these plans:
  - S** public involvement,
  - S** an ecological approach,
  - S** partnerships, and
  - S** management based on sound science and traditional knowledge.
10. This letter of understanding may be terminated upon three months notice of any party.

Originally signed by: Lawrence Joe, Champagne and Aishihik First Nation  
Mike Crawshay, Alsek Renewable Resource Council  
Jim Connell, Government of Yukon  
Jeff Monty, Department of Indian Affairs & Northern Development