



Healthy Land, Healthy People

Government of Northwest Territories
Priorities for Advancement of Conservation Network Planning

2016-2021



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Wall Tent at Tathlina Lake, Ka'a'gee Tu Candidate Area Photo: Pat Kane

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Cover Photo: Tessa Macintosh



Glossary of Terms

Karst features, Mackenzie Mountains

Biodiversity

Biological diversity (commonly abbreviated to biodiversity) means the full variety of life in a given region, including the biological and genetic diversity of plants and animals.

Conservation areas

Conservation areas protect various natural and cultural values, and contribute to the conservation network by providing complementary, but less restrictive protection than protected areas.

Conservation network

A conservation network includes protected areas and conservation areas at various scales that collectively contribute more effectively to maintaining the integrity of ecosystems and biodiversity, and contributing to ecological, economic and social stability than individual sites could alone.

Conservation network planning

Conservation network planning, or conservation planning, includes the establishment and management of a conservation network, and also involves the consideration of ecosystem processes and connectivity. In the Northwest Territories (NWT), unlike in other jurisdictions where conservation network planning is concerned with restoring connections and repairing damaged ecosystems, it is most important and feasible to maintain intact ecosystem processes.

To achieve this outcome, the land outside of the conservation network is managed in a manner that supports ecosystem processes and allows for movement of wide-ranging northern species. As a result, the conservation network does not need to be physically connected to achieve connectivity; instead, it fits within a broader land management framework – for example, multi-region regulatory processes and land use planning.

Ecosystem integrity

Ecosystems have integrity when they have their native components – for example, water, soils, species diversity and abundance, natural processes – intact and they are able to persist into the future.

Partners

Responsibility for the management of NWT land is shared among a number of parties – Aboriginal governments, federal and territorial governments, NWT communities, resource management and land use planning boards, private land owners, and regional non-governmental industry and environmental organizations. Roles and responsibilities are defined and guided by legislation and agreements.

Protected areas

Protected areas are the backbone or core of a conservation network as they are ecologically intact and have the highest level of protection, including prohibitions on industrial development. Protected areas are permanent, resilient and are effectively managed and monitored.



Introduction

Dall's Sheep



Drying fish, Samba K'e

With an estimated 30,000 interrelated species, the relatively intact state of biodiversity in many parts of the NWT provides us a rare chance unavailable in most other regions in Canada or the world – the ability to proactively plan a healthy future for land, water, wildlife and people.

Our northern ecosystems are diverse and especially sensitive. Our land, rich in biodiversity, contributes to the high quality of life we all enjoy in the NWT. Our food security and traditional economy rely on continued biodiversity in the north.

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has set out its vision for land use and management in *Northern Lands Northern Leadership – The GNWT Land Use and Sustainability Framework* (LUSF). Making sure that land in the NWT remains healthy for future generations is a priority of the GNWT. This includes protecting biodiversity through the establishment and management of protected areas and conservation areas, often referred to as conservation network planning.

The GNWT intends to proceed with a northern approach to conservation network planning to ensure biodiversity and ecosystem integrity is maintained into the future by strengthening existing partnerships and establishing new relationships.



Moving Forward with Conservation Network Planning

Caribou

Moving forward, conservation network planning is an important piece of the overall land management regime for the NWT. Along with other initiatives like regional land use planning, the *Mineral Development Strategy* and the *Economic Opportunities Strategy*, conservation network planning is a key aspect in achieving the vision of the LUSF, the GNWT's approach to balancing land-use decisions post-devolution. It contributes to environmental sustainability for present and future generations.

The Time is Right

People of the NWT want a healthy land for the benefit of future generations. The NWT has a rare opportunity to be a leader in conservation, and apply lessons learned elsewhere in the world and across Canada to achieve sustainable resource management. It is far more efficient to preserve land now than try to restore land later. Conservation network planning not only maintains unique northern landscapes – it also provides more clarity and certainty for regulators, industry and residents of the NWT.

The latest research on climate change adaptation speaks to the importance of conservation network planning in the face of a changing climate. The conservation network includes healthy populations of species and ecosystems that are more resilient to change. Ecological representation and, specifically, the use of enduring landscape features during conservation network planning is important because they are less subject to change. Maintaining connectivity of the conservation network can help ensure survival of species in the face of climate change by facilitating the movement of species. In that sense, although climatic conditions at some sites will no longer remain suitable for certain species, the conservation network as a whole may be able to protect those species.



Spruce cones

Photo: Canadian Wildlife Service, D. Mulders



Rosa Mantla preparing caribou hide at Daring Lake Tundra Science and Culture Camp



Kamatuks on tundra at Daring Lake

Collaboration and Coordination

Collaboration and coordination is cornerstone to the conservation network planning process. People in communities engaged in conservation initiatives have knowledge that has been acquired through experience, observation, from the land and from spiritual teachings acquired over centuries. The existing candidate areas include important ecological features, and also have a significant grounding in an indigenous worldview. These areas represent the interconnectedness of people, culture and place over time.

The GNWT Traditional Knowledge Policy commits to incorporating traditional knowledge into government decisions and actions. Future GNWT conservation network planning actions will respect the Traditional Knowledge Policy and the LUSF vision of Northerners working together by recognizing that decisions influencing a region's economy and environment are best guided and managed by the people who live there.

The GNWT will, through a coordinated interdepartmental approach led by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), build on the partnerships and collaborative work undertaken over the last 15 years of conservation network planning in the NWT. The GNWT will continue to recognize and respect Aboriginal and treaty rights, including requirements of land, resources and self-government agreements.

Priority Outcomes for Conservation Network Planning: 2016-2021

The priority outcomes identified for conservation network planning in the NWT over the next five years are two-fold.

Achieving clarity on the future establishment and management of the existing candidate areas is the first priority of the GNWT.

Complementary to this are the discussions and collaborations required to develop a renewed strategy for conservation network planning for the NWT.



Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta Candidate Area

PRIORITY OUTCOME 1: Conclude the planning and decision making processes for each of the existing candidate areas.

Between 1999 and 2014, collaborative implementation of the NWT Protected Areas Strategy (PAS) saw the establishment of Saoyú and ʔehdacho National Historic Site – two peninsulas on Great Bear Lake – as well as the facilitation and advancement of over 12 community-based areas of interest for protection through the structured PAS planning process.

Seven of these initiatives advanced to the stage of *candidate area*. In addition, Thaidene Nënë area of interest is advancing as proposed National Park Reserve and territorial conservation designations.

A key premise of the Devolution Agreement is that decisions influencing the NWT economy and environment are best guided and managed by the people who live there. As such, the GNWT developed the LUSF for land management, in which decisions are collaborative, respectful of Aboriginal and treaty rights, made in the context of sound environmental stewardship, consider ecological, social, cultural and economic values to ensure maximum benefits to current and future generations, and are made primarily by residents of the NWT.



Thaidene Nënë Candidate Area, public engagement, Fort Smith 2015

In this context, the GNWT aims to advance the existing candidate areas to a point of final decision on establishment, through a coordinated process in which the GNWT works with planning partners to maximize conservation outcomes, and apply GNWT legislation and innovative northern solutions to conserve values on the land. To do this, some improvements to the existing legislative, policy and decision making framework are required.

An equitable management governance framework will be developed to identify the key components of a governance approach for protected areas and conservation areas. The framework will outline roles and responsibilities of the GNWT and applicable Aboriginal governments. As well, a model establishment agreement will be developed, which will provide a template for legally binding contracts for each established area.

A well-coordinated GNWT will work with partners on made-in-the-north solutions to advance and establish the existing candidate areas. Partners have articulated a need to designate classes of protected areas and conservation areas that meet numerous modern goals and demands, while being clear on how these designations will achieve broad conservation targets for the NWT.

A factor in reaching this goal is being able to refine the existing tools, including new legislation, to meet the management objectives identified for the candidate areas by all parties, while maintaining as much land under northern control as possible.



Ekali Lake, Łue Túé Sųlái Candidate Area



Horton Lake, near Colville Lake in the Sahtu

PRIORITY OUTCOME 2: Develop a renewed strategy for conservation network planning in partnership with Aboriginal governments and other partners.

The GNWT played an active role in the drafting of the original PAS document, *A Balanced Approach to Establishing Protected Areas in the Northwest Territories* (1999). This founding charter was co-signed by the GNWT and the Government of Canada, and includes a vision, principles, goals and planning process endorsed by a multi-stakeholder committee representative of all geo-political regions of the NWT. The GNWT has remained a committed partner in the implementation of the original PAS.

The GNWT will pursue a renewed strategy to advance a made-in-the-north approach to conservation network planning. The approach will be based on the principles of the LUSF. It will increase local participation in and accountability for management of individual areas, and articulate the GNWT leadership role and renewed commitment for conservation network planning.

The new approach will improve upon the original PAS by:

- developing a process to identify, prioritize and fill gaps in ecological representation to achieve conservation objectives
- planning to broadly manage and monitor across the conservation network to ensure consistency
- identifying clearly the components of the conservation network and its ultimate extent to inform land use



Cotton grass

Identifying and Filling Gaps

Identifying and filling gaps in ecological representation will be a component of the new strategy. Ecological representation planning uses a systematic process to identify new protected areas. Protected areas form the backbone of a healthy conservation network. They have the highest level of protection and are long-term, with no development permitted. They are considered the most effective, efficient and proactive way to protect and maintain a region's biodiversity, the full variety of life necessary to support people, wildlife and other living things. Together with existing protected areas, filling gaps in ecological representation will help ensure that development in the NWT is truly sustainable. When biodiversity and ecosystem integrity are adequately protected and maintained, the result is a broader suite of choices on how to use the remainder of the land in the future.



Loon chick



Wetlands, Mackenzie Mountains

Monitoring and Managing

A renewed strategy will focus on monitoring and managing the NWT conservation network so that biodiversity and ecosystem integrity in the NWT is maintained into the future. To ensure the conservation network meets its function, it is important that agencies legally responsible for areas within the network have a process in place to effectively monitor and manage what is occurring within and outside the network that may influence the ecosystem integrity and biodiversity within. This means that multiple agencies and governments will need to collaborate and cooperate to achieve a management system that recognizes the interconnectedness of ecological processes and pressures on landscapes. By working together managers can design approaches that result in an effective conservation network.

Informing Land Use

Ecological representation planning, like mineral or socioeconomic assessments, is a process that informs land use. The process outcome enhances understanding of where development could proceed, and where it should not if biodiversity and ecological integrity are to be maintained. When governments identify where land uses can occur and communicate clear rules for development in specific areas, industry and governments gain increased certainty and are able to make more timely decisions.

A renewed strategy will clearly define the components of the conservation network and its ultimate extent.

For decisions related to the designation of new areas, it will be important to ensure there is an agreed upon assessment and review process that is consistently applied, and includes detailed ecological, cultural, non-renewable, renewable and socio-economic assessments to provide sufficient data for boundary and management decision making. The new strategy will articulate and clarify specific responsibilities, requirements and procedures for conducting, analyzing and considering resource potential when making decisions about proposed area establishment in the NWT.



Stream sediment sampling for non-renewable resource assessment in Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta Candidate Area.

Photo: A. Mills



Ecological assessment - melting ice wedge, Edézhíe Candidate Area



Preparing traditional food at Daring Lake Tundra Science and Culture Camp



Work Plan 2016-2021



Cinquefoil

Photo: Canadian Wildlife Service, D. Mulders

Priorities of the GNWT 18th Assembly include fostering healthy families and creating opportunities for healthy lifestyles. Ensuring that land in the NWT remains healthy for future generations is an important factor in addressing these priorities. This includes protecting biodiversity through the establishment and management of a conservation network.

This draft work plan presents key tasks the GNWT, through a coordinated interdepartmental approach led by ENR, will undertake in partnership with Aboriginal governments and other planning partners.

The GNWT will facilitate a comprehensive and collaborative approach to the establishment and management of protected areas and conservation areas. The partners engaged in achieving these priority outcomes will vary by region, based on commitments made in settled or ongoing land, resources and self-government agreements, as well as private sector interests.

Through partnerships, the GNWT wishes to achieve the following conservation network planning outcomes:

1. Conclude the planning and decision making processes for each of the existing candidate areas.
2. Develop a renewed strategy for conservation network planning.

These **priority outcomes** are detailed below through the description of **objectives** and **tasks** to achieve each objective. Achieving clarity on the future establishment and management of the existing candidate areas is the first priority of the GNWT when it comes to conservation network planning. Complementary to this are the discussions and collaborations required to develop a renewed strategy relating to conservation network planning for the NWT, which includes ecological representation planning. As such, many of the tasks associated with these priorities will take place concurrently.



Tathlina Lake, Ka'a'gee Tu Candidate Area Photo: Pat Kane

PRIORITY OUTCOME 1: Conclude the planning and decision making processes for each of the existing candidate areas (Target completion – 2020)

Between 1999 and 2014, collaborative implementation of the NWT Protected Areas Strategy (PAS) saw the establishment of Saoyú and ʔehdacho National Historic Site – two peninsulas on Great Bear Lake – as well as the facilitation and advancement of over 12 community-based areas of interest for protection.

Seven of these initiatives advanced to the stage of candidate area. In addition, Thaidene Nënë area of interest is advancing as proposed National Park Reserve and territorial conservation designations.

This priority outcome aims to advance these existing candidate areas, including Thaidene Nënë, to a point of final decision on establishment. This would be accomplished through a coordinated process in which the GNWT will work with planning partners to maximize conservation outcomes and apply innovative northern solutions to conserve values on the land.



Beaver dam, Ekali Lake, Łue Túé Sylái Candidate Area

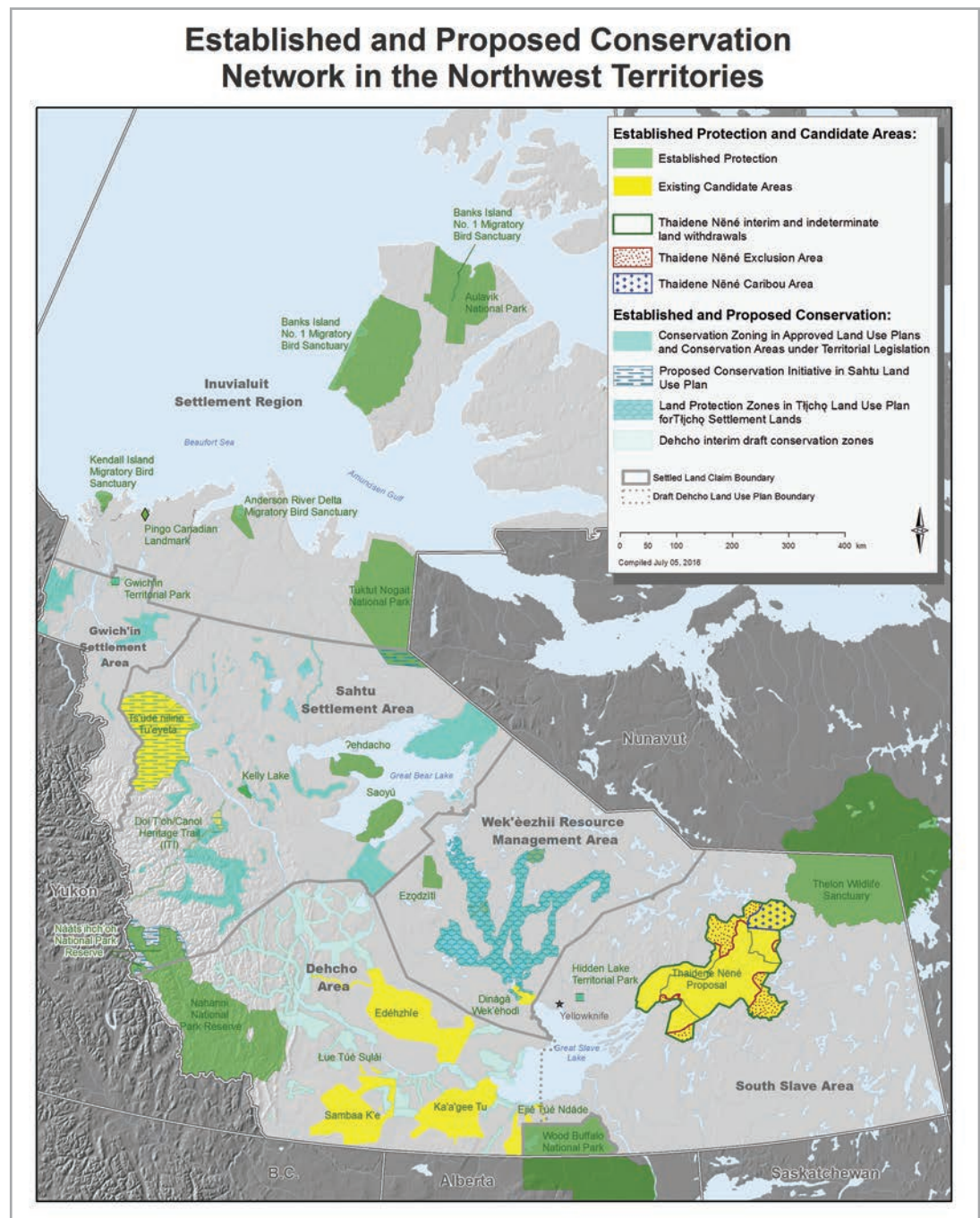
Figure 1: Established and proposed conservation network in the NWT.

Existing candidate areas (in yellow) include:

- Dinàgà Wek'èhodì (North Arm) Candidate Area
- Edézhíe (Horn Plateau) Candidate Area
- Ejié Túé Ndáde (Kátlódeeche First Nation) Candidate Area
- Ka'a'gee Tu (Kakisa) Candidate Area
- Łue Túé Súlái (Jean Marie River) Candidate Area
- Sambaa K'e (Trout Lake) Candidate Area
- Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta (Ramparts) Candidate Area
- Thaidene Nënë (TDN) Area of Interest – East Arm of Great Slave Lake



The Ramparts, Mackenzie River, near Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta Candidate Area





Edézhíé Candidate Area workshop, Fort Simpson

Objective: For each existing candidate area, lead a collaborative process with communities, regional Aboriginal governments and relevant partners to conclude the planning and review process toward a final outcome on the area.

Planning processes that are clear, collaborative and integrated are fundamental to the GNWT vision for future land management. Partners expect the GNWT to build on knowledge generated over the last 15 years of conservation network planning.

Existing candidate areas will be advanced with thorough consideration of the land claim and land use planning context in each region. Advancement of each candidate area will be context specific, and will generally involve the elements below.

Task	Timeframe
<p>GNWT officials will meet with applicable planning partners to reach agreement on a critical path to conclude the conservation network planning process.</p> <p>In most cases – that is, in PAS-related candidate areas – this would be initiated through existing working groups.</p> <p>Thaidene Néné would continue at the next element below because it has followed a process different from the PAS process and is at different stage of development.</p>	<p>By the end of 2020: The eight existing candidate areas will advance to a point of decision on their establishment, with associated establishment agreements where appropriate.</p>
<p>Upon submission of working group reports to applicable Aboriginal government and GNWT (where applicable), facilitate discussions to agree on optimal conservation designation or complementary designations and associated management regimes for each of the existing candidate areas.</p> <p>These discussions will form the basis for future establishment and would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shared interests and objectives of the GNWT and Aboriginal governments; • determination of final recommended designation and boundary; • extension of interim protection, if required; • management objectives and strategies – interim and post-establishment; and • funding mechanisms – interim and post-establishment. 	
<p>Engage other NWT partners and public on the proposed vision for designation and management decisions.</p>	
<p>Establish areas with agreed upon management and monitoring plans and structures, including signing of establishment agreement (see next two objectives).</p>	

The following objectives should be developed concurrently, as we move toward completion of existing candidate areas, but their outputs will be equally important for the work done under **PRIORITY OUTCOME 2**. The objectives would be adapted accordingly (in particular, the governance framework and the establishment agreement model) to meet ongoing needs of individual candidate areas.

Objective: Develop an equitable management governance framework.

In order to ensure ongoing collaboration between the GNWT and applicable Aboriginal government(s) after an area has been established, it is important to document and formalize how parties will work together co-operatively to manage the area.

This framework will highlight key components of a governance approach for the equitable management of territorial areas between the GNWT, applicable Aboriginal government(s) and other relevant partners. These components would be enhanced and/or adapted as necessary to meet specific requirements for each area. It is currently envisioned that this framework would include the following components:

- outline of management responsibilities of the parties
- process for drafting, review and approval of management and monitoring plans
- process for creation of a management board, including terms of reference, composition, decision making processes and dispute resolution mechanism(s) for the board (including mediation and arbitration as required)
- templates for work plans and budgets for the board

Task	Timeframe
Prepare a framework for equitable management governance that will inform establishment discussions as candidate areas advance.	Year 1 (in conjunction with areas that are in the process of being finalized for establishment)
Framework to be based on lessons learned territorially, nationally and internationally, and developed in collaboration with Aboriginal governments and other NWT partners.	

Objective: Develop an establishment agreement model.

In keeping with a co-operative approach between GNWT and applicable Aboriginal government(s) for establishing an area, a legally binding contract between parties has proven very useful where equitable management arrangements exist in other jurisdictions – for example, Gwaii Haanas.

An establishment agreement would be complementary to the legislation used to establish the area. A model for such an agreement would outline a number of key items, which may include:

- a brief statement describing the relationship between the parties;
- details of the equitable management governance approach being used for the area (including dispute resolution mechanism);
- parameters for training and employment opportunities;
- boundaries of the area;
- financial commitments towards the ongoing operations and management of the area; and
- template for creating an implementation plan for the agreement.

Task	Timeframe
Prepare a model to inform the drafting/negotiating of <i>establishment agreements</i> to achieve the conservation objectives of relevant parties.	Year 1 (in conjunction with areas that are in the process of being finalized for establishment)
Model to be based on lessons learned territorially, nationally and internationally, and developed in collaboration with Aboriginal governments and other NWT partners.	

Task	Timeframe
Work with the GNWT Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) as they lead the process to transform the <i>Territorial Parks Act</i> into the <i>Recreational Parks Act</i> .	Fall 2016
Develop a work plan for the creation of a new Act for establishing conservation and protected areas that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying components necessary for creating a new Act for establishing conservation and protected areas; and working collaboratively with Aboriginal governments, other partners and the public in the Act development process. 	Fall 2016

Objective: Propose new legislation for the establishment of conservation and protected areas.

There is an opportunity, through the Devolution Agreement, for people of the NWT to develop a conservation network that provides for a heightened level of participation in and responsibility for management.

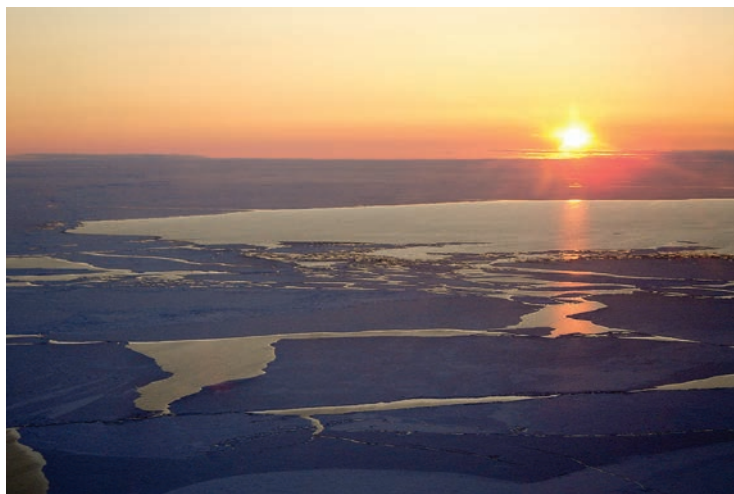
To be successful, true collaboration and partnership continue to be essential. It is expected that a majority of new territorial protected areas and conservation areas will be created using new legislation for their establishment.

New legislation needs to be created to ensure conservation and protected area establishment processes are timely, streamlined, relationship-oriented and allow for flexibility within a rational framework provided by the Act.

A new Act would ensure all areas designated under the Act have key common elements, and be guided by a common purpose and set of decision making principles.

Regulations can then be tailored to address unique protected area or conservation area establishment features, such as permitted resource development, governance arrangements with Aboriginal governments and/or stakeholders, and allowable activities.

The recently completed *Wildlife Act* is viewed by many as a highly innovative and effective process for collaboratively developing legislation that may have an impact on Aboriginal rights. As the designation of conservation and protected areas may impact Aboriginal or treaty rights, the development of the new Act will follow a collaborative approach similar to that used in the development of the *Wildlife Act*.



Ejilé Túé Ndáde (Buffalo Lake, River, and Trails) Candidate Area



Hotsprings, Mackenzie Mountains Photo: Jim Harris

PRIORITY OUTCOME 2: Develop a renewed strategy for conservation network planning in partnership with Aboriginal governments and other partners

The GNWT played an active role in the drafting of the original PAS document, *A Balanced Approach to Establishing Protected Areas in the Northwest Territories* (1999). This founding charter was co-signed by the GNWT and the Government of Canada, and includes a vision, principles, goals and planning process endorsed by a multi-stakeholder committee representative of all geo-political regions of the NWT.

The GNWT will pursue a renewed strategy to advance a made-in-the-north approach to conservation network planning. The approach will be based on the principles of the LUSF. It will increase local participation in and accountability for management of individual areas, and articulate the GNWT leadership role and renewed commitment for conservation network planning.

The new approach will improve upon the original PAS by:

- developing a process to identify, prioritize and fill gaps in ecological representation to achieve conservation objectives;
- planning to broadly manage and monitor across the conservation network to ensure consistency; and
- identifying clearly the components of the conservation network and its ultimate extent, to inform land use.

The GNWT will develop the renewed strategy through coordination between various departments and in partnership with Aboriginal governments and other partners. It would include objectives that are foundation pieces of the strategy and initiatives that are important supporting components of the strategy.



Edézhíe Candidate Area

Photo: J. LaRivière

Foundational Objectives

Foundational objectives would feed into the drafting of the strategy and can be worked on concurrently. They include:

- clearly define and communicate the components of an NWT conservation network and the extent of the network; and
- develop a process to implement ecological representation planning, a priority of the GNWT LUSF.

Objective: Clearly define and communicate the components of an NWT conservation network and the extent of the network.

Moving forward, conservation network planning is an important piece of the overall land management regime for the NWT. Along with other initiatives like regional land use planning, the *Mineral Development Strategy* and the *Economic Opportunities Strategy*, conservation network planning is a key aspect in achieving the vision of the LUSF.

A conservation network ensures that development in the NWT is truly sustainable. Protected areas form the backbone of a healthy conservation network. They have the highest level of protection and are long-term, with no development permitted.

In addition to these protected areas, other forms of land and resource management are also important for conservation, including land claim agreements, land use planning, species specific planning, environmental assessment, and regulation of land and water use. This foundational objective of the new strategy will describe the different forms of land and resource management, and their role in making sure the land, water and environment remain healthy.

Under this objective, the ultimate extent of the conservation network will also be defined to help create the clarity and certainty that industry requires as recommended in the Mineral Development Strategy Implementation Plan.

Task	Timeframe
Clearly articulate the role of protected areas and conservation areas, and describe their integration and coordination within a conservation network, in partnership with Aboriginal governments and other partners.	Year 1
Define the extent of the conservation network, in partnership with Aboriginal Governments and other partners.	Year 1



Bearberry

Objective: Develop a process to implement ecological representation planning.

This objective builds on the second goal of the original PAS, to protect core representative areas within each ecoregion of the NWT, thereby contributing to the conservation of biodiversity.

The GNWT is responsible for and continues to be committed to protecting the biodiversity and ecosystem integrity of the NWT, which includes the establishment and management of protected areas. Protected areas are considered the most effective, efficient and proactive way to protect biodiversity and ecosystem diversity.

Ecological representation is a systematic conservation network planning method used around the world to measure and fill gaps in ecosystem representation. A first step in ecological representation planning is to complete an analysis of existing and/or potential protected areas to assess if, on a collective basis, they represent regional biodiversity. Then, gaps are identified and new protected areas proposed if representation falls short.

Ecological representation, like mineral or socioeconomic assessments, informs decisions on land use. The outcome enhances understanding of where development could proceed, and where it should not, if conservation goals are to be achieved. When governments identify where specific land uses can occur and communicate clear rules for development in specific areas, industry and governments gain timely and increased certainty regarding future use of land.

This foundational objective of the new strategy will outline, in partnership with Aboriginal governments and other planning partners, a process for how the GNWT will implement ecological representation planning in the NWT.

Task	Timeframe
In partnership with Aboriginal governments and other partners, develop a process for identifying and establishing new protected areas to fill gaps in ecological representation.	Year 1



Caribou cow and calf



Castilleja (Indian Paintbrush)

Photo: S. Moore



Rapids at Daring Lake

Task	Timeframe
Draft a new strategy in collaboration with Aboriginal governments and other planning partners.	Year 1
Approval of strategy.	Early year 2

Objective: Finalize a strategy for conservation network planning for the NWT in partnership with Aboriginal governments and other partners.

Drafting the renewed strategy will incorporate the above described foundational objectives and would also include the following supporting components, to be developed following approval of the renewed strategy.

Supporting Components

1. Develop a northern approach for balanced assessments of new proposed areas

For decisions related to proposed areas, it is important to ensure there is an agreed upon assessment and review process that is consistently applied. This process needs to include ecological, cultural, non-renewable, renewable and socio-economic assessments that provide sufficient data for boundary and management decision making. A northern approach would clarify specific responsibilities, requirements and procedures for conducting, analyzing and considering assessments when making decisions about protected area establishment in the NWT.

2. Continue to incorporate the best science and traditional ecological knowledge into conservation network planning for the NWT.

This would include, but is not limited to: evaluating the conservation network to maximize climate change resilience and adaptation; assessing current and potential future fragmentation to ensure connectivity of the network; providing this information to other land use and management processes; incorporating freshwater and wetland information into ecological representation planning; and identifying and mapping special features, and providing guidance on how to protect those that fall outside conservation network.

3. Outline a process to broadly manage and monitor across the conservation network.

To ensure protected areas are achieving their overall goal of conserving biodiversity, there needs to be a plan to manage across the conservation network. This will require multiple agencies and governments to collaborate and cooperate to ensure comparable indicators exist across the NWT.

4. Ensure regular state of the conservation network reporting and associated public communications.

A state of the conservation network report will measure progress and identify where there are gaps. It will also inform how well protected areas are achieving the goal of maintaining biodiversity and ecological integrity, and where there might be potential future threats. Additionally, a public website would be updated more frequently with the status of the network, information on proposed areas and allow for engagement opportunities throughout review, establishment and management of new areas.

5. Establish a new forum for partner and stakeholder engagement in implementation of the renewed strategy and associated initiatives.

A new forum would provide input into the implementation of the renewed strategy, facilitate information exchange and guide and facilitate ecological representation planning.





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