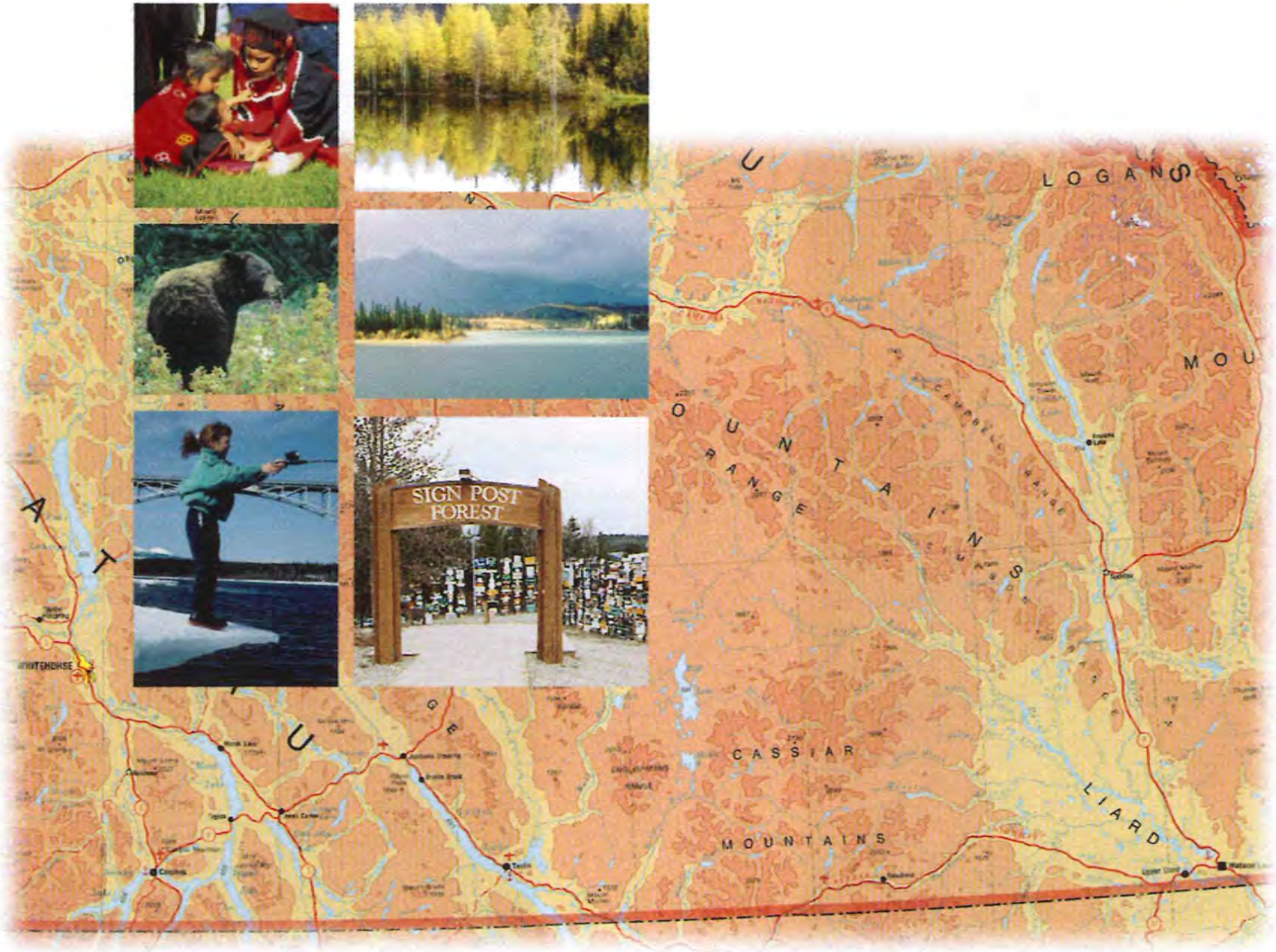
Alaska Highway East Interpretive Plan



Yukon Department of Tourism
Heritage Branch
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Inukshuk Planning & Development
In Association with Aasman Design Inc.

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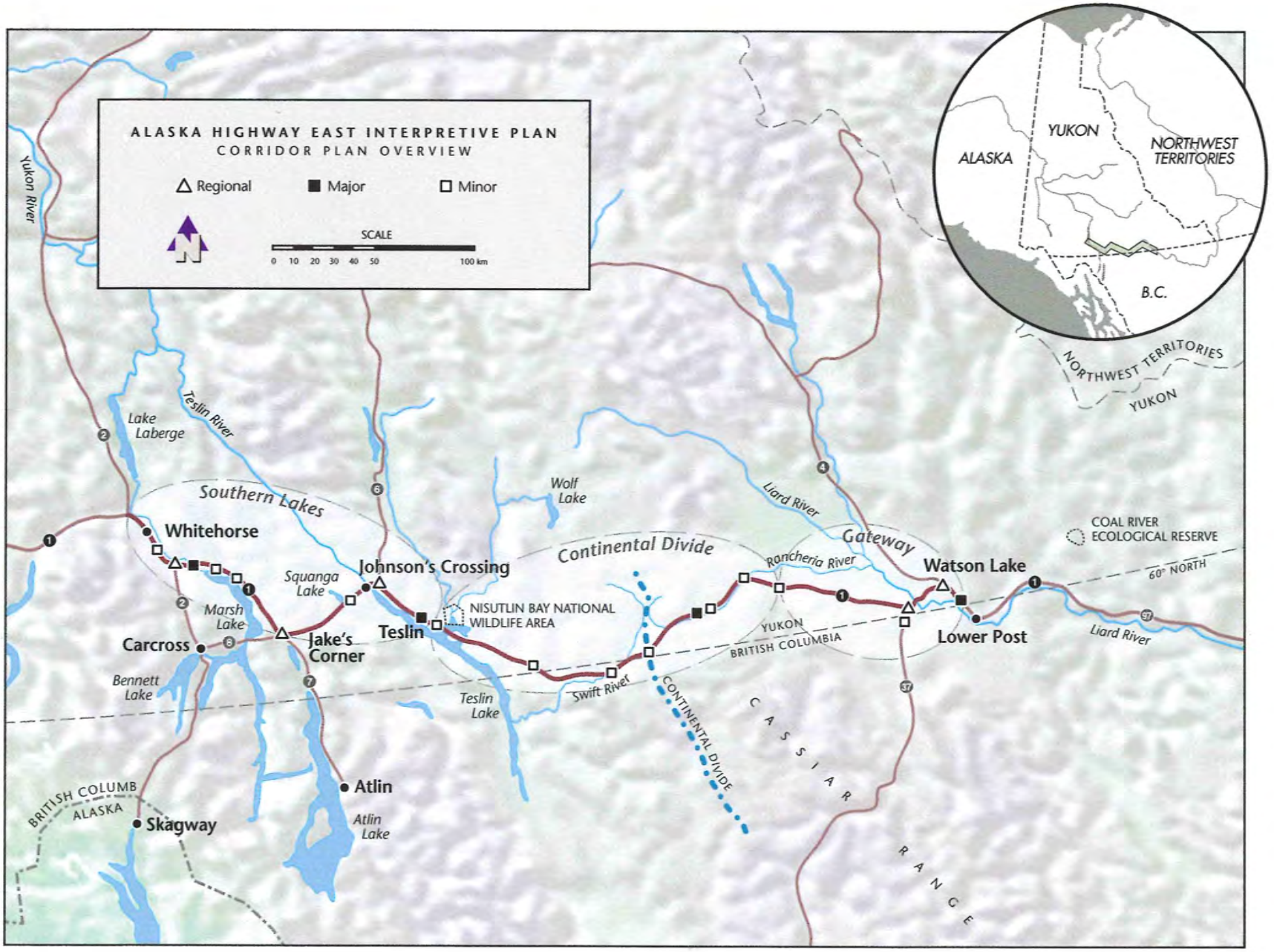
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YUKON

Executive Summary

This report contains specific recommendations regarding the objectives, purpose, placement and type of interpretive signage to be erected and maintained along the Alaska Highway from the British Columbia border south of Watson Lake to Whitehorse. It also identifies and describes partnership opportunities to improve program delivery.

A detailed analysis of the existing signage was carried out to determine what specific improvements are needed. The location, site characteristics, condition and type of interpretative message present were reviewed. In the past, signs have been erected as opportunities arose, illustrating specific themes but lacking an overall framework. The new approach is to develop corridor plans based on visitor needs and regional priorities. The first step is to examine what currently exists, build on those strengths, and develop a new framework to meet current needs and priorities. Successful program implementation is also dependent on fostering effective partnerships between government agencies, communities, First Nations and regional tourism associations.

This plan follows the program framework established in the 1995 *Interpretive Strategy* which involved a Yukon wide review of the interpretive signage program. The 1995 Strategy set out the program mandate, main interpretive themes and provided guidelines for spacing distances, site development and site maintenance frequency. It also established a three level site development classification system with regional orientation sites at main highway junctions, followed by major and minor sites determined by the interpretive theme, spacing distance and extent of facility development proposed. Today, road conditions permit travellers to go further and faster in the same amount of time than in the past. The net result is that they may actually spend less time in the Yukon unless there are more reasons to stop. Each new highway corridor plan is designed to tell the Yukon's story and enhance the travellers experience. The ultimate objective is to encourage the visitor to stop more frequently and spend more time here.

The main recommendations of the Alaska Highway East Plan are:

- The highway should be divided into three main thematic units; Gateway, Continental Divide and Southern Lakes.
- A number of the Alaska Highway 50th Anniversary Signs should not be replaced at the end of their useful life. The highway/pipeline construction themes should be emphasized at the Watson Lake Sign Post Forest and South Canol Highway intersection sites.
- Relocating the existing "Welcome to Yukon" border sign at km 1008 to an existing pull-out across from Lucky Lake at km 1011.7.
- Responsibility for site signage at the Sign Post Forest should be turned over to the Town of Watson Lake. Heritage Branch should work closely with the Town to implement their site redevelopment plan and concentrate program efforts on completing the regional orientation site for the Campbell Highway at this location.
- A regional orientation site is needed at the junction of the Alaska and Cassiar highways (km 1042.8). The Tourism Department should work with the Town of Watson Lake, Gateway Tourism Association and Community & Transportation Services to examine the feasibility of re-using the existing Weigh Station for this purpose. Heritage Branch would contribute the external regional orientation signage component in this project.
- Two existing highway rest areas, created as a result of highway reconstruction (km 1127 and km 1196), should be upgraded to serve as the southern and northern entrances to the Cassiar mountains and introduce the Continental Divide theme. This will help compensate for the lack of definition at the existing site at km 1164.
- The Tourism Department should work with the Village of Teslin, Teslin Tlingit Renewable Resources Council, Department of Renewable Resources and Canadian Wildlife Service to co-ordinate the existing signage at km 1294 and 1297.5 with plans for the new Nisutlin Bay National Wildlife Area and proposed Teslin Tlingit Cultural Centre.
- The effectiveness of the radio transmitters and regional orientation messages at Jake's Corner and the intersection of the South Klondike Highway should be evaluated and the feasibility of additional site development explored. Discussion of site development opportunities should involve the adjacent business owners.
- The Tourism Department should work with Renewable Resources and Yukon Energy to upgrade the existing Marsh Lake and Yukon River bridge sites to highlight more area themes.

This plan is a tool that can be used to meet Yukon Tourism's goal of encouraging visitors to stop and spend more time in the Yukon.

1.0 Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The Alaska Highway stretches from Dawson Creek, B.C., 2300 km north-west to Big Delta, Alaska. It is difficult to imagine the amount of effort, logistics and co-ordination that went into completing this project in just over eight months. Just under 30,000 army and civilian personnel descended on the Yukon in 1942 to build an all-weather land route to Alaska, a series of airfields and several pipelines. It was a remarkable engineering achievement.

This plan focuses on the stretch of highway from the B.C./Yukon border at km 1008 south of Watson Lake to Whitehorse at 1470. A plan for the western section of the highway between Whitehorse and Beaver Creek will also be prepared so this plan must consider how the two will subsequently contribute to one continuous visitor experience.

The current signage along the Alaska Highway is the result of various government initiatives that have taken place over the past 14 years in conjunction with reconstruction of the road. As a major transportation corridor the original narrow road, with its many bends and twists, has gradually given way to a modern highway similar to any major road in North America. Many of the features of the former road, from bridges to buildings converted into highway lodges, are gradually being replaced and the road's history relegated to local museums. It is hard for today's visitors to put this road's historical significance in context.

New signage installed to commemorate the 50th anniversary in 1992 focused on documenting the construction history. Historic milepost markers were re- erected along the route with a series of standard site identification signs at key locations such as airstrips and base camps. The signage initiatives undertaken for the 1992 commemoration were partially a response to a niche market of travellers - people who had worked on the original construction or used the road in the early years. The significance of many sites, such as staging camps, has little interest to today's visitor. While the road history must not be lost, it is important to bring out the many other qualities of the highway corridor that have been overlooked. The signage program needs to operate under a logical strategy that reflects the highway corridor's diverse attributes and stimulates people's interest in the Yukon.

The challenge in the Alaska Highway East Plan is to fill in the gaps such as missed interpretive opportunities, appropriate themes of interest to current and future highway travellers and priorities for sign replacement and site upgrading.

Nine broad thematic categories were identified in the signage strategy inventory. Overall, the current Alaska Highway East signage has elements of seven of the nine themes.

The significance of many sites, such as staging camps, has little interest to today's visitor.

These are: Historic–General; Historic–Settlement; Historic–Exploration and Mining General; Historic–Transportation and Communication Alaska Highway; First Nations History; Natural History; and Regional Orientation.

Inconsistencies and imbalance in theme representation have been noted. More emphasis is needed on natural and cultural history themes. The plan responds to this challenge by providing an overall thematic framework which can be used to blend both existing and proposed signage into a cohesive message that responds to the visitors primary need for information. The objective is to encourage the visitor to stop and spend more time in the Yukon because the information stimulates their interest.

Successful program implementation depends on fostering effective partnerships between government agencies, communities, First Nations and regional tourism associations. For example, Community & Transportation Services are implementing a new highway rest areas program which could result in capital and operating cost-savings for both departments through co-operative planning.

There are practical limitations to what the interpretive signage program can do. The interpretive sign purpose, location, sign/site relationships and cost all need to be considered together. The form of signage is changing with a greater emphasis on interpretive stories rather than on a single message. Signs and wayside exhibits aid visitor awareness of an area's attributes and may cause visitors to alter their travel plans. For example, the visitor en route to Alaska may take a side trip up the South Canol Road or around the Carcross/Tagish Loop because of presentations made at various junctions along the Alaska Highway.

This plan also considers which signs should not be replaced or which sites might be relocated to create a more effective impression of the reconstructed highway. Priorities are given for the plan recommendations.

Existing Teslin Lake Interpretive site, km 1297.5.

1.1 Program Background and Plan Context

The Department of Tourism, Heritage Branch, has the primary responsibility for developing and maintaining interpretive signage along the principal highways within the Yukon. In 1995, the Department commissioned a study of all existing highway interpretive signage with a view to establishing program guidelines. The *Yukon Interpretive Signage Strategy* (Inukshuk Planning & Development 1995) provides Yukon-wide guidelines for new site selection, spacing distances, site rationalization, sign construction and maintenance. The program guidelines provided direction for the preparation of individual corridor plans.

Key recommendations from the 1995 Strategy which guide the succeeding corridor plans include:

- program principles such as optimum spacing distances between sites and facilities; variety in interpretive media, message balance and representation, the need for year round site accessibility; and shared responsibility for program implementation;

- a hierarchy of sign types reflecting site significance and role, differentiating between territorial entrance, regional orientation, major and minor locations;
- program management directions to encourage inter-agency co-operation and co-operative partnerships in plan implementation;
- site facility development policies regarding the appropriate use of information kiosks, toilets, garbage containers, viewing platforms and similar support infrastructure; and
- inspection and maintenance standards to guide annual inter-agency agreements on site maintenance and facilitate budgeting.

It is important to remember that this corridor plan needs to be integrated with the previous plans for the South Klondike Highway and the Campbell Highway and South Canol Road. These plans call for regional orientation sites at the Carcross cut-off, Johnson's Crossing and Watson Lake. In this plan, regional orientation needs at Jake's Corner and the Cassiar Highway junction are also examined.

The current interpretive program has a mandate for signage at key locations within the road right-of-way. However, there may be opportunities to work with partners to improve the overall visitor experience. For example, if the Weigh Scale site at the Cassiar junction becomes available, this program would contribute the regional orientation signage while the Gateway Tourism Association and Town of Watson Lake would be responsible for operation of a seasonal visitor information centre. At Marsh Lake, reference could be made to the nearby Swan Haven Interpretative Facility operated by Renewable Resources and the Department could partner with Yukon Energy (YEC) on upgrading the Yukon River bridge signage.

Yukon River bridge site with a view of the marsh lake dam.

1.2 Purpose & Objectives

Our intent is to produce an interpretive plan that describes themes, suggests appropriate locations and presents guidelines for sign placement and site upgrading along the eastern portion of the Alaska Highway from Whitehorse to the British Columbia border beyond Watson Lake. The goal is to present the road traveller with an accurate, balanced, and interesting picture of the highway landscape which highlights it's natural, cultural and heritage character. The purpose of this report is to provide the direction needed to achieve this goal.

The study objectives include:

- identifying representative themes and messages for this portion of the Alaska Highway;
- evaluating the effectiveness of existing signage for site location appropriateness, redundancy, message currency, theme representation and balance;
- determining the need for new sites for interpretive site development;
- formulating concepts for corridor motifs and key site priorities;
- outlining the capital costs and operational requirements associated with the recommended corridor improvements; and
- seeking First Nations, community, and government agency input in defining corridor needs, suggesting changes, setting development priorities, locating new sites, evaluating message content and creating corridor motifs.

1.3 Planning Approach

The study approach included a review of the road corridor history; regional tourism plans for Whitehorse, Carcross/Southern Lakes, Teslin and Watson Lake; and the 1994 Visitor Exit Survey regional data.

This was followed by interviews with individuals, government agencies, First Nations, area communities and two field-trips along the highway. The first trip focused on identifying issues, new opportunities, and constraints by examining all possible sites along the corridor and interviewing key individuals.

A draft plan was prepared and circulated to 40 different stakeholders for review and comment. Follow-up interviews were arranged and the effects of the principal conclusions and recommendations were examined during a second field trip. The results of that feedback, along with the technical comments received, were used to prepare this final report.

Rancheria Falls Recreation Site, km 1156.4

2.0 The Tourism Context

The development of Yukon's tourism potential is a government priority and the signage program is an essential component for improving the visitor experience. The eastern section of the Alaska Highway is the gateway to the Yukon where many highway travellers enter the Yukon for the first time, or take their last view of Yukon scenery.

There are two "gateway" sites and several regional orientation sites along this corridor. Travellers enter and leave the Yukon along the Stewart Cassiar (#37), South Klondike (#2) and Alaska (#1) highways. This creates several types of regional orientation issues that need to be explored. Watson Lake would like to encourage north bound travellers on highway #37 to turn south and visit their community perhaps taking the Campbell Highway as an alternative route north. The communities of Atlin and Carcross would like to divert travellers to their communities on their trip either north or south. Teslin has been a traditional coffee break or lunch stop. It could become an overnight rest stop as travel times decline with completion of highway reconstruction.

Current road conditions permit travellers to go further and faster than in the past. The result is that they may actually spend less time in the Yukon unless there are more reasons to stop. Interesting interpretive signs spaced at appropriate intervals is a simple, cost effective method to lengthen a visitor's stay and stimulate interest in the Yukon's natural and cultural heritage.

Recommendations for improving interpretive signage are an important component of all local and regional tourism strategies. The *1996 Watson Lake Region Tourism Development Plan* mentions developing an interpretive plan for the Alaska Highway in its list of recommendations. The *1993 Carcross/Southern Lakes Region Tourism Development Plan* recommends planning and developing a regional orientation site at one of the Alaska Highway entry points to the Carcross/Southern Lakes Region. It also suggests sites for new interpretive pull-offs to be linked to recreation or wildlife viewing sites where possible and notes that the Carcross/Tagish Loop was the route of the original Alaska Highway.

The strengths and weaknesses of the existing sites and signage are discussed in terms of location, theme representation, message content and current utility. Suggestions for possible corridor improvements are also put forward in the recommendations.

The 1994 Visitor Exit Survey (VES) reveals some interesting data that is relevant to this interpretive plan. Of all visitors to the Yukon between June and September 1994 (206,800), approximately 88% spent some time around Whitehorse while 55% visited some portion of the Southern Lakes and just under 50% spent some time in the vicinity of Watson Lake. What is extremely relevant is the percentage of visitors that did not stop at all in each respective region because this program wants to change that. The 1994 VES data notes that between 28-30% of the visitors to the Whitehorse and Watson Lake regions did not stop, while a surprisingly 61% of all visitors passing through the Southern Lakes region did not stop.

Visitor profile data shows that 55% of all visitors to the Yukon are "passing through". 74% of all Yukon visitors are Americans (153,400), and they also comprise 82% of the pass-through travellers (93,357). It should be noted that a significant portion of this pass-through traffic includes people such as U.S. military personnel moving in and out of Alaska as part of job rotations or Alaskans headed on a trip "outside" with no particular visitor interest. The numbers are still significant as the Alaska Highway is the main travel corridor through the Yukon.

Scenery was the main attraction and "lack of time" the principal reason for not staying longer in any area along the corridor. The other relevant statistic is that travellers not in a tour group, make up the vast majority of visitors along the travel corridor. Visitor travel patterns are illustrated in the chart on the following page.

The road flow patterns show that between Watson Lake and Whitehorse approximately 75,000 visitors are westbound and 69,500 are heading east. Just over 69,100 of Yukon-bound visitors in the summer of 1994 came north on the Alaska Highway from Ft. Nelson, while 65,400 headed north from Skagway through Carcross, and 13,100 used the Stewart-Cassiar highway. From Watson Lake 48,900 continued south on the Alaska Highway, while 27,200 chose to use the Stewart-Cassiar route. Almost 52,000 people left the Yukon through Skagway. The traffic flow pattern is also relevant because it shows how few people chose to take any of the possible diversionary routes along the Campbell Highway, South Canol Road or travel the Tagish-Carcross loop.

Yukon Visitor Exit Survey Visitor Road Flow Pattern Analysis

Highway /Segment	No. of 1987 Visitors[1]	No. of 1994[2] Visitors
Alaska Highway		
Whitehorse to Teslin eastbound	80,000 – 85,000	66,700 – 70,600
Teslin to Whitehorse westbound	70,000 – 75,000	74,100 – 76,000
Teslin to Watson Lake eastbound	85,000 – 90,000	71,100
Watson Lake to Teslin westbound	75,000 – 80,000	75,600
Watson Lake to Fort Nelson southbound	60,000 – 65,000	48,900
Fort Nelson to Watson Lake northbound	60,000 – 65,000	69,100
South Klondike Highway		
Whitehorse to Carcross southbound	35,000 – 40,000	51,700
Carcross to Whitehorse northbound	50,000 – 55,000	65,400
South Canol Road		
Johnson's Crossing to Ross River northbound	<2,000	2,100
Ross River to Johnson's Crossing southbound	<2,000	1,800
Stewart Cassiar Highway		
Dease Lake to Watson Lake northbound	15,000 – 20,000	13,100
Watson Lake to Dease Lake southbound	30,000 – 35,000	27,200
Campbell Highway		
Ross River to Watson Lake southbound	1,000 – 2,000	2,400
Watson Lake to Ross River northbound	2,000 – 5,000	3,200

[1] Yukon Tourism advises the 1987 road pattern data was only a "best guess" estimate and should be treated accordingly.

[2] Traffic flow data includes all modes of travel within Yukon.

The main issues are:

- to what degree will refurbishing existing signage and adding new interpretive sites influence the visitor to take side routes or make more stops along the way?
- how can the signage program be rationalized to tell a more complete story of the people, landscapes and history of the corridor?
- which themes are under-represented or over-represented? Is there a way to project a unified image of the corridor?

The 1994 VES data shows that the number of visitors to the Yukon who travel north to Alaska and return back through the Yukon declined by 13% between 1987 and 1994. The number of one way trips increased from 39% in 1987 to 48% in 1994. This partly reflects trends in bus group tour packaging. Although not major users of most sites, bus tours do stop at specific locations.

Yukon Tourism has compiled a visitor profile from the 1994 visitor exit survey data. It shows that nearly one quarter of all visitors used the Milepost

> *"The Alaska Highway* is both the primary *strength* of the Region's tourism markets, and its major *weakness*. Virtually all current visitors are highway travellers. While this situation has provided steady business for most tourism operators, it will be challenging and costly to diversify into products and markets which are not highway-oriented." (Watson Lake Regional Tourism Plan, 1996).

Magazine in trip-planning while 27% referred to it during their trip. One of the problems with this stretch of road is that with reconstruction, mileage distances have changed and the kilometre posts have not been updated. The "mileposts" in the signage erected for the 1992 highway construction anniversary, refer to distances on the original road. Several recent tourism publications have also noted mileage inconsistencies in other signage. The correct mileage points need to be confirmed by Community & Transportation Services and the correct information passed on to all involved so corrections can be made. Timing of such changes is important because future publication dates may be fixed from 6-9 months in advance.

The visitor profile shows that the highway travellers passing through the Yukon has the following characteristics. They tend to be older, travelling in a two person party and evenly split between males and females. Three quarters are on holiday and 63% arrive in the Yukon by car/truck/van. Of the remainder, 26% are travelling by recreational vehicle. The research also found that 77% of overseas visitors were likely to rent vehicles during their stay and anecdotal evidence confirms this trend has continued.

It is important to note that the proportion of Yukon visitors over age 55 comprises 42% of the visitor market and this has obvious implications for sign design. Legibility and readability are an issue for this visitor group and insufficient attention has been spent on font size, typography, and colour contrast decisions in new sign design.

A more sensitive issue is that independent travellers using vans, truck campers and motor-homes are often seen parking at rest areas and interpretive sites overnight. This leads to tourism facility operator complaints and a reluctance to support new pull-offs. It also leads to the erection of prohibition signage which sends a mixed message to the visitor.

As interpretive site development becomes more sophisticated there is a demand for the provision of other services at these sites including outhouses and garbage pick-up. This creates significant ongoing maintenance costs in excess of the capital cost to erect the signage in the first place.

The Tourism Department desires to promote winter tourism. Community & Transportation Services ploughs out and maintains rest area sites at 80 km intervals. Appropriate winter maintenance procedures have yet to be developed that suit the equipment available or climatic conditions. At present, this means facilities like outhouses and garbage cans have to be placed in open, obtrusive locations so equipment can reach them. It is also virtually impossible to keep the toilets clean, as they cannot be pumped out in the winter.

The sites which warrant some form of year-round maintenance to support winter tourism are listed in the recommendations.

Swift River Crossing, km 1168.

3.0 The Existing Situation

The interpretive program focuses on signage that can be placed within the road right-of-way. Opportunities to improve the overall visitor experience need to be identified and partners found to reduce overall program costs.

In the summer of 1994, Yukon Tourism staff interviewed travellers stopped at various interpretive sites throughout the territory. Responses to the sign survey confirmed that scenery was the principal reason visitors stopped at any given site. It is worth noting that sites such as Bove Island and Five Finger Rapids, which offer broad landscape vistas, scored higher than sites such as the Continental Divide which provide little information and poor scenery.

The Alaska Highway has had a major impact on the native people. The eastern portion of the Alaska Highway passes through the traditional territories of five First Nations. First Nation history and geographic place names are clearly under-represented. Some missed opportunities would be easy to fix. For example, Squanga Lake *(Dasgwáage Méne')* means "small kind of whitefish" in Tagish.

> *"Narratives anchored to specific geographical features give depth and richness to locations which can be described precisely but only minimally by such scientific terms as latitude and longitude."*
>
> *(Alaska Highway Explorer, 1994)*

The original name is relevant because the lake contains a rare population of pygmy whitefish. Adding an explanation for descriptive names like Squanga Lake increases visitor interest and illustrates themes such as the importance placed on resources by Yukon's First Nations.

First Nation stories can be linked to other themes. For example, Mount White named by William Ogilvie after the Hon. Thomas White who sponsored Ogilvie's exploration and survey of the Yukon River in 1887 is also called *Ts'áambáa'a* which means "Grey Ridge". Nearby *T̄l'ó K'aa' Pzéte'* is the source of red ochre. The words mean "Grass Blade Mountain". People burned the rock and used the powder as a dye for decorating potlatch house and colouring snowshoes. Patches of red rock are visible on the mountain face. For southbound travellers, Mount White stands out as a prominent landmark dominating the drivers view for more than 30km inviting questions about its name and significance.

Liard Basin, km 1106.

Providing information about the mountain, it's geology and use by area First Nations, is an example of how themes can be linked to create an interesting interpretive message.

The Alaska Highway East passes through four different ecoregions: (Liard Basin, Pelly Mountains, Boreal Mountains & Plateau, and Yukon Southern Lakes). The windshield view afforded from each direction can be quite different and varies significantly with weather conditions, season and time of day. There are some excellent opportunities for viewing wildlife. Numerous species of waterfowl can be seen around the Watson Lake area, Nisutlin Bay, along the Teslin River, and at M'Clintock Bay. Caribou are often seen near the road in the vicinity of Jake's Corner and west of the Cassiar Highway junction in the winter. Moose may be observed in wetlands along the entire road corridor. The Renewable Resources Wildlife Viewing program has created a brochure identifying opportunities for viewing wildlife along the corridor.

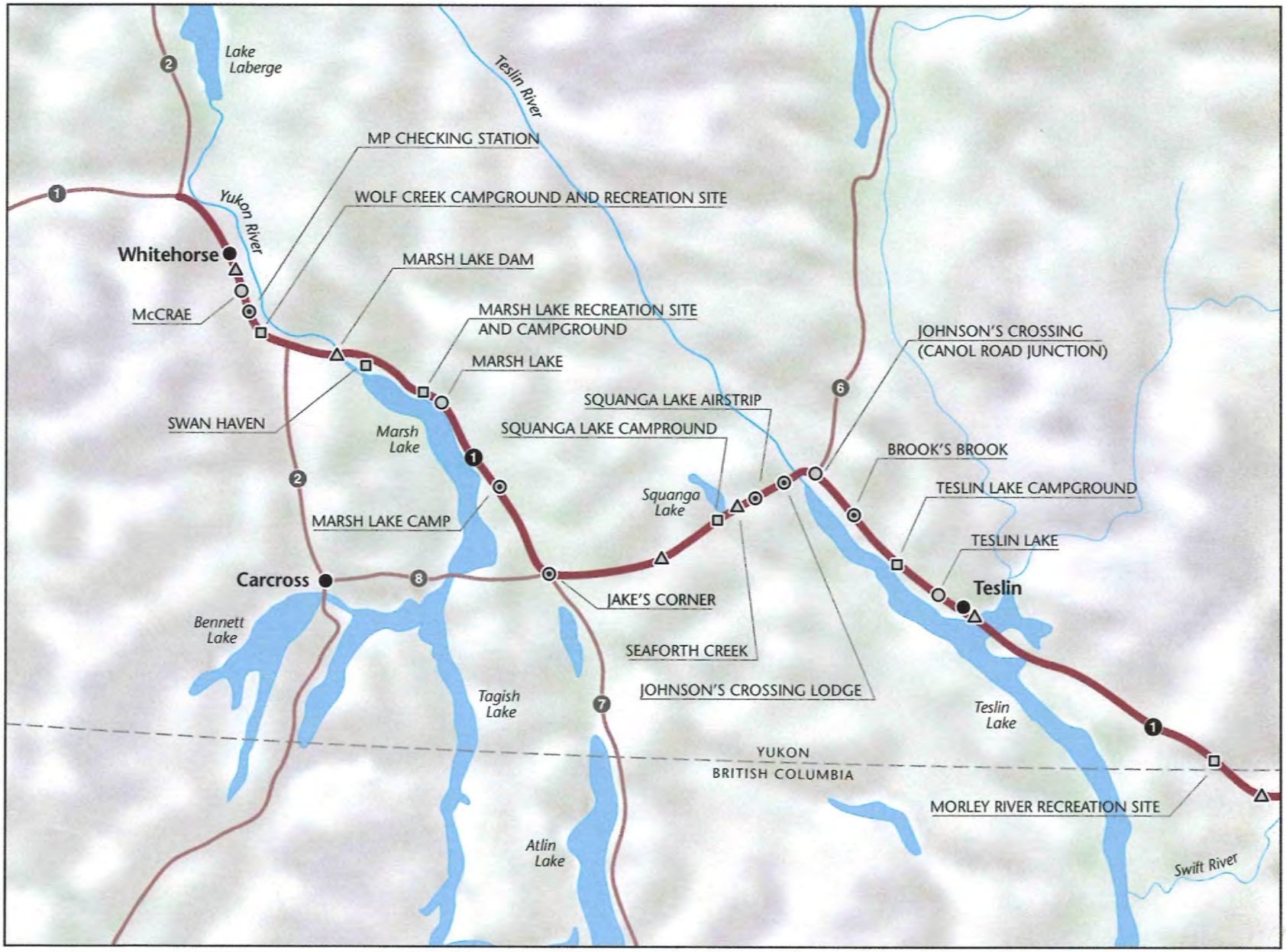
Site Development Issues	Sign Content, Message and Design Issues
• location and spacing distance between sites	• placement on site and orientation
• site identification and warning; safe access	• size, age and condition of existing signs
• site furnishings (condition and placement)	• theme and message relevance to location
• management/maintenance responsibility	• connection to main corridor themes
• site sensitivity	• type of sign erected • (plaque, signboard, marker)
• visitor capacity, size and suitability	• audience applicability
• potential to minimize duplication	• sign readability, legibility and visibility
• potential for related uses	• sign accuracy, currency and completeness
• suitability for year-round use	• suitability of presentation method
• site significance association	• education and information value
• aesthetics (visual quality)	• translation potential

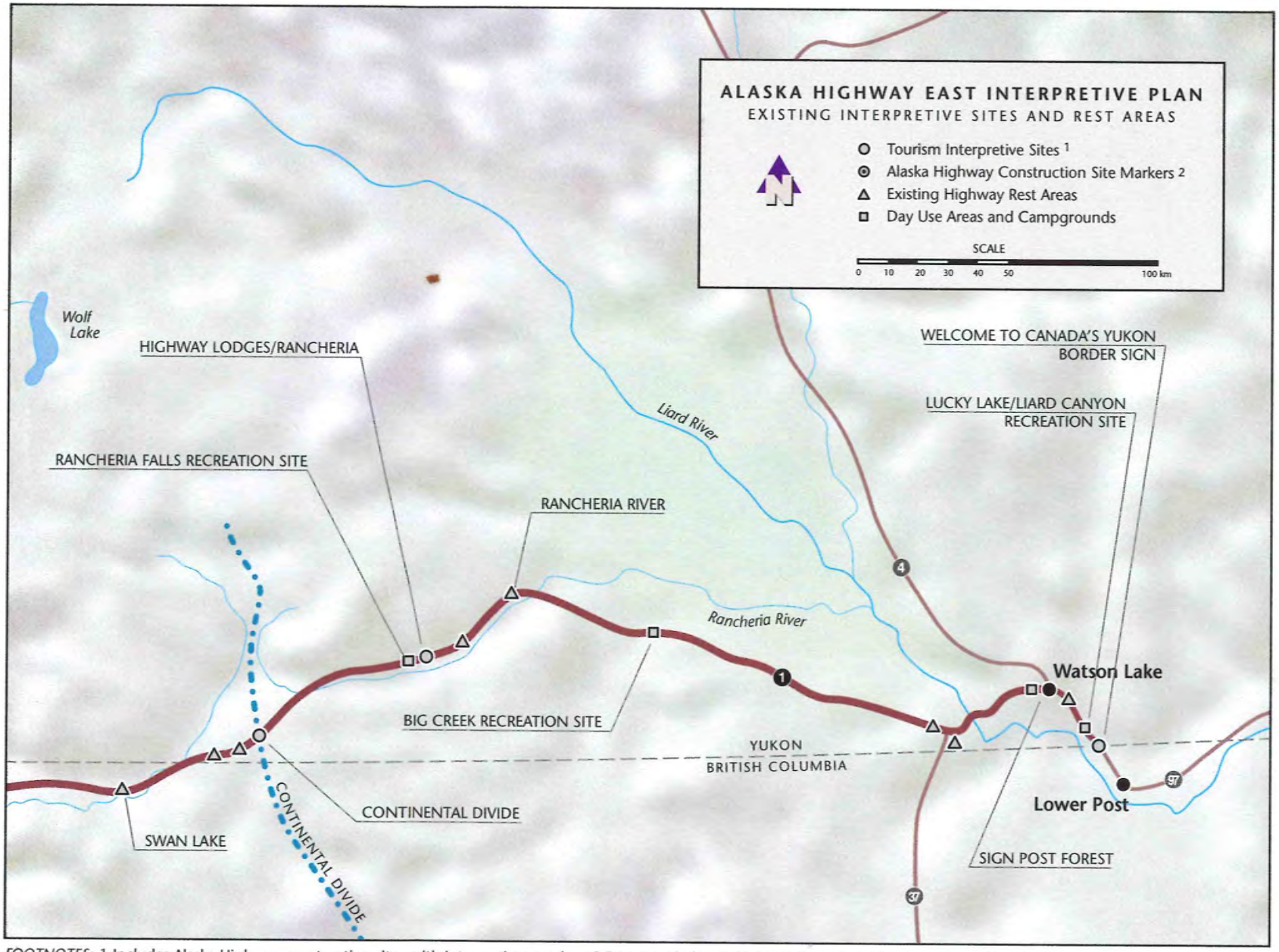
Sites which already have trails and/or interpretive panels include the day-use areas at Lucky Lake, Big Creek, Rancheria Falls, Morley River, and Marsh Lake. These sites are immediately adjacent to the highway and co-operative interpretive initiatives here may eliminate the need for additional sites.

Sings are an average of 32.5 km apart on this section of the highway. There are some inconsistencies, with signs as close as 1 km, to as far as 130 km apart. None presently exist between km 1164 (the Continental Divide) and km 1294 (Teslin) but there are many possibilities. For example, at km 1197 and 1240, two existing highway rest areas could be used, while the Morley River Recreation Site at km 1251 offers another opportunity. Through local consultation, other interpretive opportunities have been identified. The planning challenge is to select sites which, together, provide a balance and cohesion that will sustain visitor interest along this section of the road. These signs should complement, and not duplicate, existing or proposed community initiatives.

In the following two sections, the sites and the signage are analyzed. A list of the factors considered is shown in the table to the left.

A key objective behind the interpretive program is to provide order, image continuity and effective messages to sustain visitor interest. In some cases the logic behind the choice of any particular sign location may not be apparent and have more to do with convenience than location relevance. For example, a sign might be located at a highway maintenance section division point, if for no other reason than the presence of a truck turn-around. In other situations, the preferred location may not be suitable because of safety concerns or finally, road reconstruction may have bypassed the original site.


Lake Laberge
Teslin River
MP CHECKING STATION
WOLF CREEK CAMPGROUND AND RECREATION SITE
Yukon River
Whitehorse
MARSH LAKE DAM
McCRAE
MARSH LAKE RECREATION SITE AND CAMPGROUND
JOHNSON'S CROSSING (CANOL ROAD JUNCTION)
MARSH LAKE
SQUANGA LAKE AIRSTRIP
SWAN HAVEN
Marsh Lake
SQUANGA LAKE CAMPROUND
BROOK'S BROOK
Squanga Lake
TESLIN LAKE CAMPGROUND
MARSH LAKE CAMP
TESLIN LAKE
Carcross
Teslin
JAKE'S CORNER
Bennett Lake
SEAFORTH CREEK
JOHNSON'S CROSSING LODGE
Tagish Lake
Teslin Lake
YUKON
BRITISH COLUMBIA
MORLEY RIVER RECREATION SITE
Atlin Lake
Swift River



FOOTNOTES: 1 Includes Alaska Highway construction sites with interpretive panels; 2 Denotes Alaska Highway construction sites with place name markers

3.1 Alaska Highway East Site Assessment

The corridor has been divided into three sections: Gateway, Continental Divide and Southern Lakes. Maps, which accompany the text, show their respective locations, ownership and function. A brief summary of each existing interpretive site is provided along with its main features, strengths and weaknesses.

Other existing rest-stops are examined with a view to eliminating duplication, improving safety or encouraging partnerships in site development and management. As a result we recommend some sites be eliminated or signs relocated when due for replacement.

3.1.1 BC/Yukon Border to Big Creek Recreation Area

Welcome to the Yukon / BC/Yukon Border Crossing Historic Mile 627 (km 1008)

The first sign to officially welcome west-bound visitors to the Yukon is a border crossing sign located on the north side of the road across from a highway maintenance pull-out. One of a series of border identification signs erected in 1995, the sign greets travellers with the message "Welcome to Canada's Yukon–The Magic and the Mystery" yet this site does little to introduce the Yukon. There is no westbound advance warning sign.

Facilities at the pullout on the south side are minimal, consisting of a bear-proof garbage container and a grouping of four signs of differing sizes, styles and origins. They include interpretive and historical signs and a large commercial sign focusing on B.C. businesses which serve eastbound travellers. The commercial sign duplicates a B.C. regional orientation sign 2.6 km further east. Two of the signs have suffered damage from vandalism.

Three of the signs were erected in 1992 as part of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of highway construction. They consist of a milepost marker, border identification sign and plaque which talks about the number of times the road crosses back and forth over the border and when the road bypassed Lower Post.

Anecdotal information confirms people stop at this site year-round to have their picture taken next to the sign. This site presents a dilemma. Its intended function as the 'Gateway to the Yukon' is undermined by a number of factors. Principally, the pullout is on the south side of the highway, making it less convenient for travellers heading westward into the Yukon.

B.C./Yukon border, km 1008

This is the official point where the visitor enters the Yukon although the highway criss-crosses the border earlier and later. The entire site is located on a sweeping curve. The curve and high bank make construction of a west side rest stop impractical. Out of necessity the sign has also been placed too close to the edge of the road. It has been angled towards the rest area to facilitate picture taking from that point but there is evidence that people cross the road to stand beside the sign for the picture to be taken. While sight lines are good for westbound traffic to see the sign and turn safely into the rest area, vehicles travelling eastbound do not have a clear view because of the steeper curve. The shape of the rest area makes it difficult for traffic turning out of the rest area to see traffic in both directions properly. This traffic is generally travelling at speeds greater than 80 km/hour. There is no room to enlarge the rest area though some additional clearing of the right-of-way would improve visibility for eastbound traffic. The site is the convenient divisional point for road maintenance crews so it will continue to exist even if the interpretive signage is moved.

The question here is whether safety or location accuracy is more important. Local interviews confirm westbound travellers like to stop at this site because of the presence of the border sign. The location and orientation of the rest stop, coupled with the related commercial signage primarily serves travellers "leaving" the Yukon, rather than "arriving". Given these factors, this site does not lend itself as a 'Gateway to the Yukon'. It is neither convenient nor is it particularly welcoming or informative for Yukon-bound travellers.

There are several possible solutions. The commercial signage is redundant and can be removed. The milepost marker and official border sign could be left as is and the border interpretive sign relocated along with the "Welcome to Yukon" sign to another location. A "talking sign" could be used at this point instead of the usual free-standing display. There is power available nearby but a new structure would be needed to house the equipment and ensure the system is kept in good running condition because there are no nearby facilities.

We do not know how effective the existing transmitters (e.g. Jake's Corner) have been in the past and the advance warning symbol is not internationally recognized. However, the advantage of this approach is that First Nation history is based on an oral tradition where stories are passed down from one generation to the next. From the visitor profile data that has been collected over the years, we know many visitors have a strong interest in learning about First Nation culture and the "talking" sign could be one way of meeting that need.

For example, Cruikshank (1991:41) describes the Kaska Dena story about the winter and summer worlds and the link to the legend of the arrival of the first white man. The legend goes as follows: "In the beginning of time, the horizon came down to the earth creating a barrier. On one side there was a snow covered winter world and everything in it was white. The other side was ordinary reality. People could be stolen into the white world. The first animals managed to cross into the summer world by having Bloodsucker, the leech, make a hole in the barrier. When Robert Campbell first arrived in the Yukon, people thought he was from this white world because of his skin colour". This story also demonstrates how the "gateway' and "arrival" themes can be woven together in an interesting and informative way that could be told by an elder in a "talking" sign.

Relocating the "Welcome to Yukon: and interpretive plaques are a possibility. The text of the Yukon Border panel would have to be rewritten as it refers to the actual border location while the second sign refers to Lower Post. Lucky Lake provides the closest viable relocation site because there is already a pull-out on the east side across from the entrance to the day-use area.

***Conclusion** – leave milepost marker, highway construction site identification sign and border plaque at this site. Relocate "Welcome to Yukon" border sign and Lower Post interpretive plaque to Lucky Lake. Consider the use of a talking sign if the logistics can be worked out and further study of existing signs confirms visitor receptivity.*

B.C./Yukon border, km 1008

Lucky Lake Recreational Day Use Area/ Liard Canyon Recreation Site (km 1011.7)

The facilities, located less than 4 km from the border, offer a variety of amenities to the traveller which make it the ideal first stopping point. Located on the east side of the highway, it is a convenient and well-equipped stop for people entering the Yukon. Basic facilities include bear-proof garbage containers, outhouses and picnic tables. Recreational facilities include a beach, water slide and a 3 km interpreted trail from the day use area to the Liard River Canyon. The site was developed as a joint venture between the Department of Renewable Resources and Town of Watson Lake. It is a very popular and well used site.

The existing pull-out immediately across from the entrance to the Lucky Lake park would make a better location for the "Welcome to Yukon" sign. Although not at the border, the combination of facilities across the road and excellent sight lines makes this a much safer location for this sign. Once stopped, travellers have the choice of either making use of the day-use area across the road or continuing on their way into Watson Lake.

An area orientation sign primarily directed at westbound travellers could introduce the area's history, geography and main tourism attractions. The Liard River figured prominently in First Nation, European explorer and gold rush fortune-seeker history.

The story of Robert Campbell, thought to be the first European to enter the Yukon, does not need to be told here because it is covered at the regional orientation site in Watson Lake. How Lucky Lake got its name however, is a story in the best Yukon tradition and with visitor appeal. The lake was named by U.S. Army Engineering Corps soldiers in 1942 when an enterprising young woman set up a tent business there and clients referred to transactions as "a change of luck". Visitors can be directed to the existing interpretive trail in the day-use area. As washroom facilities are located across the road and 3 km further on, they would not be required here.

In short, this site offers features that would provide westbound visitors a comprehensive introduction to key historical, cultural and natural themes - things that spell 'Yukon' and set the stage for what they will see further along the way.

***Conclusion** – relocate "Welcome to Yukon" and Lower Post signs here and add area orientation sign.*

Highway Rest Area (km 1015)

Located just south of Watson Lake on the north side of the highway, this rest stop currently includes signage introducing the Town of Watson Lake as well as basic garbage and outhouse facilities. In the past C&TS has provided and maintained at least one rest area near each community. In the mid 1990's the Department proposed a commercial sign strategy that would minimize the erection of further billboards and promote the establishment of one site at each entrance point where commercial signage could be erected that identified the businesses and services available in the local community. This proposal was patterned after a signage program developed and successfully implemented in British Columbia. Thus the purpose of such rest areas is different than the interpretive purpose behind the Yukon Tourism program.

Although it has been designated by Transportation Maintenance for improvement (new signage, etc.), the proximity of this rest stop to the Lucky Lake site (3 kilometres east), Wye Lake Trail (2 kilometres west) and the Town of Watson Lake (5 kilometres west) may actually make the entire site redundant.

***Conclusion** – serves its present purpose; no further development needed.*

Existing pull-out across from Lucky Lake Day-use Area, alternative "Welcome to Yukon" sign site, km 1011.7.

Sign Post Forest Watson Lake (Historic Mile 635)

Alaska Highway#1 and Campbell Highway#4 Junction (km 1021)

This regional orientation site and attraction, includes Watson Lake Visitor Reception Centre, historical and interpretive signage and the 'World Famous Sign Post Forest'. As a regional orientation site, Watson Lake should provide clear directions for travel and information on alternate destinations. The Tourism Department has provided 5 signs and a milepost marker at this site. These include a sign explaining the history of the Sign Post Forest, "Gertrude" the tractor, and the P-39 Airacobra plus two Alaska highway construction commemoration signs. The monument containing the scale model replica of the Bell P-39 has been removed and will not be replaced. A sign describing the Campbell Highway is set off by itself at the back of the parking lot for the Visitor Information Centre.

There are a number of signs of disparate styles, functions and locations. The Sign Post Forest continues to grow each year and it has reached a point where a number of signs are removed every year because many have been constructed on the spur of the moment by visitors and are not designed to withstand the local weather.

Numerous additional opportunities for interpretation exist here. Forest resources, the origin of the Town of Watson Lake and the role of mineral exploration in the development of the area are possible topics. However, to do so would simply add to the information overload already present.

The central issue at this site is what role the Department should continue to play. The Town of Watson Lake has recognized the area as a main visitor attraction for highway travellers that has reached a point where an overall redevelopment plan is needed. EDA Collaborative Inc. was commissioned in 1998 to prepare a revitalization concept to link the area to the new Science Centre across the highway. In essence the consultants suggested the site be re-organized and simplified. Directional signage was noted as a significant problem. The result is an ambitious redevelopment plan that the Town of Watson Lake appears ready to spearhead..

The 1995 Yukon-wide Interpretive Signage Strategy suggests that regional orientation sites should be developed at the main highway intersections to provide a historical, cultural and recreational context for the traveller. These regional sites should reflect the main interpretive themes. They should also be planned and managed for year round use.

In this case, the regional orientation needs are being fulfilled by the existing Yukon Tourism Visitor Reception Centre which has exhibits focusing on highway construction. From a tourism perspective, the real need is to promote the Campbell Highway and a solution compatible with the current redevelopment plans is proposed in the 1997 *'Campbell Highway And South Canol Road Interpretive Plan'*.

Watson Lake Signpost Forest with Regional Visitor Reception Centre in background, km 1020.5.

It would make more sense to upgrade the Campbell Highway site and incorporate the "regional orientation and welcome to Yukon elements" in any signage erected at the Lucky Lake and Stewart-Cassiar Highway intersection sites.

The new Town of Watson Lake plan calls for a very interesting highway construction exhibit using parts of the Alaska Highway right-of-way. This is one case where the existing highway construction signage (milepost marker, site identification sign and interpretive plaque) should be maintained as there will be a visible highway construction image. Since the community will be taking the lead, the Department should drop the other existing signs from the inventory and turning responsibility for them over to the community. In this way, they can be relocated, modified or dropped depending on how well they fit in with the current redevelopment plans.

None of the existing signage discusses the Liard First Nation in a regional context. As noted in the Campbell Highway Plan, this thematic deficiency will be picked up in the new exhibit design for the regional orientation site. The theme could also be included as part of the internal exhibits in the Visitor Reception Centre. Since the primary focus of those displays is highway construction, the First Nation perspective could be illustrated by highlighting the changes and impacts that highway construction had on the Kaska Dena people and culture.

***Conclusion** – Focus on upgrading the Campbell Highway orientation site; turn existing signage over to the community for integration into redevelopment plan (Gertrude, Airacobra, Sign Post Forest); retain responsibility for the three highway construction related signs for corridor continuity, relocating if required to fit into planned roadside display.*

Alaska Highway and Stewart Cassiar Highway Junction (km 1042.8)

This is the second southern "gateway" to the Yukon. A standard "Welcome to the Yukon" border sign has been erected 3.5 km south of the intersection. The weigh station site is situated on the south east corner of the intersection. It is currently not in use and could provide an opportunity for re-use as a sub-regional orientation site. The Weigh Station layout can easily be adapted to this new use without compromising the possibility of returning it to it's former use if required in the future. The area immediately north-east of the weigh station shows good potential for such a facility - it is slightly elevated and offers attractive views to the east and west. A corner location would catch traffic heading in three directions; east-bound on the Alaska Highway and north or south-bound on Highway #37.

If the Weigh Station building becomes surplus to the Government of Yukon needs, the Watson Lake Chamber of Commerce and Gateway Tourism Association have confirmed their interest in seeing the site developed in the manner proposed (P. Irvin personal comm.) and the building used as a seasonal visitor reception centre.

The B.C. Government may also be interested in contributing to site development at this location. Currently there is a small sign board advertising highway services located across the highway.

Should the weigh scale option not be available, there are two other possibilities. Option #2 is a small pull-out located less than 300m south of the intersection on the Stewart-Cassiar Highway. The Town of Watson Lake has erected a substantial directional sign indicating the distance to their community at this location. This site could not be expanded to include a regional orientation component as there is no room for further site development and parking is already limited. There is less visual clutter here as the site is situated before the main commercial signs. No outhouses or garbage cans exist at this location.

The lack of room at this location could be compensated for with the use of a "talking" sign. It could either be based out of the Weigh Scale building or managed by one of the service stations under contract. Concerns about the effectiveness of such signs apply but this approach could be used in the same manner as it is in Haines Junction where weather warning and highway condition information is broadcast in the off-season.

Weigh Station at junction of Alaska and Cassiar Highways

Option #3 is to add a regional component to the Government of B.C. rest area at the border. Although the site is on the south side of the road, sight lines and visibility are excellent in both directions. As in the case of the other border site, visitors appear to climb the bank even in winter, to have their pictures taken by the sign. The border sign is set well back from the road so a small trail to make it easier to get up the bank is all that is required. There is no power available here for a "talking" sign.

As a Yukon "gateway" point, regional orientation should be the interpretive focus. As such, geography would be the principal theme. Complementary themes might include Kaska Dena Homeland and highlighting regional tourism opportunities. The key here is not to duplicate themes or topics covered better elsewhere such as highway construction. Other possible topics for interpretation include the minor gold rush that occurred in this region immediately south of today's Alaska Highway (1875-1896) because such a theme complements one of the territory's main marketing themes– gold rush history and responds to the visitor's sense of arrival in the Yukon. This site should be designed and managed for year-round use.

***Conclusion**–Work with Community and Transportation Services and the Town of Watson Lake to investigate the feasibility of a sub-regional orientation site on the former Weigh Scale site first. Support re-using the existing building as a seasonal visitor reception centre. The Heritage Branch interpretive sign program role should be to contribute external signage with a regional orientation focus. As an alternative, work with the B.C. Government to upgrade the border site.*

Highway Rest Area (km 1044.5)

This large rest stop offers outhouses and garbage cans. There is an existing Chamber of Commerce sign intended to encourage travellers to visit Watson Lake before continuing on south along the Stewart Cassiar Highway. The market is east and south bound travellers. Transportation Maintenance will be installing new signage announcing the rest area and distance to next rest area. This site has no natural interpretive appeal and for program purposes is not attractive as it is oriented more towards travellers about to leave the Yukon.

***Conclusion**–Site does not meet program selection criteria.*

Big Creek Recreation Site (YTG) (Km 1084.8)

The location of this day-use recreation site poses challenges but also offers good interpretive opportunities. It is at the mid-point between existing interpretive signage at Watson Lake (km 1021) and Rancheria Highway Lodges (km 1144). Existing facilities include picnic sites and outhouses. It is a popular fishing site. It is situated on a sharp curve just before a bridge and this may pose traffic safety concerns with increased use. The parking area may also need to be expanded. As the site is managed by Renewable Resources there is no need for direct program participation. These types of sites are not maintained in the winter.

If interpretive elements are added by Renewable Resources, Heritage Branch needs to work with that department to avoid thematic duplication. Topics for discussion night include fish, wildlife, and the Liard Basin ecoregion. This is also a possible breakpoint between the "Gateway" and "Continental Divide" thematic sections as the Cassiar Mountains start to come into view.

***Conclusion**–work with Renewable Resources to suggest appropriate interpretive themes and stories which meet program objectives and thematic priorities.*

Big Creek Recreation Site, km 1084.8.

3.1.2 – Big Creek Recreation Area to Teslin

Not all of the highway construction site commemoration sign locations are listed along this section of road unless they are located in conjunction with an interpretive plaque or are part of an existing rest area.

Existing Highway Rest Area (km 1106)

Transportation Maintenance is proposing to maintain this site as a rest area because it meets the 80 km spacing distance between full-serviced rest areas. New advance warning and site identification signage, and improvements to the access road angles are planned.

There is an old log cabin across the highway and a bridge further along but little else that would naturally encourage the traveller to stop. This site appears more suited to its present use as truck stop for westbound traffic.

***Conclusion**–no interpretive program value.*

Existing Highway Rest Area (km 1127) (Rancheria River)

By this point the westbound travellers have begun to wind their way along the Rancheria River as the highway approaches the Cassiar Mountains. This site was developed during highway reconstruction and offers a panoramic view of the river valley and surrounding mountains. It is a natural stopping point on a clear day. It is also a large site with good access from both directions. Other than a garbage can, this site has no facilities. The main weakness is the lack of formal definition of the parking area and the preferred entry/exit points.

This site falls approximately half-way between the Big Creek recreation site and the Rancheria Falls recreation site. It is 21km north of the existing full service rest area. While it has advance warning signage, the camera symbol would be a more appropriate identifier because the attraction is the view. The only existing sign identifies the site as a rest area and tells the traveller not to park overnight or have open fires.

The site offers opportunities to interpret the local geography and geomorphology visible from the highway corridor. Various geological features including cirques, tarns, rock glaciers, talus and avalanche slopes and stages of wetland development are visible along this stretch of highway.

As the site is located above the surrounding area, there may also be occasional opportunities to view wildlife especially moose along the river and in the wetlands below.

Rancheria River Rest Area, km 1127.

This site could be linked to the proposed Swan Lake site on the opposite side of the mountains. Both sites support the Continental Divide theme. Treating this section of road as a unit also helps prepare the traveller for the Continental Divide site.

It would be difficult to add outhouses accessible for maintenance purposes without being visually obtrusive (see Swan Lake example Km 1196). As sites with existing outhouses are located within 30 km in either direction, additional washrooms may not be needed. Better edge definition is needed to provide traffic separation and space for an interpretive display.

***Conclusion**–ideal location to add interpretive signage consistent with program mandate. Focus on geography and geomorphology with information link to Swan Lake site. Prepare the visitor for the Rancheria Falls and Continental Divide sites ahead.*

Historic Mile 710: Highway Lodges/ Rancheria (Km 1143.8)

There is an interpretive plaque here discussing the history of the highway lodges, plus a milepost marker and a site identification sign erected as part of the 50th Anniversary commemoration program.

The signs are located at the entrance to a private campground. They are easily missed and would be better located closer to the old highway lodge since that is the subject of the interpretive panel. They should face inward and be placed opposite the gas pumps and lodge entrance and within the highway right-of-way. The role of the old highway lodges is becoming less clear as they are torn down and replaced with new structures, but the theme remains historically relevant. If and when the old lodge is replaced the Heritage Branch could work with the property owner to incorporate this display into any future site development plans.

A fourth sign was located along the river itself inside the campground. The sign was removed by Renewable Resources when the campground was privatized. The initial plan was to refurbish and erect it at the Rancheria Day Use site. It was not followed and the sign remains in storage. This is the only sign that mentions the GSC. Their role is an important component of the exploration theme.

***Conclusion**–approach lodge owner regarding relocation closer to lodge and explore potential to divest responsibility for signage to them if and when commercial site redevelopment occurs. The sign referring to George Dawson could be reinstalled at the km 1127 site.*

Historic Mile 710, Highway Lodges at Rancheria, km1143.8

Rancheria Falls Recreation Site (Km 1156.4)

This existing Renewable Resources site currently offers visitors the opportunity to picnic, walk trails and a boardwalk out to the falls viewing signs which discuss the areas natural features. Site development and management responsibility rests with Renewable Resources who maintain the site on a seasonal basis. If Renewable Resources expands the number of interpretive panels at this location, First Nation land use could be one theme. Another possibility would be to add the story of *"How the Chickadee Stole Fire"* which is part of Kaska Dena mythology. This story could be included the Yukon Wild panel on fire when that panel is eventually redone.

This type of cross-cultural connection is one of the most pronounced deficiencies in the signage along the Alaska Highway. Market research confirms this type of interpretive link is of particular interest to Yukon visitors and the opportunity should not be missed. It should be noted however, that any use of First Nations mythology requires prior consultation and approval.

***Conclusion**–work with Renewable Resources to suggest inclusion of appropriate interpretive themes and stories which meet program objectives and thematic priorities when existing signage is upgraded. Watch for duplication of message content.*

Existing Continental Divide Highway Rest Area (Km 1164)

The interpretive significance of this site is not reflected by the way this site has been developed and maintained. This site was created out of surplus fill during highway reconstruction and an opportunity to provide the visitor with a "sense" of the divide was missed. The site is too large and generally unattractive with no indication of it's ecological and cultural significance as a boundary between ecoregions, and Teslin Tlingit/Liard First Nations. territories.

The two free-standing signs located near the mid point of the site, were installed in 1995 after highway reconstruction was complete. This site is maintained on a year-round basis by Highway Maintenance and includes toilets and garbage facilities in keeping with the 80 km full-service spacing interval. The existing signage is superficial and needs, updating to properly reflect the continental divides natural, cultural and historic significance.

As the visitor cannot physically see the "divide", providing information at the two nearest sites on either side of the divide would make the driver more aware of the gradual climb to the divide. The existing signs are relatively new and will not need to be replaced for some time. More careful thought needs to go into both sign design and site layout to make the site more attractive to visitors.

***Conclusion**–the interpretive potential of this site is not reflected in either the manner of site development or the quality of existing signage. Work with Yukon government departments and First Nations to upgrade the physical appearance of the site and ensure new signage content more completely reflects key interpretive themes.*

Swift River Crossing (km 1168)

This is not an 'official' rest area site. Local highway maintenance staff prepared a parking area after observing continual visitor use. It is a popular clandestine camping and angling spot alongside the river. There is a Tlingit story about a fish found in this river. According to the legend, the fish was told by its "grandfather" that people get hungry in the winter so he was going to paint the cheeks of these fish so hungry people could see them better.

Despite the fact that people frequent this area, and the fish story has good interpretive value, the site is only 4 km from the Continental Divide site which has more overall significance.

***Conclusion**–does not meet spacing criteria and has a less significant theme. Message could be discussed at Continental Divide site.*

Swan Lake, B.C. Highway Rest Area (km 1196)

The site is located on the east side of the highway in British Columbia along a stretch of road maintained by C&TS for the B.C. Government. It is maintained year-round and offers impressive 270 degree views of marshes, lakes and mountains to the south. Prominent landscape features 80 km away are visible.

There is only the standard rest area identification sign prominently displaying the usual prohibition icons with respect to fires and overnight parking. Adequate warning signage does exist, and Transportation Maintenance has identified this as a site to receive new rest area signage. Selective clearing of vegetation would further enhance the views especially toward Mt. Simpson. This is a good location to talk about landscape ecology and area geography, perhaps interwoven with stories of Tlingit mythology appropriate to the area. Adding interpretive signage would complement the work already completed by C&TS and meet both agency program objectives including the spacing criteria.

***Conclusion** –consider for future interpretive site in conjunction with C&TS and B.C. Government. This site could also introduce the eastbound traveller to the upcoming Continental Divide by discussing the Cassiar Mountains.*

Andrew Creek B.C. Highway Rest Area (km 1240)

Also on the B.C. side of the border, this site offers garbage and restroom facilities for travellers but is unremarkable from an interpretive point of view. It is approximately mid-way between the existing interpretive sites at the Continental Divide and Teslin.

The Andrew Creek site is not as attractive as either the Swan Lake site (km 1196) or the upcoming recreational day use area at Morley River less than 10km to the west. It is currently a highway maintenance division point which C&TS plans to maintain year round.

There is a more attractive site from a visitor perspective less than 2 km further east near Lower Hazel Creek overlooking a small lake. This site would provide an opportunity to interpret how permafrost affects vegetation and drainage and would make a good picnic site. However, given the proximity of the Morley River Recreation Site less than 10 km away, a viable alternative exists and new investment is difficult to justify.

Conclusion *–present site has little interpretive value. Viable alternative exists at Morley River.*

Morley River Recreation Site (km 1250.5)

This popular recreation site is managed by Renewable Resources and offers picnic sites, fishing and a trail to the river. There has been continuing interest in expanding the facilities here to add a campground.

The Morley River drains the west side of the Cassiar Mountains and portions of the Nisutlin Plateau. The river is used to access the interior for both hunting and fishing. This site presents another opportunity to partner with Renewable Resources by piggy-backing on the infrastructure already in place. Transportation Maintenance has designated this as a site to receive new signage. The site is partially screened from view and additional warning signage closer to the actual entrance would improve safety. As the recreation site is not maintained in the winter, consideration should be given to enlarging the parking area outside the gate since trails in the area are used extensively at this time of year for a range of recreation activities.

Interpretive topics might include the origin of the name Morley, (the son of William Ogilvie who was a prominent figure in Yukon history) to a discussion of the Nisutlin batholith and Tlingit use of this area. It is also worth noting that the area to the north is under study for national park status. There are 3 historic milepost site identification signs in the next 50 km and stretches where the original road is still visible among the trees.

Conclusion *–work with Renewable Resources and Highways to upgrade the site and ensure any additional interpretive signage incorporates the suggested themes. Consult with the Teslin Tlingit Renewable Resources Council on sign content and site suitability.*

View of Teslin Bridge and boat launch from the Village Marina

Teslin Bridge (km 1293)

This site at the south end of the bridge could provide a site for signage related to the new Nisutlin Bay National Wildlife Area which can be seen though the trees and down the bay. The site includes a boat launch and single garbage can. There is a steady cross-slope down to the lake. The shape of the parking area makes turning RVs around difficult and the entrance is too tight for easy access.

Conclusion *–more suitable alternative exists across bridge.*

Historic Mile 804: Teslin Deisleen Aayi (km 1294)

In 1992 a milepost marker, site identification sign and interpretive panel were installed in the right-of-way on the north side of the highway at Nisutlin Drive. The site is easily missed by visitors travelling in either direction. No effort has been made to landscape the area and help draw attention to their presence. The content of the interpretive panel is very interesting and mentions some consequences of highway construction for the Teslin Tlingit people.

The Village of Teslin advises that, despite it's weaknesses, the site is well used especially by recreational vehicles. They do not want RVs to pull into the small park and marina immediately opposite this site because it is difficult to turn the vehicles around. The park has picnic, garbage and washroom facilities and there is a small museum and craft shop across the highway.

While the present site is convenient for recreation vehicles, the signs are located close to the edge of the right-of-way which means vehicles appear to be using the adjacent vacant lot for parking. This could be resolved if the service road were extended when the adjacent property is eventually redeveloped.

There are two possible alternative locations. The small park and marina is an obvious choice but the parking area is quite small and unsuitable to recreational vehicle movement. The Village of Teslin has also suggested the park as a site for an interpretive display featuring the new Nisutlin Bay National Wildlife Area. The second alternative would be to relocate the signs to the west side of the highway in the bridgehead reserve which is part of the Yukon Motel parking lot. This would not solve the visibility issue but would work better for RV traffic and fit well with the adjacent business facilities. A third approach would be to phase out the milepost marker and site identification sign and relocate the interpretive panel to the George Johnston Museum. A fourth alternative would be to examine the feasibility of creating one single, comprehensive display integrating all the existing and proposed signage.

Historic Mile 804, Teslin, km 1294.

The Teslin bridge is also a story in itself as it is the longest bridge on the Alaska Highway and could easily be interpreted at this location. Other stories include how residents doubted a road was being pushed towards them from Carcross and the impact the first bulldozers had on arrival.

Care needs to be taken to ensure the themes portrayed do not conflict with the themes displayed at the George Johnson Museum, located less than a kilometre to the north, and the Teslin Tlingit plans to develop a heritage centre in the near future.

***Conclusion**–upgrade the appearance of the existing site as an interim measure. Add a new garbage can and work with the Village of Teslin to resolve maintenance concerns. Consider relocating all three signs to the Yukon Motel parking lot or phasing out the milepost marker and site identification sign with the interpretive panel moved to the museum. Consider adding an interpretive panel regarding bridge construction and consult with the Canadian Wildlife Service, Teslin Tlingit Council and George Johnson Museum staff to ensure any changes complement their plans.*

3.1.3 Teslin to Whitehorse

Teslin Lake Interpretive Site (km 1297.5)

This site was developed by Yukon Tourism as a point of interest. It offers a panoramic view of Teslin Lake and Mt. Bryde from the viewing platform. It is located close to Fox Point, where the Teslin Tlingit First Nation are planning a heritage centre. Their plans include a waterfront trail between the village and Fox Point. There have been problems with inappropriate use of this site in the past and this remains a local concern. As a result there is some reluctance to add washroom facilities.

This is one of several "feature" sites developed over the last 10 years. It includes an elaborate wood routed identification sign, with a defined viewing platform that has six interpretive panels attached to the frame. Some effort was also made to landscape the immediate area with native plants with mixed success due to a lack of maintenance. The site was developed following consultation with the Teslin Tlingit Council and this has resulted in a successful balance of themes ranging from the history of the area to the impact of highway construction and an explanation of native traditions. This is one of the few sites where First Nation interests have been integrated into the interpretive message to provide a balanced picture.

Two of the six panels were added under the wildlife viewing program by Renewable Resources. These panels deal with shore birds and the Teslin bird migration route. Since the Canadian Wildlife Service is planning an interpretive display to highlight the Nisutlin National Wildlife Area, consultation should take place to avoid duplication. It may be appropriate to change the wildlife viewing panels at that time to include reference to the new wildlife sanctuary.

The Dawson Peaks across the lake are known locally as the "Three Aces" and *Tléinàx Tawéi* (Lone Sheep) in Tlingit. This is where the Animal Mother made her nest according to Tlingit legend and taught the animals how to behave towards people. It is also said she set down rules on how people must treat her animal children. Some locals suggest that watching the clouds drifting off the peaks or noting the snow pattern on the slopes can be used to predict the weather. There is the opportunity here to link stories to key landscape features visible from this site.

The efforts to present an interesting and inviting site are somewhat off-set by the usual two standard negative symbol signs discouraging overnight use.

***Conclusion**–the site is now sufficiently developed. When the wildlife viewing panels are changed, ensure there is a reference to the new sanctuary and consider relocation to that interpretive site. A panel on the story behind the "Three Aces" could be substituted then, if acceptable to the Teslin Tlingit Council.*

Teslin Lake Campground & Rest Stop (km 1307.5)

This well-equipped facility offers a variety of amenities to the traveller, including fishing, hiking trails and a boat launch. There is a highway rest area immediately in front of the campground which, like many others, will receive new signage. Several of the outhouses now located in the campground will be moved closer to the rest area to serve both facilities. Given this site's location, only 10 kilometres from the viewing platform with its interpretive displays, it seems that the addition of interpretive signage to this site would be unnecessary.

***Conclusion**–no action required*

Historic Mile 830: Brook's Brook Army Camp (km 1333.6)

The official name for this site is *Gántiyàkw* and it was a traditional Tlingit fishing camp. Later it was the place where steamboats landed and were repaired. It became the site of a major construction camp during the building of the Alaska Highway. Today the site is the traditional meeting place for the Teslin Tlingit Council Annual General Assembly.

The historic milepost and site identification sign are easily missed. While there are a number of topics that could be highlighted at this point, it would be difficult to construct a pull-out at this location due to the steep banks and road curvature.

The Teslin Tlingit have reclaimed this site for their own use. The proximity of this site to a major regional site at the junction of the South Canol Road minimizes the need for an additional interpretive site along this stretch of highway.

***Conclusion**–location is not suitable for site development and does not meet spacing distance from the regional site at intersection of the South Canol Road.*

Alaska Highway#1 and Canol Road #6 Junction; Historic Mile 836: (km 1345.5)

The *Campbell Highway and South Canol Road Interpretive Plan* identifies the junction as a regional orientation site. A major upgrade is required to overcome a number of problems with the present site. This is a hidden intersection and the existing signs are easily missed. The earlier report emphasized the need to increase site visibility and encourage visitors to stop. This is the last point at which travellers can be influenced to consider taking the South Canol Road as an alternative route north or as a side trip into the hills to see tundra and alpine meadows.

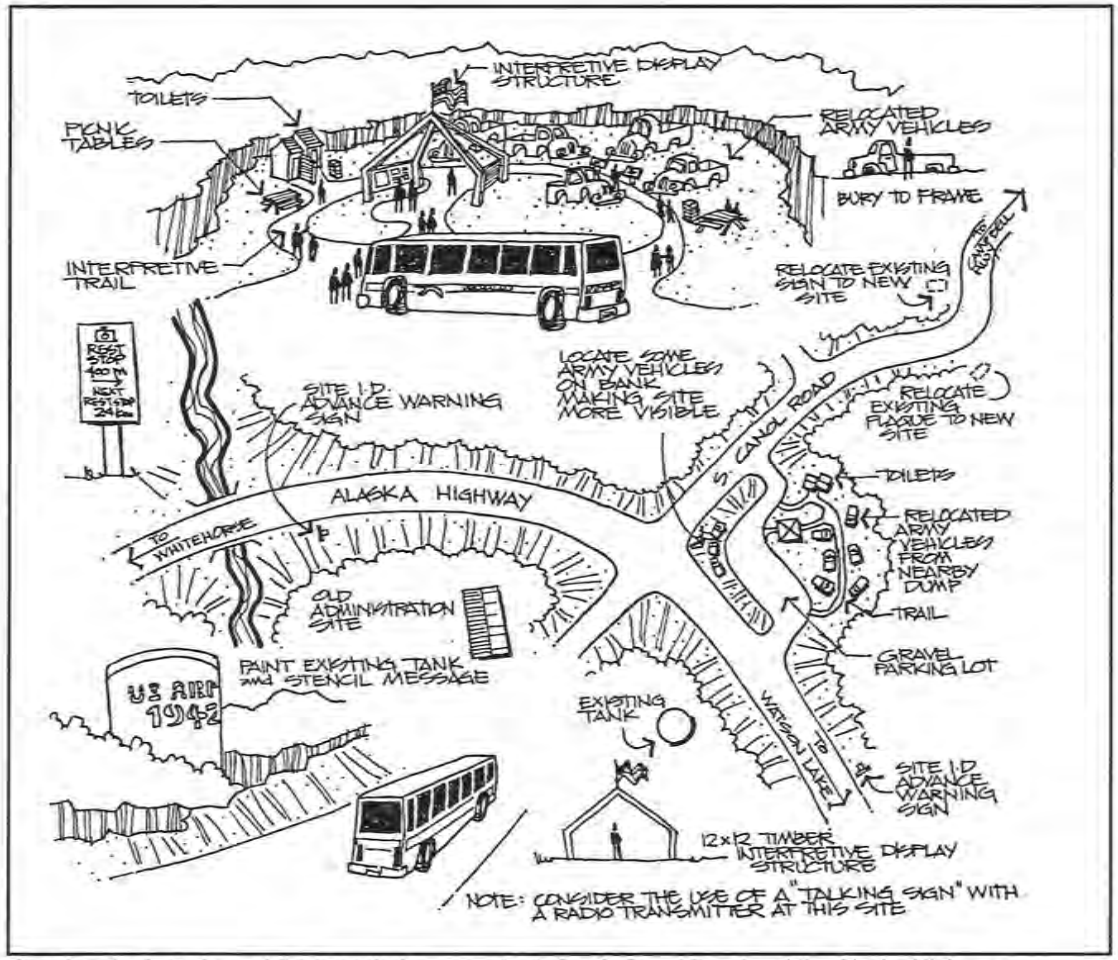
The principal theme would remain the construction of the Canol pipeline and it was suggested that any signage used be complemented by a physical display of construction artifacts to make the site a local landmark. Effective redevelopment of this site will require the support and assistance of Highways to re-grade the road banks to improve sight visibility of the intersection. Some fill is required to create this site and material collected by bank re-grading could be disposed of here.

Consideration should be given at this point to additional themes such as Tagish and inland Tlingit land use as well as the wildlife viewing opportunities on the river near the bridge. Trumpeter and tundra swans can be seen here during their spring and fall migrations.

***Conclusion**–develop as a regional orientation site and ensure site development results in a prominent landmark which encourages travellers to stop.*

Historic Mile 836: Johnson's Crossing Lodge (km 1346.5)

There is a site identification sign and milepost marker located at the entrance to the lodge property.



A regional orientation exhibit intended to serve both South Canol Road and the Alaska Highway.

The original highway lodge has been replaced so the only remaining physical presence reflecting the site's importance is the bridge and this could be interpreted at the regional site across the river.

However, as the Teslin River is visible here and not at the regional site, there are two options worth considering at this location. Option #1 would be to investigate the feasibility of using a "talking sign". Arrangements are usually made with the adjacent lodge operator to look after the transmitter. This idea would likely receive a favourable response if a portion of the message is tourism oriented as in the case of the Jake's Corner tape. It would be important to make sure the transmission range reached east of the South Canol Road junction so it could be tied into the regional site and help promote the road north as well.

The transmitter option could also provide more detail about the Teslin River including First Nation traditional use, current recreational use, the story behind the bridge and the wildlife viewing opportunities during the spring and fall migration.

Option #2 would be to work with Renewable Resources and the Teslin Renewable Resources Council to upgrade the boat launch near the bridge and add a day-use area. There is already a sign at this location regarding appropriate river travel behaviour and the former lodge owner confirms that, while access is a problem, the area gets a fair amount of visitor use. If this site was upgraded, the boat launch site would be an alternative location for signage regarding bridge construction and wildlife migration as well as First Nation use of the river.

***Conclusion**–do not replace site identification and milepost markers at end of useful life. Consider the option of a "talking" sign or cover the relevant stories at the regional site.*

Camp 5-E Squanga Lake Airstrip (km 1355.5) & Big Devil Pump Station (km 1376)

A site identification sign and milepost marker have been erected adjacent to the entrance to the emergency airstrip. The site is unremarkable except for the huge eagles nest on top of a former communications tower. The nest is not visible from the road. The Big Devil Pump Station sign is on the edge of the right-of-way at Summit Lake and is also unremarkable.

***Conclusion**–Maintain both signs as is for life of signage, but do not replace.*

Highway Rest Area near Seaforth Creek (km 1365)

No interpretive signage exists at this site now. Dalayee and Teenah lakes form the headwaters of this creek which drains into Squanga Lake. It is part of an important wildlife corridor with the general area well used on a seasonal basis by the Carcross-Tagish First Nation. Moose and osprey are often seen around the lake and along the creek. Carcross-Tagish elders have expressed concern that the name of the creek is wrong as it was originally called Johns River after the Art Johns family.

The existing rest area next to the creek evolved from a water truck pumping site. Highway Maintenance plans to upgrade this rest area in keeping with their 80 km spacing interval. It is kept open year-round as it is a divisional point for highway maintenance crews. There is a well used year-round trail to Seaforth Lake.

The site has little to offer the highway traveller aside from the creek itself. For westbound travellers Squanga Lake is not visible, lying a further 1 km to the north-west and eastbound travellers have already passed the campground and the lake. Adding an additional site would result in duplication in facilities.

As the Seaforth Creek site will be maintained by C&TS as a designated rest area, the best solution is to add an interpretive display at the existing site. It should orient the traveller to the immediate area including the trail to Seaforth Lake, and indicate the presence of the nearby campground and significance of Squanga Lake.

***Conclusion**–Add interpretive panel about the area to the existing Seaforth Creek site and include First Nation component.*

Johnson's Crossing Lodge, km 1346.5.

Squanga Lake Campground (km 1368)

This small, attractive campground offers swimming, fishing and amenities on a point next to Squanga Lake. There is insufficient room to develop a pull-out adjacent to the campground entrance. Renewable Resources might be approached to add trail and interpretive signage within the campground that covers topics such as the pygmy whitefish, and First Nation names for the area. For example, the Tagish name for Streak Mountain which is visible from the road is *Kwáchóo Taits'éne'* which means ling cod/grandmother's skull) in Tagish. Ling cod is called "grandma" because flesh hangs from its lip like an old woman with a labret.

Any campground signage should refer to the Seaforth Creek site so the interpretive messages at the two locations complement each other.

***Conclusion**–consider encouraging Renewable Resources to add an interpretive trail within the campground covering the themes identified above and include a cross-reference on the proposed Seaforth Creek panel if such a trail is developed.*

Highway Rest Area (km 1379)

This seasonally maintained site is a popular stop according to C&TS Maintenance staff. A bear proof garbage container has been added because of past litter problems. Located on the east side of the road, this is the first real opportunity for the westbound traveller to view the Mount White cliffs. The logical topics for interpretation include the geology of the area and the significance of Mount White to First Nations. However, given the proximity of the site to the Jake's Corner road junction and the previously identified site opportunity at Squanga Lake, the need for an additional site is questionable. Both themes can also be illustrated equally well at one Jake's Corner site.

***Conclusion**–does not meet general spacing objectives; let the view speak for itself.*

Historic Mile 866: Jake's Corner/ Alaska Highway #1 & Tagish Road #8 Junction (km 1392.4)

This is the site of an existing "talking sign" that focuses on encouraging travellers to either visit Atlin, B.C. or take the Carcross-Tagish loop. The script is a travelogue of things to see and do. The warning signs are easily missed and there is no universally recognizable symbol to alert travellers to the sign's presence. There is also a camp site sign commemorating the 50th anniversary of road construction.

It will be difficult to locate a regional orientation site at this T-intersection that will work for both west and eastbound travellers. On the south side of the highway, the ground slopes away quickly towards the Tagish Road and the most suitable location is before the intersection for traffic heading east. The Jake's Corner motel and service station sit on a high bank on the east side of the Alaska Highway overlooking the intersection. The B.C. Government has erected a small information kiosk listing Atlin businesses. The kiosk is similar to the one erected at the Stewart-Cassiar Highway and is easy to miss among the relics of vehicles and machinery lining the bank.

The site is strategically placed to divert travellers down to Atlin, Tagish and into the heart of the Carcross/Southern Lakes Region. The Southern Lakes loop is a full-day trip from Whitehorse, offering excellent opportunities to see wildlife, particularly in the spring.

The highway right-of-way comes quite close to the existing buildings, so it is possible to position interpretive signage where it can be seen. However, this would have to be done with care to clearly differentiate between the regional orientation site and the adjoining commercial property. With careful site planning and directional signage, it should be possible to develop a site that could complement the commercial facilities already present.

Sign and artifacts at Jake's Corner, km 1392.4.

In this situation, the message on the talking sign should identify the location of the interpretive site because it is above the highway and will appear to be part of the adjoining commercial property. The actual entrance and exit locations should be marked clearly. The site should also be planned for year round use.

There are a number of existing commercial signs all intent on attracting travellers in either direction to visit Atlin. This is one of the rare occasions when such intentions are in fact also in the Yukon's best interests. This is because the only way in or out of that community at this time is through the Yukon.

The Carcross-Tagish loop requires promotion and the script needs to recognize both situations. The issue here is how to balance tourism promotion with interpretation because there are a number of themes that could be presented at this location.

This is a good location to discuss the significance of Tagish place names. For example, Mount White is divided into the *Tsámbáa'a* (grey ridge) and *Tl'ó K'aa'Dzéle'* which is the first visible peak where patches of red ochre are clearly visible on the flanks. People burned the rock and used the powder as a dye for decorating potlatch houses and colouring snowshoes. Mount White dominates the view in either direction and combining the Tagish story about the use of red ochre with the mountain geology is a good example of a possible interpretive topic that would sustain visitor interest.

***Conclusion**–work with the adjacent property owner, Atlin and Carcross-Tagish Chamber's of Commerce and Carcross-Tagish First Nation to develop a regional orientation site. Update the "talking sign" to reflect the changes proposed.*

Judas Creek (km 1402.7)

This potential site is easily overlooked as it is situated on a long, straight stretch of road and is not very scenic. The site already receives unregulated use and is a natural picnic or camping spot with an existing driveway in good condition. Judas Creek is called *Kuk'ahéeni Tlein*, the Tlingit words for "big fish tail creek," according to Angela Sidney, because fish jumped at the mouth of this creek and made a noise with their tails. The creek was also the site of a mini gold rush in 1911. When no gold was found, the prospectors named the creek "Judas".

***Conclusion**–while this could be considered as a minor site, there are higher priorities at both Jake's Corner and Marsh Lake.*

Historic Mile 883: Camp 4-E Marsh Lake Camp (km 1420.5)

The site contains only a historic sign and milepost marker and better opportunities for interpretation exist elsewhere. However, this site is one of the few locations with public access to the lake and, while restricted in size, the access point could be developed further for public use at a later date.

***Conclusion**–Replace only if part of a project to improve waterfront access at this point. Point out current significance as a deep water boat launch site on the area interpretation maps used at other sites.*

Marsh Lake (km 1426.8)

The pull-off is situated on the west side of the highway overlooking Marsh Lake. For travellers in either direction this is the first obvious spot to stop by the lake. The site lies below the adjacent highway and the entrance and exit point sight lines need to be improved. Anecdotal information confirms this is a popular stopping point for eastbound truckers as well as highway travellers. In the fall this stretch of shoreline is also a local berry-picking area.

The present sign explains the origin of the lake's English name and describes the role the lake played as a transportation route to the Klondike. It faces away from the lake with a backdrop of trees and shrub willow. The view to the lake could be opened up with some minor brushing of the undergrowth to provide a trail to the water edge. The lakeshore fluctuates significantly during the year with mud flats in the spring and water rising to the vegetation line when runoff from the mountains peaks. This is a good site to observe shorebirds in the spring. The site also provides a panoramic view over the lake towards Mount Lorne to the west.

This site should include additional interpretive panels focusing on First Nation use and occupancy of the area and the importance of the M'cClintock River for salmon spawning. The signs should note seasonal interpretive opportunities available at Swan Haven, which is located away from the highway. A large area map would help to put the Southern Lakes region in better perspective while providing an opportunity to illustrate First Nation place names.

Only a garbage can is needed here. Toilet facilities are available nearby at the day-use area and campground and therefore the distance guideline can be ignored. This is the only point where a driver can stop safely beside the lake. Reference should be made to the location of the nearby Swan Haven Interpretive Centre and the campground/day-use facilities.

***Conclusion**–consider upgrading site with additional interpretive signage. Improve site access visibility and access to the water. Keep brushing to a minimum to avoid berry-picking area.*

Marsh Lake Recreation Site and Campground (km 1429.5)

The campground and recreation sites are two separate sites separated by a shallow marsh. Aside from an orientation map at the entranceway, neither has any interpretive signage. Both sites have vandalism problems and are heavily used by Whitehorse residents. If the Department of Renewable Resources adds any interpretive features, they may wish to focus on beach development and the local wetland features that surround the site. The location of nearby facilities should be noted.

***Conclusion**–co-ordinate upgrade plans for the Marsh Lake site with Department of Renewable Resources initiatives at Swan Haven and this site to avoid duplication.*

Marsh Lake Dam Highway Rest Area (km 1443)

The rest area is located on the south-east side of the Yukon River bridge. The site is tucked in behind a bank and not readily apparent. There is no room for a turning lane in either direction and there needs to be advance warning of the hidden intersections at either end of the bridge. The site contains two double bin garbage cans, two outhouses and a single routed wood free-standing sign describing the history of the dam and the reasons for its construction. There is also a popular boat launch at this location. Transportation Maintenance intends to maintain this site year-round.

There are a number of missed opportunities at this location including a joint venture with Yukon Energy involving the dam and hand operated boat lock. This would be an excellent opportunity for Yukon Energy to provide support for an improved interpretive exhibit while meeting corporate objectives. Such an exhibit might include re-doing the panel on the dam and building a short trail to the dam itself alongside the service road with a second panel talking about how the dam and lock works. A third panel might interpret how the lakes are managed to provide year-round hydro power.

This would leave the Heritage Branch free to concentrate on the significance of the Yukon River to both Yukon and Alaska as well as First Nation land use. The construction of the dam had an impact on the sloughs and wetlands upstream of the bridge. The first slough above the dam is called *Témil Chídlé* (Little Fishnet) in Tagish while anthropologists believe the fish camp near the present dam was called *t'AqAdji.*

The area between the bridge and M'cClintock Bay was important for fishing and muskrat trapping though the latter activity was largely eliminated by the construction of the dam. Caribou regularly cross the road in the vicinity and, in recent years, mule deer are frequently sighted passing through this area.

The Tagish and Inland Tlingit think each major river has a personality and power of its own. "Those who do not belong to the tribe claiming the river must be very polite when travelling there. If they make loud noises or disrespectful comments about the water, they will drown" (McClellan 1975:88). There are stories about the first encounters with

Marsh Lake Dam rest area at south end of bridge, km 1443.

gold rush stampeders coming through the sloughs to the river which could be related at this site.

It is possible to construct a short trail up the side of the bank to provide better views of the wetlands south of the river. There is no safe place for a pedestrian to cross the road to see the sloughs. There is also no walkway on the bridge deck so it is important to design the site in such a manner that visitors are directed away from the bridge. For westbound travellers this site marks the beginning of the legendary Yukon River, one of the 10 largest rivers in the world and the historic route to the Yukon gold fields. This interpretive opportunity should not be missed.

This site should be used to describe some of the features the eastbound traveller will see between here and Marsh Lake.

***Conclusion**–explore the potential for a partnership with Yukon Energy to upgrade the site exhibits and treat as a major interpretive site. Work with C&TS to reduce safety concerns with site access.*

Alaska Highway and Klondike Highway South Junction (Carcross Cut-off) (km 1454.8)

This is an opportunity to develop a regional orientation site and divert travellers to other Yukon destinations. The need for a regional orientation site at this location is noted in the *South Klondike Highway Interpretive Plan* recommendations.

Commercial signage competes here for the travellers' attention. At the request of the Carcross-Tagish Chamber of Commerce, the Heritage Branch added a "talking sign" similar to the one at Jake's Corner providing an overview of the Southern Lakes region and the Carcross-Tagish loop.

The most suitable place for a regional orientation site is on the north-west side of the intersection in the service station parking lot. Most of this land is within the public right-of-way and the proposed site is adjacent to an area postal kiosk. An alternative location would be the south-west corner of the intersection where the interpretive displays would stand out more clearly. However, this would complicate traffic movement through the intersection. The north-west corner is more suited to catch southbound traffic rather than vehicles headed into Whitehorse along the Alaska Highway and would also catch travellers inbound from Skagway.

This is a site where the existing "talking sign" could complement the interpretive signage by providing advance warning and general regional tourism information. This would leave the signage to focus on topics such as the White Pass & Yukon Route and the landscape features of the South Klondike Highway. Themes such as the Gold Rush and First Nations history are better captured elsewhere.

The main weakness with the "talking signs" is that the Department does not know how effective they are as a communication tool. Part of the problem is that the advance warning symbol is not universally recognized so they can be easily missed.

***Conclusion**–develop as regional orientation site in conjunction with South Klondike Highway Interpretive Plan and expand the use of the "talking sign" to provide advance warning and general regional tourism information.*

Carcross Cut-off, junction Alaska Highway #1 and Klondike Highway #2, km 1454.8.

Wolf Creek Campground and Recreation Site (km 1458.6)

This site is now within the City of Whitehorse limits and has been fully developed. A salmon re-introduction program has been successful with salmon returning to spawn in increasing numbers. The Yukon Conservation Society offers an interpretive brochure for the trails, with information on natural and historic features along the way.

***Conclusion**–the site already provides good interpretive opportunities and no additional work is required.*

Historic Mile 908: MP Checking Station (km 1461)

Part of the 50th Anniversary project, this site identification sign and milepost marker are located near the entrance to Wolf Creek Campground. There is no longer any trace of the facility.

***Conclusion**–eliminate at end of useful life.*

Historic Mile 910: McCrae (km 1463.7)

This site marks the previous location of one of the main storage and maintenance camps for highway construction. It remains one of the city's main industrial areas though little evidence of its original purpose remains. Established initially in 1890 with construction of the railroad, it also included a short spur line to the former Whitehorse Copper Mine. After the war, the construction camp was dismantled and many of the buildings removed or sold off.

Four signs can be found in a row facing inward from the highway. They include an old routed wood sign about the 135th meridian, a historic milepost marker, a site identification sign and an interpretive panel describing the history of the construction camp. The signs are easily missed because they are situated in the service road below the elevation of the road so they are barely visible to passing vehicles. At least one of the signs is in poor repair. There are no warning signs to announce the site location.

Alternative locations were examined including moving the site further north and across the road. A site further north, adjacent to the service road and across from the Main Street Mining rock sculptures, would have the least number of conflicts with nearby businesses and would benefit from the presence of the eye-catching sculptures.

If it is to be retained, the site needs better definition of the parking area, with some landscaping to set off the signs.

There may also be a partnership opportunity here with the adjacent business assisting with site maintenance as stopped travellers are likely to patronize their services at the same time if the signage has encouraged them to stop.

***Conclusion**–add landscaping and edge definition to create a more attractive appearance so the signs stand out from the surrounding area. Remove the 135th Meridian sign and phase out remaining signs at end of their useful life as little evidence of former camp remains of interest to visitors.*

Miles Canyon Turn-off (km 1465.7)

The original wood-routed sign, indicating the turn-off to Miles Canyon, has been removed. Miles Canyon is an important attraction within the City of Whitehorse and most Alaska-bound tour buses enter or exit the city using this road which follows the edge of Schwatka Lake. City of Whitehorse plans for the area have identified the need to upgrade interpretive signage along the road. C&TS could assist by providing advance warning signage along the Alaska Highway.

***Conclusion**–add advance warning signage of the intersection.*

View looking north at McCrae, km 1463.7.

3.2 Site Inventory Issue Summary

The site inventory and assessment confirms there are a number of issues that need to be resolved in this corridor interpretive plan. The Alaska Highway construction theme clearly dominates the existing signage because the highway drastically changed the Yukon and significantly altered travel patterns. The Alaska Highway theme is also dominant because historic marker signage was installed along the road for the 50th anniversary. However, this signage provides little more than site identification and is increasingly irrelevant as the highway is rebuilt to modern standards. Potential visitors who may have been associated with the initial road and pipeline construction are becoming too old to travel. The vast majority of sites now contain nothing more than a site identification panel and a historic milepost marker. They could be eliminated from the program at the end of their useful life. This would affect at least 21 signs.

The border crossing locations on the Alaska Highway and Stewart Cassiar Highway need to convey a sense of "entry/arrival" in the Yukon. This Gateway theme is particular relevant to the Town of Watson Lake which markets it. In both cases there are three possible options:

- do nothing, leave "Welcome to Yukon" border signs to speak for themselves;
- investigate the feasibility of "talking signs" to put the welcome message into a tangible interpretive form; or
- incorporate the "gateway" message into the first available site.

The third issue relates to the development of regional and sub-regional sites and the interrelationship of the Alaska Highway sites to other Interpretive Plan recommendations. In the case of Watson Lake, the Sign Post Forest site and the adjacent Government of Yukon Visitor Reception Centre already meet the needs of the Alaska Highway program. The next priority should be to develop the Campbell Highway exhibit as recommended in the Campbell Highway and South Canol Road Interpretive plan.

The intersection of the Alaska Highway and Stewart-Cassiar Highway poses its own problems and opportunities. Watson Lake wants to attract travellers to the community before they turn west or south to leave the territory. The existing Weigh Scale Station is an ideal site, particularly if the Town of Watson Lake were to enter into a partnership with others to operate a seasonal visitor reception centre. Heritage Branch could contribute the regional orientation signage under this program mandate. Alternatively, the department could investigate the feasibility of using a "talking" sign to partially achieve the same objective.

The junction of the Alaska Highway and South Canol Road is identified as a key regional orientation site in the *Campbell/South Canol Road Plan*. Development of the potential of this site would support this plan's goals as well. The Jake's Corner and Carcross cut-off sites are of lesser significance but very important from a regional tourism development perspective.

The next issue is a question of spacing and the potential for inter-agency collaboration. Highway maintenance staff are committed to a program of full service rest areas approximately every 80 km and these sites will be maintained year-round. There is a proliferation of sites along the corridor that need to be rationalized through inter-agency discussion to reduce duplication, improve the visitor experience and reduce maintenance costs. Not all sites require toilet facilities nor does every site with interpretive potential need a sign. To the extent possible, providing some form of interpretive opportunity every 50 km will meet program and visitor needs.

A number of the rest area pull-outs are poorly defined and often significantly larger than required partly because there was a surplus of material following road reconstruction. This means sites such as the Continental Divide simply have the appearance of one giant parking lot. On the other hand, past maintenance experience has shown that sites with ditch medians have not been successful, especially in the winter, and a number have been filled in to make maintenance simpler.

There are many interpretive themes that can be portrayed at each site and the challenge is to find the right balance so as not to lose visitor interest. Linking themes and relationships and making such simple changes as the addition of the original First Nation place name to a geographic feature can arouse visitor interest and respect First Nation traditional territories. Proper spelling should be confirmed by the affected First Nation.

There is a balance between "too much and too little" in interpretive signage. If it is too frequent, or too similar, the signage starts to lose its effectiveness. If there is too much at any one site, the message is lost. Signage is also only one interpretive medium and it has strengths and weaknesses that need to be considered in design. Issues such as text size, colour contrast, panel fabrication method and plaque angle all must be considered with the visitor's interests in mind.

Finally, the Alaska Highway is the main transportation corridor through the Yukon. And the most heavily travelled road year-round. It was clear from the November field trip that not much thought has been given to year-round accessibility beyond ploughing the parking lots.

3.3 Assessment of Current Sign Text

The messages presented at each individual sign location were analyzed as to their particular perspectives and themes. The analysis attempts to highlight shortcomings, redundancies and inadequacies in the information presented.

The actual text on each Tourism Department sign is in the left column. The right column contains notes that touch on the text deficiencies and suggested ways to improve thematic representation.

As a general observation, the highway and its construction history is well covered while–with one notable exception– First Nations culture, history and naming conventions are largely under-represented. Regional orientation material is non-existent.

EXISTING SIGN TEXT	COMMENT
3.3.1 BC/Yukon Border to Big Creek Recreation Area **Yukon Border Crossing** *km 1008 (Yukon) Alaska Highway (South)* Theme: Welcome to the Yukon, History of area Sign1 – YUKON BORDER This marks the border between British Columbia and Yukon, at the latitude of 60 degrees north. Between Historic Mile 585 and here, the highway has already dipped back and forth across the border seven times. Over the next 255 kilometers (140 miles) the highway will swing back into B.C. several more times, once for a stretch of 68 kilometers (42 miles), before making a final crossing at Morley Lake, southeast of Teslin. Sign 2 – LOWER POST Lower Post, at Historic Mile 620, is a former Indian Village site and Hudson's Bay Company trading post. It is located at the junction of the Liard and Dease rivers and, in the 1800s, was a stopping off point for trappers and miners heading north along the Liard. It has been known variously as Sylvester's Lower Post, Liard Post, and Lower Post. It was called Sylvester's Lower Post after Rufus Sylvester, a former Cariboo miner who built the log structure for the original trading post in the mid-1870s. During highway construction, Lower Post was the site of a United States military sawmill. It was built in March 1943 by soldiers of the 341st Regiment of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and was used to process timbers for bridge construction. The highway originally ran through the centre of the town, following a wagon trail that had served for many years as the main link between Lower post and Watson lake, 24 kilometers (15 miles) to the northeast. In 1985, the highway was re-routed to the east of Lower Post.	• As a "welcome to the Yukon," this site would benefit from basic orientation materials: a geo-political map of the territory showing its context within North America; an introduction to the people of the Yukon, both traditional First Nations and the current population; and an idea of what it means to live North of 60 and why anyone would want to. This site should say to a traveller: You have arrived at a unique place, a special place–let us introduce you to it. • The "Gateway" and "Arrival" themes can be woven together with First Nations legend in an interesting and informative way here, if told by an elder and incorporated into a "talking" sign. For example, Cruikshank (1991:41) describes the Kaska Dena story about the winter and summer worlds and linked the legend to the arrival of Robert Campbell, thought to be the first white man in the region.

Watson Lake

km 1020.5 Alaska Highway
Theme: Recent History

SIGN 1 – THE WORLD FAMOUS WATSON LAKE SIGNPOSTS

THE YUKON WAS A DISTANT AND, SOMETIMES, LONELY PLACE FOR THE THOUSANDS OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS WHO WERE SENT NORTH TO BUILD THE WAR-TIME ROAD TO ALASKA.

WHILE CONVALESCING AFTER A VEHICLE ACCIDENT IN 1942, CARL LINDLEY – A 21 YEAR-OLD SOLDIER WITH COMPANY D, 341ST ENGINEERS – WISTFULLY ERECTED A SIGN TO HIS HOMETOWN OF DANVILLE, ILLINOIS. THIS SINGLE SIGN HAS GROWN INTO A "FOREST" OF MORE THAN 20,000 SIGNS FROM CITIES AND TOWNS AROUND THE WORLD.

THIS INTERNATIONAL SIGNPOST COLLECTION IS STILL GROWING, AS VISITORS ADD OVER 2,000 SIGNS EACH YEAR.

SIGN 2 – GERTRUDE

ED KERRY AND "GERTRUDE", HIS 1938 TD 35 INTERNATIONAL TRACTOR, CAME TO THE YUKON AS A TEAM IN THE 1940s DURING THE BUILDING OF THE ALASKA HIGHWAY. FOR 40 YEARS GERTRUDE COULD BE SEEN AT CONSTRUCTION SITES ALL OVER THE YUKON, BUILDING EVERYTHING FROM AIRSTRIPS AND CITY STREETS (IN WHITEHORSE) TO PORTIONS OF THE ALASKA HIGHWAY.

"GERTIE" WAS DONATED TO THE YUKON GOVERNMENT BY THE KERRY FAMILY IN MEMORY OF ED KERRY, A LOYAL AND TRUE YUKONER.

SIGN 3 – NORTHWEST STAGING ROUTE

The growth of air travel in the 1930s sparked an interest in creating a "Great Circle Route", to link the Canadian Northwest with Alaska, Siberia, and China. In 1935, the Canadian Department of Transport sponsored Dan McLean and the famous bush pilot Punch Dickens, to scout an air route to the Far East. Based on their recommendations, the federal government authorized the construction of airfields between Edmonton, Alberta and Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, as part of a route to the Orient. In 1940, work began on airfields at Grande Prairie, Alberta; Fort St. John and Fort Nelson, British Columbia; and Watson Lake and Whitehorse in the Yukon. Between these points, emergency airstrips were built as a safety measure. By September 1941, the route was open to aircraft flying visual flight rules. Three months later, the installation of radio beacons made all-weather flying possible.

Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, made the United States

- Sign 1 and 2 suffer–as do all such wood routed signs–from having text set in all upper case lettering. Numerous studies have shown that this style of typesetting is difficult to read and more often misunderstood than text set in upper and lower case. It is visually formidable and therefore less inviting to read. Having said that, the signs are to the point and do not suffer from excess verbiage.
- All signage at this location focuses on a single theme–military history of the Alaska Highway and Watson Lake. Given the information overload at the Sign Post Forest–and its very origins–this is just as well. The themes of First Nations traditional land use and the area's natural resources should be dealt with at the proposed Campbell Highway orientation site.
- The Liard First Nation topics could be incorporated into exhibits at the Visitor Reception Centre. Since the primary focus of those displays is highway construction, the First Nation perspective could be illustrated by highlighting the changes and impacts that highway construction had on Kaska people and culture.

fearful that Alaska and the Aleutians were also possible targets. To expedite the movement of men and supplies through a protected inland route to the Alaskan coast, the airstrips along the Northwest Staging Route were upgraded to handle large bombers. Hangers, workshops, refuelling facilities, and lighting were added to the basic airfields and barracks built to house airport staff. By July 1943, the Northwest Staging Route was complete and capable of handling military aircraft in all weather.

The construction of the Northwest Staging Route was a major factor in determining a route for the Alaska Highway. A road that linked up the airfields of the Northwest Staging Route would provide a secure supply route, out of range from Japanese attack. The airfields supported and protected highway construction, while the highway, in turn, supplied the system of airfields.

Sign 4 – BELL P-39 AIRACOBRA

THIS MODEL IS IN COMMEMORATION OF THE PILOTS WHO FLEW THE NORTHWEST STAGING ROUTE DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR.

THIS P-39 REPLICA IS AN EXAMPLE OF ONE OF MORE THAN 8,000 MILITARY AIRCRAFT THAT PASSED THROUGH WATSON LAKE BETWEEN 1942 AND 1945.

THESE P-39 AIRACOBRAS WERE FLOWN TO THE SOVIET UNION UNDER THE AMERICAN – RUSSIAN LEND LEASE PROGRAM. THE PLANES WERE WINTERIZED IN GREAT FALLS, MONTANA, AND PAINTED WITH RUSSIAN MILITARY INSIGNIA.

THE P-39'S WERE THEN FLOWN TO THE LADD FIELD NEAR FAIRBANKS, ALASKA, WHERE THEY WERE TURNED OVER TO RUSSIAN PILOTS WHO FLEW THEM TO NOME, THEN ACROSS THE BERING SEA TO NOVOSIBIRSK IN SIBERIA AND ON TO VARIOUS WAR FRONTS IN RUSSIA

BUILT BY: BELL AIRCRAFT CORPORATION

POWER: ALLISON LIQUID COOLED V-12, 1200 HORSE POWER

WEIGHT: EMPTY 5,600 POUNDS GROSS 8,000 POUNDS

WING SPAN: 34 FEET

LENGTH: 30 FEET

MAXIMUM SPEED: 380 MILES PER HOUR

ARMAMENT: 1–20 MILLIMETER CANNON, 60 ROUNDS 2–50 CALIBRE GUNS, 200 ROUNDS 2–30 CALIBRE GUNS, 1,000 ROUNDS

THIS MODEL WAS CONSTRUCTED BY MR. DAVE McILMOYLE OF WATSON LAKE, YUKON

FINANCED: YUKON DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM * TOWN OF WATSON LAKE

- Once again, signage is difficult and uninviting to read because it is set in capital letters
- NOTE: The Airacobra model was erected by the Town of Watson Lake and was removed in 1998 for refurbishment. However, the estimated cost of repair appeared to be prohibitive and Town Council has decided not to re-erect the model. The base will need to be removed. The brass plaque could be re-used in the Visitor Information Centre with a miniature model of the plane.

3.3.2 Big Creek Recreation Area to Teslin

Rancheria *(in Campground)*

km 1144 Alaska Highway

Theme: Historical information

In the early 1880s the Yukon was still a largely unknown wilderness. Prospectors were just beginning to explore the rugged country of the interior, and in several places had found small amounts of gold.

One of the first people outside the Yukon to realize the importance of these finds was George Mercer Dawson, geologist and later Director of the Geological Society of Canada.

He urged the Minister of the Interior to send a reconnaissance team to the area and investigate it more thoroughly. In 1887 Dawson himself was sent north, along with a team of geologists and surveyors.

It was an incredible exploration, covering 60,000 square miles and taking the work of the G.S.C. above the Arctic Circle for the first time. Dawson was an equally incredible individual. Crippled by disease as a child, he still carried out the demanding work of the survey with the utmost capability. He was well-liked by everyone and was an observant and unbiased reporter.

The reconnaissance team's route took them across the country from Ottawa to Victoria and up the coast to the mouth of the Stikine River. From there they had travelled overland through the Cassiar District of northern British Columbia and inland on the Liard River, passing the mouth of the Rancheria River.

Unlike many explorers of the day who bestowed new names on all of the geological features they saw, Dawson tried diligently to record the existing Indian names. He could not establish the original native name for this river, but noted that it was known as the Rancheria, probably named for miners who had come to the area some years earlier during a short-lived gold rush.

Dawson and his men spent many months studying and mapping the Yukon and their final report was the first thorough account of the area to be published.

- This sign, currently in storage, contributes interesting historical information about the area, but shows a cultural bias in the first paragraph. Should this subject be re-visited, it would be a good opportunity to expand on the First Nations theme alluded to, that of traditional toponyms. Some of the regional names should be included in the text, together with First Nations stories and legends that explain them. Also, references to "Indian" and "Native" should be up-dated to "First Nations" to reflect current usage.

Rancheria

km 1144 Alaska Highway

Theme: Recent history

After World War II was over and the rest of the country was returning to normal, the Alaska Highway was still under military control. Civilian traffic was restricted by both government regulation and the lack of services for the casual traveller.

In 1946, the British Yukon Navigation Company started a bus service from Dawson Creek, British Columbia to Whitehorse, Yukon. The company financed the construction of four highway lodges along the route to provide gas for their trucks and busses and refreshments for the passengers. The early highway lodges varied greatly in appearance. These included hastily converted army barrack buildings, stout two-story log structures and a framed wall tent for serving lunches.

Rancheria was one of the first lodges to open. The original lodge was constructed of logs with the help of Bud Simpson. Simpson eventually bought the place and ran it with his wife Doris for 28 years. As the business grew, the building was enlarged using materials salvaged from the nearby abandoned highway construction camp. This was common practice at a time when lumber was expensive and hard to come by.

The highway lodges served simple meals and offered sanctuary from severe weather and road conditions. Doris Simpson served her first meal to a man and his son who arrived during a snow storm, on the night of October 9th, 1946. They feasted on ham and eggs. in 1948, a roast beef dinner with all the trimmings was $1. Gasoline was not so cheap, however, selling for 55 cents per gallon! Rooms were reasonably priced at $3 to $4 for a double. Mrs.Simpson can recall a few times, in bad weather, when strangers were forced to sleep two to a bed and even under the dining room table.

Many of the early lodges were destroyed by fire, usually caused by wood heat, faulty wiring, or temperamental generators. Also, many lodges closed down as the road improved, and there was less need for frequent stopping places. Rancheria is one of the few original Alaska Highway lodges still operating today.

In 1974, the lodge was purchased by Beverly Dinning who has continued the tradition of staying open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

- Viewed in the context of its commercial setting, this sign text is both appropriate and interesting. Other area themes–such as First Nations legends and natural history, are better suited to the Rancheria Falls Recreation site nearby.
- Should this panel ever be updated or replaced, the last sentence should be eliminated or re-phrased, as it "dates" the signage.

Continental Divide

km 1164 Alaska Highway
Theme: Geographical History

SIGN 1

This height of land divides two of the largest drainage systems in North America – the Yukon River and the Mackenzie River watersheds.

Water draining west from this point forms the Swift River. This river drains into the Yukon River and continues a northwest journey of 3,680 kilometers (2,300 miles) to the Bering Sea (Pacific Ocean).

- As there is no visible evidence of the "divide" here, it is up to the signage to fill in the gaps. For such a significant site, the information imparted is dry and spare. Viewers are only given general information when there are a variety of stories that could be told.

Water that drains to the east forms the Rancheria River which flows into the Liard River then the Mackenzie River. These waters flow northward and empty into the Beaufort Sea (Arctic Ocean) after a journey of 4,200 kilometers (2,650 miles).

SIGN 2

There is a distinct difference in traditional land use patterns corresponding with this separation of river drainages. Pacific salmon migrate up the Yukon River watershed providing a reliable and relatively abundant food resources and less transient human population than land to the east.

- Sign 2 is ineffective. Readers are left wondering what the "...distinct differences in traditional land use patterns" are. This panel should address the questions it raises and which readers may have: were Pacific watershed folks richer than Arctic watershed folks? how did they live and work? did they look different from each other? is the climate different in the 2 watersheds? are there ecological differences such as vegetation, geology or fauna that are unique to each watershed?

3.3.3 Teslin to Whitehorse

Teslin

km 1294 Alaska Highway
Theme: Area Military History

The construction of the Alaska Highway brought a new way of life to the Yukon's native people. It proved to be a mixed blessing. The impact on the people of Teslin is a good example.

When World War II began, the majority of Teslin's native people lived at Johnston Town, at the south end of Teslin Lake. They hunted, fished, and trapped, following traditions that fostered respect for the earth and its animals. Even after the arrival of white traders, contact with non-natives occurred only once or twice a year.

When the highway came through, there were suddenly many "strangers" in the country who brought machinery and foreign ways. The soldiers also brought disease with them. The Indians had little resistance even to the common cold – let alone the dysentery, jaundice, whooping cough, mumps, tonsillitis, and meningitis that plagued the Yukon's native population during the winter of 1942. Many died during the construction years.

After the war, many Indians moved closer to the highway communities to be near wage work, schools, medical facilities and swifter travel. The old settlements along the rivers and lakes were abandoned, including Johnston Town. It is because of this migration that older natives equate the coming of the highway with the end of traditional ways and the loss of a simpler way of life. One Teslin Elder remarked sadly that "after the highway, it seemed that all the dreams of Johnston Town were fading away."

- The content of this sign complements the signage at the Village of Teslin park and marina immediately east. Should this sign be moved to that site, as suggested, this complementary association would be stronger yet. Other stories that could be brought out at this point include how residents doubted a road was being pushed through from Carcross and the impact the first bulldozers had on arrival.
- The Teslin bridge is a story in itself, as it is the longest bridge on the Alaska Highway, and could be added at this site.

INDIAN GUIDES

There were few accurate maps for most of the Yukon when the U.S. Army began work on the Alaska Highway. Initial reconnaissance was done by aircraft, but often the road builders relied on local Indian guides to lead them through the wilderness. This country was not an unknown frontier to the natives who had hunted and trapped here for generations.

One such guide was John K. Thorn from Teslin. Together with David Johnston, he guided the highway surveyors from Teslin, southeast to Contact Creek near Lower Post, British Columbia. Thorn was well-qualified to choose the best route for this section of the highway. His family had trapped in the Swan Lake area to the east of Teslin for years and had traded with the Kaska people to the southeast past Watson Lake.

The guiding party travelled on foot, supported by one pack horse, for the entire summer of 1942. The urgency with which the road was built meant that the niceties of a formal survey were often ignored. As the guiding party moved along blazing a trail, the bulldozers were often right behind them cutting road. On one occasion, over eager cat operators had been close on the heels of guides for hours, only to find they had been led in a circle. This was a not too subtle warning from the guides to keep their distance.

Despite these rare pranks, however, the Indian guides proved invaluable to the construction of the pioneer road. Many of the guides continued in the service of the highway and maintenance crews after the road was completed. Some Teslin Indians worked on the highway for three generations.

- Should the signs be updated or replaced, references to "native" and "Indian" people should be standardized to "First Nations".

Teslin Lake

km 1297 Alaska Highway

Theme: History of Area

SIGN 1 – THE ALASKA HIGHWAY

Before the construction of the Alaska Highway the Indian people of this area lived a very traditional life and were well-known as successful hunters and trappers. One of the most prominent families was the Johnstons, who were descended from the original Taku River chief Kowakha. George Johnston, a son of Kowakha, earned enough money one winter to buy a car and have it transported by barge to Teslin.

- A good representation of diverse themes that adequately represents regional First Nations interests.

This was 1928, nearly 15 years before the Alaska Highway was built. Johnston cut his own road 6 km (4 miles) along the lakeshore to Fox Creek, complete with culverts and short-span pole bridges. He ran a "taxi" service along this road in the summer and used the Chevrolet sedan – after painting it white – to hunt wolves on lake ice in winter. Johnston also ran a successful general store in Teslin and is known for his photographs of the community from 1910 – 40.

Engineers surveying the route for the Alaska Highway in 1941 followed Johnston's road. In spring 1942 a large construction camp was established at Brook's Brook (Mile 830/km 1328). A number of Teslin Indians found casual work as guides, packers or laborers, or making handicrafts. For the first time, people stayed in a community over the winter instead of going out on their traplines. Epidemics of measles, whooping cough, meningitis and mumps swept through the village one after another, killing seven, most of them children.

After the highway was completed, the Teslin people spent less and less time on their traplines. Changes in trapping regulations, low fur prices and new government schools kept families in town most of the year.

Many Teslin people still hunt and trap today. The Teslin Tlingit Council is also the first in the Yukon to return to a traditional clan system of government. Teslin is also home to the first Indian speaker of a Canadian legislature: Sam Johnston, another descendent of Chief Kowakha.

SIGN 2– TESLIN

Teslin Lake is one of the largest lakes in the territory, at 125 kilometers (78 miles long) and 3 kilometers (2 miles) wide. Its name and name of the small settlement Teslin, five km (3 miles) to the south, came from the Tlingit "Teslin-too" meaning long narrow lake.

The Community of Teslin (mile 804 /km 1295) sits at 2,329 feet (672 meters) above sea level. The three peaks you see to the south rise to 6,500 feet (1981 meters). These mountains, called the Dawson Peaks, actually lie in British Columbia, as does the southern third of Teslin Lake. Most of the landmarks in the area have traditional Tlingit Indian names–examples are shown on the map.

The Island Tlingit people have fished and hunted in the region for countless years. Long before the Alaska Highway was built in 1942, Teslin Lake was an important stop for both overland and water travellers. People journeyed overland by trails that led to the Taku and Stikine rivers on the coast of Alaska as well as to Atlin Lake and Carcross. During the Klondike Gold Rush, paddle-wheel steamers plied Teslin Lake and the Yukon River transporting goods and people between Whitehorse and Teslin. The steamers were pulled out of the water in the 1940's when the highway replaced river traffic.

- There is some repetition of information between the first panel in this grouping and the panel at Teslin, regarding the construction of the Alaska Highway and its impact on the Teslin Tlingit First Nation. There is also an inconsistency in spelling between these two sites, of "Johnstontown" or "Johnston Town."

- The Dawson Peaks are known locally as the "Three Aces" and Tléinax Tawéi (Lone Sheep) in Tlingit. This is where the Animal Mother made her nest according to Tlingit legend and taught the animals how to behave towards people. It is also said she set down rules on how people must treat her animal children. Some locals suggest that watching the clouds drifting off the peaks or noting the snow pattern on the slopes can be used to predict subsequent weather patterns as well.

SIGN 3– NATIVE TRADITIONS

Long before the first outsiders appeared, the Indian people of this area were trading with the coastal Tlingit Indians for Russian and European trade goods. The coastal Tlingit travelled inland from the Taku River area near Juneau, Alaska, with guns, axes, tobacco, blankets, calico and matches. They also brought wooden boxes, baskets, seaweed and eulachon oil, which they traded for inland furs. Sometimes they stayed through the winter to trap.

Eventually a group of Tlingit people permanently moved inland. They spent most of the year trapping and hunting around Teslin Lake and travelled to the coast only to trade. These "Inland Tlingit", like their Athapaskan neighbors to the north, followed the seasonal migration of whatever fish or game was available. In spring they trapped beaver and hunted waterfowl around the Nisutlin River delta. In summer they would travel up the Nisutlin River to trap Salmon. In late August, families went into the mountains to hunt caribou, sheep, moose and gophers. Winter was the trapping season. By February families were moving again, looking for good ice-fishing lakes and fresh meat. The Teslin people trapped and hunted from Wolf Lake east to the headwaters of the Liard, north to central Yukon, halfway down the Teslin River and south to Johnstontown.

The Naming of Fox Point – Naagas'éi X'aayí
As related by a Teslin elder

Many years ago some woman wanted to come up to their salmon cache at Crowknife up the Nisutlin River. They camped along the lakeshore at the mouth of Teslin River. There was a woman Indian doctor living there also and she had a vision that something bad would happen if they went to this cache and she told them that they shouldn't but they went. So she went along with them and her grandchild was with her. She told them they would see three signs and that these were bad luck. The first sign they saw was a wolverine coming across the lake and it was dancing. They kept on going then they saw a lynx coming across and it was also dancing. The kept on going and the last sign they saw was a fox dancing across the lake and she told them this last sign... {Note: Some text not recorded}

SIGN 4 – EARLY HISTORY

The traditional Tlingit trading trails from the Alaskan cost to Teslin Lake were considered good alternative routes to the Klondike gold fields because they avoided U.S. Customs. In 1897 railway engineers surveyed the route from Glenora, at the headwaters of the Stikine River, to Teslin Lake, and a year later they began to build. A political change of heart halted construction after only twenty miles of grade had been completed, but hundreds of gold seekers and a Canadian army contingent, the Yukon Field Force, still used the route.

- The content of these signs are interesting and informative, and go a long way to addressing regional First Nation themes. However, the text is quite lengthy on some of the panels. Sign 3, for instance, is just under 400 words–twice the *maximum* length advised by many interpretive planners. According to the Interpreter's Handbook Series, the success of a sign can be reduced to a formula in which the effort required to read is a function of the reader's expectation of reward. It is questionable whether there is enough expectation of reward in this panel for most readers to expend the effort to read it all. Many may find the task too daunting to begin.

- A good example of a story of interest to visitors

The Field Force was a 200-man contingent of troops sent north to assist the North West Mounted Police and assert Canadian sovereignty in a largely American gold rush. The most difficult part of their journey was the trail from Glenora to the north end of Teslin Lake – 150 miles through rough terrain alternating from heavy brush to melting muskeg. It took one month for the force, its packhorses and 100 tons of supplies to cover the same distance that Indian packers had traditionally travelled in less than a week.

The Hudson's Bay Company (H.B.Co) had established a trading post on Teslin Lake in 1898 and a small settlement called Galbraith (or Galbraith's Post) grew up around it. The Canadian Development Company (CDC) ran a sawmill and shipyard nearby. The CDC completed a small steamer called the Anglian in July 1898 in time to carry part of the Field Force to Fort Selkirk on the Yukon River. The rest of the force sailed homemade scows and boats down Teslin Lake and down the Teslin and Yukon Rivers to Fort Selkirk.

The H.B.Co post closed after the brief gold rush boom but a second trading post was built in 1903 near Nisutlin Bay at the present site of the town of Teslin. The Island Tlingit continued to trap and hunt, ranging over a large area of land, but the new settlement of Teslin became their summer headquarters.

Johnson's Crossing

km 1345.5 Alaska Highway

Theme: Military History

THE CANOL PROJECT

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the American government feared a Japanese invasion of its Alaska coastline. To counter this threat, the United States army upgraded the airfields of the Northwest Staging Route and built the Alaska Highway to transport men and equipment to their Alaskan bases.

Construction and maintenance of these strategic transportation routes required enormous amounts of gasoline and oil. Normally, fuel would have been carried north by ship. With the Japanese in the Aleutian Islands, however, the United States Government feared that regular shipping lanes were not safe. The Canol Project was born out of the need for a secure oil supply.

Canol, short for Canada Oil, was a massive effort funded by the United States military and built by the construction consortium, Bechtel-Price-Callahan. Under this project, the oil fields at Norman Wells in the Northwest Territories were developed, a refinery was built in Whitehorse, and a four inch pipeline was laid between the two. In addition, 600 miles of road,

- This panel covers the history of the Canol project well. What is missing is the "rest of the story". That is: the clean-up efforts that continued for decades afterwards, the long-term impacts of this major project, and the on-going environmental issues. Reference can be made to what is still observable to travellers along the South Canol Road.
- In the on-going debate over the environmental implications of tanker shipments of crude, it is worth noting that during the time of the Canol Project, Alaska was being supplied from the lower 48 with 12 tankers per month. At the height of production, the Canol project provided Alaska with the equivalent of one additional tanker of oil per month. Was it worth the environmental

telephone lines, several airstrips and ten pumping stations were built to service the line. Oil was pumped up and down the highways through auxiliary lines between Whitehorse and Fairbanks, and from Carcross to Watson Lake. A line was also built between Whitehorse and Skagway, Alaska to bring oil from the south if necessary. In all, 200,000 tons of material and over 50,000 people were employed by the Canol. From an estimated cost of $30 million, the final price of this megaproject ballooned to over $134 million.

The project was controversial. It consumed an incredible amount of workers, labor, and materials at at time when they were badly needed elsewhere. The Japanese threat to coastal shipping never materialized. Production costs for a barrel of oil from the Canol was over four times higher than the world price. It was much cheaper to ship the oil to the Alaska Highway via the 110 mile line from Skagway. The project was shut down in 1944, less than a year after the refinery had opened. Robert P. Patterson, United States Under Secretary of War, summed up the Canol project saying:

I suppose that we must bow to the verdict, that the project was useless and a waste of public funds.

Marsh Lake

km 1427 Alaska Highway
Theme: History of area

ORIGINALLY THIS BODY OF WATER WAS KNOWN AS MUD LAKE, SINCE ITS SILTY, SHALLOW BOTTOM MADE NAVIGATION DIFFICULT. IN 1883, HOWEVER, WHEN AMERICAN EXPLORER FREDERICK SCHWATKA SURVEYED THE YUKON RIVER, HE CHANGED THE NAME TO MARSH LAKE, AFTER YALE COLLEGE PROFESSOR OTHNIEL CHARLES MARSH. THIS IS THE MOST NORTHERLY OF A CHAIN OF LAKES THAT EXTEND FROM THE PACIFIC COAST AND FROM THE HEADWATERS OF THE 1984-MILE YUKON RIVER. IN 1898 THOUSANDS OF WOULD-BE MINERS SAILED DOWN THIS ROUTE ON THEIR WAY TO THE KLONDIKE GOLD FIELDS.

Marsh Lake Dam

km 1444 Alaska Highway
Theme: History of area

THE WHITE PASS & YUKON ROUTE BUILT A WOODEN DAM HERE IN 1924. THIS HELD EXTRA WATER TO LAUNCH THE STERNWHEELERS AT WHITEHORSE IN THE SPRING, CARRY THEM OVER THE SHALLOW STRETCHES BEFORE AND AFTER LAKE LABERGE, AND FLUSH OUT

damage?

- Perhaps the environmental impact story could best be told at the proposed regional orientation exhibit at the north end of the South Canol and the junction with the Robert Campbell Highway.
- Other themes that may be presented here are First Nations traditional routes and land use, wildlife viewing opportunities and the story of Pacific Salmon. The bridge here represents the eastern-most crossing of a salmon stream by the Alaska Highway.

- The use of all capital letters should be avoided
- Originally this lake was known as Ta'an Mun. A fine parallel theme could be developed here explaining First Nations land use, place names and legends surrounding the lake.
- Metric distance should be used

- Many themes should be developed here around the Yukon River. It has significance locally, nationally and internationally. The Yukon River a major route to the Klondike gold fields and is

THE LAKE ICE. THE DAM WAS REPLACED IN 1952, THEN LATER TAKEN OVER BY THE NORTHERN CANADA POWER COMMISSION. NCPC BUILT THE PRESENT STEEL DAM IN 1975 TO HELP POWER THE WHITEHORSE HYDRO PROJECT. THE FIRST TWO DAMS HAVE BEEN DISMANTLED, BUT THEIR FOOTINGS REMAIN UPSTREAM OF THIS STRUCTURE, PREVENTING BANK EROSION.

McCrae

km 1463.5 Alaska Highway
Theme: Military History, Geographical Location

SIGN 1– 135TH MERIDIAN

THIS POINT MARKS THE 135TH DEGREE LONGITUDE.
YOU ARE NOW APPROXIMATELY 850 MILES WEST OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

SIGN 2– MCCRAE CONSTRUCTION CAMP

McCrae originated in 1900, as a flag stop on the newly-constructed White Pass and Yukon Railway. It was named after a company director, Colin Macrae. Shortly thereafter, the wagon road to Carcross was built and intersected the railway at this point. In 1911, a 12 mile spur line was completed from here to the mines of the Whitehorse Copper Belt. This operated for about 10 years until low copper prices made it uneconomical to ship the ore south.

When the army came north to build the Alaska Highway tote road in 1942, they followed part of the old wagon road. At this convenient intersection of rail and road, which was now spelled McCrae, the army set up a large camp including a complex of warehouses and shops for storage and vehicle maintenance. While the highway was under army control, a traffic checkstop was in operation just south of the tracks. Military police stopped all highway travellers to check their papers. McCrae was also the site of a telephone repeater station and a U.S. Army quartermaster's relay station.

Later in 1942, one of the civilian contractors, the Metcalfe-Hamilton-Kansas City Bridge Company, set up a major construction camp here. McCrae became a sprawling, bustling community with its own theatre, store and recreation centre. Many Whitehorse residents bussed here to watch the latest movies at the theatre, or attend the dances.

The McCrae camp was closed down soon after the end of the war. Many of the buildings were dismantled and shipped out by railway. Others were sold to local people, including the two-story structure which became the original McCrae hotel and truck stop.

one of the 10 largest rivers in the world. Travellers who arrive here for the first time will sense the significance of where they are standing. It remains only to enhance the perception that they have "arrived."

- An orientation map showing the headwater lakes and the entire route to the Bering Sea would be helpful to place the river in context.
- First Nations traditional use and the cultural significance of the area should be addressed
- Hydrography, geology and natural history should be addressed.
- Does the river bear gold? If not, why not? Why was it a route to the Klondike? Do people still use it today? How does the hand-operated lock work? Can you reach Whitehorse by boat? is it safe to go through Miles Canyon?

- One aspect missing from the McCrae story is the long-term impact that construction of the highway and influx of American soldiers had on local people. How did it change Whitehorse? What is still visible or relevant as we head into the 21st Century? How has the highway changed over the years.
- The sign marking the location of the 135th Meridian refers to the fact that at this point the visitor is 850 'miles' west of Los Angeles, California – an update to metric is needed.

3.4 Analysis of Thematic Representation

There are four main themes for the Alaska Highway East: cultural (First Nations), historical, natural history and regional tourism promotion. Within each is a subset of themes that reflect the significant events and characteristics of the region. There are deficiencies. For example, little reference is made in the signage to the First Nations whose traditional territories traverse the highway corridor. The biggest shortcoming is in regional orientation signage. This is important because the corridor includes three major entry points into the territory. Natural history themes are only lightly touched. Renewable Resources discusses these themes, at their Liard Canyon trail and Rancheria Falls sites.

Cultural Theme Representation

The highway corridor passes through the traditional territories of five First Nations. Of these, only the Teslin Tlingit are adequately represented in the interpretive signage.

To adequately balance interpretive text in the region from a cultural perspective, any changes to existing sign texts and new signage should respond to the following questions:

- Who are the First Nations that live here? How many are there? Where are they located and where did they come from?
- How did they live and interact with one another and what changes occurred when they met the first European explorers? How do they live today?

There are three approaches that could be used to adjust the imbalance in First Nation's cultural representation. They are to:

- introduce additional text panels to parallel the existing historical panels. In this way, First Nation place names and traditional land use patterns can be integrated with "new" names and land use patterns. First Nations spellings and translations, would reinforce the message to travellers that First Nations did and do still exist in this landscape;
- develop new signage that discusses pre-contact history, lifestyles, traditional territories, language and culture;
- integrate themes at significant sites–in this way, a story can be told by way of different themes in close juxtaposition. For instance, the existing Continental Divide site could interpret the natural history, geomorphology and First Nations themes all in the way each is impacted by or related to the Continental Divide

Historical Theme Representation

The Alaska Highway Anniversary signage has filled in the gaps on Historic-Transportation & Communication and the Alaska Highway history is now well represented. However, over a third of the current interpretive signs are site identification posts, resulting from the Alaska Highway Historic Milepost program. The relevance of some of the Alaska Highway Anniversary signage is difficult to appreciate without the accompanying brochure. Once it is out of print, that difficulty will be exacerbated.

Natural History Theme Representation

A map showing ecoregion boundaries and their relation to geopolitical boundaries and traditional territories, should included in any regional orientation signage or at a site where the regional transition is obvious.

Regional Tourism Representation

Apart from the "Welcome to Yukon" sign at the BC/Yukon border, there is no sense of arrival or entrance at the key intersections along the corridor. There is little to encourage travellers to consider taking either the Campbell or South Canol as an alternative travel route. These issues have all been addressed in the Campbell/Canol Interpretive Plan, and those conclusions apply equally here.

Alaska Highway East Existing Interpretive Signage

Thematic Category	Number of Signs
Historic – Settlement	3
Historic – Exploration & Mining; General	2
Historic – Exploration & Mining; Klondike Gold Rush	1
Historic – Transportation & Communication; Alaska Hwy.	5
Historic – General	3
First Nations History	3
Natural History	4
Regional Orientation	0*
Site Identification (non-interpretation)	12

NOTES:

* *Does not include two "talking signs"*

4.0 Alaska Highway East Interpretive Plan

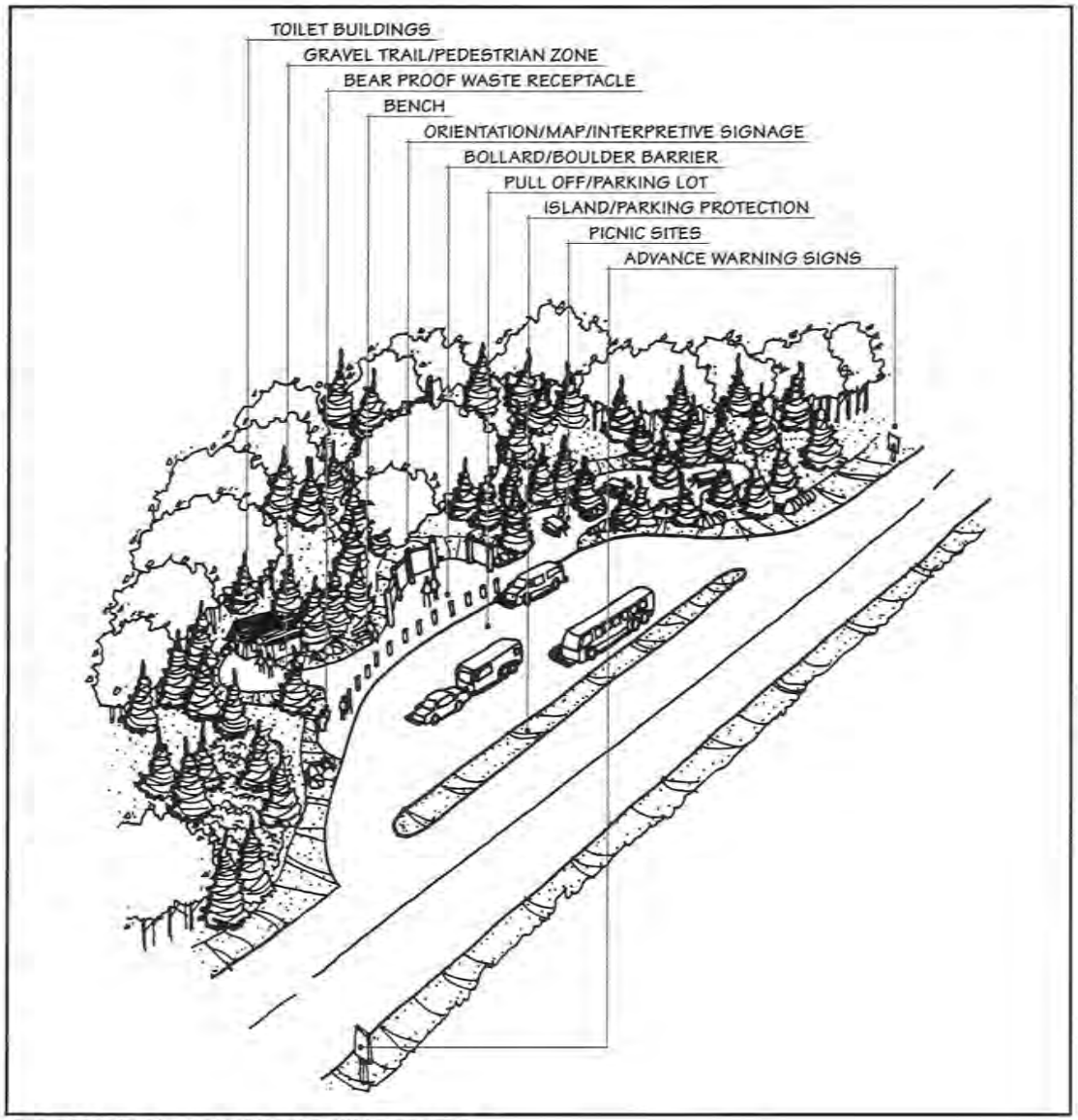
4.1 Approach

The Alaska Highway is the principal highway through the Yukon. It remains first and foremost, in many travellers eyes, the road to Alaska. Part of the challenge is to change that perception by persuading the visitors to linger in the Yukon as they work their way north. Interpretive signage is one tool that can be used to influence the visitor's experience in a positive way.

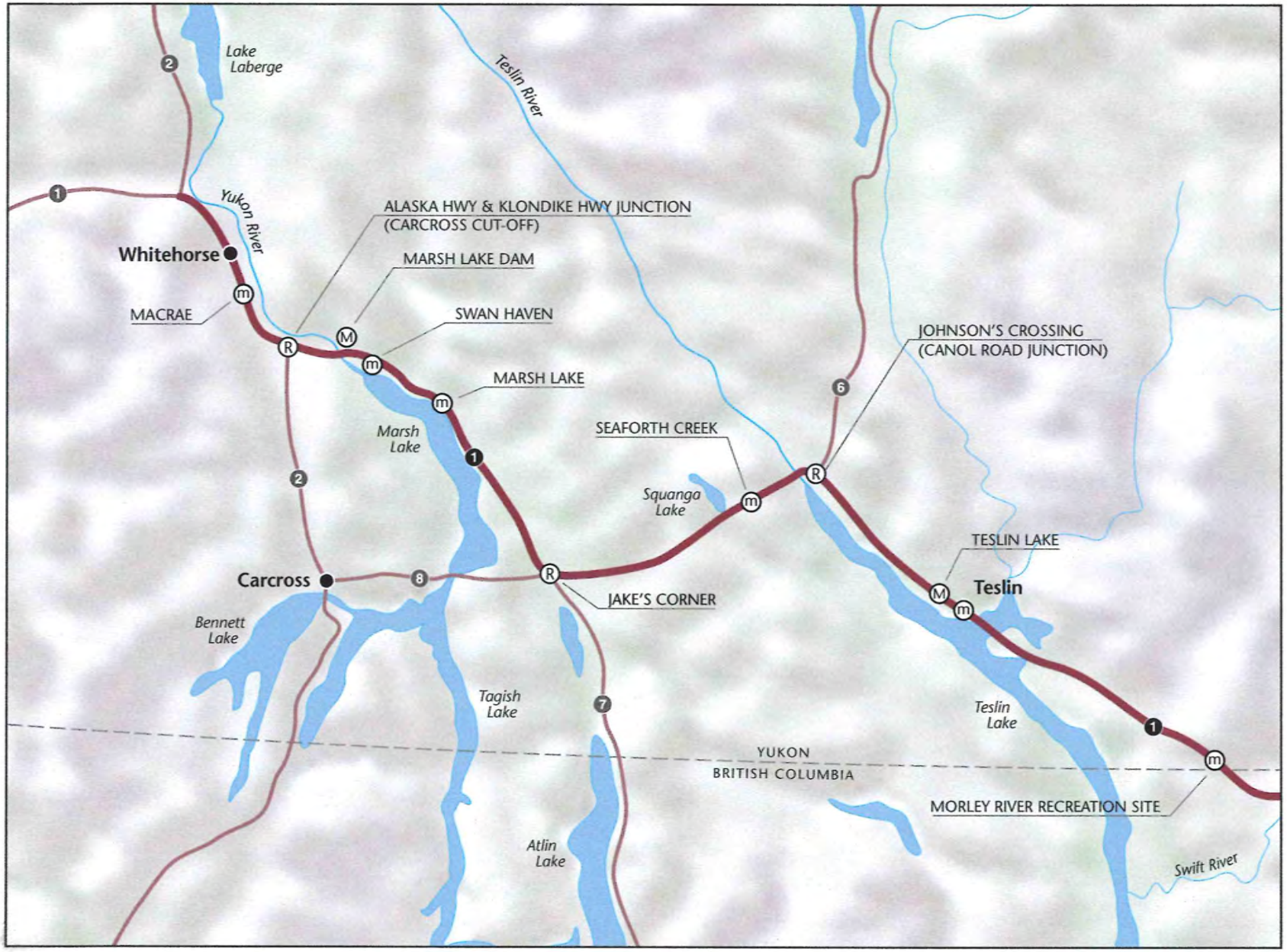
This plan builds on what already exists and looks at ways for inter-agency co-operation to reduce development and maintenance costs. From the site analysis it is apparent that there are a number of opportunities and constraints affecting program implementation. Regional issues are of concern to Watson Lake, Teslin, Atlin and Carcross and the plan responds to these.

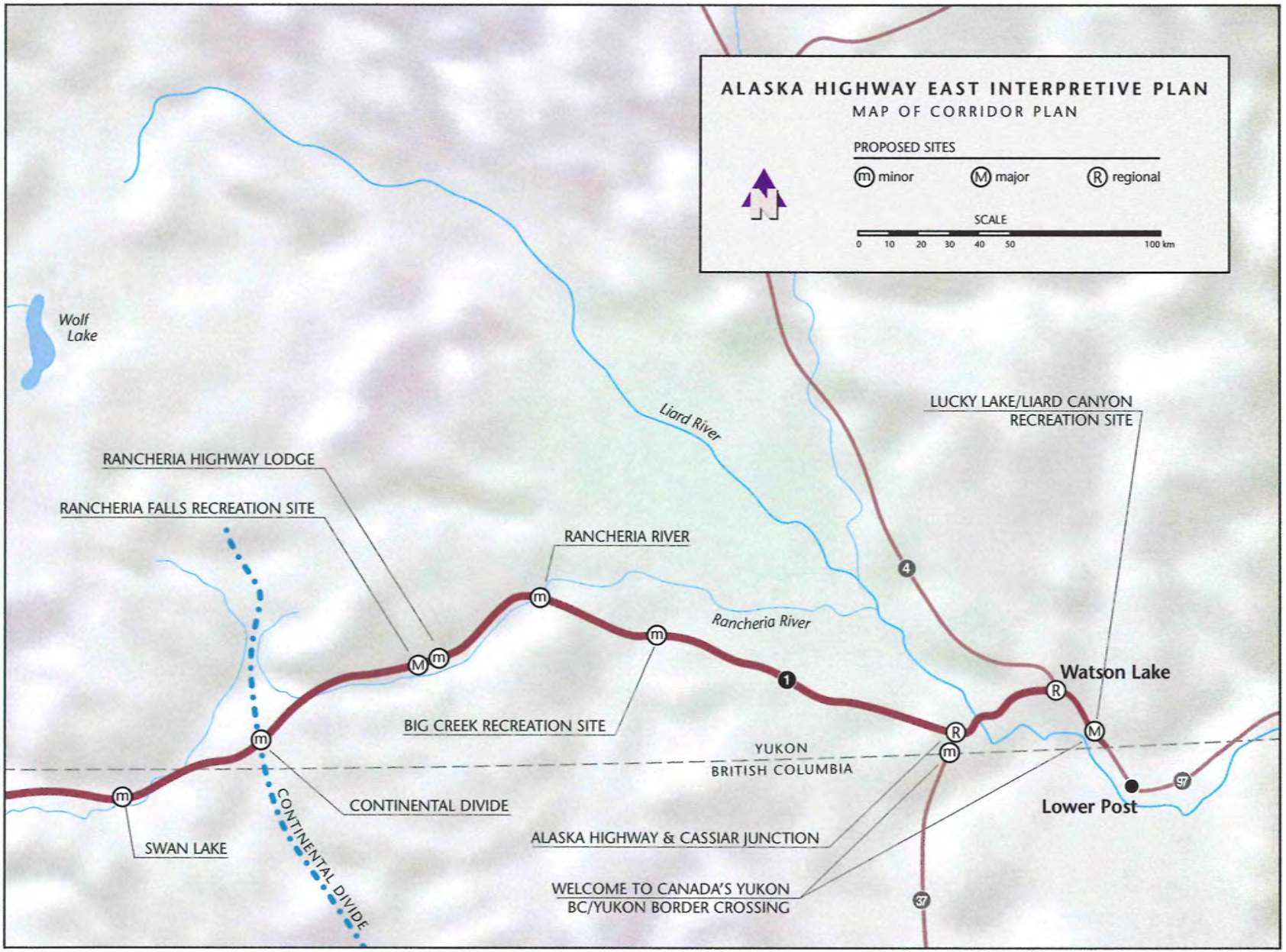
The site hierarchy which follows is consistent with the basic guidelines set out in the Yukon wide Interpretive Sign Strategy approved in 1995. Priority is given to upgrading the regional and sub-regional sites at various highway junctions including the Carcross cut-off, Jake's Corner, the South Canol Road and the Stewart-Cassiar highway junction.

Several new sites are proposed and it is recommended that others be upgraded to make them more effective. Two major sites are proposed. At Stewart-Cassiar Junction and the Yukon River Bridge. The new highway rest areas at Rancheria River (km 1127) and Swan Lake B.C. (km 1196) should be upgraded to overcome deficiencies with the Continental Divide site. At sites such as these, visitors are encouraged to leave their vehicles.



Components of a typical Regional Site concept


Lake Laberge
Teslin River
Yukon River
ALASKA HWY & KLONDIKE HWY JUNCTION
(CARCROSS CUT-OFF)
Whitehorse
MARSH LAKE DAM
MACRAE
SWAN HAVEN
JOHNSON'S CROSSING
(CANOL ROAD JUNCTION)
MARSH LAKE
Marsh Lake
SEAFORTH CREEK
Squanga Lake
TESLIN LAKE
Carcross
Teslin
JAKE'S CORNER
Bennett Lake
Tagish Lake
Teslin Lake
YUKON
BRITISH COLUMBIA
MORLEY RIVER RECREATION SITE
Atlin Lake
Swift River

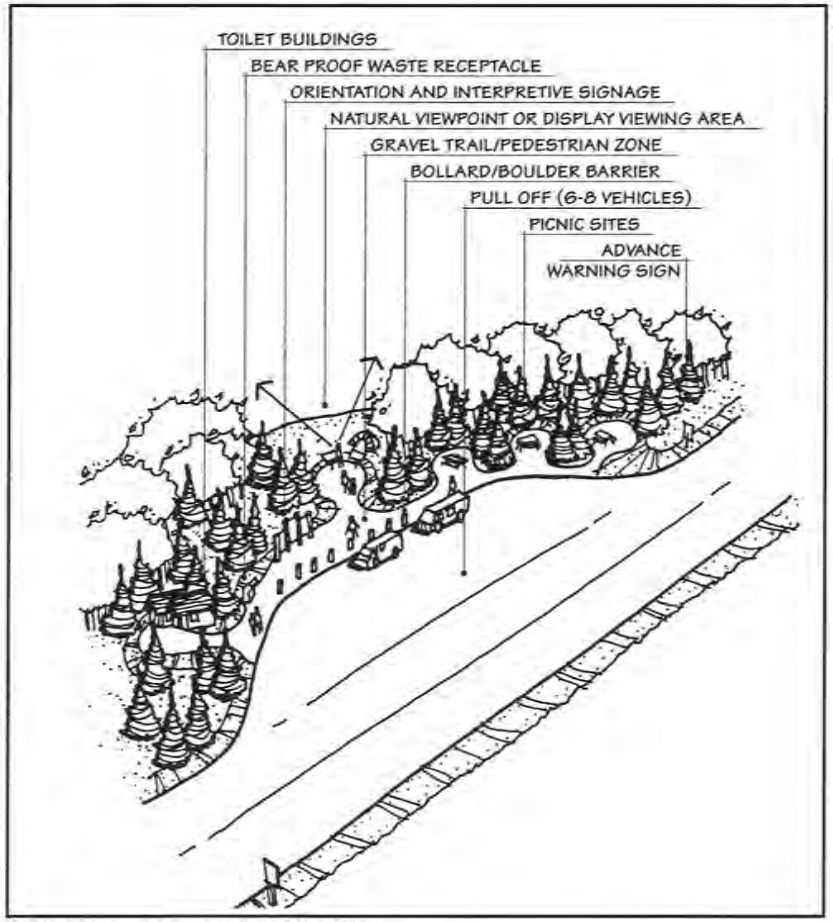

ALASKA HIGHWAY EAST INTERPRETIVE PLAN
MAP OF CORRIDOR PLAN
PROPOSED SITES
(m) minor
(M) major
(R) regional
SCALE
0 10 20 30 40 50 100 km
N
Wolf Lake
Liard River
LUCKY LAKE/LIARD CANYON RECREATION SITE
RANCHERIA HIGHWAY LODGE
RANCHERIA FALLS RECREATION SITE
RANCHERIA RIVER
Rancheria River
BIG CREEK RECREATION SITE
Watson Lake
YUKON
BRITISH COLUMBIA
CONTINENTAL DIVIDE
CONTINENTAL DIVIDE
SWAN LAKE
ALASKA HIGHWAY & CASSIAR JUNCTION
WELCOME TO CANADA'S YUKON
BC/YUKON BORDER CROSSING
Lower Post
4
1
37
37

Wherever possible, major sites correspond with existing highway rest areas or build on Renewable Resources day-use areas (e.g. Big Creek, Rancheria Falls, and Morley River) Visitors are expected to spend more time at major sites and thus the interpretive exhibits will tend to be more elaborate. All major sites would be fully equipped with toilet facilities, garbage bins and site identification signage. They are also intended to be accessible on a year round basis.

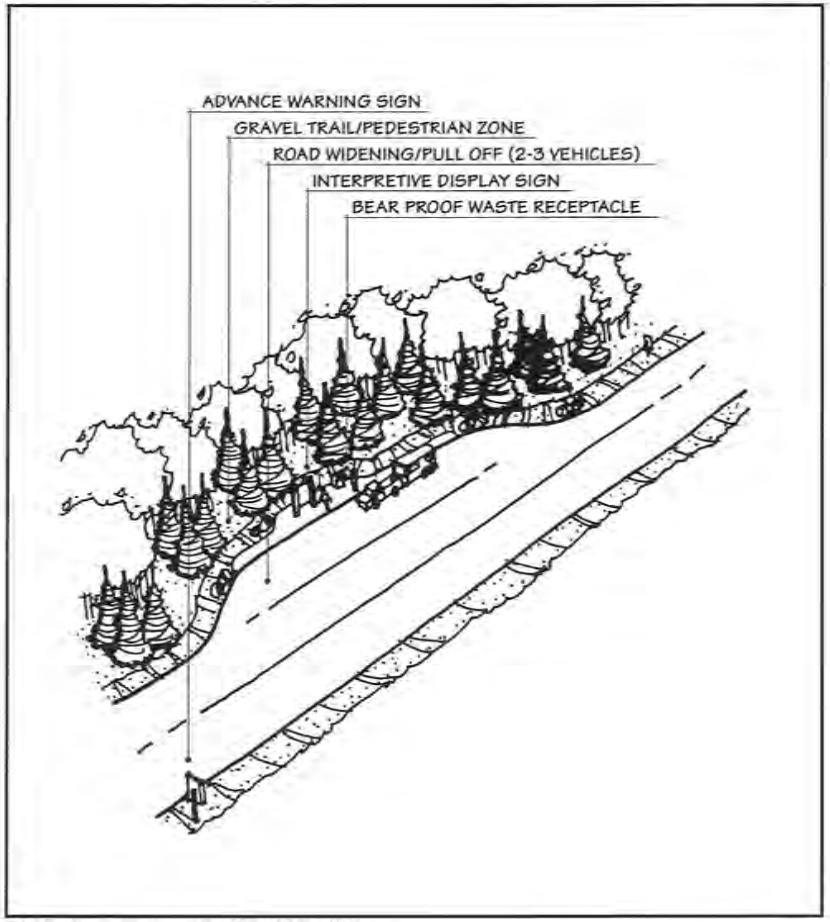
Minor sites will normally have a single sign with minimal support infrastructure, usually only a bear-proof garbage container. Parking areas are less elaborate and smaller in size.

The site improvement recommendations put an emphasis on developing partnerships to facilitate implementation and future maintenance. The site analysis has identified some new opportunities and a number of program issues that require resolution.

Specific site location and access deficiencies have been analyzed and improvements proposed to overcome safety concerns. Local community tourism concerns have also been examined to develop a comprehensive program structure for signage along the corridor. Particular issues, like the continued relevance of the 50th Anniversary signage, have been looked at in the context of an overall highway plan to create the thematic framework which follows.



Typical components of a Major Site



Typical components of a Minor Site

4.2 Thematic Representation Rationale

The interpretive sign program focuses on natural, cultural and historical themes. The following need to be considered to adequately represent the region.

4.2.1 Historic Context and Theme

The Alaska Highway was built as the result of a perceived military threat during the Second World War. The highway's impact on the Yukon was tremendous, both then and now. Military construction imagery and signage developed for the 50th anniversary, are well represented. The highway is the most important travel corridor through the Yukon to Alaska. Unlike other northern roads, it is considerably altered from its pioneer phase, reflecting its importance in the Yukon transportation system and to the economy. Today there are few traces left of the original pioneer road. As such, it is difficult to give travellers a sense of how difficult it was to drive the old Alaska Highway.

Interpretive signage needs to relate to places, events and features that can be viewed from the highway with the larger regional perspective left to visitor centres and museums. In that context, explaining the history of highway lodges, geography of the landscape or backgrounds of communities makes sense.

4.2.2 Traditional Territories Theme

The corridor traverses the traditional territories of Five Yukon First Nations: the Liard, the Teslin Tlingit Council, the Carcross/Tagish, the Kwanlin Dun and the Ta'an Kwach'an Council. Prior to the development of this highway, rivers, lakes and trails were the travel corridors. There are a number of opportunities to introduce First Nation traditional land use stories that are of interest to visitors. In addition, local legends can cast a different and unusual slant on the natural features that visitors see along the way.

4.2.3 Ecoregions Theme

The Alaska Highway East crosses 4 distinct ecoregions: The Liard Basin, the Pelly Mountains, the Boreal Mountains and Plateau and Yukon Southern Lakes

According to the *Yukon Wild* booklet, coniferous forest covers about 58% of these ecoregions, with the exception of the Liard Basin which is 91% coniferous forest. This region contains the largest and most valuable trees in the Yukon. It is also the habitat and northernmost limit for many songbirds. The Pelly Mountains have a distinct interior "wet-belt" climate and are the northernmost range of Stone Sheep. The Boreal Mountains are a small Yukon extension of a huge B.C. ecoregion. Much of it is remote and sub-alpine. The Yukon Southern Lakes is the most populated and developed region in the territory. It is also home to the most important waterfowl staging areas in the Yukon and the territory's largest lakes.

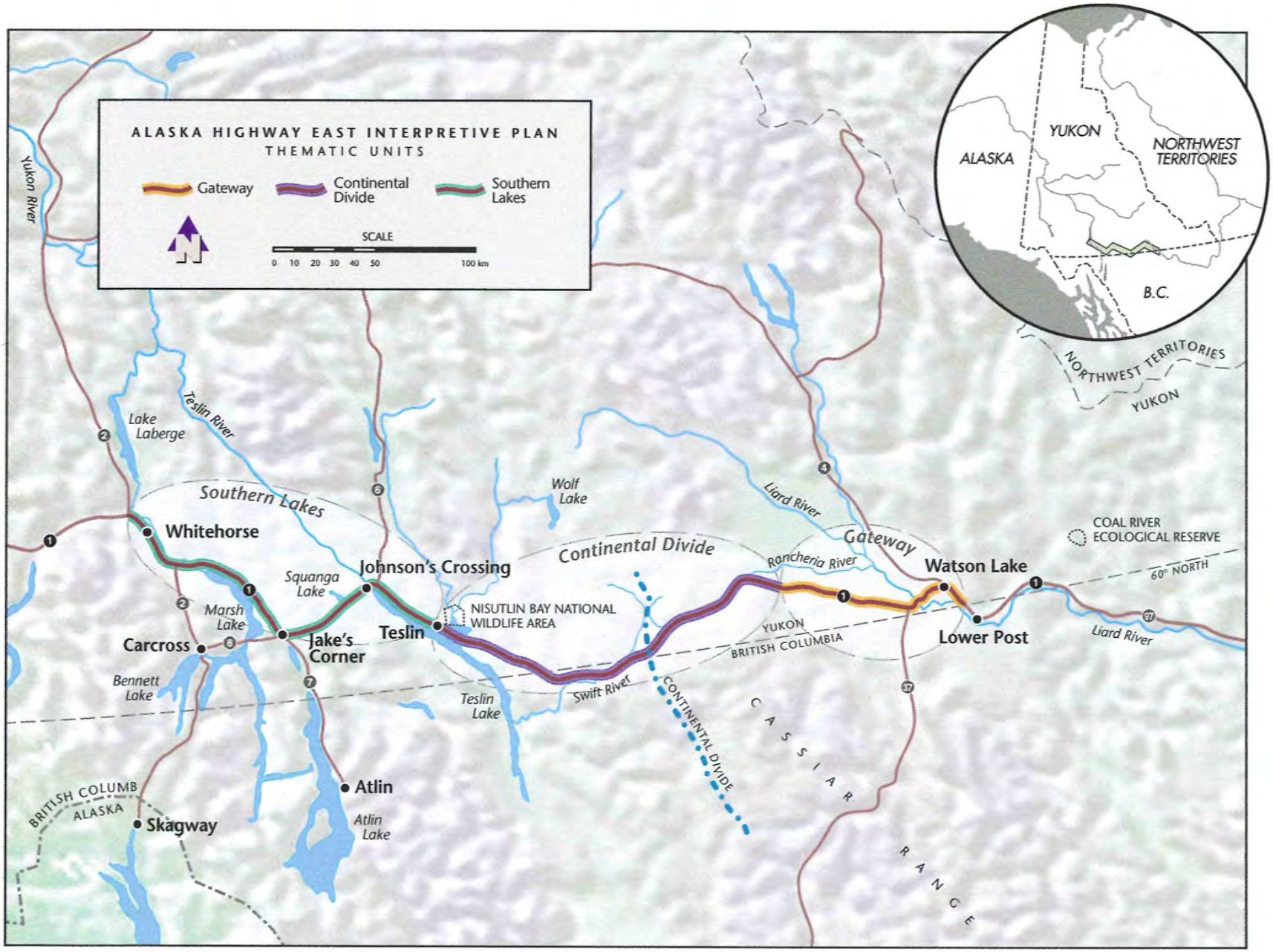
4.2.4 Distinctive Features Theme

The Alaska Highway East is a scenic road, offering a variety of changes along its route. As visitors arrive, they pass through mature stands of spruce and pine near Watson Lake. Occasionally, they will see birch trees, aspen and larch. The trees diminish in size and variety west of Watson Lake while the landscape opens up. Panoramic vistas are encountered as travellers head into the interior, and the Cassiar Mountains become more visible. The Continental Divide further accentuates the sense of being in this "interior" landscape. Soon, the highway rolls intimately along small meandering rivers with views of valley bottoms. Finally, it skirts the margins of the big lakes and crosses over large rivers on its way into the increasingly urban setting of the Whitehorse area.

4.3 Media and Audience

The focus of this Interpretive Plan is on signage because signs are usually the simplest and most cost effective approach for telling a story. They require the least amount of maintenance over their life cycle. Other media approaches have been used in conjunction with on-site signage to present the corridor themes. These include talking signs at the Carcross Cut-off and Jake's Corner and an interpretive brochure, the 50th Anniversary Site Locations printed in 1992.

Visitor profile data shows that this is the most heavily travelled corridor in the territory, that most travellers are just passing through, and that a significant number do not stop and visit along the way. Many stop only as necessary for gas, food and to use rest areas. For many travellers then, the attraction is the route itself, not the region they are traversing. The challenge is to divert them wherever possible (i.e., at the places they do stop) and encourage them to take a different view of the country they are passing through.


ALASKA HIGHWAY EAST INTERPRETIVE PLAN
THEMATIC UNITS
Gateway
Continental Divide
Southern Lakes
SCALE
0 10 20 30 40 50 100 km
ALASKA
YUKON
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
B.C.
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
YUKON
Yukon River
Teslin River
Lake Laberge
Southern Lakes
Whitehorse
Wolf Lake
Liard River
Gateway
Continental Divide
Rancheria River
Watson Lake
COAL RIVER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE
60° NORTH
Squanga Lake
Johnson's Crossing
Marsh Lake
Carcross
Jake's Corner
Teslin
NISUTLIN BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE AREA
YUKON
BRITISH COLUMBIA
Lower Post
Liard River
Bennett Lake
Swift River
CONTINENTAL DIVIDE
Teslin Lake
CASSIAR
RANGE
Atlin
BRITISH COLUMB
ALASKA
Skagway
Atlin Lake

4.4 Highway Interpretive Units

There are many stories in the thematic framework suggested for this highway. The changes in landscape along the corridor convey different visual images. The challenge is to focus the visitor's attention on the dominant themes and landscape changes. The objective is to maintain an image of the road corridor as a whole experience. The key is finding the right number of simple, logical connecting themes.

The corridor has been divided into three sections, reflecting 3 distinct thematic units. They are:

Gateway

This section extends from the B.C./Yukon border to Big River Recreation Site at km 1084.8. It addresses the entry experience of travellers, from the Alaska Highway and the Stewart/Cassiar Highway, who have now crossed the 60th parallel and have truly entered the North. It also reflects the aspirations of the community of Watson Lake, "gateway" to the Yukon.

Continental Divide

This section extends from the Big River Recreation Site to Teslin and has as its primary feature, the Continental Divide. This division of watersheds is where east meets west–in a word, the interior. This sense is enhanced by the sweeping views and distant mountains encountered along this section.

Southern Lakes

This section extends from Teslin to Whitehorse. Water is the dominant imagery here as the highway skirts and crosses Nisutlin Bay, Teslin Lake, the Teslin River, Marsh Lake and the Yukon River.

4.5 Sign Types & Locations

The chart on the following page is a summary of the sign development program recommendations for each site. Signage themes are listed along with the site's proposed function in the sign program hierarchy. Sites requiring winter maintenance are also noted with the associated costs listed in the appendices. The associated capital and maintenance costs are listed in the implementation chapter at the end of the plan. Implementation priorities are also described.

Tracks in the snow indicate length to which travellers will go for a Yukon "gateway" photo.

4.5.1 Signage Recommendations

Site	Location	Status	Themes	Recommended Action
Welcome to the Yukon	km 1008	◆	Welcome, sense of arrival in Yukon	relocate to Lucky Lake ❖
BC/Yukon Border Crossing	km 1008	◆	Highway History, BC Commercial Services	downgrade to minor ◈
Lucky Lake	km 1011.7	◆	Regional History	move border sign here ★ ◆ ❄
Watson Lake	km 1020.5	▲	Regional Orientation, Intro to First Nations, Highway History	co-ordinate with Town of Watson Lake ▲ ❄
Alaska & Cassiar Hwy Junction	km 1042.8		Regional Orientation	locate at weigh scale ★ ▲ ❄
Big Creek Recreation Area	km 1084.8		Natural History	leave to Renewable Resources ◈
Rancheria River Rest Area	km 1127		Geography–Geomorphology of Cassiar Mountains and introduction to Continental Divide	add sign ★ ◈ ❄
Rancheria Highway Lodge	km 1143.8	◈	Highway History	relocate closer to lodge ◈
Rancheria Falls Day Use	km 1156.4	◆	Natural history and features	support Renewable Resources ◆
Continental Divide	km 1164	◆	Geography, First Nation Traditional Territory	downgrade to minor ◈ ❄
Swan Lake, B.C.	km 1196		First Nation Mythology, Natural History, and introduction to Continental Divide	add sign ★ ◈ ❄
Morley River Recreational Site	km 1250		History, First Nation Seasonal Round, Recreation	leave to Renewable Resources ◈
Teslin	km 1294	◈	Highway History	landscape, re-locate if necessary ◈
Teslin Lake	km 1297	◆	History, First Nation Traditions & Mythology, Natural History	leave as is ◆ ❄
Brook's Brook	km 1333.5	◈	Historic markers	allow to lapse ❖
Johnson's Crossing/S. Canol Rd.	km 1345.5		Regional Orientation, Highway and Pipeline History	co-ordinate with Highways ★ ▲ ❄
Johnson's Crossing Lodge	km 1346.5	◈	Historic markers	allow to lapse ❖
Seaforth Creek	km 1365		Natural history, First Nations Use	add sign ◈ ❄
Squanga Lake	km 1355.5	◈	Historic marker	allow to lapse ❖
Big Devil Pump Station	km 1376	◈	Historic marker	allow to lapse ❖
Jake's Corner	km 1392.4		Regional Orientation, First Nation Territory, Geology	maintain "talking sign"–partnership opportunity ▲ ❄
Marsh Lake Camp	km 1420.5	◈	Historic markers	allow to lapse ❖
Marsh Lake	km 1427	◈	Area History and attractions (ie: Swan Haven)	upgrade signage ◈ ❄
Yukon River Bridge	km 1444	◈	History, Geography–Geology, Natural History	re-develop/partnership opportunity ◆ ❄
Alaska & Klondike Hwy Junction	km 1454		Regional Orientation	maintain "talking sign"–partnership opportunity ★ ▲ ❄
M.P. Checking Station	km 1461	◈	Historic markers	allow to lapse ❖
McCrae	km 1463.5	◈	Geography, Highway History	landscape and replace 135th Meridian sign ◈ ❄

◈–Minor ◆–Major ▲–Regional ★–New ❖–Lapse ❄–Winter maintenance required

5.0 Sign Design Concepts

Design Approach

The approach taken in developing a graphic image for the Alaska Highway East Corridor, is to consolidate all thematic units into a cohesive whole. In previous highway interpretive plans, different icons have been proposed and developed for each thematic unit along a corridor. Ultimately, this may lead to a proliferation of icons that fail to enhance the program simply by their number. A traveller may become confused rather than enlightened. We must also consider the ramifications of a new series of thematic units and icons which may be developed for the Alaska Highway West, from Whitehorse to the Alaska border.

Corridor Identity Image

The graphic image proposed for the Alaska Highway East encompasses all three themes of Gateway (highway leading viewer into the scene), Continental Divide (diminishing mountain peaks) and Southern Lakes (shoreline of a lake). The entire image is a self-contained oval shape, like a jewel or small window overlooking an idyllic scene. That the landscape is the homeland of First Nations is suggested by the stylized border device of traditional First Nations motifs. Thus, the land can be seen to be anchored within a First Nations context. All four elements can be found along the western section of the highway as well.

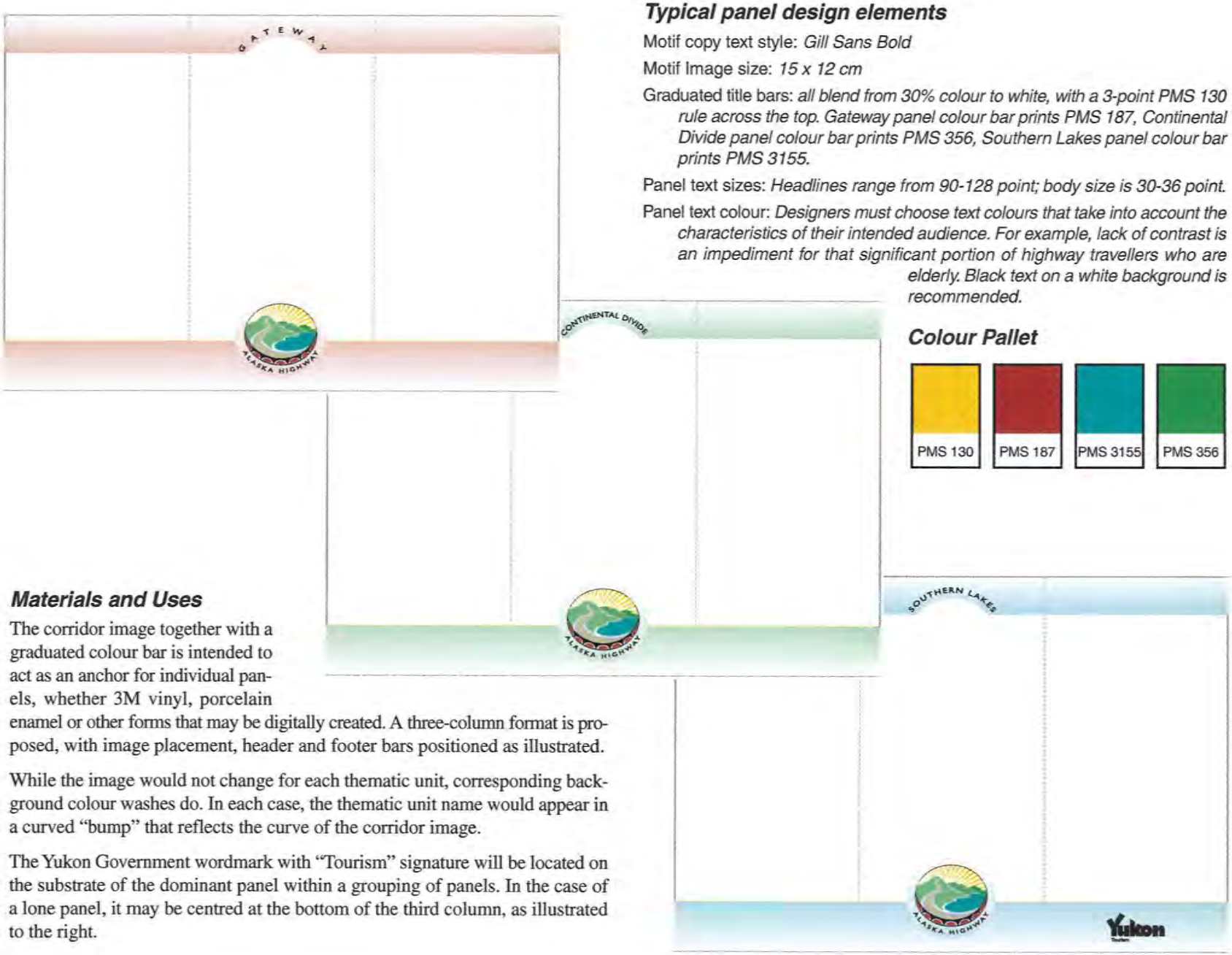
Colours

A colour pallet for the image, based on the Pantone Colour Matching System (PMS), consists of a bright yellow (PMS 130), green in three shades (PMS 356) earthy red (PMS 187), and a blue (PMS 3155). The greens and blue are representative of the water and forests of the corridor, the yellow of the historic search for gold and the red (and black) is representative of the First Nations along the corridor.

Sign and Support Fabrication

Typically, signs will be supported by 200 mm turned timber posts. These will be approximately 3500 mm in length, with 2200 mm above ground. A distinctive 40 mm notch is routed into the post 100 mm from the top, to a depth of between 13 and 19 mm. All notches will be stained an earthy red, similar to PMS 187. All panel sizes, support and fastening details and other specifications are as noted in the *Silver Trail Interpretive Plan*.

An exception to the post support arrangement, above, should be made for a "view" site. This would be the case at the proposed Swan Lake site, km 1196, for instance. Here, a tall, vertical support and sign would obtrude on and detract from the view. A standard steel pedestal support, 70-80 cm tall with an angled metal panel–either porcelain enamel or 3M vinyl sign– is to be preferred.



Typical panel design elements

Motif copy text style: *Gill Sans Bold*

Motif Image size: *15 x 12 cm*

Graduated title bars: *all blend from 30% colour to white, with a 3-point PMS 130 rule across the top. Gateway panel colour bar prints PMS 187, Continental Divide panel colour bar prints PMS 356, Southern Lakes panel colour bar prints PMS 3155.*

Panel text sizes: *Headlines range from 90-128 point; body size is 30-36 point.*

Panel text colour: *Designers must choose text colours that take into account the characteristics of their intended audience. For example, lack of contrast is an impediment for that significant portion of highway travellers who are elderly. Black text on a white background is recommended.*

Colour Pallet

PMS 130 | PMS 187 | PMS 3155 | PMS 356

Materials and Uses

The corridor image together with a graduated colour bar is intended to act as an anchor for individual panels, whether 3M vinyl, porcelain enamel or other forms that may be digitally created. A three-column format is proposed, with image placement, header and footer bars positioned as illustrated.

While the image would not change for each thematic unit, corresponding background colour washes do. In each case, the thematic unit name would appear in a curved "bump" that reflects the curve of the corridor image.

The Yukon Government wordmark with "Tourism" signature will be located on the substrate of the dominant panel within a grouping of panels. In the case of a lone panel, it may be centred at the bottom of the third column, as illustrated to the right.

6.0 Implementation & Operations

6.1 Recommended Priorities

The Alaska Highway is only one corridor within the Yukon highway network that requires additional investment in new interpretive signage. As stated earlier, this study has identified a range of improvements that need to be carried out from sign replacement to new site development. A range of partnership opportunities have been identified to maximize available capital and maintenance dollars. These opportunities range from sign sponsorship (i.e. Yukon River Bridge dam interpretation - Yukon Energy Corporation) to the opportunity to re-use the vacant Weigh Station site at the Cassiar Highway junction (Town of Watson Lake, C&TS, Gateway Tourism Association).

In some cases the idea that "less is more" came through in the public consultations. This supports the spacing standards adopted in the 1995 Yukon-wide Strategy and leads to a more careful analysis of opportunities for collaboration. As a consequence, the recommendations include references to site improvements at locations that are not directly within the mandate of this program administratively, but fit the overall program objective. For example, by working with the Department of Renewable Resources to ensure any trail and interpretive signage development within the day-use areas complements the thematic objectives of the corridor plan, both agencies' tourism service objectives are met.

It is also important to ensure that the Alaska Highway East Interpretive Plan is integrated with the completed plans for the South Canol Road, Campbell and South Klondike highways. Consideration has also been given to how this plan will work with the plan to be prepared for the Alaska Highway from Whitehorse to Beaver Creek. This is reflected in the design concept for the proposed logo which, it is hoped, could apply to the entire highway corridor.

This plan also responds to needs identified in the four regional tourism plans that have been completed over the past seven years along the corridor.

The implementation priorities are presented in the following table.

6.2 Alaska Highway Commemoration Signage

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of construction of the highway a specific sign program initiative was undertaken by the Department of Tourism to accurately mark the locations of key sites and events that occurred.

Sites were marked one of three ways: with just the original milepost marker, a site identification sign and/or an interpretive plaque depending on the site situation and its importance.

Sign Plan Implementation Priorities

Priority #1	Priority #2	Priority #3
Cassiar Highway Junction/ Weigh Scale Exhibit	Jake's Corner Exhibit Development	McCrae Site Landscaping/ Sign Replacement
South Canol Road Junction Site/Exhibit Development*	Seaforth Creek New Sign	Teslin Site Landscaping or Relocation
South Klondike Highway Junction Exhibit Development*	Marsh Lake Site/Sign Upgrade	Continental Divide Site Upgrade
Yukon River Bridge Exhibit Development	Border Sign Relocation Lucky Lake	Rancheria Lodge Sign relocation
Swan Lake New Sign***	Sign Post Forest**	
Rancheria River New Sign		

NOTES:

* *Reflects need to co-ordinate with previously completed plan recommendations*

** *Assumes Town of Watson Lake takes lead on Sign Post Forest Improvements*

*** *The Swan Lake site is in British Columbia and will require their support and approval for installation.*

A "Mile by Mile" historic milepost brochure was also prepared in conjunction with Alaska and British Columbia and distributed widely that summer. Copies still exist and will be available at VRCs. This program was largely geared towards meeting the needs of a particular niche market– veterans now in their seventies and eighties returning for a last look at a project they participated in so many years ago.

With highway reconstruction, and the clean-up of former camp-sites, much of the physical evidence has long since disappeared and the site identification sign stands alone by the side of the road. With often nothing much to see, the importance of many sites is no longer relevant to today's highway traveller.

This study has concluded that once a number of these signs have reached the end of their physical life they should not be replaced. It is recommended that the highway construction theme be concentrated at the Sign Post Forest site in Watson Lake and at the junction of the South Canol Road. It is also recommended that the brochure not be reprinted.

Typical highway commemorative signage.

6.3 Use of Talking Signs

At present there are two "talking" signs which were erected by the Department of Tourism at the request of the Carcross-Tagish Chamber of Commerce. These signs are located at the Carcross cut-off and Jake's Corner. Both are tourism oriented, encouraging travellers to take the Carcross-Tagish loop. The message on the Jake's Corner tape also refers to Atlin, B.C. at the request of that community.

The radio transmitters have an effective range of between 5-10 kilometres depending on the location. With numerous commercial signs near highway junctions competing for the drivers attention, the radio transmitter concept, in theory, provides an alternative communication approach which is less distracting and potentially more informative.

In this study, the option of using "talking" signage to overcome some existing problems was considered at the B.C./Yukon border site as well as the Cassiar Highway and South Canol road junctions. The main weakness with this technology at this time is that we do not know how many visitors tune in to listen to the existing transmitters.

There is anecdotal evidence that travellers do not recognize the advance warning symbol and there is no internationally recognized equivalent that can be adopted. Without knowing the effectiveness of the present signs, it would not be prudent to invest further in such technology until research confirms the effectiveness of this tool. As several transmitters currently exist throughout the Yukon and there are also visitor radio sites, a monitoring program should be designed to determine their effectiveness.

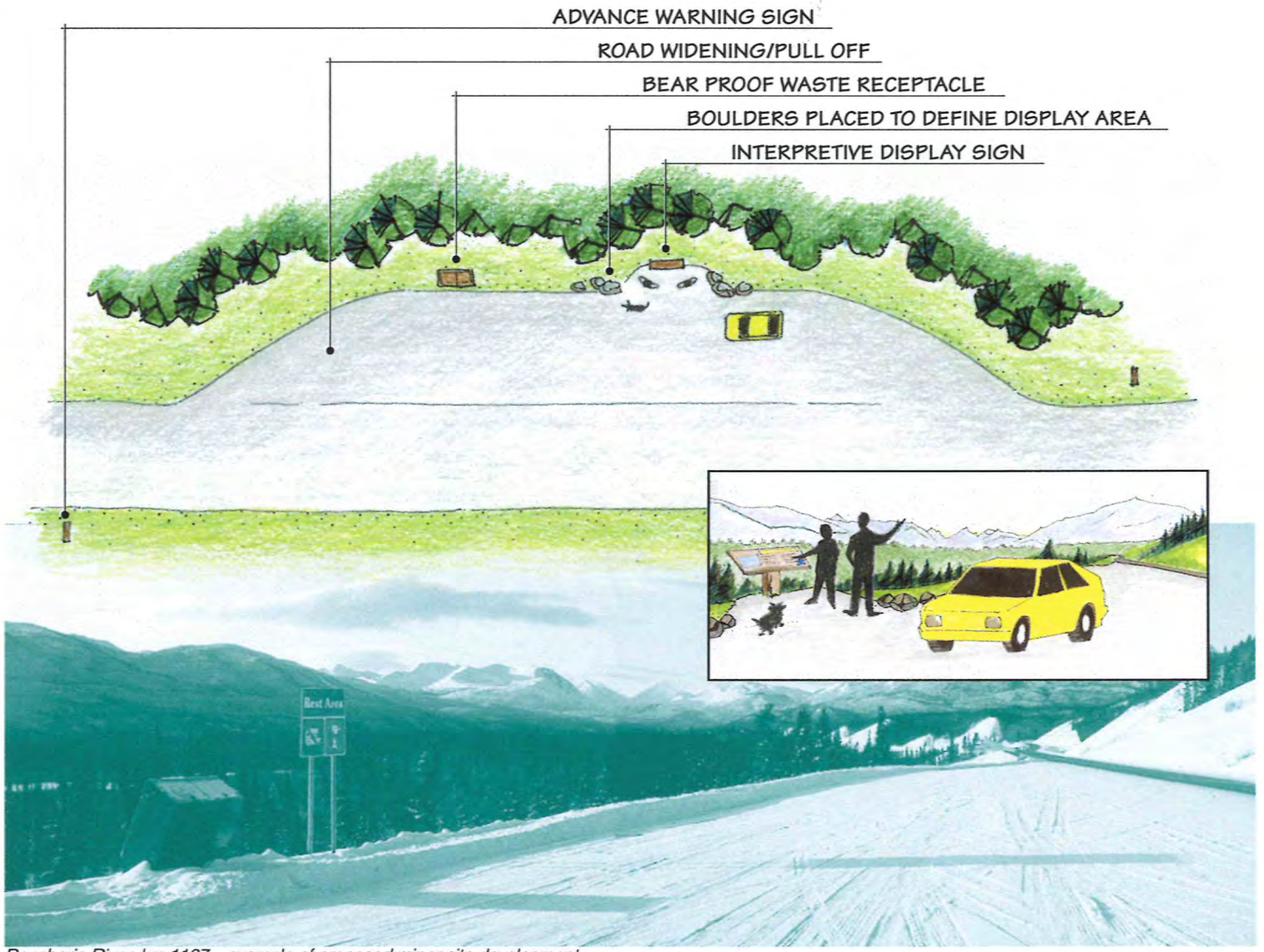
6.4 Application of Site Hierarchy

The following sketches illustrate the appropriate level of site development for three of the priority sites along the Alaska Highway East corridor. The 1995 Yukon Interpretive Strategy establishes three types of sites with a corresponding level of development. Regional sites are located at the main highway junctions and they are intended to encourage all visitors to stop. In some cases there will be a main and sub-regional site as is the case for this stretch of highway. The South Canol Road and Jake's Corner are sub-regional sites while the Alaska/Campbell Highway, Alaska/Cassiar and Alaska/South Klondike highway junctions are full regional sites because of the level of traffic and significance of the decision point.

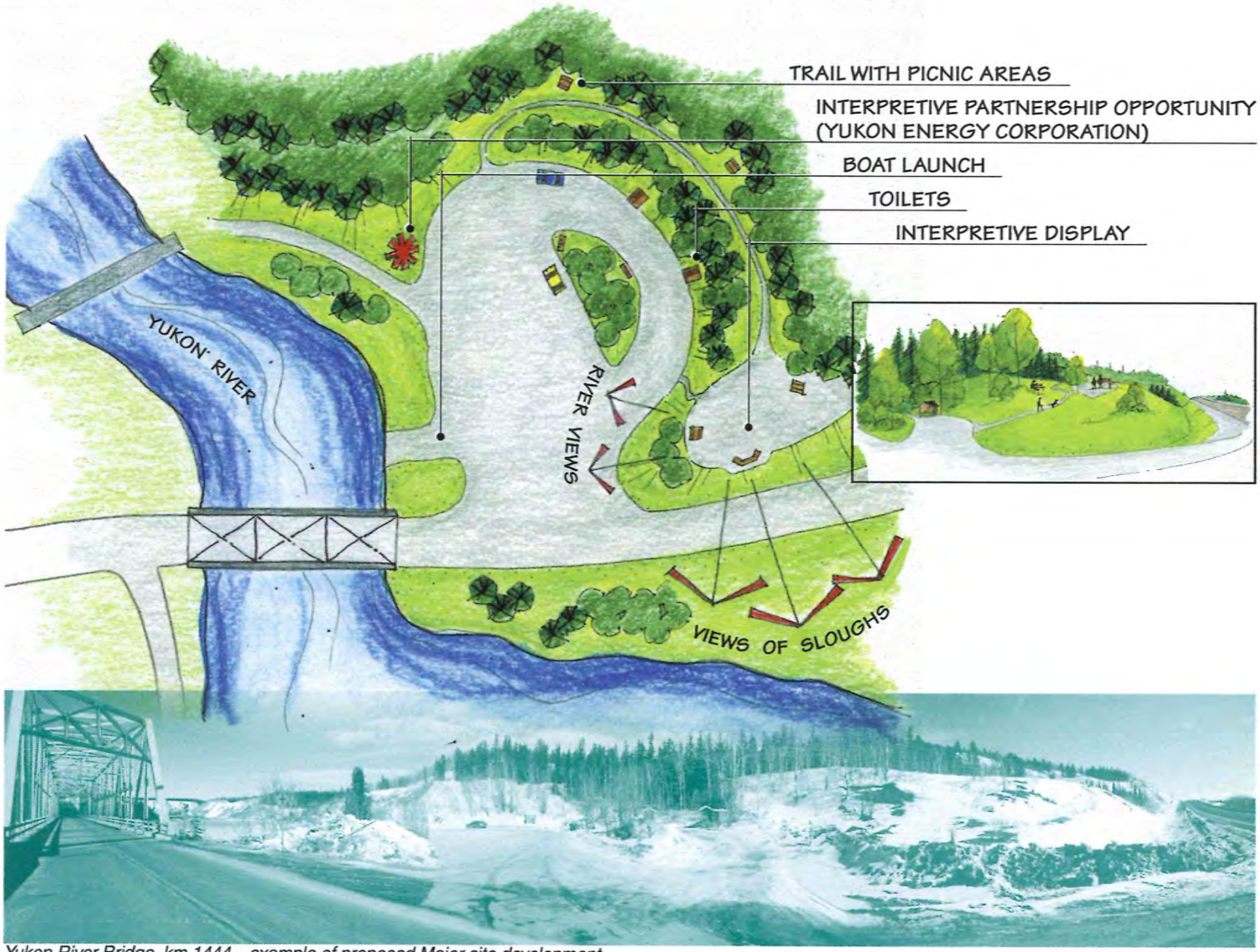
The first sketch illustrates how the existing Weigh Scale site at the Cassiar Highway junction might be developed as a regional site and possibly as a seasonal visitor information centre through a creative partnership. The primary objective is to try and persuade travellers not to bypass Watson Lake by providing information on the region. The second objective is to encourage the visitor, once stopped, to consider taking the Campbell Highway or South Canol Road on their trip north or way back south.

The main difference between a major and minor site is the amount of time the visitor is expected to pause. Both are based on "points of interest" with the larger, more important sites offering more services and things to see or do. The Yukon River bridge is an example of such a site where more than one interpretive display may be used and other features such as a short trail are proposed. Visitors may spend from 30 minutes to an hour at such sites.

A minor site will usually only contain a single sign highlighting a particular feature such as a view or the significance of a place or event. The traveller stops, reads the sign and leaves.



Rancheria River, km 1127—example of proposed minor site development.



Yukon River Bridge, km 1444—example of proposed Major site development.

Alaska and Cassiar Highway Junction, km 1042.8—example of proposed Regional site development.

6.5 Directional Signage

Advance warning directional signage is provided at a 2 km and 250 m interval to provide the traveller with adequate time to slow down, identify the type of interpretive opportunity ahead and turn off the highway safely. A directional arrow tab is included on the 250m sign to indicate which side of the road the site is on.

The use of standard symbols has been encouraged with a camera indicating a point of interest and binoculars to indicate a wildlife viewing site. Until these symbols become universally recognized, it is useful to include a word bar as illustrated below at the first few sites when travellers enter the Yukon.

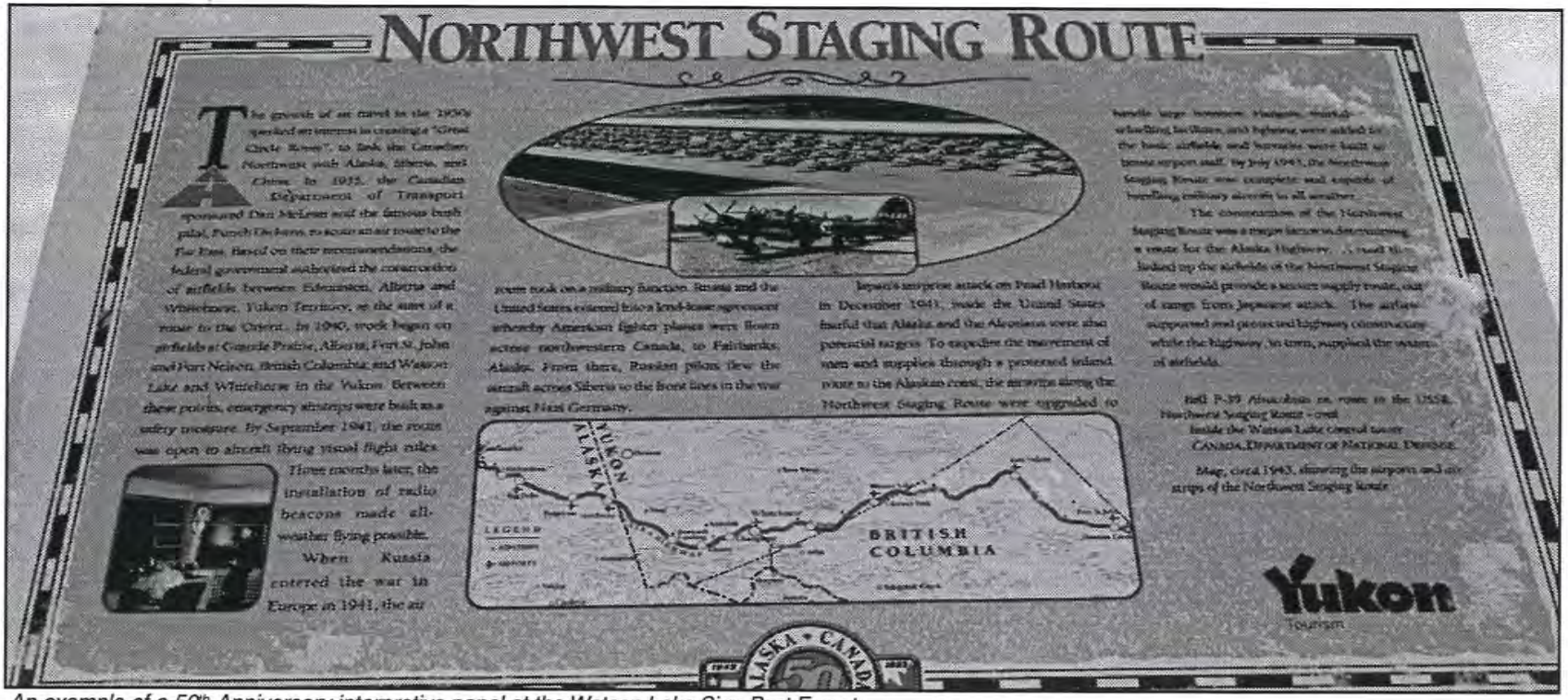
C&TS has adopted a standard rest area sign identification policy which applies to major rest area sites which are spaced at approximately 80km intervals. These sites will be maintained year-round and may have multiple users including truckers. At such sites, the 250 m warning sign includes the distance to the next rest area. Wherever possible, the standard rest area signage should be used.

In the case of those sites developed primarily for interpretive purposes, either the camera or binocular symbol will be used at 2km with the same symbol and a directional arrow tab at the 250m mark. Historic sites will have a larger sign at the 2km point which identifies the name of the site with services available indicated by symbol tabs.

Major site advance warning sign, 2 km

Appendix 1 – Sources of Data

- *Alaska & Yukon History Along the Highway* (Stone, 1997)
- *Alaska Highway Explorer: Place Names along the Adventure Road* (Wonders, 1994)
- *Alaska Highway Historic Milepost: A Mile by Mile Guide* (Yukon Tourism brochure)
- *Canada's Yukon 1998 and 1999 Vacation Guides* (Yukon Tourism)
- Heritage Branch Interpretive Signage Photograph and Site Records
- *See Your Wildest Dreams Come True: Yukon Wild. Wildlife Viewing in the Yukon* (YTG Renewable Resources brochure)
- *Swan Haven* (YTG Renewable Resources brochure)
- *The Trail of '42: A Pictorial History of the Alaska Highway* (Cohen, 1979)
- *Whitehorse & Area Hikes & Bikes* (Yukon Conservation Society, 1995)
- *Yukon Alaska Highway Rendezvous '92 Calendar of Events* (YAC brochure)
- *Yukon Government Campgrounds 1998* (YTG Renewable Resources, 1998 brochure)
- *Yukon Places and Names* (Coutts, 1980)
- *Yukon River Heritage: An illustrated introduction for river travellers* (Yukon Tourism)
- *Yukon's Wildlife Viewing Guide Along Major Highways: Yukon Wild.* (YTG Renewable Resources booklet)

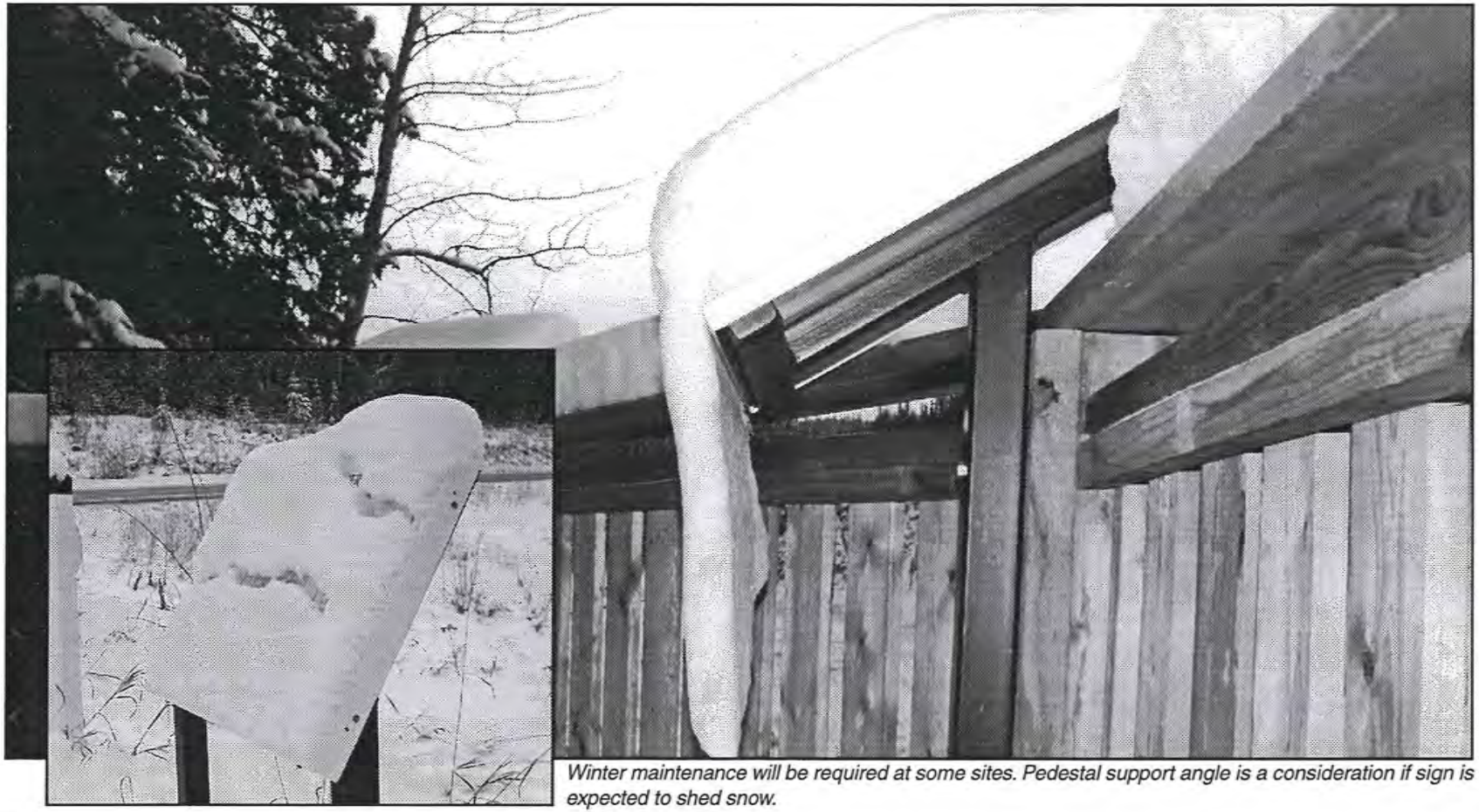


An example of a 50th Anniversary interpretive panel at the Watson Lake Sign Post Forest.

Appendix 2 – Site, Capital & Operation Estimate

A preliminary estimate of site development and maintenance costs has been developed for the 15 projects identified in the corridor plan. The estimates and cost assumptions are based on information collected during preparation of the Yukon Interpretive Sign Strategy in 1995 updated to 1999.

A site by site development cost estimate is based on cursory site inspections conducted during two field trips during the winter of 1998-99. Maintenance costs are based on the standards recommended in the 1995 Strategy and may vary considerably depending on level of use and nature of the inter-agency maintenance contracts established between the three departments affected. The information should be used with caution. Current pricing should be obtained at the time each project is scheduled and after review of the most recent maintenance history. It is recommended that the personnel in the agency responsible for site maintenance be consulted at the planning and budgeting stage.



Winter maintenance will be required at some sites. Pedestal support angle is a consideration if sign is expected to shed snow.

Site: McCrae Site Refurbishment **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type: Minor

Location: km 1463.5

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new/expanded parking area**	$65.00/m²	
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	$300.00
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	$550.00
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	$2,000.00
picnic table	$300.00 each	
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	
toilet and holding tank***	$3,000.00 each	
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features	varies	$3,000.00
TOTAL		**$5,850.00**

** Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

*** Assumes current site is retained and landscaped*

**** No toilets provided*

Maintenance Heritage Branch cost

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
HIGH SEASON		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$750.00
SHOULDER SEASON		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panels as required empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$400.00
WINTER SEASON		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to displays empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$450.00
ANNUALLY	check for graffiti and repair as required fill out seasonal maintenance report re-grade gravel pull-offs spring clean up re-stain furnishings fall check-up	 $750.00 $250.00 $250.00
TOTAL		**$2,850.00**

Site: South Klondike Highway Junction **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type: Regional

Location: km 1454

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new/expanded parking area**	$65.00/m²	
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	$300.00
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	$8,000.00
picnic table	$300.00 each	
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	$1,200.00
toilet and holding tank***	$3,000.00 each	
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features***	varies	$5,000.00
TOTAL		**$14,500.00**

** Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

*** Assumes gas station site is used. Includes site landscaping*

**** Assumes no toilet facilities required*

Exhibit maintenance Heritage Branch cost

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
HIGH SEASON		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$700.00
SHOULDER SEASON		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panels as required empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$200.00
WINTER SEASON		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to displays empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$500.00
ANNUALLY	check for graffiti and repair as required	$500.00
	fill out seasonal maintenance report	
	re-grade gravel pull-offs	$750.00
	spring clean up	$500.00
	re-stain furnishings	$250.00
	fall check-up	$450.00
TOTAL		**$3,850.00**

Site: Yukon River Bridge **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type: Major

Location: km 1444

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new/expanded parking area**	$65.00/m²	$5,000.00
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	$250.00
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	$6,000.00
picnic table	$300.00 each	$1,500.00
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	$8,000.00
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	
toilet and holding tank***	$3,000.00 each	
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features*****	varies	$7,500.00
TOTAL		**$28,250.00**

* *Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

** *Assumes current site is retained and only minor resurfacing required*

*** *Existing toilets retained*

**** *Toilet pump-out frequency to be determined by use; assumes minimum of four times/season*

***** *Does not include any exhibit development undertaken by Yukon Energy.*

Assumes general site maintenance and washrooms C&TS cost. Exhibits and site furnishing Heritage Branch cost.

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
HIGH SEASON		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$2,000.00
SHOULDER SEASON		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panels as required empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$400.00
WINTER SEASON		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to washrooms, displays empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$750.00
ANNUALLY	check for graffiti and repair as required	$500.00
	fill out seasonal maintenance report	
	re-grade gravel pull-offs	$1,200.00
	spring clean up	$500.00
	re-stain furnishings	$250.00
	fall check-up	$500.00
	pump out toilets****	$1,000.00
TOTAL		**$6,100.00**

Site: Marsh Lake **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type: Minor

Location:

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new/expanded parking area**	$65.00/m²	$5,000.00
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	$200.00
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	$2,000.00
picnic table	$300.00 each	
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	$250.00
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	
toilet and holding tank	$3,000.00 each	
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features	varies	$1,000.00
TOTAL		**$8,450.00**

** Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

*** Assumes current site is retained, resurfaced and approaches rebuilt*

**** No toilets provided*

Maintenance Heritage Branch responsibility

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
HIGH SEASON		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$800.00
SHOULDER SEASON		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panels as required empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$400.00
WINTER SEASON		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to display empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$500.00
ANNUALLY	check for graffiti and repair as required	
	fill out seasonal maintenance report	
	re-grade gravel pull-offs	$1,000.00
	spring clean up	$400.00
	re-stain furnishings	$100.00
	fall check-up	$400.00
	pump out toilets***	
TOTAL		**$3,600.00**

Site: Jake's Corner **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type: Sub-regional

Location: km 1392.4

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new/expanded parking area**	$65.00/m²	$3,000.00
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	$200.00
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	$4,000.00
picnic table	$300.00 each	
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	$1,200.00
toilet and holding tank***	$3,000.00 each	
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features	varies	$7,500.00
TOTAL		**$15,900.00**

** Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

*** Assumes current site is retained and only minor resurfacing required*

**** No toilets provided*

***** Assumes artifact loan from adjacent business*

Assumes site maintenance cost shared with C&TS

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
HIGH SEASON		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$650.00
SHOULDER SEASON		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panels as required empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$300.00
WINTER SEASON		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to display empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$500.00
ANNUALLY	check for graffiti and repair as required	$250.00
	fill out seasonal maintenance report	
	re-grade gravel pull-offs	$1,000.00
	spring clean up	$400.00
	re-stain furnishings	$200.00
	fall check-up	$400.00
TOTAL		**$3,700.00**

Site: Seaforth Creek **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type: Minor

Location: km 1365

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new/expanded parking area**	$65.00/m²	
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	$200.00
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	$2,000.00
picnic table	$300.00 each	
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	
toilet and holding tank	$3,000.00 each	
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features	varies	$1,000.00
TOTAL		**$3,200.00**

** Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

*** Assumes current site is retained and resurfaced*

**** Toilet pump-out frequency to be determined by use; minimum spring, summer and fall*

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
HIGH SEASON		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$1200.00
SHOULDER SEASON		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panels as required empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$400.00
WINTER SEASON		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to washrooms, displays empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$750.00
ANNUALLY	check for graffiti and repair as required	$250.00
	fill out seasonal maintenance report	
	re-grade gravel pull-offs	$1,000.00
	spring clean up	$300.00
	re-stain furnishings	$100.00
	fall check-up	$300.00
	pump out toilets***	$400.00
TOTAL		**$4,700.00**

Site: South Canol Road Junction **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type: Sub-regional

Location: km 1345.5

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new parking area**	$65.00/m²	$14,000.00
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	$500.00
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	$8,000.00
picnic table	$300.00 each	$900.00
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	$3,000.00
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	$2,400.00
toilet and holding tank	$3,000.00 each	$4,000.00
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features****	varies	$5,000.00
TOTAL		**$37,800.00**

** Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

*** Assumes fill from regraded cut banks*

**** Toilet pump-out frequency to be determined by use; assumes minimum of four times/season*

***** Does not include cost to relocate army vehicles from nearby dump*

Site maintenance Heritage Branch cost

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
HIGH SEASON		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$1,600.00
SHOULDER SEASON		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panels as required empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$400.00
WINTER SEASON		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to washrooms, displays empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$600.00
ANNUALLY	check for graffiti and repair as required	
	fill out seasonal maintenance report	
	re-grade gravel pull-offs	$1,000.00
	spring clean up	$500.00
	re-stain furnishings	$400.00
	fall check-up	$250.00
	pump out toilets***	$600.00
TOTAL		**$5,350.00**

Site: Teslin Site Refurbishment **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type: Minor

Location: km 1294

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new/expanded parking area**	$65.00/m²	
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	
picnic table	$300.00 each	
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	$1,200.00
toilet and holding tank***	$3,000.00 each	
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features	varies	$2,000.00
TOTAL		**$3,200.00**

** Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

*** Assumes current site is retained and landscaped*

**** No toilets provided*

Garbage pick-up provided by Village of Teslin

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
High Season		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$250.00
Shoulder Season		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panels as required empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$250.00
Winter Season		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to displays empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$250.00
Annually	check for graffiti and repair as required fill out seasonal maintenance report re-grade gravel pull-offs spring clean up re-stain furnishings fall check-up	$200.00 $200.00 $200.00
TOTAL		**$1,350.00**

Site: Swan Lake, B.C. **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type: Minor

Location: km 1196

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new/expanded parking area	$65.00/m²	
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	$200.00
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	$2,000.00
picnic table	$300.00 each	
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	
toilet and holding tank**	$3,000.00 each	
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features	varies	$1,000.00
TOTAL		**$3,200.00**

* *Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

** *Existing toilets retained*

*** *Toilet pump-out frequency to be determined by use; assumes minimum of four times/season*

Assumes site maintenance responsibility of C&TS

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
HIGH SEASON		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$1200.00
SHOULDER SEASON		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panel as required empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$400.00
WINTER SEASON		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to washrooms, displays empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$750.00
ANNUALLY	check for graffiti and repair as required	
	fill out seasonal maintenance report	
	re-grade gravel pull-offs	$1,000.00
	spring clean up	$250.00
	re-stain furnishings	$100.00
	fall check-up	$250.00
	pump out toilets***	$300.00
TOTAL		**$4,250.00**

Site: Continental Divide **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type: Minor

Location: km 1164

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new/expanded parking area**	$65.00/m²	
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	$200.00
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	$1,100.00
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	
picnic table	$300.00 each	
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	
toilet and holding tank***	$3,000.00 each	
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features	varies	$5,000.00
TOTAL		**$6,300.00**

** Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

*** Assumes current site is retained and landscaped*

**** Existing toilets retained*

***** Toilet pump-out frequency to be determined by use; assumes minimum of four times/season*

C&TS responsible for general site maintenance. Heritage Branch responsible for site upgrade costs and sign maintenance

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
HIGH SEASON		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$1,600.00
SHOULDER SEASON		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panels as required empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$500.00
WINTER SEASON		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to washrooms, displays empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$500.00
ANNUALLY	check for graffiti and repair as required	
	fill out seasonal maintenance report	
	re-grade gravel pull-offs	$2,500.00
	spring clean up	$300.00
	re-stain furnishings	$250.00
	fall check-up	$300.00
	pump out toilets****	$400.00
TOTAL		**$6,350.00**

Site: Rancheria Lodge **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type: Minor

Location: km 1143.8

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new/expanded parking area**	$65.00/m²	
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	
picnic table	$300.00 each	
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	
toilet and holding tank***	$3,000.00 each	
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features	varies	$750.00
TOTAL		**$750.00**

** Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

*** Assumes current site is retained and resurfaced*

**** No toilets provided*

Site maintenance responsibility of Lodge owner, repairs responsibility of Heritage Branch

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
HIGH SEASON		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	
SHOULDER SEASON		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panels as required pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	
WINTER SEASON		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to display pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	
ANNUALLY	check for graffiti and repair as required fill out seasonal maintenance report re-grade gravel pull-offs spring clean up re-stain furnishings fall check-up	$100.00
TOTAL		**$100.00**

Site: Rancheria River **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type: Minor

Location: km 1127

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new/expanded parking area	$65.00/m²	
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	$200.00
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	$2,000.00
picnic table	$300.00 each	
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	
toilet and holding tank	$3,000.00 each	
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features	varies	$1,000.00
TOTAL		**$3,200.00**

* *Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

Assumes toilets not installed, site maintenance C&TS responsibility

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
HIGH SEASON		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$750.00
SHOULDER SEASON		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panels as required empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$400.00
WINTER SEASON		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to displays empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$750.00
ANNUALLY	check for graffiti and repair as required	
	fill out seasonal maintenance report	
	re-grade gravel pull-offs	$1,000.00
	spring clean up	$250.00
	re-stain furnishings	$100.00
	fall check-up	$250.00
TOTAL		**$3,500.00**

Site: Alaska and Cassiar Highway Junction **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type: Regional

Location: km 1042.8

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new/expanded parking area**	$65.00/m²	$6,500.00
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	$200.00
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	$6,000.00
picnic table	$300.00 each	$1,500.00
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	$1,000.00
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	$2,400.00
toilet and holding tank***	$3,000.00 each	$6,000.00
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features	varies	$5,000.00
TOTAL		**$28,600.00**

* *Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

** *Assumes current parking area enlarged by 100 m²*

*** *New toilets provided*

**** *Toilet pump-out frequency to be determined by use; assumes minimum of four times/season*

Exhibit Heritage Branch cost. General site maintenance C&TS cost. Building maintenance if used as visitor information cost assumed by local parties

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
HIGH SEASON		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$1600.00
SHOULDER SEASON		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panels as required empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$300.00
WINTER SEASON		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to washrooms, displays empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$500.00
ANNUALLY	check for graffiti and repair as required	$250.00
	fill out seasonal maintenance report	
	re-grade gravel pull-offs	$1,000.00
	spring clean up	$500.00
	re-stain furnishings	$250.00
	fall check-up	$450.00
	pump out toilets****	$300.00
TOTAL		**$5,150.00**

Site: Sign Post Forest **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type:

Location:

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new/expanded parking area	$65.00/m²	
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	
picnic table	$300.00 each	
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	
toilet and holding tank***	$3,000.00 each	
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features	varies	$10,000.00
TOTAL		**$10,000.00**

* *Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

Assumes one time grant towards site refurbishment plan with on-going maintenance responsibility of Town of Watson Lake

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
HIGH SEASON		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	
SHOULDER SEASON		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panels as required empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	
WINTER SEASON		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to washrooms, displays empty garbage, clean washrooms pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	
ANNUALLY	check for graffiti and repair as required fill out seasonal maintenance report re-grade gravel pull-offs spring clean up re-stain furnishings fall check-up pump out toilets****	
TOTAL		**N/A**

Site: Border Sign Relocation to Lucky Lake **Highway Unit: Alaska Highway East**

Type: Major

Location: km 1011.7

Capital Cost*

Site Feature	Unit Cost	Site Cost
new/expanded parking area**	$65.00/m²	
hard surface areas	$50.00/m²	
post/boulders	$25.00 each	
sign upgrade	$550.00/panel	
new sign	$2,000.00/panel	
picnic table	$300.00 each	
gravel trail	$50.00/m²	
bear-proof garbage container	$1,200.00 each	$1,200.00
toilet and holding tank***	$3,000.00 each	
viewing platform	$50.00/m²	
boardwalk	$100.00/m	
wood stairs	$75.00/m	
special site features****	varies	$1,000.00
TOTAL		**$2,200.00**

** Costs do not include research and design fees for sign/display features. Costs represent estimates for supply and installation only.*

*** Assumes current site is retained and resurfaced*

**** Toilets available at Lucky Lake*

***** Covers only sign relocation costs*

Maintenance cost responsibility of Heritage Branch

Operations & Maintenance

Schedule	Activity	Cost
HIGH SEASON		
Weekly *May 15-Sept. 15*	empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$750.00
SHOULDER SEASON		
Bi-weekly *April 1-May 14* *Sept. 16-Oct. 30*	clean interpretive panels as required empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$400.00
WINTER SEASON		
Monthly *Nov. 1-March 31*	clear snow to sign empty garbage pick up litter visual check of site & report damage	$400.00
ANNUALLY	check for graffiti and repair as required	$100.00
	fill out seasonal maintenance report	
	re-grade gravel pull-offs	$750.00
	spring clean up	$200.00
	re-stain furnishings	$250.00
	fall check-up	$200.00
TOTAL		**$3,050.00**