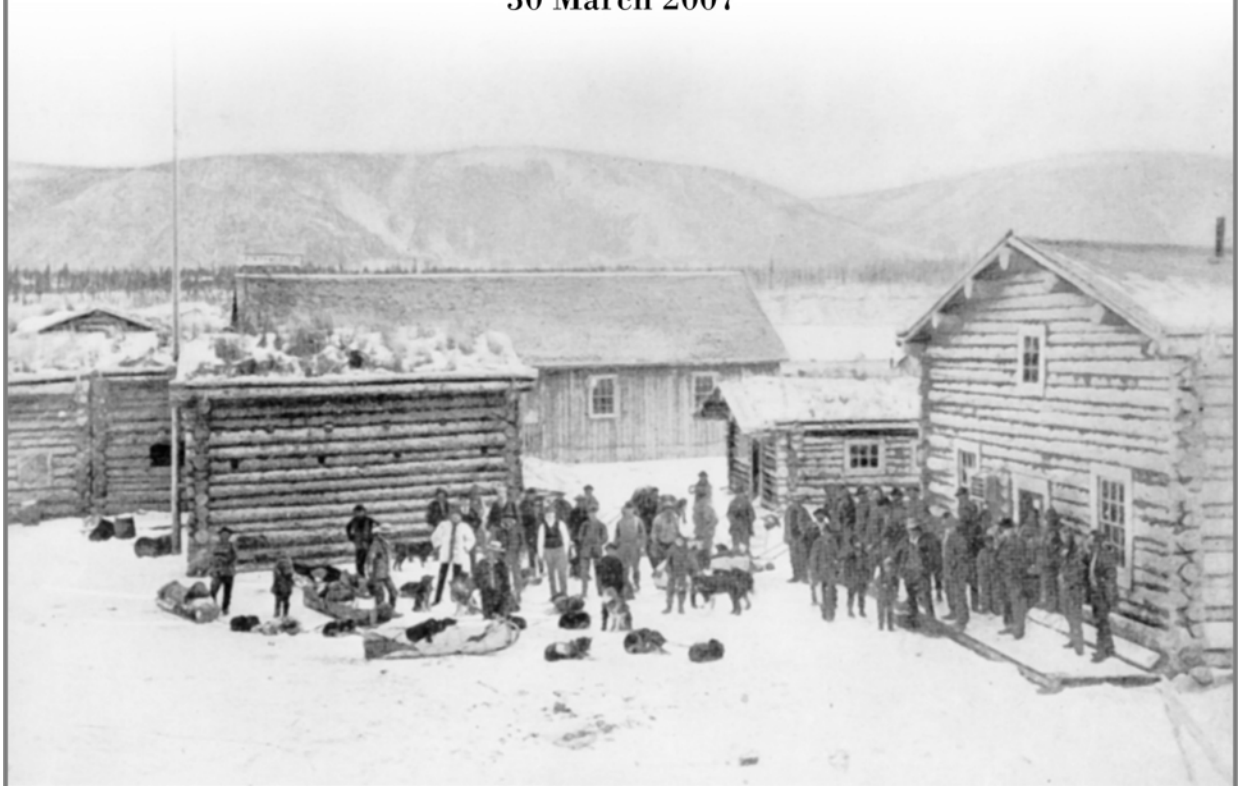


Forty Mile, Fort Cudahy and Fort Constantine Historic Site

Interpretation Plan

prepared for
Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in
Government of Yukon, Historic Sites
by
Helene Dobrowolsky & Rob Ingram
Midnight Arts

30 March 2007



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Cover Photo: Forty Mile, ca. 1897. From: Tappan Adney, *The Klondike Stampede*.

Important Notice:

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FORTY MILE, FORT CONSTANTINE AND FORT CUDAHY HISTORIC SITE INTERPRETATION PLAN

30 March 2007

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In 2003, Judy Campbell, Eileen Fletcher and T.J. Hammer prepared the *Forty Mile, Fort Cudahy and Fort Constantine Historic Site Management Plan*. This Interpretation Plan is the next stage in site planning and builds on their excellent work. The Management Plan was completed in 2005 and officially signed by representatives of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Government of Yukon on June 11th, 2006 at the Forty Mile townsite. This was an excellent opportunity to visit the site and my great thanks to the citizens of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in who hosted this wonderful event. We are also indebted to the following people for assistance, advice and responses to queries about a great variety of topics.

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Mike Mancini	General Manager, <i>Klondike Spirit</i>
Boris Dobrowolsky	former Cassiar Asbestos employee
Catherine & Ron Veale	former Forty Mile caretakers (1971)
Miriam & Mike Sager	proprietors, Eagle Canoe Rentals

Introduction

Note: The Fortymile River and its drainage are generally spelled as one word while the townsite of Forty Mile is written as two words. That being said, numerous documents indiscriminately adopt one usage or the other, as well as terms such as Forty-Mile and 40-Mile.

For the sake of brevity, the term “Forty Mile Historic Site” in this report actually refers to the Forty Mile, Fort Cudahy and Fort Constantine Historic Site.

What is Interpretation?

Interpretation is a special way of communicating information in a manner which reveals meanings and relationships to an audience rather than to simply communicate factual information. It helps people to understand natural and cultural heritage through first hand involvement with ideas, cultures, objects, artifacts, landscapes or sites.

What is an Interpretation Plan?

An interpretation plan takes a comprehensive approach to all aspects of interpretation. What are the themes and stories that best interpret Forty Mile Historic Site? What are the site resources? Who are the members of the potential audience — river travellers, Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in citizens, students, other Yukoners — and what are their needs and interests? Who belongs to the broader audience who might be interested in the Forty Mile story but are unable to visit the site? How does Forty Mile interpretation fit with other interpretation initiatives in Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in traditional territory, in the Klondike area and within Yukon? Are some Forty Mile stories already being told elsewhere?

What are the best ways to tell Forty Mile stories? Interpretive approaches can address a broad range of alternatives from self-guided hikes with a brochure, signage, onsite tours and interpretive programs, and videos or DVDs telling some of the stories of Forty Mile.

Which interpretive methods work best and which could be improved? There is no single best way to do interpretation. The main goal is to provide visitors with some new thoughts and ideas. There can be as many different ways of interpreting Forty Mile as there are visitors.

What is needed to put interpretation into place? Answering this question means addressing issues such as setting priorities, training, costs, and timetables. Putting all these elements into a comprehensive interpretive plan, rather than taking a piecemeal approach can increase the effectiveness of interpretation. It can also mean increased tourism, more jobs and other economic benefits for the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in as well as the opportunity to share and illuminate the rich history of Forty Mile with a variety of audiences.

1 Site Orientation & Access

Figure 1.1 Forty Mile Historic Site showing road and river access. *Michael Edwards map*



Forty Mile is situated at the confluence of the Yukon and Fortymile rivers approximately 67 km (42 miles) before the international boundary. Historically the site was reached by the Yukon River on a variety of vessels from miners' pole boats to steam-powered sternwheelers. Long before newcomers arrived and established the settlement, First Nations people travelled by foot along the Fortymile drainage and other overland trails, occasionally crossing the rivers or travelling portions of the river using rafts, birchbark canoes and skin boats.

The nearest community and airport is Dawson City, approximately 88 km (55 miles) upriver from the townsite or about 150 km (93 miles) by road. Since the construction of a road to Clinton Creek from the Top of the World Highway in the late 1960s, the site has been accessible by road. In earlier years, visitors walked to the site along an old trail from the bridge crossing the Fortymile River. At present, road travellers use a cut-off road, possibly built by Hān Fisheries, to the Fish Camp located upriver of the townsite.

Forty Mile is also located within the traditional territory inhabited by Hän-speaking people and, specifically, the traditional territory of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in).

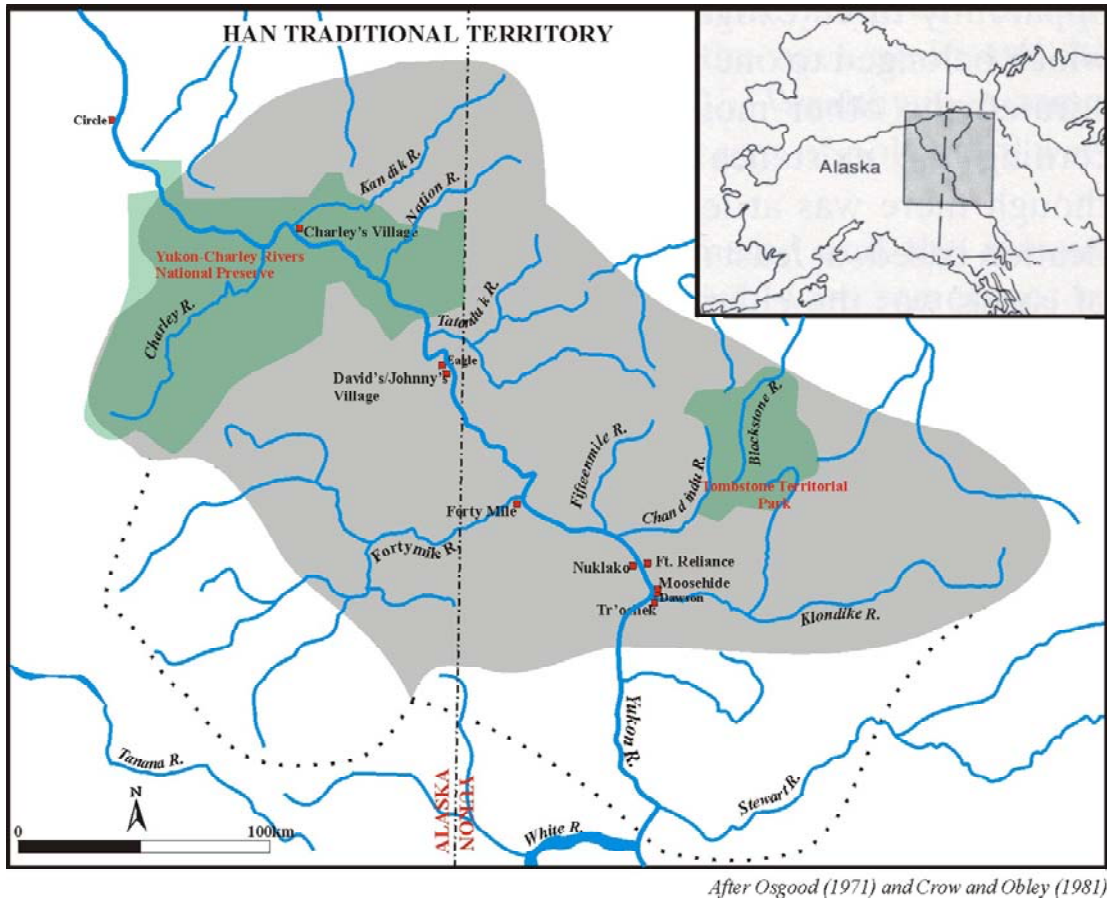


Figure 1.2 Hän Traditional Territory

Forty Mile, Fort Cudahy and Fort Constantine Historic Site consists of a number of discrete areas located on both sides of the mouth of the Fortymile River. They include:

- the main community occupying the area now known as Forty Mile Island,
- a portion of the townsite, farming area and cemetery extending further inland across the slough from the townsite,
- Mission Island just upriver of the site, and
- across the Fortymile River on the north side are Fort Cudahy, Fort Constantine and Gibson Island.

This aerial photograph has been annotated to show the components of the historic site.

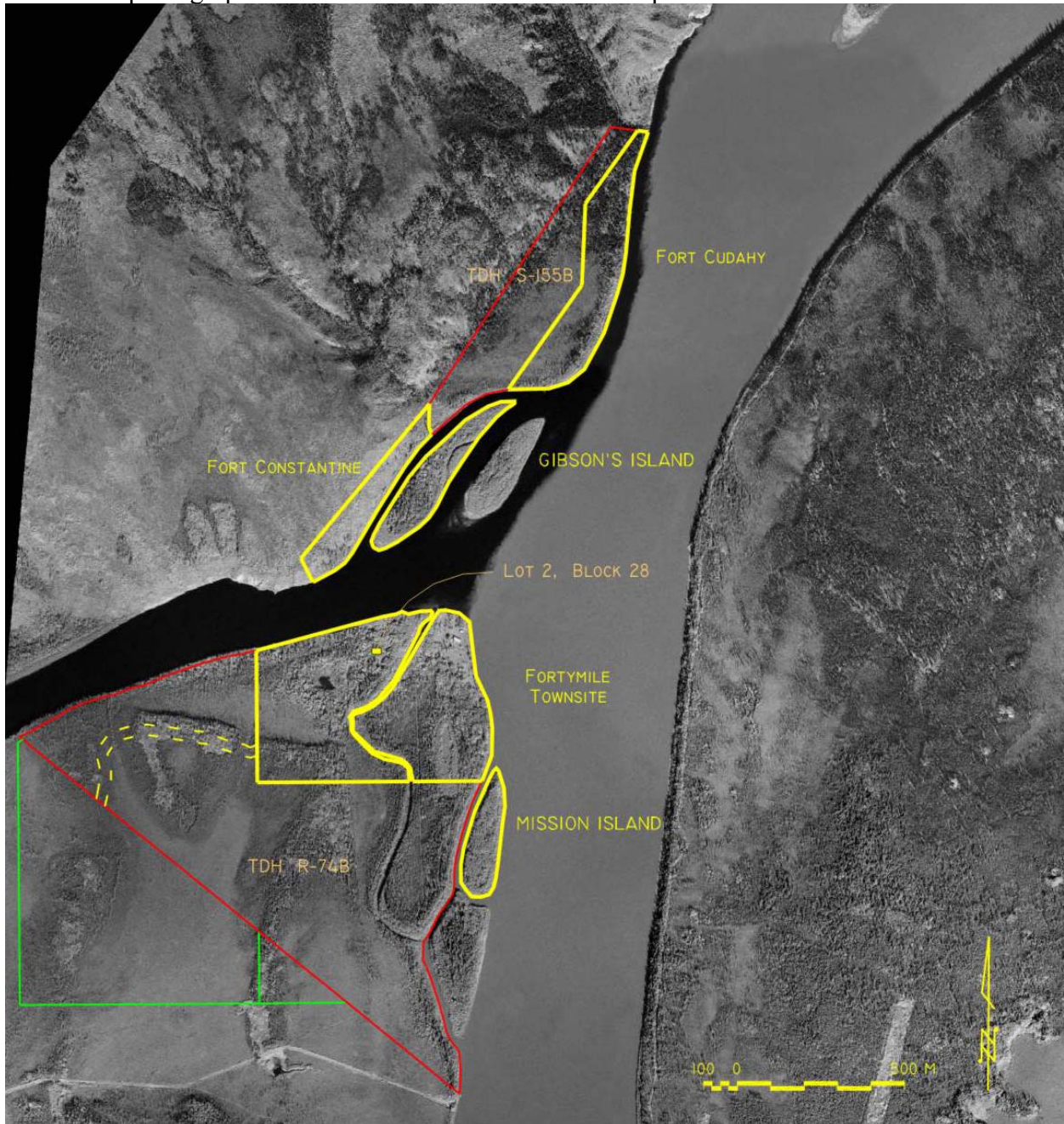


Figure 1.3 Forty Mile, Fort Cudahy and Fort Constantine Historic Site

KEY:

- yellow Historic Site boundaries including access easement through settlement lands
- Lot 2, Blk 28 one privately-owned lot within the Forty Mile townsite.
- Red Tr'ondëk Hwëch' in settlement lands
- Green Surveyed Territorial Lands

Forty Mile Access

The main routes to the site are still by water:

- travelling downriver from Dawson,
- floating down the Fortymile River after putting in at various possible sites, or
- motoring up the Yukon River from Alaska.

Otherwise people travel to the site by road. It is nearly 60 km (37 miles) to the Clinton Creek turn-off and 48 km (30 miles) down the road to the former mining town. A three-kilometre side road to the south reaches the Yukon River about 1 km upriver of the Forty Mile townsite. The lack of signage, the narrow and winding character of the side roads, and irregular maintenance necessarily limit the numbers and types of vehicles that can travel this route.

According to Historic Sites Manager, Doug Olynyk:

“The road from the Top of the World Hwy to Clinton Creek is definitely a surveyed, public Right of Way and the maintenance responsibility of Government of Yukon. The road from the Clinton Creek Road to the Fisherman's Landing is also a public road, but possibly unsurveyed. It is referred to as the “Fish Road” by the local highway maintenance folks. It is about three km long and was built by private interests (probably Hän Fisheries) with Yukon government funding. There is currently no budget to maintain it but it has gotten maintenance attention in the past when Ministers ask.”

It will be necessary to ensure there is annual budgeted maintenance for the Fish Road before promoting increased traffic to the site by road. Even so, the public should be notified that this is a narrow, winding and hilly road not suitable for all vehicles. It is unlikely that Highways will commit to maintaining a road that is not already a high traffic route. Perhaps some crush should be dumped into the larger holes; then put in a sign and a parking pullout on the main road so those in low vehicles can hike in.

Travelling the Fortymile River in Alaska

When speaking of the Fortymile River, it's important to remember that most of the river watershed is in Alaska. A number of American or Alaskan sites promote wilderness travel on the Fortymile River and in the area. One of the more informative sites is hosted by Paul Otteson and features the text of his book, *Alaska: Adventures in Nature*. The following excerpt summarizes the status of the Fortymile River in Alaska as well as the various options for travelling the river.

Source: <http://www.alaskajourney.com/interior/taylor.html>

The BLM [Bureau of Land Management] administers much of the historic Fortymile mining region, threaded by the branches of the Fortymile River and its tributaries. About 392 water miles are protected by the wild (192 miles), scenic (208 miles), or recreational (10 miles) designations, offering river runners a variety of options for trip length, scenery, and whitewater challenge.

Two of the best routes are: The South Fork Fortymile River route offers Class I—Class III waters and is accessible at several points from the Taylor Highway (see milepost listings). From the first put-in at Mile 49, distances to roadside take-outs are about 25 miles to Mosquito Fork, 30 miles to South Fork Lodge near Chicken, 72 miles to Fortymile Bridge (Mile 112.6), and 165 miles to Eagle. There are other take-outs as well, though away from the road the river dips deeply into wild country.

Mining activity is heavy in spots, particularly downstream of Chicken. The Middle Fork/North Fork Fortymile River route is accessed by an air drop-off, often at the old mining camp of Joseph. Canyons and mining ruins are found along the 90-mile route to the first roadside take-out at Fortymile Bridge, as are rapids that can reach Class V.

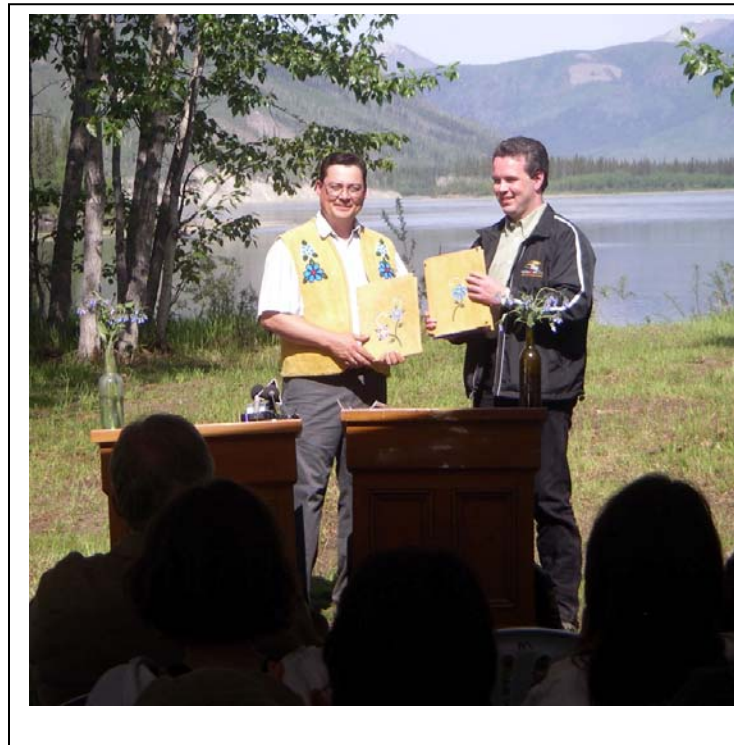
The North Fork meets the South several miles upstream of the road take-out at Fortymile Bridge (Mile 112.6 of the Taylor Highway). An alternative or extension is to stay in or put-in at Fortymile Bridge for the loop through Canada to Eagle. It's a 100-mile, weeklong trip through varied country with canyons, the historic site of Fortymile town at the Yukon-Fortymile confluence, and a wind-in-the-face final leg down the wide, silty Yukon to Eagle. Contact the BLM for information on all routes. The Tok office is the best choice, 883-5121.

2 Planning Background & Recent Activities

Interpretation planning needs to take place within the context of overall site planning and management. Considerable planning, research and preservation work has taken place at Forty Mile in the last few years. A number of these activities are in themselves interesting Forty Mile stories, and worthy of interpretation.

Management Plan

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement, ratified by the First Nation's membership in 1998,



specified that the Forty Mile, Fort Constantine and Fort Cudahy Historic Site was to be co-owned and co-managed by the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Yukon governments. In 2002 and 2003, the team of Ecogistics Consulting (Judy Campbell), Eileen Fletcher and T.J. Hammer prepared a draft management plan for the Forty Mile Historic Site.

The plan officially came into being on June 11, 2006 when Brad Cathers, representing the Government of Yukon Cabinet, and Chief Darren Taylor of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in signed the plan at a ceremony and celebration hosted at Forty Mile by Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in.

Figure 2.1 Chief Darren Taylor and Minister Brad Cathers sign the Forty Mile Management Plan, 11 June 2007. *Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Archives*

In the interim, several other planning initiatives and site development activities have taken place. Below is a summary of some of this work.

Preservation & Maintenance Plan

Yukon government's Historic Sites program is hoping to have funding to commission a preservation and maintenance plan next fiscal year. According to Historic Sites Manager, Doug Olynyk, such a plan "is necessary to go beyond the type of emergency stabilization work we have done to date and continue to do – and to provide caretakers/maintenance crews with guidance."

Archaeology

Over eight summers, archaeologists worked with students to document site features and evidence of pre-contact and early contact use of the site. In 2006, the booklet, *Archaeology at Forty Mile/Ch'ädä Dëk* by Thomas J. Hammer and Christian D. Thomas was produced in cooperation between Heritage Resources and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. This is one of a series of well-illustrated and easy-to-follow archaeology booklets produced in cooperation with First Nation governments and documenting the archaeology work in their traditional territories.

Archival Research

As part of the management planning process, T.J. Hammer prepared an overview history of the Forty Mile site.

In 2002, a detailed bibliography was prepared listing Forty Mile references from a variety of archival sources and resources. This was compiled by Helene Dobrowolsky for Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Yukon Government's Heritage Resources Unit.

Historic Sites has a few binders of historic photos of the site. There are, however, many other archival photographs that could be added to the collection and increase knowledge of the site.

Oral History

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in has an extensive collection of recorded oral histories with First Nations elders, most of which are transcribed. A number of these refer to the Forty Mile site.

In 2005, Chris Evans conducted an oral history project with elders with some knowledge and experience of the Forty Mile site. They included: Mathew Malcolm and Silas Stevens who were recorded in Fairbanks; and Julia Morberg and Margaret Titus who were recorded in Forty Mile.

Stabilization and Preservation

From 2003 to 2006, Hän Construction was contracted to stabilize the St. James Anglican Church, the telegraph office and the RCMP detachment and to perform other site preservation work. A "Fire Caddy" mobile fire suppression wagon has been located on site.

In 2006, the Church was given a front porch, stairs, and was landscaped. The Telegraph office was braced, and the floor removed, in preparation for foundation replacement next year. The same treatment was given to the Roadhouse and Building #7, the Alaska Commercial Company residence.

Visitor Facilities

From 1996 to 2000 Sebastian Jones, who lived at Forty Mile seasonally, was contracted to provide site security, firewood for the campground and caretaking services.

In 2006, Hän Construction built a new kitchen shelter with a wood stove. Outhouse facilities have been installed, and a few picnic tables have been set up. To date, camping is informal and visitors are encouraged to set up their tents near the north point of Forty Mile Island. During navigation season, a modular, floating dock is seasonally located on the Fortymile River near the point.

A more permanent log bridge has been constructed over the seasonal slough on the trail between

the site and the fisherman's landing.

Over the last few seasons, Hans Algotsson and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizens, Victor Henry, William Henry and John Semple, have worked as caretakers and interpreters at the site. They also have done extensive brush clearing and trail repair. A heavy duty "brush hog" type mower has been provided for the caretaker's use.

Graphic Design

In 2006, Aasman Design was contracted to develop graphic design guidelines to provide a consistent look to future signage, publications, etc.

3 Forty Mile Themes and Stories

Historical Overview

The Fortymile River drainage is one of the major tributaries feeding the Upper Yukon River basin. This area was an important hunting and fishing area to the Hän people and their neighbours – the Gwich'in, the Tanana and the Tutchone. Members of these First Nations met at fish camps along the Yukon River during the summer salmon runs to trade, visit and intermarry. They also hunted caribou during the two annual migrations of the Fortymile Caribou Herd.

Well before white traders visited the Upper Yukon River basin in the mid 19th century, the Hän were part of an extensive trade network with their neighbours to the north, south and west. When the first non-native traders visited Hän territory, they met people who had never seen a white person but were familiar with kettles, beads, tea and tobacco. Jack McQuesten of the Alaska Commercial Company set up a post at Fort Reliance in 1874. The Hän adjusted their way of life, trapping additional fur for trade and spending part of each year near the post.

About eight years later, prospectors from the outside began moving into the Yukon basin seeking gold. McQuesten and his colleagues began stocking mining supplies and these posts made it possible for the miners to over winter in the north. There were a number of promising finds, but the first major strike came in September 1886 when two miners found coarse gold 23 miles above the mouth of the Fortymile River. Soon after the rush to the new diggings, a bustling community of miners, merchants, and entrepreneurs grew up at the mouth of the river. First Nations people, attracted by the goods and services of the new settlement, helped build the Alaska Commercial Company post and supplied meat to the miners. The church followed in the late 1880s when Reverend M.W. Ellington started a mission for the First Nations people.

Today Forty Mile is recognized for its importance as a grayling fishery, a hunting area – largely due to the seasonal migrations of the Fortymile caribou herd, the site of Yukon's first major find of coarse gold and the development of innovative mining techniques, the territory's first real settlement, an early meeting place between First Nations people and the newcomers, and the place where the Canadian government first asserted its sovereignty in northwest Canada.

Forty Mile Firsts

- Yukon's first major gold strike (Sept. 1886)
- development of new placer mining techniques
- Yukon's first non-native settlement (1887)
- founding meeting of the Yukon Order of Pioneers (YOOP), 1 December 1894
- Yukon's first post office (1894)
- Yukon's first residential school (1893)
- first meeting between Canadian government representatives and Hän people
- the place where the Canadian Government first raised the flag in the Yukon and collected customs taxes (1894)
- Yukon's first Mounted Police post (1895)

Confluence of Cultures

For thousands of years, First Nations people met at the confluence of the Yukon and Fortymile Rivers in summer to visit, trade and enjoy good fishing and hunting. When gold was discovered in the Fortymile River drainage, the settlement of Forty Mile grew up around a trading post at the mouth of that river. This frontier settlement drew First Nations people, miners from all over the world, missionaries seeking converts and government officials determined to protect Canadian sovereignty and enforce Canadian laws. The encounters and intermingling among various people, cultures and institutions caused some tensions, interesting alliances and a wealth of compelling stories.

Hence, “Confluence of Cultures” is the overall concept selected for organizing the stories of Forty Mile. Below are some examples of these encounters:

- In the early days, this was one of the places where the Hän met other First Nations people during the summer fishing season to feast, trade and inter-marry.
- This was one of the places that First Nations people interacted with newcomers to the country.
- Miners and entrepreneurs from all over the world met in this remote settlement.
- At Forty Mile, First Nations people met representatives of the two institutions that would strongly influence their future, the Church and the Canadian government.
- The rough and ready justice of the miners’ meetings encountered the laws of Canada as enforced by the Mounted Police.
- Two large corporate interests, the Alaska Commercial Company and the North American Trading and Transportation Company, competed at Forty Mile.
- The Hän experienced different concepts about land stewardship and ownership. The creation of the International Boundary divided the Hän and even families with members born on different sides of “the line”.
- After its heyday, Forty Mile continued to be a place of converging cultures: the settlement was a base for First Nations people, miners, trappers and farmers.
- Today, Forty Mile is a place where visitors from around the world can meet Yukoners and learn about our unique history and culture.

Introduction to Themes

There are many stories to be told about the Forty Mile site – stories that range from First Nations use of the site in the distant past, to recent work that First Nations youth are doing to discover and document the activities of their forebears. Many stories of early contact between First Nations people and newcomers took place in the Fortymile area. Then there is a considerable list of Forty Mile “firsts” noted on the previous page.

One way to organize and focus these stories is by grouping them into general *themes*. These themes can either be a larger overall topic such as “Natural Setting” or “The Churches” or encompass periods of change such as “From Furs to Gold” and “Bonanza and Beyond”.

Figure 4.1, the “Forty Mile Historic Site Interpretive Framework” outlines the suggested themes and stories. This builds on material discussed in the *Forty Mile Management Plan* only with some re-organization (e.g. episodes such as Joe Wilson and the gumboots are incorporated into the Alaska Commercial Company story) and the addition of other relevant stories (e.g. Fort Cudahy and N.A.T.T., 40 Mile Today).

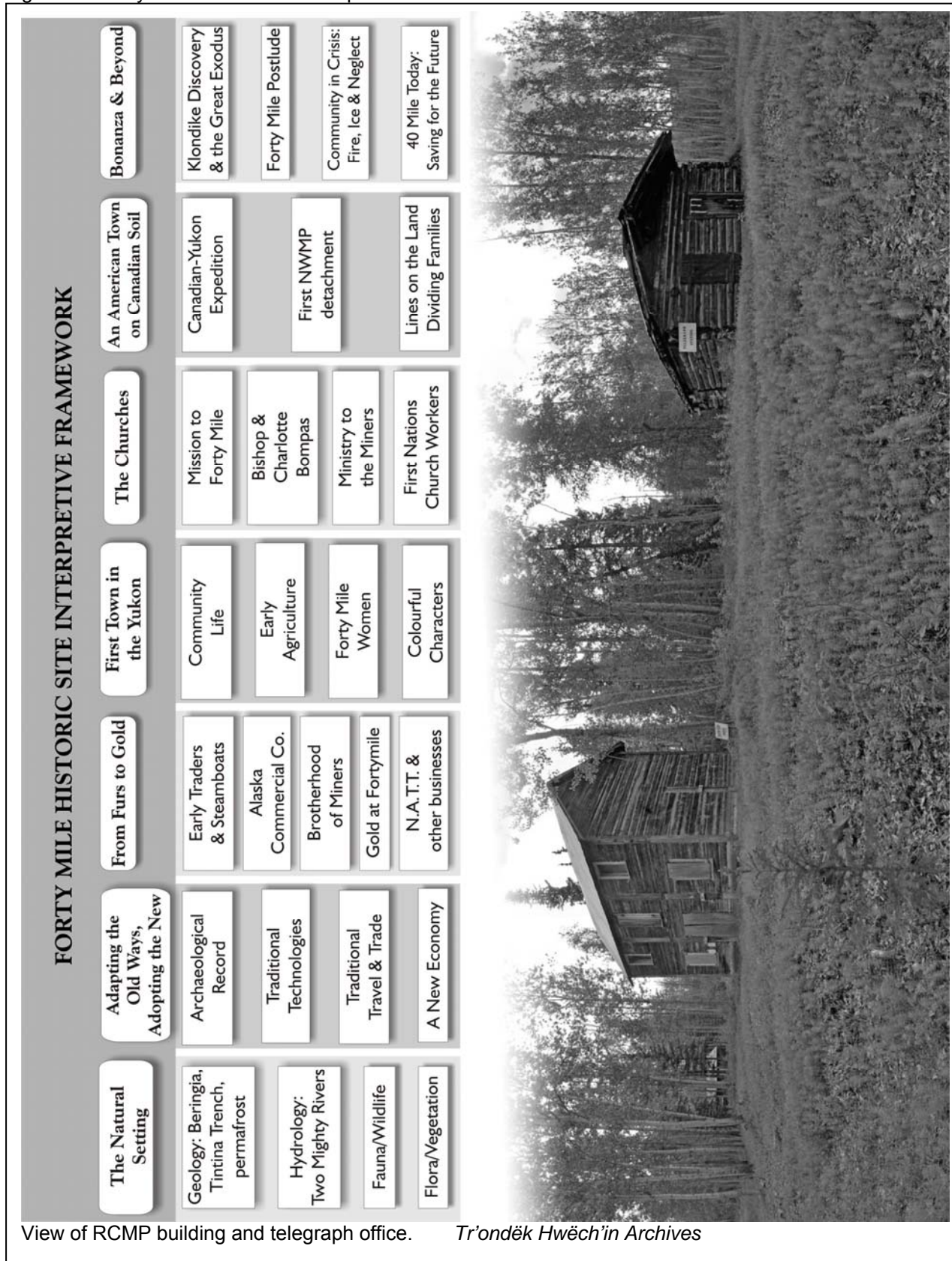
In this section, there is a brief introduction to/description of the theme followed by the main points to be covered by each story listed in point form.



PA-017052

Figure 3.1 First Nations woman, Rev. Hawksley & his family at Buxton Mission, 1901.
Library & Archives Canada, PA 017052

Figure 3.1 Forty Mile Historic Site Interpretive Framework



3.1 Theme: The Natural Setting

The setting and natural resources of the Fortymile drainage have influenced the human history of this area.

At Fortymile, there were good fat grayling. They're hard, not soft like some other places. I don't like soft fish.
– Mary McLeod, 1974

We used to go up from Eagle to Forty Mile area. At the mouth, we used to go grayling fishing too – in the spring time. Bunch of dog teams go up there ... just use a rod – fish at the mouth. Chop a hole right through the ice.
– Silas Stevens, 2005

The site is located at the confluence of two major river systems with a dramatic vista of the surrounding landscape. The geology and geography of this site and area contributed to the location of the First Nation camp and later gold rush buildings, the occupations of the residents and the boomtown quality of the town's existence.

This is an excellent place to tell stories about the changing landscape (Beringia, hydrology, succession forest, riverine environment, etc.) and some of the area's species, particularly the once mighty Fortymile Caribou Herd and the grayling that made the Fortymile River an important spring and fall fishery.

Despite the fact that the visitor is standing in the Yukon's first "town," the natural world is very evident. Visitors' experiences are much enriched if they can learn more about the natural forces and species of the area, and how these have affected the history of Forty Mile.

Story: Geology

- Beringia: The Forty Mile drainage is part of Beringia, the extensive ice free zone and refugium during the last great ice age. Unlike other glaciated areas, placer gold in the creek beds was undisturbed.
- Tintina Trench: This great geological rift stretches hundreds of miles and is an important spring and fall migration route for numerous bird species.
- Permafrost: The presence of permafrost contributed to the rapid deterioration of many Forty Mile buildings and also presented a challenge to miners who developed mining techniques for northern conditions.
- the Fortymile area is rich in minerals: the rich gold diggings further upriver, the asbestos that fuelled a 12-year operating mine and company town, and the nearby coal deposits at Coal Creek that helped to power the Klondike. Each mining era brought a different group of residents to the region. People stayed until the resources ran dry or mining was no longer economic.

Story: Two Mighty Rivers

- The Fortymile River drainage and river system is one of the Yukon's major tributaries. Despite this, the river is too shallow for steam navigation, even by the small sternwheelers

of the 1880s.

- Most of the Fortymile watershed is located in Alaska, thereby creating confusion about whether mining areas were in Alaska or Canadian territory.
- Hydrology: The townsite was vulnerable to spring flooding and ice damage.
- The large shallow bar at the tip of the townsite prevented large boats from docking. The location of Fort Cudahy was selected in part because steamers could dock at the Yukon River bank.
- Changing channels made Forty Mile site an island and created other islands near the river mouth.
- Repeated floods have resulted in large silt deposits that helped create distinct archaeological strata.

Story: Fauna/Wildlife

- Fur: the fur bearing mammals that have been harvested by early and present day trappers.
- The Fortymile Caribou Herd was once known as the gold rush herd, supplying miners with meat twice a year. Tell the story of this once mighty herd, its importance to several First Nations, its decline and recent conservation measures.
- Fish: historic importance of the Fortymile River as a spring and fall grayling fishery and the Yukon River as a salmon fishing & processing site.
- This was one of the first places in the territory where bird species were recorded and specimens collected. Appendix 5 of the Interpreters Manual lists the species of waterfowl and birds that have been sighted in this area.

Story: Flora/Vegetation

- Boreal forest: focus on story of succession forest as illustrated at the townsite
- Riverine environment: the many species growing at Forty Mile that prefer “wet feet” e.g. cottonwoods, willow, alder, horsetails, etc.
- During dry summers, forest fires have threatened this site a number of times. Discuss the fire history of the area and the back burn that is still evident on the other side of the Fortymile River.

3.2 Theme: Adapting the Old Ways, Adopting the New

After the arrival of non-native traders, First Nations people changed their seasonal round to accommodate new technologies and opportunities.

All year people are busy. In summer people dry fish and get berries. In autumn they hunt moose. In winter they trap, but get caribou and moose while they are trapping.
– Mary McLeod, 1974.

To a large degree, First Nations stories are implicit in all the themes. This section will focus on the pre-contact life in the area, how people used to travel and make a living, and some of the many changes that happened during early contact with the newcomers.

Story: Archaeological Record

- Between 1998 and 2005, archaeologists have worked with youth to investigate and map the site as well as conducting impact assessments in areas where buildings were stabilized.
- Archaeological work, together with archival research, has been useful in mapping traces of the former settlement and showing distinct commercial, residential, mission, and police areas.
- significance of archaeology work in detailing pre-contact life at the site extending to at least 2300 years before present.
- This archaeology work has been important in teaching youth about their heritage.

Story: Traditional Technologies

- Description of early hunting practices, especially stories about caribou hunting.
- Fishing methods. Although this was an important salmon processing camp, the main focus will be on the spring and fall grayling fishery.
- These fishing and hunting methods changed with the introduction of guns, fish nets and fish wheels.

Story: Traditional Travel & Trade

- Discuss the distances people travelled to earn a living during the seasonal round and some of the areas they fished and hunted at different times of the year.
- Modes of travel during different seasons and over different terrains.
- The Forty Mile site was a gathering place for various First Nation groups (Hän, Tanana, Gwich'in, etc.) before the arrival of newcomers. After contact, people tended to gather near trading posts (often located on the sites of traditional gathering areas).

Story: A New Economy

- increased emphasis on the fur trade (see intro to From Furs to Gold)
- assisting the miners (market hunting and fishing, fabricating and selling clothing, etc.)
- the less positive side of these developments: loss of access to the land, diminishing resources, disease, alcohol.
- Alliances between miners and traders and First Nations women: sometimes these were enduring partnerships, in other cases women and children were eventually abandoned.

3.3 Theme: From Furs to Gold

Early traders began carrying mining supplies as well as fur trade goods, in response to changes in the economy and settlement patterns.

Long before the arrival of newcomers within Hän traditional territory, the First Nations economy was changing. Intermediaries, such as the Gwich'in and the Tlingit, brought new trade goods such as kettles, knives and blankets which they traded for fur. To obtain these goods, people began to spend more time trapping fur-bearing animals and treating hides. Once non-native traders moved into Hän traditional territory, people were drawn to the trading posts. There they found new sources of income such as market hunting and fishing, guiding and helping to build the posts.

The arrival of an increasing number of prospectors prompted Alaska Commercial Company traders to stock more supplies. This development allowed some prospectors to over-winter in the area and contributed to the timing of the first major gold strike on the Fortymile River in 1886. McQuesten notes that a party spent the winter at Fort Reliance as early as 1882.

Story: Early Traders & Steamboats

- The development of the Yukon River basin and many early mining discoveries owe much to three early traders and explorers: Leroy Napoleon “Jack” McQuesten, Alfred Henry Mayo and Arthur Francis Sean Harper.
- In the spring of 1887, the three men and their families established a store at the mouth of the Fortymile River, the basis for the settlement of Forty Mile.
- The traders would not have been able to operate without trade goods and a more-or-less reliable supply network. This story will briefly profile four of the first steamboats on the Yukon River: the *Yukon*, the *St. Michael*, *New Racket* and the *Arctic*.

Story: Alaska Commercial Company

- the role of this American company in developing Yukon and Alaska
- First Nations people played a key role in supplying and building the stores at Fort Reliance and Forty Mile
- uncertain supply lines: early steamships, poor quality of supplies, shortages, e.g. tale of Joe Wilson and the gumboots
- limited communications: the annual mails

Story: Brotherhood of Miners

- The miners regulated themselves using the “Miners’ Code”
- anecdote about Mayo’s cache at Fort Nelson
- Miners Meetings: fair treatment or vigilante justice?
- formation of the Yukon Order of Pioneers

Story: Gold at Fortymile

- the story of the great strike in 1886 and subsequent rush
- bringing the news to the Outside: Tom William's death march & the experiences of “Bob” his First Nations guide
- the development of new mining methods allowed miners to work their claims in winter

Story: N.A.T.T. & other businesses

- John J. Healy, founder of Forty Cudahy and a little about his colourful past
- the Fort Cudahy operation (rivalry with McQuesten, boats, post, role in supporting NWMP)
- other Forty Mile entrepreneurs included Thomas O'Brien (trader), Al Hamilton (businessman), Frank Densmore (blacksmith), William McPhee (billiard parlour and saloon) and George T. Snow (theatre and dance troupe).

3.4 Theme: First Yukon Town

During its heyday, the log cabin community of Forty Mile abounded with interesting characters and stories of their pastimes and activities.

Description of Forty Mile in May 1893:

... Forty Mile Creek, the loneliest mining camp on the face of the earth, where it is midnight all winter and daylight all summer, and where the mail comes but once a year. We were the first arrivals from the outside for that spring, and brought the year's budget of news to the three hundred white men, who, in addition to the Indians, at that time formed the population of this placer gold-mining camp of the far north.

The village is situated on the left hand or west bank of the Yukon, at the mouth of Forty Mile Creek. There were all sorts of men among the miners, who spent their summers in washing gold out of the gulches, and their winters in playing poker and spinning yarns.

– Frederick Funston, 1896

This theme includes stories about Forty Mile in its heyday and beyond. We will learn about the construction of Yukon's first log cabin settlement and the people who lived there. Even before the discovery of gold in the Klondike, the town's population dropped after gold finds on Birch Creek and the establishment of Circle, Alaska.

Story: Community Life

- development of the Log Cabin settlement and architectural features/challenges
- Loneliness and isolation
- Early entertainments: Liar's Island, the "opera house", library, the saloons & homebrew operations
- moving on: after reaching a peak of about 1000 people, the population dropped after gold finds at Birch Creek in Alaska and establishment of the town of Circle.

Story: Early Agriculture

- discuss Forty Mile gardens, farm/s and farmers and changes over the years
- Farming in the North presented special challenges: a short growing season, soil underlain with permafrost, etc.
- Farmers responded with unique solutions such as ploughing fields with a dogteam or a

moose, etc.

- The visitor can see many relics of agricultural activity at Forty Mile.

Story: Forty Mile Women

- Although Forty Mile was primarily a community of miners, a small number of women contributed to the development of the settlement.
- Much has been written about Jack McQuesten, Alfred Mayo and Arthur Harper but little recognition has been given to the contributions of their First Nations wives. These three remarkable women and their families all helped to establish the Forty Mile settlement.
- Non-native women at the settlement included missionaries, teachers, entertainers and the wives of miners and traders.

Story: Colourful Characters

- Many of the Klondike's legendary gold miners were old timers who first came into the country before the Forty Mile strike and were amongst the town's earliest residents.
- The miners developed interesting pastimes and eccentricities to pass the long cold winters
- Some of the characters in this "community of hermits" are briefly profiled in this story.

3.5 Theme: The Churches

The first Anglican mission on the Yukon River was set up at Forty Mile. For some years, this was the headquarters of Bishop Bompas and his wife, Charlotte, two of the most significant figures in early Yukon church history.

Anglican Church missionaries established a presence at Forty Mile not long after the founding of the settlement. Establishing ministries to both the First Nations people and the miners were formidable tasks and not all church workers were up to the challenge. At Forty Mile, Father William Judge was the first Roman Catholic Church worker to establish a mission in the territory. Forty Mile was also the site of Yukon's first residential school, set up on Mission Island in 1893 when Bishop and Mrs. Bompas took in live-in students.

After the Klondike gold rush, when Forty Mile became a much smaller community, the Anglican Church still kept a presence at the settlement, aided in large part by First Nations church workers.

Story: Mission to Forty Mile

- brief outline of Anglican Church presence at Forty Mile from 1887 to ca. 1930s.
- first Mission established by J.W. Ellington & his subsequent breakdown
- establishing Buxton Mission on Mission Island
- The story of Father Judge, the Roman Catholic missionary.

Story: Bishop and Charlotte Bompas

- biographical sketches of Bishop and Mrs. Bompas and their work in the North and Forty Mile
- the role of Bishop Bompas as an advocate for First Nations people, especially the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in

- Mission Island – discussion of the early years of this mission

Story: Ministry to the Miners

- Arrival of Anglican missionary, R.J. Bowen, with the task of ministering to the miners
- construction of St. James Church
- the story of Father Judge, first Roman Catholic priest to settle in the area

Story: First Nations Church Workers

- importance of First Nations church workers in furthering the Anglican ministry among First Nations people and in remote area
- story of First Nations catechists, especially Jonathan Wood, in maintaining Forty Mile mission.

3.6 Theme: An American Town on Canadian Soil

Although Forty Mile citizens came from all over the world, most were Americans who acted as if they were mining and living on American soil. This and other issues impelled Canada to send officials to Forty Mile.

“About 200 Miners have passed the present winter in this immediate vicinity, in British Territory. The Indians have learned from them to make whiskey for themselves, and there has been drunkenness of Whites and Indians together with much danger of the use of firearms.”

– Bishop Bompas, Forty Mile, to Chief Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Ottawa, 1893

Early prospectors were uncertain of exactly which country they were occupying and mining. This had many implications: the first traders were Americans, the first post office was American, miners followed American rather than Canadian mining regulations, and there was even a perception that this valuable area might be annexed by the American government. Coupled with complaints about the rough justice of the miners meetings and the debauching of First Nations people, the Canadian government was finally compelled to send representatives to this remote and neglected area of the country.

After a reconnaissance trip in 1894, NWMP Inspector Constantine established the first Yukon detachment at Fort Constantine in 1895. Two years later, this complex of 9* buildings, enclosed by a stockade, were almost abandoned when the Mounties followed the stampede to the Klondike discoveries. Two of the buildings were dismantled and moved to Dawson in the fall of 1897.

Dominion Land Surveyor William Ogilvie came to survey the international boundary and later proved invaluable in resolving claim disputes in the Klondike. One eventual effect of the new border was that the Hän and other First Nations people, who had once freely ranged between Yukon and Alaska, were forced to choose a nationality. In some cases this had the effect of dividing families.

Story: Canadian-Yukon Expedition

- in 1887, George Dawson led an expedition to survey the territory for the Canadian government
- one of his party, William Ogilvie, travelled to Forty Mile and was the first to establish the location of the boundary between Alaska and Yukon
- significance of this expedition in future decisions about the administration of Yukon

Story: First NWMP Detachment

- circumstances leading to first NWMP expedition at Forty Mile
- reconnaissance in 1894 by Inspector Charles Constantine and Staff Sgt. Brown
- the first NWMP post on Yukon soil in 1895; building Fort Constantine
- the Glacier Creek showdown
- importance of Mounted Police presence at onset of Klondike gold rush
- Eventual fate of Fort Constantine and the various buildings in Forty Mile that housed the Forty Mile detachment.

Story: Lines on the Land Dividing Families

- William Ogilvie's early work in establishing the international boundary
- the 1903 boundary commission
- impact of the boundary: by forcing people to choose a nationality, some families were divided.
- Forty Mile's continuing role as a customs post.

3.7 Theme: Bonanza & Beyond

The heyday of Forty Mile was over a few years before the Klondike gold rush. Nonetheless the smaller settlement continued to operate for several decades as a police and customs post, a store and centre for area First Nations people.

Talking about the life of Pete Anderson and his family:

They fish [salmon] and made lots of dried fish for dog teams and, I guess he sold it. A lot of it – sold to the police, RCMP, whatever they call it – Northwest Mounted Police ... I know they had horses and they had a big farm too. They sold vegetables eh, grandpa. Fish, dried fish and sold it. Kind of a farmer-fisherman I guess. – Margaret Titus, 2005

The community thrived until the discovery of gold on Rabbit Creek in 1896. The town was abandoned virtually overnight. After the excitement had subsided, several miners returned to the Fortymile diggings. Forty Mile lived on as a much smaller settlement. It still had a police post, store and mission and continued to be the base for a sizeable group of First Nations people, many from the Alaska side. By the late 1930s, however, the townsite was almost abandoned. Placer mining has continued in the Fortymile drainage in both Yukon and Alaska until the present day.

The Forty Mile townsite suffered from neglect during the following decades. Occasionally, during spring break-up, flooding and ice damaged the site. People camping at the site sometimes built fires that went out of control and destroyed cabins. Portable artifacts gradually disappeared. While

we don't have pictorial or archival records showing what happened at Fort Cudahy and Fort Constantine during this period, we can safely assume these sites were suffering the same depredations.

Despite this, various individuals and groups worked to save and document the site over the years. This work was formalized after the signing of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement and the provision that the site would be co-owned and co-managed by the First Nation and the Government of Yukon. The last story will discuss subsequent developments and preservation work at the site.

Story: Klondike Discovery & the Great Exodus

- brief reprise of the story of the Bonanza discovery on August 17, 1896.
- Carmack registering his claim and the subsequent rush & desertion of Forty Mile
- moving of merchants, police post, etc.
- the resettlement of Forty Mile when many returned after the initial excitement subsided

Story: Forty Mile Postlude

- After Bonanza, Forty Mile survived as a smaller community for at least three decades housing a police and customs post, store (telegraph office?).
- the Anglican mission survived due to the efforts of First Nations church workers
- the town remained a base for many First Nations people in the area
- Forty Mile families: McLeods, Andersons, DeWolfes, etc.
- description of the activities that kept them going: woodcutting, fishing, farming.

Story: Community in Crisis: Fire, Ice & Neglect

- the final abandonment of Forty Mile and the consequences
- natural forces: flooding, ice, permafrost, dry rot, etc.
- human damages: removal of artifacts, fire, etc.
- efforts of various individuals and groups (Clinton Creek Historical Society, Alan Innes-Taylor) to preserve the site and its resources

Story: 40 Mile Today

- Forty Mile legacy: why the site is important to the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, its significance in Yukon history and why it is important to save and interpret what remains at the site
- outline the story of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement that this historic site would be co-owned & co-managed by Yukon Government and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in
- development of the Management Plan; activities to manage, preserve and interpret the site
- importance of site to heritage of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and all Yukoners
- the story of the preservation work at Forty Mile
 - o challenges of preserving the buildings: what happens during deterioration, methods of stabilizing, reconstructing, etc.
- the dendrochronology project
- collecting and interpreting the stories of Forty Mile and the people who spent time there.

4 Forty Mile Interpretive Resources

(Note: Some of this information is reprinted from the Forty Mile Management Plan.)

4.1 Natural Resources

Forty Mile historic site, located at the confluence of two major rivers: the Yukon and the Fortymile. The historic site is located on the lowest level of a series of natural terraces that reflect the changing courses of the rivers over time. There is considerable evidence of erosion, flooding and the abrasive action of ice. The natural setting of the site has also been altered by human activity, in particularly the removal of vegetation and exposing permafrost.

The river is a major migration route for birds and salmon. Historically, the Forty Mile area has been a crossing point for the Fortymile Caribou Herd during their migrations between winter and summer ranges.



Figure 4.1 Swanson's Store ca. 1970s. *Boris Dobrowolsky photo*

4.1.1 The Setting / Natural Viewscapes

The historic site is located at the confluence of two rivers. The Forty Mile site, especially the north tip of Forty Mile Island, is characterized by sweeping vistas of the bluffs that line the Yukon River with the Cloudy Range in the distance.

The openness of the river at this point and the low hills in the foreground make these views some of the most spectacular in the area. It is not hard to imagine an early hunter sitting on the riverbank scanning the adjoining hills for game and instead spotting the first steamboat chugging up the Yukon River.

Note: this page will be replaced with an insert of an 11x17 townsite plan.

Figure 4.2 Forty Mile Townsite.

Reverse of insert plan.

Geology

Forty Mile is within Beringia, the area ranging across Northern Yukon and Alaska that remained unglaciated during the last major ice age between about 10 and 25,000 years BP (before present).

Forty Mile also lies within the Tintina Trench, a linear valley that traverses Yukon Territory from southeast to northwest. The Trench is underlain by a huge fault along which bedrock has shifted as much as 450 km.¹ Created about eight million years ago, the massive upheaval changed the course of the Yukon River from south into the Gulf of Alaska to north into the Bering Sea. The Trench is rich in mineral deposits. It also is an important wildlife migration route and a flyway for species such as sandhill cranes, swans and peregrine falcons.

Much of this area is underlain by permafrost. Lack of knowledge of permafrost and its properties sabotaged many early buildings on the site.

The recent history of the area has been influenced by rich mineral deposits found in the region, asbestos near Clinton Creek, the coal found near Coal Creek and most famously, the coarse gold that led to the founding of the territory's first boomtown community and first log cabin town.

Mammals

Wildlife typically found along the Yukon River can be seen in the Forty Mile area. Black bears are regularly spotted, as are moose. Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in elders report that moose use the islands in the Yukon River (of which there are several near the mouth of the Fortymile River) for calving. This area is part of the range of the Fortymile caribou herd. This woodland caribou herd, which historically numbered in the thousands, still inhabits the area.

Many other mammals inhabit the Fortymile river valley and area including squirrels, foxes, porcupines, wolves, lynx, marten, mink, weasels or ermine, wolves, wolverine and the water dwellers: beaver, river otters and muskrats. Coyotes have occasionally been seen in the area but are not common.

Fortymile Caribou Herd

The Fortymile Caribou Herd was once estimated at half a million animals and ranged across the eastern interior of Alaska and throughout much of the central and southern Yukon. There are stories of early hunters working together to harvest caribou using a long caribou fence near Chicken, Alaska. Later this was referred to as the "gold rush herd", feeding hungry many miners. By the 1970s, due to periodic cold winters, over-harvesting, and high predation rates, the herd had dwindled to 7500 animals. After 1974 the herd was rarely sighted in Yukon.

In 1994 the Fortymile Caribou Herd Management Planning Team was struck, representing a broad cross-section of public and government agencies in both Alaska and Yukon. Through a program of controlled hunting, non-lethal predator control and habitat protection, the herd has

¹ www.yukonheritage.com, Highway Sign Program Km.652.3, North Klondike Hwy.

recovered to an estimated 40,000 animals in 2002.² As the herd size increased, so did the amount of their traditional range being used. In the fall of 2002, a portion of the herd crossed the Yukon River at the mouth of the Fortymile River for the first time in fifty years.

Birds

Bird sightings in the Fortymile area were recorded as early as the late 1800s. Trader Jack McQuesten collected bird specimens and sent them to E.W. Nelson, who was conducting a major study of birds on the lower Yukon River for the United States government. More data was collected by Charles Hall, who ran the Alaska Commercial Company store from 1899 to 1901. In 1909, Joseph Grinnell published an article listing birds from Fortymile (Grinnell, 1909).

Appendix 5 in the Interpretation Manual contains a chart of recorded bird sightings in the Yukon portion of the Fortymile watershed. Additional species documented in the watershed include swans (*Cygnus sp.*), harlequin duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*), osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) and red-tailed hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*).

There are a few species in the area of particular interest. Peregrine falcons were considered endangered by the 1970s but their population has increased due to a successful recovery program. Other species listed as being of special concern in Alaska and/or Yukon are the grey-cheeked thrush, the olive-sided flycatcher and the short-eared owl.

Fish

The fishery at the confluence of the Fortymile and Yukon Rivers was important to First Nations people. Since pre-contact times, the Hän fished for grayling in the Forty Mile in spring and fall – a practice that continued well into the 20th century. At Forty Mile, the Anderson family also fished for salmon in the 1920s and 1930s. They dried vast quantities of chum salmon which they sold to the RCMP to fuel their dog teams.

According to Cox (1999), who completed an archival search for historic references to salmon fishing in the Yukon River basin, Inspector C. Constantine of the NWMP reported in his 1894 diary that the principal fish in the area were king and dog salmon (chum), but that he was aware of a twelve pound whitefish being sold at the hotel at Fort Cudahy.³

A report prepared for the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council identifies the following fish as occurring within the Fortymile drainage: Arctic grayling, burbot, inconnu, northern pike, slimy sculpin, round whitefish, longnose sucker, Chinook and chum.⁴

Commercial and subsistence fishing still occurs in the area.

² *Facts about the Fortymile Caribou Herd Management Plan: A Consensus Approach to Predator Management in Alaska*. www.state.ak.us/adfg/wildlife/geninfo/game/40-facts and *The Comeback Trail: News of the Fortymile Caribou Herd*, May 2002. www.aurora.ak.blm.gov/40milecaribou/5-2002/052002_main.

³ Cox, Jody, *Salmon in the Yukon River Basin, Canada – A Compilation of Historical Records and Written Narratives*. January 1999 for the Yukon River Restoration and Enhancement Fund, pg. 73.

⁴ Environmental Dynamics Inc., *Fortymile River Watershed Assessment* (report prepared for Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council, 2003).

Plant Communities

Several stages of boreal forest succession can be found within the densely vegetated sites of Forty Mile, Fort Cudahy and Fort Constantine. Before the advent of the Forty Mile gold rush, the site was probably populated by a combination of white and black spruce. However, the miners removed the tree cover from much of the area, drying out the soil and lowering the water table. The north tip of Forty Mile Island is characterized by lush meadows sparsely treed with cottonwood. Other herbaceous species include fireweed, yarrow, asters, high bush cranberries, with a predominance of rose bushes. Moving further from the river, forests of white spruce predominate. In wetter locations, forests of black spruce and lichen can be found.

The riverine environment is indicated by the number of plant species that thrive with “wet feet” such as willow, alder, cottonwood and horsetail.

4.2 Cultural Resources

Archaeological Resources

“As for archaeology as interpretation... We spent loads of time talking with people about the archaeology at the site. I found people were very interested to know that the site had a history before the gold rush. I believe some sort of interpretive signage displaying the archaeology of the site would be fantastic.”

– Christian Thomas, 2007

According to archaeologist Christian Thomas, Forty Mile “likely contains the most detailed record of human history in the central Yukon for the time period spanning the last 2500 years and maybe more.” As well as finding stone tools, archaeological crews have found bone needles, bone arrow heads, birch bark baskets and countless fragments of processed caribou bone (used to make tools). Thomas believes that “the archaeological resource at the site is quite large in totality and the artifacts at the site are very well preserved when compared to just about any other site in the Yukon.”

As stated in the Management Plan, archaeological resources may include:

- the material remains left behind by previous inhabitants from which behaviour of such groups may be inferred;
- archaeological resources that may be thousands of years old, hundreds of years old or relatively recent;
- resources that are portable items manufactured by humans or artifacts like stone scrapers, bone points, trade beads, steel axe heads, even a prospector’s steel drill bit;
- artifacts in groups that form clusters and/or features which include buildings, middens containing bones and refuse, fire pits, or caches;
- other types of features including human altered landscapes such as farmers’ fields, building berms, drainage ditches or excavated cache pits; and

- evidence of natural events such as changes in soil composition or layering due to floods, change in environmental regimes or volcanic eruptions, that help us date a chronology of human activity and occupation and provide useful archaeological information.

The Forty Mile Management Plan details the results of the archaeological surveys over five field seasons up to 2002. Field investigations continued for another three seasons and yielded some valuable results as documented in the archaeology booklet published in 2006. Archaeologists have created a heritage inventory map for the historic site including extant structures, remains of former buildings, locations of artifacts and artifact clusters, graves and man-made depressions, berms, mounds, etc. This document will be valuable in piecing together the history of Forty Mile townsite.

Artifacts and Artifact Clusters

Artifacts at the Forty Mile townsite range from tiny prehistoric stone chips and the remains of animals and fish cooked over ancient fireplaces or “hearths” to immense pieces of industrial machinery that would be impossible to move without mechanical assistance.

The Government of Yukon’s Archaeology unit is storing artefacts collected at Forty Mile. In future, it will be possible to make reproductions of older items for interpretation.

Over the years, many portable items have gone missing. Likely, a number of these were lost in the first Dawson Museum which was destroyed by fire in 1960. In the territorial database of artifacts, the only item – other than photographs – listed as associated with Forty Mile is a ledger from the “Fortymile Museum” with an inventory of artifacts, prepared by Alan Innes-Taylor in 1961, and now held by Dawson City Museum. This could be a valuable record listing many items and types of items that are no longer on site and perhaps in future might be used to help identify objects that might have come from Forty Mile. According to Sally Robinson, the Dawson Museum also has a free-standing wooden wringer washing machine from Forty Mile.

It is also likely that a number of Forty Mile artefacts are privately held or have been donated to institutions with no provenance or records of where they came from.

Buildings and Structures

These range from about eight buildings that are still standing or “extant,” to remnants of former buildings and structures in various stages of disintegration, to hollows and berms indicating the sites of former cabins. The interpretive manual contains brief histories of the various individual buildings. These can be added to in future.

Resources on Mission Island

Mission Island was subject to an intensive surface survey during the 2001/02 archaeological investigations. As a result a total of 19 features were mapped (see Table 2.1 for summary of features identified). The features occur in a somewhat linear fashion following the eastern edge approximately 5 to 10m west of the eastern shore of Mission Island and beginning, approximately 26m south of the north tip of the Island. The Mission Island mapping activities have demonstrated that significant heritage resources still remain on Mission Island that relate to the activities of the Buxton Mission albeit in an archaeological context.

Before visitors can walk on the island, it should be determined whether additional archaeological investigations are required or what protection might be required. In the interim, St. James Church is a good site to discuss the Anglican Church and Mission Island.

Resources at Fort Constantine

Fort Constantine is located on the north bank of the Fortymile River across from the town site of Forty Mile. The area in and around Fort Constantine is extensively disturbed as a result of freeze/thaw activity. Ten historic features were documented during the surface survey of the Fort Constantine area. It is extremely difficult to differentiate natural depressions—swamp sink holes—and anthropogenic depressions in the Fort Constantine area. Other features identified include tongue and groove flooring, barrel boilers and whip saw horses. During the 2002 investigations a section of the Fort's palisade was documented suggesting much more of the site is intact than previously thought.

Like many novice builders in the north, the Mounties who constructed Fort Constantine removed all ground cover until they reached the rock-hard permafrost. Inevitably, the exposed permafrost melted, causing the structures to sink and tilt in the muddy ground. This site is an excellent place to interpret the hazards of building on permafrost as well as *Sovereignty* theme.

As stated in the Management Plan, the site is unsuitable for visiting. Any interpretation should happen across the river and at the RCMP barracks.

Resources at Fort Cudahy

Fort Cudahy is located approximately 200m north of Fort Constantine. A heritage survey in the area documented 12 historic features. The features included small sheet trash middens, well-defined building outlines and potential privy locations. The terrain, in stark contrast with Fort Constantine, is relatively dry with little to no freeze-thaw activity. The survey carried out was preliminary in nature and it is likely that many more intact archaeological features will be identified. Again, as stated in the Management Plan, the site is unsuitable for visiting.

Cemeteries

The main cemetery is located on a well drained bench southwest of Forty Mile townsite, on the west side of the slough. A preliminary survey of the cemetery was conducted by Barrett in 1986. Approximately 35 graves were located. Although about half of the graves had intact fences and headboards, many graves are in poor repair and many headboards are not legible.

There is a First Nations gravesite by the trail from the fish camp to the townsite and another First Nations cemetery on a high bank across the Yukon River. There are also reports of other burial areas that have not yet been confirmed.

Archival Resources

There is a great range of materials relating to Forty Mile and its history including: writings by early visitors and residents, historic photos, site plans and maps, transcripts of oral history interviews, newspaper articles, films, government records and videos, etc. Records relating to Forty Mile history can be found in libraries, archives and museums throughout North America. In

Yukon, Forty Mile materials can be found at Yukon Archives and Dawson City Museum.

In 2002, Helene Dobrowolsky prepared a bibliography of sources relating to the Forty Mile /Fort Cudahy/Fort Constantine Historic Site.⁵ This document is available in digital format, allowing for regular updates.

Oral Histories

Oral histories and local knowledge are important sources of information to help understand changes in use and condition of the site over time. There is some material about Forty Mile in the oral history transcripts held by Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. Some Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and others have memories and knowledge that is relevant to the development and interpretation of the site, as do relatives of people who lived at the site most recently. In 2005, Chris Evans conducted an oral history project with four elders with information useful for the site.

Former members of the Clinton Creek Historical Society, might also be able supply useful information. Other volunteer caretakers/former residents of the site include Ron and Catherine Veale who looked after the Forty Mile during the summer of 1971 and Shelley Brown and Sebastian Jones. Tim Gerberding might also be a good potential source of information about changes to the site over time having lived at nearby Coal Creek for many years from the 1970s on.

⁵ Helene Dobrowolsky, *Forty Mile Historic Site Bibliography: Sources for Forty Mile, Fort Constantine and Forty Cudahy* (prepared for Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Yukon Government, Heritage Resources Unit, 2003).

5 Forty Mile Visitors

There are many potential audiences for Forty Mile interpretation. They include: Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizens, Dawson residents, other Yukoners, and visitors from other provinces and countries. Some of their interests include experiencing Yukon wilderness, First Nations culture and early Yukon history.

There are also many others who might never visit the site but are still interested in learning about Forty Mile and all its stories. Consequently, it is important to also consider ways to interpret the site to far-flung audiences.

Much of the following information comes from Sebastian Jones. He and his partner, Shelley Brown, began spending winters at Forty Mile in 1989 and then began spending an increasing amount of time there, becoming year-round residents by about 2004. They began keeping track of visitors in a scrapbook until the Government of Yukon supplied a visitor register.

5.1 Summer Visitors

The following statements are based on information from the visitor register, observations made by Sebastian Jones, Miriam Sager of Eagle Canoe Rentals and some information gleaned from internet research.

- There has been a steady upward trend in visitor numbers over the last 10 years.
- Most years site visits peak in July, closely followed by August.
- Travellers are split between those who travel by road and river travellers.
- about a quarter of the visitors are from the Dawson area.
- There are a large number of repeat travellers to the site, suggesting it is a popular destination for short excursions.
- Visitor knowledge about the site varies greatly: some people “know lots” and others “have no idea.”
- When Sebastian and Shelley have been on site, visitors have been most interested in learning about them and their living arrangements.
- Only one river tour operator, the Alaska-based *Alaskan Adventures*, advertises Forty Mile as an overnight stop en route to Eagle; most organized river tours end at Dawson.
- Some people rent canoes in Eagle or Dawson from businesses which offer drop off and pick up services.
- Many put in on the Taylor Highway and float down the Fortymile River then down the Yukon River to Eagle.
 - about 15-20% of visitors travel down the Fortymile R., as many as 50 people
 - most of these travellers are Alaskan
 - every year, a bible school in Wasilla sends at least 30 people on this trip
 - During high water, there are some “owly spots” and during low water, there are some shallows areas.
 - The river can be rafted any time but canoeing is safest at low water.

5.1.1. Eagle Canoe Rentals

Eagle Canoe Rentals, operated by Mike and Miriam Sager, rents canoes to people travelling downriver from Dawson as well as a few experienced paddlers who tackle the Fortymile River. This two-person business has been operating for 10 years with an inventory of about 22 canoes, and assistance from a Canadian partner, Dieter Reinmuth in Dawson City. Mr. Reinmuth also has a canoe rental visit.

Miriam Sager shared the following information during a telephone interview in December 2006:

- Their season extends from mid May to mid September, with most travel taking place during June, July and August.
- With assistance from Dieter Reinmuth of the Dawson City Hostel in Dawson, Eagle Canoe Rental rents out approximately 25 canoes out of Dawson per year with one or two paddlers per canoe.
- They rent one or two canoes per season to experienced paddlers floating down the Fortymile River. They won't rent canoes in May or June during high water.
- Their clientele tends to fall into two main groups: Alaskan who have travelled the river in the past and are touring with visitors; and tourists from elsewhere.
- Some people have floated the Yukon River from Whitehorse and switched canoe rentals at Dawson to travel further.
- In earlier years, their customers were mostly Canadians and Europeans. With the switch to the Euro, Europeans seem to have less money and fewer are travelling north. Now there are more Americans from the lower 48.
- Because of regulations regarding a U.S. business, they are unable to do any pickups in Canada; hence they don't retrieve people from the Forty Mile site.
- Most people paddling the river between Dawson and Eagle camp out at Forty Mile. Some people have been weathered in at Forty Mile for two days.
- It's a lovely setting – lots of people take great photos.

Visitor Interests

- People are most interested in experiencing wilderness; they tend to ask about fishing spots, places to camp and hiking areas.
- The Sagers recommend Mike Rourke's river guide because he discusses the geology and history of the area. Many people don't bother with the history. After visiting Dawson, they're overloaded with the Klondike: "I've been to Dawson, I've visited the museum, I know it all."
- Alaskans/northerners probably wouldn't appreciate too much development at the site. They tend to prefer the Forty Mile that they first visited in earlier years: the abandoned site they could discover on their own. They don't always appreciate finding someone else (caretaker) there.
- Other visitors might appreciate the new facilities more.
- One couple mentioned visiting with the caretaker for an evening; they had "a very nice talk."
- Some signage might encourage people to learn more about the area history.
- Miriam believes that a water pump would be appreciated by all visitors.

5.2 Winter Travellers

Not well documented is the fact that Forty Mile receives many winter visitors. This is a popular destination for local people with snow machines.

Forty Mile is also on the route of the Yukon Quest dogsled race and a well-used rest stop. This is a transition point between river and road. Musher travel on the river between Forty Mile and Dawson, up the Forty Mile River and along part of the Top of the World/Taylor Highway. For the winter of 1997/98, the only one for which there are some statistics available, the register lists 83 visitors making 116 visits.

Sebastian Jones offered the following information about winter visitors:

- more people, mainly locals, are travelling in the bush since snow machines have improved
- from river freeze-up in late fall until after New Year's, no one visits the site
- from mid February (when days are longer and a trail has been broken by Yukon Quest) until the end of March, the site has visitors almost every day
- people are either on a day's outing from Dawson or travelling through
- the dogmushers often camp on site; people on snow machines only camp over occasionally
- there is a business in Dawson that rents out snow machines.

5.3 Forty Mile Visitor Register

In 1996, Forty Mile residents and volunteer caretakers, Sebastian Jones and Shelley Brown, began keeping a record of visitors to the site and noted the total number of entries every year. The visitor book was left in the old Swanson Store for people to sign but Sebastian noted that more people signed in when Shelly or Sebastian were on site. Consequently the following numbers should be considered as incomplete.

The following pages contains information that has been extracted from the register. Unfortunately, statistics were not available for the years 2001 to 2005.

It would be beneficial to do more detailed analyses to learn the following:

- specific information about the visitors' places of origin,
- their mode of transport,
- whether they were part of a group or independent travellers,
- what proportion consists of family groups including children, and
- which route they travelled to reach the site.

For example, we know that many Germans visit Fort Selkirk, enough to make it worthwhile to translate interpretive materials into that language. This type of information is not yet available for Forty Mile.

Future interpretive planning would benefit from more detailed knowledge of visitor demographics. It is strongly recommended that a standard form be developed for recording detailed visitor statistics on a monthly basis. This could be the responsibility of onsite interpreters.

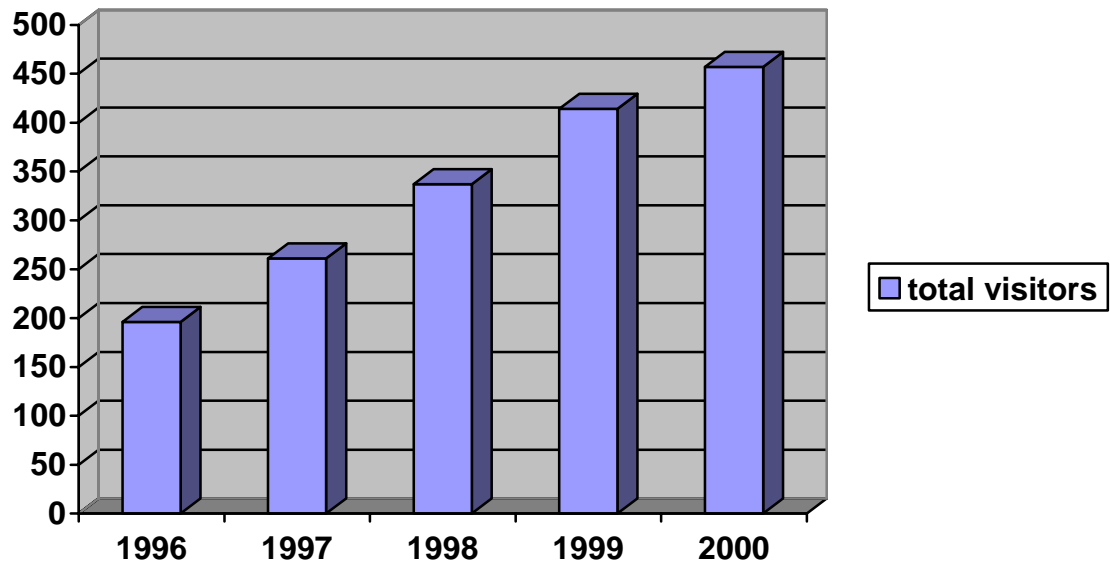


Figure 5.1 Total numbers of Forty Mile visitors listed in the register, 1996-2000.

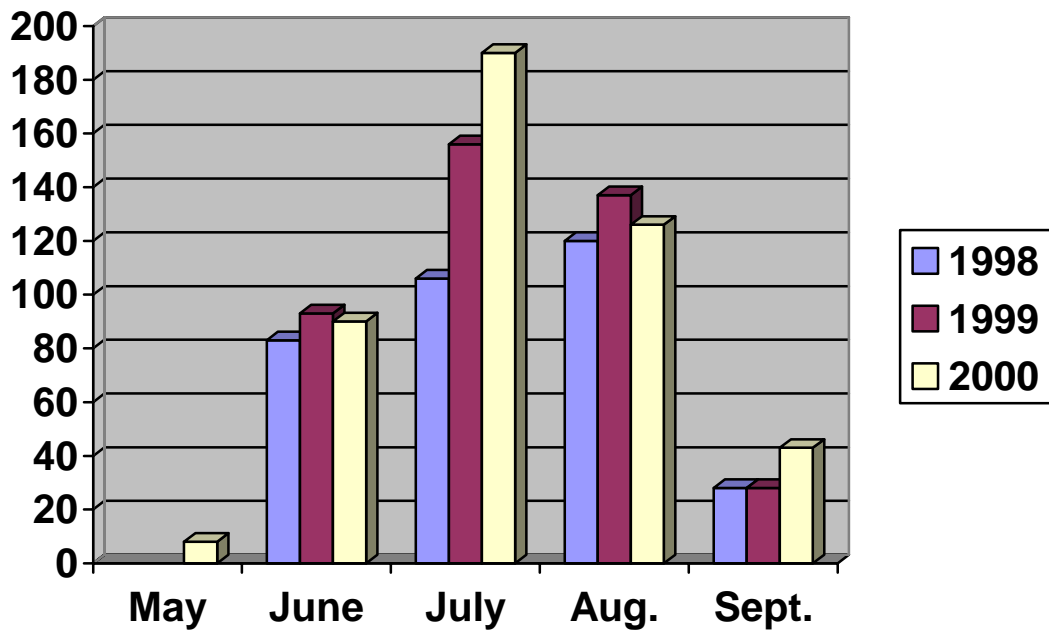
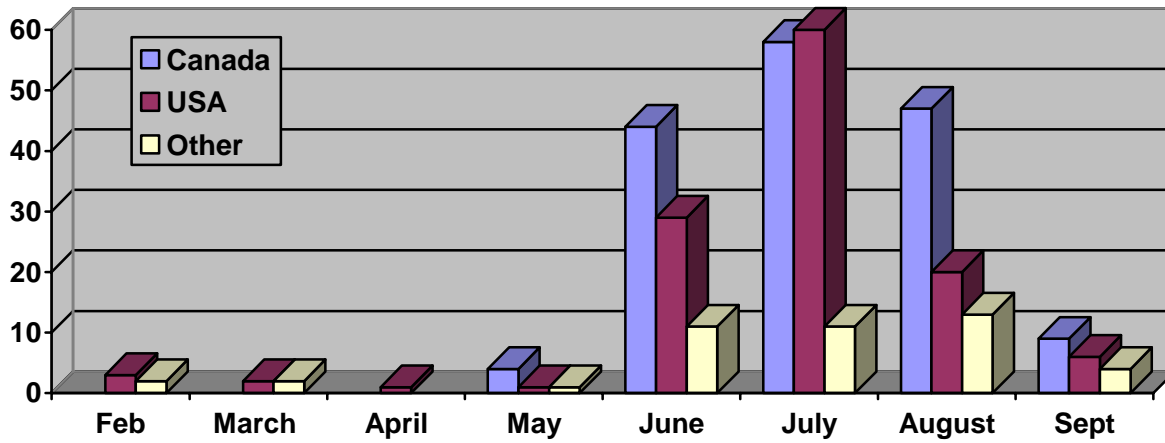


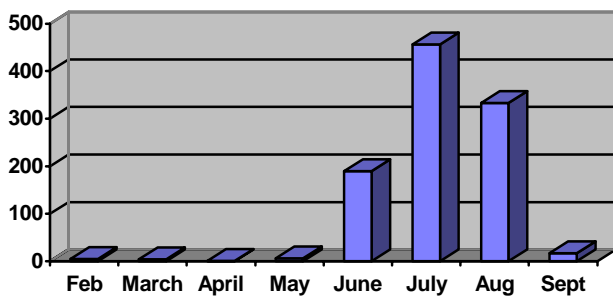
Figure 5.2 Number of visitors to Forty Mile broken out by month, 1998-2000.

Figure 5.3 2006 Forty Mile Visitor Statistics (from Visitors Register)

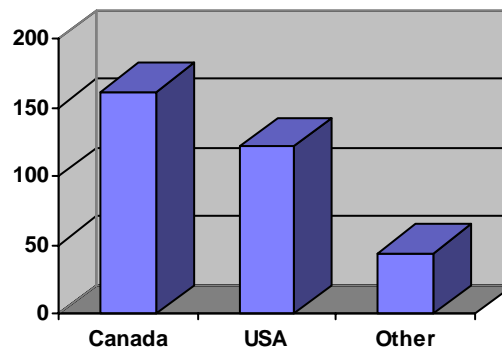


Origin	Canada	USA	Other	TOTALS
February		3	2	5
March		2	2	4
April		1		1
May	4	1	1	6
June	44	29	11	84
July	58	60	11	129
August	47	20	13	80
September	9	6	4	18
TOTALS	162	122	44	328

Visitor Numbers by Month



Visitors by Origin



6 Current Forty Mile Interpretation

This section provides a brief overview of current interpretation activities at various Yukon museums and interpretive centres that refer to the Forty Mile site. Most of these focus on the stories of early mining, the sovereignty issue, the arrival of the Mounted Police and other aspects of non-native history such as the establishment of Y.O.O.P.

6.1.1 Interpretation Providers



Figure 6.1 The *Yukon Queen* motoring by Forty Mile, June 2006. *Midnight Arts* photo

Dānojà Zho

Dānojà Zho is a meeting place for Tr’ondëk Hwechin heritage activities, events and programs and a place to celebrate First Nation culture.

Hammerstone Exhibit Gallery and seasonal temporary exhibits in the Gathering Room feature traditional and contemporary activities within the First Nation’s territory.

The Centre plays a role as an information gateway to Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in Heritage Sites such as Tr’ochëk, Forty Mile and the sites within Tombstone Territorial Park.

Dawson City Museum

The Lind Gallery in the Dawson City Museum focusses on the pre-gold rush period. Exhibit topics include pre-contact trade, introduction of trading posts, the change from fur trade to mining trade, lists of early miners and early mining areas, maps showing the Forty Mile general area / river drainage with mining sites and townsite plan, comparison of winter survival in late 1800s and the modern high tech approach to winter camping, gold – highlighting that this was the first discovery of coarse gold, various mining methods referring to the impact of permafrost, transport and early steamboats. The museum also has a detailed First Nations exhibit.

Klondike Spirit

During the 2007 season, a new tour vessel – the paddlewheeler *Klondike Spirit* – will be giving tours in the Dawson City area. Although the tour schedules were not available at the time of writing, according to the general manager, Mike Mancini, the immediate plans were to make fairly short tours and special excursions in the immediate Dawson City area only.

MacBride Museum

The museum’s “Rivers of Gold exhibit” has a display section on Forty Mile focussing on its role as an early mining centre. The museum has also put together a web based exhibit, “The Force in the North”. See below for more detail.

Parks Canada, Dawson City

During the walking tour of Dawson, Forty Mile is discussed during a stop at the Yukon Order of Pioneers (YOOP) Hall. The settlement is discussed in the context of the prelude to the Klondike strike and the founding of the Yukon Order of Pioneers.

Yukon Queen

This vessel, operated by Holland America Lines, motors between Dawson City and Eagle as part of a summer bus and boat loop. During its river tour, the boat pauses briefly in midstream while the guide points out the site and provides some general history information.

Private Tour Operators

There are number of raft and canoe tour operations that stop at the Forty Mile site. There are also tours that travel down the Fortymile River from the Alaska side. Unfortunately, there is little readily-available knowledge about these operations, a number of which are based outside the territory.

Publications

A number of books refer to Yukon's pre-Klondike history. A few that highlight the Forty Mile townsite include Pierre Berton's *Klondike, Prelude to Bonanza* by Al Wright and *Law of the Yukon* by Dobrowolsky. Michael Gates has written a detailed history of the townsite and area in *Gold at Fortymile Creek*.

Detailed references to these and other publications are available in the Forty Mile bibliography.

In 2006, Yukon Tourism and Culture and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in produced an attractive booklet, *Archaeology at Forty Mile/ Ch'ëdä Dëk*, interpreting the archaeology work at Forty Mile.

Websites

The Fortymile Mile Caribou Herd Management Team

<http://aurora.ak.blm.gov/40milecaribou/default.htm>

This useful site includes several research and planning documents relating to the Fortymile Caribou Herd as well as issues of *The Comeback Trail* dating from February 1997 to May 2002.

Virtual Museum Canada

"The Force in the North." Produced by MacBride Museum

<http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Force/en/detachments/fortymile/>

This site briefly discusses sovereignty issue that led to the establishment of the first NWMP detachment in Yukon as well outlining the detachment's history.

The Klondike Photographers: The Gold Rush Era. There are some photos by Veazie Wilson taken at Forty Mile in the early 1890s.

<http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Goldrushphoto/02english/02intro.html>

6.1.2 Overlapping Stories

Some stories that could be told at Forty Mile are also being told elsewhere. Below a brief list of some of these topics and the locations in which they are interpreted.

Story Topic	Locale
Old Log Church Museum, Whitehorse	Photo displays discuss early Anglican Church mission in Forty Mile and highlight Bishop Bompas.
Beringia	Beringia Interpretive Centre in Whitehorse; exhibit in the forthcoming Tombstone Territorial Park VRC
Early Placer Mining	Dawson City Museum, MacBride Museum
Fortymile Caribou Herd	Caribou in general and the Porcupine Caribou Herd in particular will be highlighted in exhibits at the future Tombstone Territorial Park VRC. At its peak, the Fortymile Caribou Herd was one of four herds that were hunted in the Blackstone Uplands.
Northwest Mounted Police	MacBride Museum; Parks Canada walking tour at Fort Herchmer.
Salmon, Salmon Fishing, Fish Camps	Dänojà Zho. Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in plans to make Tr'ochëk, the traditional encampment at the confluence of the Klondike and Yukon rivers, the primary site to tell these stories.
Tintina Trench	Highway signage at the Ogilvie Mountain viewpoint en route to Dawson
Traditional Trade and Travel	Dänojà Zho. First Nations travel and modes of transportation will also be discussed in the new Tombstone Park VRC.
Yukon Order of Pioneers	Parks Canada walking tour of Dawson City at YOOP building

7 Interpretive Methods

In this section, we identify a variety of interpretive methods that can be employed on and off site and make some suggestions for how these might be employed at Forty Mile.

7.1 Onsite Interpretation

7.1.1 Types of Interpretive Programs Interpretive Talk



The Interpreter presents a prepared talk on a particular subject at a fixed site such as the kitchen shelter.



Figure 7.1 Bruce Barrett leads a group on a tour of Forty Mile, 11 June 2006. Midnight Arts photo

Interpretive Walk



Demonstrations are used to illustrate activities or techniques.

The Interpreter leads a walk and talks about various features along the way. A sample tour program will be included in the Forty Mile Interpreter's Manual.

particular interpretive theme (e.g. drying fish, archaeology work).

Demonstrations



Spontaneous Interpretation

The Interpreter is available to the visitors to answer their questions on an informal basis.

Roving

The interpreter walks around the site and casually approaches visitors and provides information about the feature the visitors are looking at. This provides a security function as well. Prior to an evening program, the interpreter could walk around the campground to inform the visitors about the

upcoming program.

7.1.2 Visitor Centre



Visitor Centres help people to get oriented, find information and displays, get messages about programming from the bulletin board, and find the site interpreter. Based on management plan recommendations, we suggest that the following measures until a permanent centre is established.

We recommend the following:

- The caretaker should continue to be based at the Swanson Store.
- Until there is an increase in site visitors, we suggest that the new kitchen shelter serve as a base for tours and programs.
- When the Alaska Commercial Co. building has been stabilized and partially restored/rehabilitated, this can become as the permanent visitor centre.

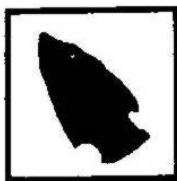
7.1.3 Photo Albums



At other sites, this interpretation method has proven to be a successful and popular means of interpretation with site visitors, site workers and elders.

- Photo albums can be more effective if organized to illustrate particular themes or stories with minimal text. e.g. First Town in the Yukon, Sovereignty.
- Printed and laminated pages would be more durable than photographic prints.
- The site caretaker/interpreter should be in charge of the albums. He or she should also make note of additional information learned when people view the albums.
- The albums could be stored at Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in offices over the winter and used for other programming in places like Robert Service School and Dänojà Zho.

7.1.4 Artefacts, Replicas, Specimens and Props



Interpretation is defined by first-hand experience and the presence of “the real thing”. Interpretive programs are enhanced by artefacts and replicas. These can range from replicas of ancient stone tools excavated on site to the kinds of items used in early hand mining or log cabin housekeeping.

As in many river communities, people left Forty Mile thinking either they would return one day or that they had no further use for the contents of their cabins and outbuildings. Over the years, many people have collected items as souvenirs. Others collected artifacts with good intentions of preservation, many of these artifacts have gone astray over the years.

- Artifacts collected at Forty Mile since the late 1990s are stored at the Government of Yukon’s Archaeology Unit in Whitehorse.
- Artefacts at the site range from very small (microblades, beads, square cut nails) to very large (farming and mining machinery).
- Replicas can be made of items such as stone tools.
- Other small items found on site, such as old bottles, etc. should be kept in a secure location and can possibly be used in future displays.
- Research should continue into artifacts that have gone missing. The ledger of artifacts from the “Forty Mile Museum” held by the Dawson City Museum, might be a helpful resource.
- Specimens (e.g. dried plants, rocks, bird feathers, etc.) can be useful in illustrating a talk.
- Props can include a variety of items (photos, replicas, specimens) used to illustrate and enliven an interpretive presentation.

Outdoor Artefacts

There are various large artefacts around the site such as pieces of farming and mining machinery that are too heavy to move. These large pieces are site landmarks and should be identified and described in site tours and self-guiding literature.

7.1.5 Signage



Outdoor signage serves two main purposes:

- informational – e.g. directional signage, regulations, identification of buildings and features
- interpretive – telling stories of the site and the area; these can be particularly helpful to visitors during the off season, when the site is unstaffed

Note: Guidelines for signage design and materials are being prepared by Aasman Design.

Interpretive Signage

We recommend that the signage be unobtrusive and limited to a few locations. We suggest the following signs or sign groupings would be most useful to visitors.

- *The Rivers and the Land* — located near the NE point of land at the confluence of the two rivers. This would orient the visitor to the landscape and interpret natural history stories about geology, the river environment and animals, particularly the Fortymile Caribou Herd. An artistically rendered map can orient visitors to the site components (including Constantine and Cudahy), the rivers and surrounding landscape features such as the Cloudy Range seen in the distance.
- *First Inhabitants* – Telling about pre- and post-contact use of this area by First Nations people and the continuing connection of Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in with this site.
- *Mining* – Briefly explain geological reasons for mineral wealth. Discuss the great gold strike of 1886, changes in mining methods and how this contributed to settlement in the region and, eventually, the Klondike gold rush.

- *Trade* — Sign in location suitable for looking across the Forty Mile River toward Fort Cudahy and still being able to see the remaining Alaska Commercial Company buildings. Talk about how McQuesten, Harper & Mayo made it possible for miners to overwinter, the practice of grubstaking, A.C.Co. store at Forty Mile, and later competitors.
- *First Community* – Telling about the log cabin settlement, extent of services, survival challenges and why the town diminished. This may also be a good place to tell why there is little to see today, i.e. what happened to the buildings over the years.
- *The Churches* — located near St. James Church and Mission Island, this would interpret the church history at Forty Mile and focus on the interaction between church workers and First Nations people. This can also handle Church history in general including Father Judge, the Roman Catholic priest.
- *Mounted Police* – The police barracks is a good location to talk about the history of the NWMP post in Forty Mile and the many jobs and challenges faced by early Mounties.

Directional, Orientation and Identification Signage

- Welcome sign by boat landing near Fish Camp. This should be visible to both highway and river travellers. Upon closer inspection, the sign should inform visitors that although they are near Forty Mile Historic Site, they can choose to either dock there and then walk approximately 1.5 km to the site, or travel further downriver to the dock on the Fortymile River. A townsite plan showing the route and the locations of the gravel shoals would be helpful.
- A second welcome sign should be set up near the Fortymile River boat dock.
- As recommended in the Management Plan, “entrance” sign panels should be installed at these two sites. The contents orient will orient visitors to the site through a site map, provide information on the significance of the site and its key features and instruct the visitors about the appropriate use of the site including camping, bear safety and protection of resources.
- Consider identifying buildings with discreet name plaques set unobtrusively on the outside of the building near ground level. We suggest small bronze coloured metal plaques, stating the name of the structure, the construction date (if known), and the date first stabilized. Further information on the buildings can be provided by interpreters, in a self-guiding brochure, in a future booklet, or in a display at the Visitor Centre.
- There should be a change in tone of the signs between the historic site and the visitor reception areas. Signs at the boat landing and camping area should be noticeable and welcoming. These can be larger scale, higher profile signs to attract attention to regulations and camping areas. By using signage standard to other territorial campgrounds, the visitors will know when they are in the camping/visitor facility area and when they are in the historic site proper. These signs should not, however, interfere with the view of the

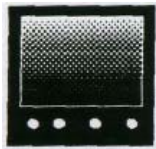
townscape.

- Simple routed signs could act as “pointers”, marking trailheads and other remote difficult to locate features.
- Regulatory signs may also be necessary. They should be in English, French (and possibly German) and carry messages regarding:
 - Respect for the buildings & landscape
 - Respect for archaeological sites and artefacts
 - Disposal of garbage
 - Camping and burning areas
 - Wildlife

These messages should be repeated at trailheads and other access points to the site.

- A sign at the cemetery could list known burial sites with a message requesting respect for the site. As recommended in the Management Plan, there should not be directional signs encouraging unguided visitation.

7.1.6 Videos/DVDs, Powerpoint Shows



Videos, DVDs and Powerpoint presentations can be used to provide an animated program. This would require a generator, TV and VCR/DVD player, possibly a laptop computer and a suitable space suitable for people to view audio visual material.

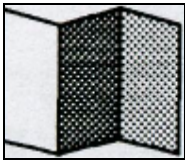
- This option requires an expensive investment in equipment and an appropriate facility for viewing, and creates security concerns.
- For the foreseeable future, this interpretive method is probably be best suited to offsite interpretation.

7.1.7 Publications

Note: Guidelines for logo, colour, layout, etc. are being provided in a separate contract with Aasman Design. These guidelines should be consulted when preparing publications.

- Interpretive publications include: pamphlets, brochures, booklets and books.
- Some items, such as the archaeology booklet, could serve as interpretation and information sources both off-site and on-site.

Interpretive Brochures



Brochures can serve several purposes:

- They can convey a variety of types of interpretive information on and off the site.
- They can be printed in different languages for visitors who have little English.
- Although there is a possibility of littering, visitors can be encouraged to recycle the literature.
- If people can take a pamphlet as a souvenir, they are less likely to take a doorknob or other artifact.

Self Guiding Site Pamphlet

A fold-out brochure with a site plan allow visitors to take self-guided tours. Such a brochure could also contain anecdotal material about the buildings as well as general history of the townsite, the association of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in with the site, and information about the preservation and management programs.

An off-site brochure can provide images and basic information on Forty Mile, for example, where it is, what is there, a bit of its history, how to get there and where to get more information. This can be as simple as a fact sheet or one of the multi-colour cards or “lure brochures” used by many museums.

A brochure that unfolds into a poster could also be considered for off site interpretation. A similar document was produced for Herschel Island some years ago. This could portray Forty Mile and the beauty of its setting with historic and contemporary photographs, as well as information about general history, events and transport to the site. In a kiosk or VRC, it is also more eye-catching and can serve as a take home souvenir.

Booklets & Books



Booklets and books are a potential source of more in-depth information about the site. These are also a potential revenue source and could be sold at Forty Mile, Dänojà Zho and other Yukon locations. These can provide interpretive information about the site that cannot be accommodated in signage or brochures. They can also provide good resource material for off-site educational programs.

A booklet with photographs and stories about the historic resources would complement the self-guided brochure with additional information.

7.1.8 Displays



Displays, whether they be of artefacts, photographs or other interpretive items are best housed in locations that can be secured and where the site interpreter can offer additional information.

- Displays can be flat (placed on walls or free standing panels) or three dimensional (reproductions, models and artefacts).
- Wall displays can feature items such as photographs, maps, text and reproduction of historic documents.
- Displays consisting of models, artifacts, reproductions and specimens can either be secured in cases or, if appropriate, set out for people to pick up and examine. e.g. rock samples.
- The design and construction of display cases require awareness of conservation, security and appropriate design.
- Another consideration is the security of the display items in the off-season, whether they should be stored off site or in a central secure location.
- Smaller portable cases with casts of prehistoric objects might be suitable for off-site interpretation in places such as schools.
- Ideally the future Visitor Centre will house displays.
- Displays interpreting particular themes could be housed in other structures (e.g. police history in the RCMP Detachment; history of Forty Mile mission in St. James church) but again, security should be a major consideration.
- It will likely be difficult to make the buildings housing displays completely rodent proof, another concern in the care and security of display items, particularly paper and textiles.

7.1.9 Interior Restoration



Given the lack of information about building interiors and other preservation needs, interior restoration is not a priority at this time. This option should be re-examined when the Preservation Plan is prepared.

7.1.10 Special Events

This includes special events or celebrations, such as the recent Management Plan signing, which might be held at the site in summer.

- These would be opportunities for an interpretive social experience as well as a potential economic opportunity.
- If possible, such events should be promoted well in advance to allow visitors and local people to plan their site visit accordingly.
- The investment of time and planning required for this type of project has to be measured against events being held at other sites such as Moosehide, Tombstone Park and Tr'ochëk.
- This type of project could be initiated on a pilot basis and later extended if successful.

7.2 Off-Site Interpretation

There are two main audiences for off-site interpretation:

- potential visitors who wish to learn more about the site and how to get there
- people, including students, who may never be able to visit the site but wish to learn more about Yukon culture and history.

The approach used to reach these target audiences differs slightly. For the first group, more emphasis will be placed on promotion. For the latter, interpretive materials will be informational.

For both groups then, the messages delivered off-site should convey that Forty Mile is a:

- unique opportunity to learn about pre Klondike Gold Rush history,
- place to learn about Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in culture,
- a special wilderness and heritage site to visit for an afternoon or a few days

7.2.1 Website and other Online Interpretation

The World Wide Web has become a valuable and commonly-used tool for trip planning, site promotion, research and interpretation. Below are a couple of suggestions for using this resource to interpret Forty Mile Historic Site.

Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN) <http://www.chin.gc.ca/>

This mission of this federally-sponsored site is “to promote the development, the presentation and preservation of Canada's digital heritage content for current and future generations of Canadians.”

A membership in CHIN offers a number of benefits:

There are many useful resources for heritage institutions including training and resource materials, information about potential funding sources, news of what is happening elsewhere in the country and a list of member sites.

- All members appear on the CHIN directory of museums. These entries include brief descriptions of the sites and their resources, a map, one or more photographs, lists of publications and products, and internet sources.
This can help with establishing a web and marketing presence at no cost as well as gaining some national recognition and awareness of the site.
- Members are eligible to submit proposals for website creation under the Virtual Museums of Canada (VMC) and Agora Research Initiative which focusses on the creation of educational content.
At time of writing there had been no call for VMC proposals in quite a while. Although, the program has been generously funded, applications can be quite onerous to complete. The entire website research, design and curriculum development team must be identified in the application phase.⁶

Virtual Museum websites have been prepared for two remote Yukon historic sites, Herschel Island Territorial Park and Fort Selkirk Historic Site. According to one source, some people have travelled to these remote places after viewing these sites.

⁶ Brian Groves, acting manager Museums Unit, personal communication, 21 November 2006.

7.2.2 Yukon Visitor Information Centres

There are six Yukon Visitor Information Centres (formerly VRCs), located at entry points into the territory. These centres orient visitors to the territory and all of them carry promotional and informational items such as maps and brochures. There are often exhibits or displays specific to the vicinity of the VRC. For example, there is the Alaska Highway display in Watson Lake, the history of the Carcross/Southern Lakes area in Carcross and the recreated gold rush era store in Dawson City.

The Centres provide an opportunity to promote Forty Mile through:

- Brochures, booklets and posters.
- Videos. Most centres have video capabilities and Whitehorse, Watson Lake and Dawson have well-appointed theatres. If this fits in with Tourism programming for individual Centres, there is an opportunity to present a promotional/informational film to visitors.
- It is recommended that a panel promoting Forty Mile Historic Site be installed in the Dawson VIC.

7.2.3 Dānojà Zho

The Dānojà Zho cultural centre is considered to be an information gateway to all heritage sites within Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in traditional territory. Consequently, all staff should be knowledgeable about the site and be able to provide general information about the history of the site, access and facilities available. The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in might wish to consider installing a panel with some graphics and basic information about heritage sites such as Forty Mile.

7.2.4 Publications & Mass Media

When using media such as videos, radio and television programming, print media, etc., it has to be determined whether the purpose is off-site interpretation, site information (facilities available and how to get there), or site promotion. For information about publications and their uses, refer to section 7.1.7. Some discussion has been made of videos or DVDs as an interpretive tool in section 7.1.6. Such video material would be most suitable for off-site interpretation.

While most agree it is desirable to make Forty Mile known to more potential visitors, we recommend that this be done on a limited basis until on-site interpretation is better established and site security is assured.

7.2.5 Highway Signs & Displays



Signage directing visitors to Forty Mile would be most appropriate at key access points: the ferry landing on the Dawson City side, the turn off point from the Top of the World Highway, and the cut-off from the Clinton Creek road to the Fish Road.

This should only be done once it has been decided that there are sufficient facilities to host an increase highway visitors to the historic site and the roads are in good condition. Signs should caution visitors that they would be travelling on a winding and narrow gravel road.

Any highway signage needs to conform to federal or Yukon Department of Highways regulations

and policies for signage and pull-offs if constructed in the right of way.

7.2.6 Schools: Curricula & Programs

Below is a summary of what I have learned about existing curriculum relating to First Nations and post contact history. At Robert Service School, Grade 3 students do a unit relating to archaeology at Tr’ochëk developed by Bob Sharp.

Terry Markley is the consultant for intermediate programs at the Department of Education. He mentioned that two specific social studies units deal with Yukon History: one in Grade 4 on Early Peoples; another in Grade 5 on the Klondike Gold Rush. He also mentioned that other grade levels can incorporate 20% content relating to “who we are”. He also mentioned that, generally, the Department of Education lacks resources to develop new curriculum and usually relies on other groups to furnish this material.

The following information is from Nicole Morgan, the secondary curriculum consultant: “The Social Studies program, in general, touches on First Nation issues is some way from 8-12. There is also a grade 12 Yukon First Nations course. Other than YFN 12, the courses that I know deal with the Gold Rush and Aboriginal Peoples combined are:

- Yukon Studies (11)
- Social Studies 10: below are the curriculum organizers I think are specific to what you are asking.

Prescribed Learning Outcome	Achievement Indicator
<p>C2 analyze political, economic, social, and geographical factors that led to Confederation and to the development of Canada’s provinces and territories</p>	<p>■ assess factors that led to the expansion of Canada to include other provinces and territories, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - purchase of Rupert’s Land - the national railway - sea-to-sea unification - threat of annexation by the USA - the Klondike gold rush - agricultural settlement
<p>B2 evaluate the impact of interactions between Aboriginal peoples and European explorers and settlers in Canada from 1815 to 1914</p>	<p>■ describe contributions made by Aboriginal peoples to the development of Canada</p> <p>q evaluate the interactions between various Aboriginal peoples and stakeholders in the fur trade (e.g., Hudson’s Bay Company, Northwest Company, voyageurs)</p> <p>■ assess the role of Aboriginal women in the fur trade</p> <p>■ critique the rationale for treaties (e.g., numbered treaties, Vancouver Island treaties) and the <i>Indian Act</i> (e.g., reserves, residential schools), and evaluate their impact on Aboriginal peoples</p> <p>■ describe how the contributions of and relationships with Aboriginal peoples influenced Canadian identity</p>

“Regarding possible opportunities for future curriculum development. If you are referring to perhaps developing teacher resources regarding the specific project you are working on, there is always an opportunity to add local content to our curriculum framework.”

7.2.7 Public Presentations

As recommended in the Management Plan, knowledge and interest in the Forty Mile site can be fostered by endorsing public presentations about work at the site, and research by archaeologists, scientists and other experts.

The primary audience for these presentations would be the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and other residents of Dawson City and the Dänojà Zho theatre is a potential venue. Presentations about Forty Mile could also be part of broader lecture programs such as those sponsored by the Yukon Science Institute.

8 Forty Mile Interpreters

Interpreters should be able to absorb and share information that will make the visitor's experience relevant, interesting and memorable.



Figure 8.1 Caretaker John Semple at Forty Mile, June 2007. Yukon Government photo

A heritage interpreter helps others understand and appreciate cultural and natural heritage. This section will discuss the work of interpreters who deliver Forty Mile stories on and off site.

This section will discuss what it is that interpreters do, the resources they need and what they need to learn.

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8.1.1 Roles of a Forty Mile Interpreter

At present the Forty Mile interpreter also works as the site caretaker. This person needs to be comfortable spending time in a remote site – often solo – and capable of working independently and with minimal supervision. Two of the interpreter/caretakers who have held this job are mature Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizens with good bush skills and willingness to share their knowledge and personal experience with visitors.

At a future point, when Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in may be hosting tours to the site, other people such as Dänojà Zho staff can be trained to guide tour groups.

Below is a list of some of the responsibilities of a Forty Mile interpreter.

Orientation, Advice and Visitor Support

- Yukon host
- Forty Mile host
- orientation to the site: pointing out facilities and attractions
- informing visitors of proper site etiquette
- conducting first aid as required
- advertising interpretive programs
- ensuring that the Visitor Register is signed

Interpretive Programming

- preparing and delivering interpretive talks
- guiding a variety of interpretive hikes
- assisting visitors with the resource library
- engaging visitors in interpretive activities (e.g. interactive displays)
- introducing and showing videos

Facility Operations / Park Monitoring

- monitoring trail conditions
- keeping visitor statistics
- mowing and brushing as directed
- communications with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Yukon gov't personnel
- ensure that there are adequate supplies (firewood, toilet paper) and that the campground is clean
- ensure that food & petroleum products are not left unattended in campsites or picnic shelters

8.2 Interpreter Training

Interpreter training programs has been offered in the past at Yukon in Whitehorse and Dawson. but no course are being offered at present. A Cultural Resource Management course run through Yukon College has been on the wish list created by the Yukon First Nation Heritage Group for a few years now but does not appear likely to happen in the near future. (*Jody do you have an update on this?)

Other agencies such as Parks Canada, Dawson City Museum and the Visitor Information Centres offer some in-house training. Much of this training is very specific to each institution's collections, architecture and other heritage resources and not conducive to joint training with other agencies. Another complication is that cultural institutions in Dawson start their work season at different times: Visitor Centre in mid May, Parks in early May, Dänojà Zho in late May, and the Museum in June.

This is a complicated issue with no immediate and simple solutions. Perhaps a few days of detailed one-on-one training on site with an experienced historian/interpreter might suffice for the immediate future. As always, the best teacher is experience and it would be best to have staff willing to return to the site for more than one season.

Given the remote location, it would be desirable if the interpreter could have some basic first aid training.

8.3 Forty Mile Interpreter's Manual

While there is no substitute for training and experience, the *Forty Mile Interpreters Manual* will be a valuable tool for interpreters. As well as containing general information about the process of interpretation and guidelines for carrying out on-site interpretive programs, the manual will also serve as a handy, one volume reference to the site.

It contains descriptions of the interpretive resources, stories and themes including three completed stories drawn from the thematic outline, a sample program and useful reference appendices including nine relevant interpretive units from the *Tr'ondek Hwech'in Interpreters Manual*.

The appendices are as follows:

1. Maps, townsites and area
2. Forty Mile chronology
3. Forty Mile Historical Resources
4. *Tr'ondek Hwech'in Interpretive Manual* Excerpts
5. Bird Sightings in the Forty Mile area
6. Key References

The manual is in a binder format to encourage interpreters to add their own updates and additions.

9 Evaluation of Interpretive Programs and Media

The development and implementation of interpretive programs at Forty Mile are only the first steps in an overall interpretation plan. Evaluation must be built into the plan to ensure that the right messages are reaching the right audience.

Evaluation is not a one-time event but an ongoing process. Interpreters are constantly learning more about the site, the audience, and how to best reach them. Evaluation is the tool that shows them what works best and how to improve their skills.

Before a final decision is made on using a particular interpretive medium, it should be thoroughly tested and evaluated. This evaluation can be used to assess a number of things. For example:

- is the information of interest to visitors and can they understand it clearly?
- is the format of the sign, brochure or display assisting with effective communication?”
- is the material in a suitable location for visitors?”

By testing out expensive interpretive media before final implementation, expenditures will be more cost effective.

Once programs and interpretive media are in place, evaluation should occur again.. This will indicate any changes or additions that may be necessary. This exercise is useful as both the audience and methods of communication may change over time..

If visitors have concerns or problems with any forms of interpretation, or a lack of interpretation, they will likely tell the interpreters at Forty Mile. These comments should be recorded in a notebook and passed on to the Tr’ondek Hwech’in Heritage Department staff. Visitors may also be asked to add their comments to any survey conducted on site (see 10.1). Any serious problems will quickly become evident from visitor comments.

Recommendations for evaluating specific interpretive media are outlined below. The various evaluation exercises should be considered together in determining what the final format of interpretation will be for Forty Mile.

9.1 To Evaluate the Audience

Evaluation of the visitors to Forty Mile will provide more precise information regarding their motivation, length of stay, age groups, etc. One way to do this would be ensure that people sign the visitor register. This should have categories for the visitor’s name, address, number in party, method of travel and length of stay as well as a section for comments. Another method of audience evaluation would be to request some visitor information in verbal visitor surveys or survey forms that are handed out on site. This might include questions about the visitor’s age, whether they are travelling with a commercial tour or privately, their departure point, and destination.

9.2 To Evaluate Interpretive Information

There are many ways to present interpretive stories. This Interpretation Plan has condensed the available information into distinct themes and stories. It is generally known, for example, that visitors are eager to learn about First Nations cultures and interested in stories about this pre-

Klondike settlement. While there are a numerous stories that address this part of Forty Mile history, it is not known specifically what aspects of this history visitors are most interested in. In order to write signs, brochures and design displays and programs that speak to visitors most effectively, it is important to determine their particular interests and balance this with the priorities of the Tr'ondek Hwech'in and Yukon government.

We recommended that Forty Mile visitors be asked to complete a simple survey form to determine what they are particularly interested in. The survey should be presented to as wide a cross-section of people as possible and contain a few questions about the visitors themselves (length of stay, number in party, etc.). A simple one-page questionnaire should be developed by Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Yukon government staff. During the survey, visitors should be informed about how important their feedback is in developing interpretation on the site. The survey should be short and easy to fill out so that visitors do not feel encumbered by it.

Types of questions could include:

- What aspects of Forty Mile history are you interested in learning about: traditional and/or contemporary First Nations lifestyles, life in a log cabin town, the church, the police, current preservation and archaeology work?
- Would you be interested in purchasing a booklet about Forty Mile?
- How would you prefer to have the information presented to you: rate the following from 1 (most preferred) to 5 (least preferred), interpretive talks, interpreter led walks, pamphlets, map of site with written information, signs, displays in buildings, demonstrations, restored buildings.
- What aspects of natural history are you interested in learning about: fish, caribou, geology, river environment?

9.3 To Evaluate Brochures/Pamphlets

Many of the interpretive stories could be presented in brochure or pamphlet format. The survey mentioned above will determine to what extent site visitors are interested in obtaining written information about Forty Mile. A preliminary site brochure could be developed to determine if the extent or depth of information is suitable for visitors. Visitors can be asked to take the brochure with them and either mail their comments back or fill out the on-line questionnaire at the website noted at the bottom of the pamphlet. Or if a website is not yet available, email a designated person with comments.

9.4 To Evaluate Signage and Displays

Mock signage and displays can be presented to visitors for their comments. Displays can be made economically on presentation media mounted on lightweight, rigid material. These could be set up at the church, RCMP barracks and eventually the interpretive centre at the A.C.Co. building. This type of evaluation is particularly valuable for insuring the effectiveness of costly and more permanent interpretive media. The signs and displays have been designated as a level two or three priority which allows for a season or two to test these.

9.5 To Evaluate Programs and Interpreters

The use of formal interpretive programs is new for Forty Mile. The whole approach should be evaluated as the project develops. The next two seasons of interpretive programs should be viewed as pilots for determining what programs can be done at the site. What the interpreters can

accomplish, what visitors want to learn about and what methods are most effective, should all be considered. In time, certain types of programs will emerge as being best suited to the site and to the visitors. This can be evaluated in four ways:

- through the survey
- by the on-site interpreters
- by another professional interpreter and
- by a follow-up survey (for summative evaluation).

Interpretive programs are dynamic and thus should be continually evaluated and modified by the interpreter. The programs should also be evaluated by someone other than the interpreter delivering the program as should the interpreter's presentation. This is best done by an experienced interpreter.

Until there is a Forty Mile interpreter with a few seasons of interpretation, it would enhance the professional delivery of interpretive programs to bring an experienced interpreter on-site to evaluate programs and to provide guidance and assistance. This should happen near the beginning of the season, but after the interpreters have had some experience delivering programs.

A final evaluation tool would allow visitors to fill out an on-line form at their leisure, after they leave the site. This site would also be a tool to introduce the site and its programs to potential visitors.

10 Implementation Strategy: Recommendations & Priorities

The following is a point form summary list of recommendations for Forty Mile interpretation on and off the historic site. Recommendations are followed by suggested rankings or timelines for implementation. See Chapter 7 for more information about various options.

The suggested priority ranking is set up as follows:

Immediate	Should be possible to implement in near future with little extra cost or effort
High	Within the next one to three years
Medium	Within the next five years
Long-term	Projects that could be done as budgets and personnel permit

ON SITE

Visitor Records

- Improve documentation of visitor statistics. As well as encouraging people to sign the guest book, Interpreters or other crew members should complete a detailed monthly breakout form. End of season statistics should be compiled.

[Note: Tourism used to have something like this for Fort Selkirk including countries, states, transport modes, etc.]

Priority: Immediate

Based on statistics collected, determine if there is a need for translation of interpretive material in languages other than English and French, such as German.

Signage

- Welcome & orientation sign by boat landing near Fish Camp. (see p. 44)
- Notice board in kitchen shelter (either an erasable white board or corkboard).
- Notice of site rules / cautions (kitchen shelter or somewhere prominent in camping area).

Priority: High

- Interpretive signage cluster at the tip of Forty Mile Island. Topics: the Rivers and the Land, First Inhabitants, Trade and First Community.
- Signage cluster near the RCMP Detachment and St. James Church. Topics: the Churches, the Mounted Police.

Priority: Medium

Displays

- **Interior Displays** can focus on particular themes. e.g. RCMP history in the barracks building. This should not happen until security of displays can be assured.
 - Recommend use of freestanding display panels or banners that can be easily stored or exhibited elsewhere during the off season.
 - These should only be considered once stabilization has occurred, guided by the forthcoming Preservation Plan.

Priority: Long-term

➤ **Displays of artifacts and/or replicas**

- will require display cases and secure spaces for housing them. Again, this should await completion preservation plan.

Priority: Long-term

Props

- Replicas of ancient tools, sturdy artifacts and a few laminated historic photos would be useful tools for interpreters

Priority: High

Photo Albums

- Assemble binders of photos of historic Forty Mile. These could be organized and captioned thematically. A relatively inexpensive and very effective interpretive method.

Priority: High

Publications

- Self guided brochure or booklet with site map. Can be used on and off site.

Priority: High

Special Events

- Organize and promote special events to attract visitors to the Forty Mile Site. e.g. special site tours on Parks Day.
- Set up as a pilot project and extend if successful.
- Ensure these don't conflict with events at other sites such as Moosehide, Tr'ochek & Tombstone Park.

Priority: Medium

Interpreters

- When feasible, hire a second trainee interpreter.
- Training: Try to take advantage of potential interpretive training opportunities.
 - Ensure interpreter/ caretaker and work crews have some site specific and wilderness (first aid, fire prevention, machinery operation, etc.) training.

Priority: Medium

Interpreters Manual

- Encourage interpreters to add their own notes and observations.
- As budget permits, flesh out the manual by developing more story topics, focussing on the stories needed to support specific interpretive needs (e.g. signage topics).
- Debrief interpreters post season to see what questions were asked and what topics need to be addressed

Priority: Medium to High

Archaeology

- Archaeological assessments before construction should be a must.
- Interpretive archaeology would be an asset to the overall site management.

- According to Chris Thomas, there is plenty of research potential at the site though completing more archaeological research projects would be costly. If one were to do another community project he would focus on the area surrounding the church. He also recommends late summer projects because frost limits the depth of excavations.

OFF SITE

Site Promotion in Other Facilities

- Forty Mile panel in Dänojà Zho and in Dawson Visitor Information Centre.
Priority: Medium

Publications

- Prepare a lure brochure for display racks in interpretive centres.
- Forty Mile posters.
Priority: Medium

Website

- Promotional Page Begin with just a page on either the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in or Yukon Gov't., Historic Sites website. A good start would be some basic information about the site, how to get there and who to contact to learn more.
Priority: Immediate
- Interpretive website display The Virtual Museum of Canada program is one option for developing an interpretive website although the current status of this program is uncertain. (See page 48 of this Plan.) Explore this or other avenues to fund and prepare a website interpreting the history of the site.
Priority: Long-term

DVD/Video Production

- Consider commissioning an audio-visual production that will tell the Forty Mile story and can reach a variety of audiences on and off site.
- Could also be shown in other facilities such as Dänojà Zho.
Priority: Long-term

Oral History

- Expand recent historical documentation of the site by continuing interviews with people with knowledge of the site. They might include elders with site knowledge, former members of the Clinton Creek Historical Society, volunteer caretakers/former residents and other river dwellers/travellers from the early days.
Priority: High

Archival Research

- Update the bibliography every five years.
Priority: Medium
- Update the historic photo collection (valuable for interpretation & site research).
- Research the locations of Forty Mile artifacts that are now off site.
Priority: High