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# Interpretive Signage Strategy



Yukon Department of Tourism  
Heritage Branch  
July 1995  
*Revised March 2005*

**Inukshuk Planning & Development**

*In Association with EDA Collaborative Inc, Lynxpaw Services and Aasman Design Inc.*



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# Interpretive Signage Strategy Tourism Yukon

For  
**Heritage Branch  
Tourism Yukon**

By  
**Inukshuk Planning & Development**

In Association With

**EDA Collaborative Inc.  
Lynxpaw Services  
Aasman Design**

**July 1995**

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## Department of Tourism Interpretive Sign Mandate

*"To communicate an accurate, balanced and representative story promoting the Yukon's diversified natural and cultural heritage."*

## Executive Summary

The Government of Yukon erects interpretive signs to give residents and visitors alike, an awareness of the mosaic of Yukon natural, cultural and historic features. They are a simple, cost effective, year-round communication technique to inform, interest and educate the viewer.

The new sign strategy recognizes the Department can not work alone. Tourism does not have an exclusive program for interpretive signage. It must work co-operatively with other partners especially the departments of Renewable Resources and Community & Transportation Services to deliver a cost-effective and informative program.

Key concepts behind the new program logic include: accuracy, balance, diversity, flexibility and representativeness. The program framework is organizational by focus, building on what currently exists rather than developing a new structure. This reflects the nature of the issues uncovered in the situation analysis and the general utility of existing signage initiatives. Sign purpose, location, sign/site relationships and cost need to be considered together.

The program logic also provides a comprehensive framework for new site selection, site rationalization, construction planning and sign maintenance. A new records format has been developed and the existing records converted to a user-friendly, computerized database accessible to all user departments.

For the first time, guidelines for site furnishings such as garbage receptacles and toilets are set. The ongoing site maintenance costs associated with sign placement are acknowledged to be part of overall program cost. They are to be negotiated between the departments according to their respective maintenance capabilities.

The framework provides direction on what program parameters are needed to provide order, image continuity and effective message delivery to meet user needs. The sign strategy suggests unifying elements and offers guidelines instead of prescriptive standards. Guidelines cover sign design, materials application, readability and use of site furnishings.

A comprehensive program logic is spelled out for the first time. Site inspection and maintenance principles have been developed in response to the need for an integrated database and resolution of long-standing maintenance concerns. Capital and O&M cost projections have been prepared for all program elements and a 8-10 year life-cycle standard set. This means that 12 -15 signs will need to be replaced annually.

A signage hierarchy is proposed because there are limits to program growth and a point where sign saturation begins. This can now be defined by applying the principles in the strategy. The hierarchy has four levels.

At the territorial level this involves border crossing signs with a territory wide focus. Regional signage focuses on corridor or area key features. Logical locations include highway junctions, features of regional significance and ecoregion boundary points where regional differences are most apparent.

Community level signage tells community stories. The Department of Tourism has only an advisory role. The department provides technical assistance on request if there is an interpretive or regional orientation component. This avoids duplication and gives communities both design freedom and the ability to include a commercial component in any signage endeavor.

The fourth category of signage is site specific. It can be subdivided into major and minor sites with a distinction made between roadside and backcountry or river corridor sites. This is important because it recognizes the different experiential priorities of the river corridor traveller as well as the practical maintenance realities. Five Finger Rapids is an example of a major site while Takhini Crossing would be a minor roadside site. Stewart Island and Hootalinqua would be typical minor and major river sites.

An inter-departmental signage committee management structure is recommended. It provides a mechanism to co-ordinate signage initiatives, and discuss related issues such as site rationalization and maintenance. Roles and responsibilities are dictated by the type of application, interpretative function, agency capabilities and mandate. A common process is included for the review of all interpretative sign applications.

Establishment of the interdepartmental sign committee is identified as a priority. During the summer of 1995, all sites should be inspected and the records updated to reflect the new computerized format. Sites will be categorized to reflect the strategy hierarchy with regional deficiencies identified and site rationalization priorities established. Graphic standards will also need to be prepared for each sign category. The strategy recommends program performance measures be adopted to cover matters ranging from site spacing distance to maintenance frequency and program rationalization. Program deficiencies are identified in the report with priorities for resolution recommended. The most pressing program deficiency requiring attention involves regional orientation signage at major highway junctions.

## Interpretive Opportunities Currently Represented In The Yukon Sign Inventory

- territorial entrance identification
- orientation, information and warning
- points of interest, safety and recreation area rest-stops
- natural history including wildlife viewing and ecology
- historic use; natural and cultural features
- First Nation cultural history, land use and occupation



*Territorial Entrance*



*Regional Orientation*



*Point of Interest*



*Historic Use*



*Natural History*



*First Nation Culture*



*A typical Sign is an inscribed board, plate, or space that provides information, warning or guidance*



*A typical Wayside Exhibit interprets features or events on a site to develop a theme or a story and differs from a sign by providing explanations*

Effective interpretive signage improves visitor experience in a variety of ways. First, signs are silent, 24 hour-a-day, four season, communication tools providing direction, identification and information of interest to the traveller. Exhibit signage enhances visitor understanding and experience through learning at leisure. These signs stimulate visitor interest in the Yukon's natural, cultural and historic features by the stories they tell.

Interpretive signage and wayside exhibits also have a third, more subtle purpose, especially along highway corridors. They can delay travellers, thus extending their stay within the region and increasing the likelihood of them spending money locally. This objective is particularly relevant to the Yukon where the majority of visitors are Alaska-bound.

The quality, appearance and frequency of interpretive signage and wayside exhibits influences the visitor's impressions and image of the Yukon. Done well, they complement other marketing initiatives and can motivate a change in behavior. For example, the visitor enroute to Dawson may divert for a side trip down the "Silver Trail" to Elsa and Mayo because of the exhibit at Stewart Crossing. The extra day spent in the area puts from \$65.00 to \$100.00 directly into the community economy.

The reaction of the highway traveller and backcountry user to signage along a trail or river may differ. The backcountry, wilderness traveller may perceive such signage as an inappropriate intrusion, out of context with the environment. Signage and site development policy must respect and respond to a range of visitor needs.

A working definition of both a sign and a wayside exhibit is needed to put the Yukon sign program in perspective. The following definitions have been used.<sup>1</sup>

- A Sign is an inscribed board, plate, or space that provides information, warning or guidance
- A Wayside Exhibit interprets features or events on a site to develop a theme or a story and differs from a sign by providing explanations

The Yukon has one of the most comprehensive interpretive sign programs in the country.

<sup>1</sup> Trapp, S., Gross, M & Zimmerman, R. *Signs, Trails and Wayside Exhibits: Connecting People and Places* Interpretive Handbook Series, University of Wisconsin 1994

There are 203 signs at approximately 125 sites contained in the database illustrating a broad range of themes about Yukon geography, natural and cultural history. With the exception of the Yukon River and Herschel Island, the signs are located along the main highway corridors.

## 1.1 Purpose of the Strategy

This strategy defines the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Tourism for interpretive signage. It provides a comprehensive program framework and logic for site selection, design, construction and maintenance of Yukon interpretive signage. It recognizes from the outset that the Department of Tourism does not have an exclusive mandate for signage program delivery and must work cooperatively with the departments of Renewable Resources (RR) and Community & Transportation Services (C&TS) to deliver a cost-effective and informative program that responds to visitor needs. The strategy provides a framework for interdepartmental communication and cooperation.

Over the past 15 years, Tourism Yukon has installed interpretive signage along Yukon highways and the Yukon River. Both the departments of Community & Transportation Services and Renewable Resources have been partners in this process and continue to develop programs of their own. For example, C&TS has erected new anti-litter signage and adopted a policy concerning the use of symbology standards. The department has also developed a series of truck pull-offs in response to new federal regulations limiting trucker driving times. In 1994 C&TS also completed a policy review of commercial signage along Yukon highways. One solution, generally favored by the department and supported by many at community meetings, would see the development of a standard community information kiosk.

Renewable Resources initiated a very successful, Yukon-wide Wildlife Viewing Program in 1991 which relies heavily on the development of wayside exhibits at key locations. All these types of initiatives have implications for the placement of interpretive signs and site selection.

A number of key events makes the preparation of a departmental interpretive signage strategy a timely initiative. These include:

- completion of regional tourism strategies emphasizing the role and value of interpretive signage and point-of-interest site development



*The current system has a variety of problems including sign placement and frequency, materials choice, style and form*



*New anti-litter signage from Community and Transportation Services*



*Example of signage from Renewable Resources' successful Wildlife Viewing program*

## The strategy answers many questions about:

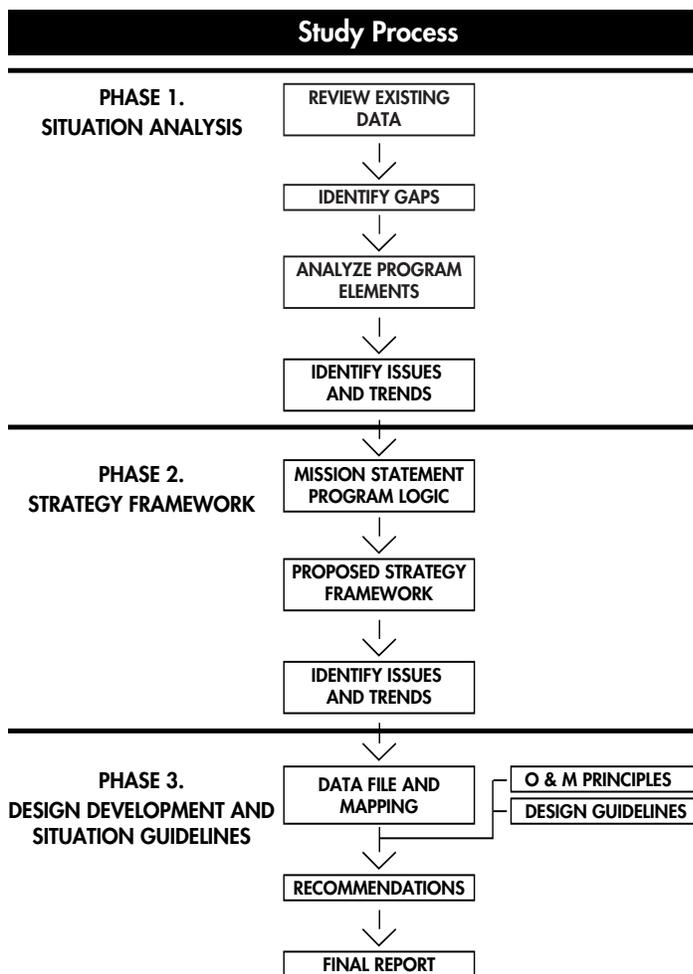
- the strengths and weaknesses of the existing interpretive signage program
- the main issues involved in program delivery
- opportunities to improve effective program delivery
- the present capital and O&M costs and what refurbishment of the existing infrastructure will involve
- how program co-ordination, signage, site development quality, and interpretive effectiveness can be improved while controlling costs
- what the role and responsibilities of the Department of Tourism should be
- what heritage themes should be represented in a Yukon-wide interpretive strategy and whether they should be presented on a regional or corridor basis
- whether there should be a uniform standard for all interpretive facilities or the regionally based approach continued

- signing of an interdepartmental Memorandum of Understanding between the three departments covering development and maintenance of pull-offs, points-of-interest and recreation sites in 1990
- completion of strategic plans for wildlife viewing, and interpretation of the Dempster Highway Corridor
- completion of a highway stopping point inventory (McSkimming 1990), and sign inventory of the 125 existing sites (Tourism 1994)
- replacement of the Alaska Highway "mile-posts" in 1992 and development of a new style of Point of Interest site (i.e. Bove Island, Kluane River)

A decade of anniversary commemorations also started in 1992 making interpretive signage a government priority. The 1994 site inventory review revealed a number of issues which warrant program re-evaluation. Some signage is acknowledged to be redundant, out-of-date and in poor condition. Site selection and development standards vary considerably reflecting uncertainty concerning site purpose or agency mandate. Some interpretive themes (i.e. Gold Rush) are well represented; others are not (i.e. First Nation's cultural history).

Sign development and maintenance has been a shared responsibility with Renewable Resources and C&TS because these departments have the ability to utilize crews for construction and maintenance. Capital and O&M costs are increasingly straining the existing partnership budgets. Certain issues such as supporting infrastructure (i.e. pull-off maintenance, outhouse education, and garbage disposal) are an ongoing headache. Site furniture standards need to be applied in a consistent manner. Also, no spacing distances exist so there is no sense of order and hierarchy.

All completed regional plans encourage construction of additional roadside pull-offs, viewpoints, and signs as part of their "regional image". This creates an expectation that the program can be easily expanded without acknowledging the ensuing capital and maintenance costs which arise.



## Approach

The approach used to develop the strategy is described to the left. The process involved a review of the sign inventory photographic records, interviews with affected agencies and a sample of affected sign users to determine the main issues. The existing program was analyzed to identify strengths and weaknesses, determine previous program logic and current operating procedures.

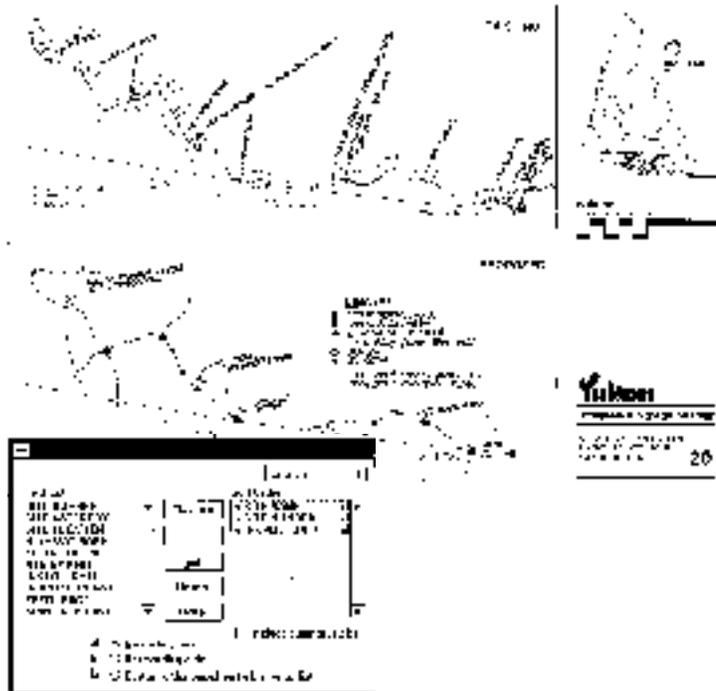
The degree of reliance on inter-agency participation and the need for co-operation was very quickly apparent. For this reason, the approach was adjusted to bring the other affected departments into the planning and project review process.

Opportunities and constraints to program operation were identified and current interpretive trends researched. Program costs were also tabulated. A new data base records system was designed to meet all potential user needs and the conversion process initiated. This resulted in a situation analysis report which was reviewed by interdepartmental representatives.

In stage two, a preliminary strategy and program framework was developed based on market needs. The proposed strategy is based on a market-driven approach. A mission statement clarifying roles, responsibilities and program objectives followed, based on a partnership focus. An organizational sign hierarchy, principal interpretive themes and general sign and site development policy were then created. The results were summarized in a *Concept & Principles Report* and reviewed by the Steering Committee.

The final project phase involved preparing an implementation strategy and working process for interdepartmental co-operation. Direction on general design guidelines, program priorities and associated cost projections have been formalized to facilitate program operation and maintenance. Sketches, graphs and charts illustrate the strategy, taking into account a range of possible users.

This final report summarizes the new program logic and provides a blueprint for future program operation including existing site rationalization.



A new computerized data base system was assembled



Typical Interpretive Sign prior to 1985

**Program History & Current Situation**

The program has evolved over the past 15 years. It started as a series of simple, vertical wood routed panels identifying Gold Rush era features near Dawson. The next series of signs focused on the Yukon River, the Alaska and Klondike highways. These initial signs were intended to provide basic information and encourage visitors to “take a break” as they headed north to Alaska or “down river” to Dawson.

During the initial years the majority of funding support came through a Federal-Territorial Tourism Development Agreement. By the late 1980’s, the department experimented with the use of different sign construction materials and began to develop wayside exhibits at key features.

The role of the signage program is changing with a greater emphasis on interpretive stories rather than a single message. The focus is now more on wayside exhibit development and regional orientation in support of completed regional tourism plans. These new regional tourism strategies recognize the value of signs and wayside exhibits (i.e. Campbell Region). They aid visitor awareness of an area’s attributes and may cause visitors to alter their travel plans.

Yukon interpretive signage has evolved from simple, routed message boards to complex porcelain enamel panels complete with photographs and rendered artwork.

The mid-eighties also saw many communities adopt mainstreet improvement programs that included community entrance signs and a variety of interpretive signs and wayside exhibits. Many of these community initiatives were undertaken with the help of Tourism and Parks Branch staff. The Watson Lake Sign Post Forest and Burwash Landing gold pan are two examples that have become tourism “sign” attractions in their own right.

Strategic interpretive planning evolved in the late 1980’s as planning for the Alaska Highway 50th Anniversary got underway. A Dempster Highway Interpretive Strategy was initiated resulting in the adoption of a consistent motif and interpretive theme developed in conjunction with the Government of the Northwest Territories. The focus also shifted to orientation exhibits highlighting several regional themes. For the first time, a comprehensive Yukon-wide strategic planning approach was used to develop a wildlife viewing program.



Recent regional tourism strategies encourage the use of regional orientation signs to “delay” or “divert” visitors



A greater recognition of First Nations history



Attractions in their own right, above and below



This program places a heavy emphasis on the use of interpretive signage at key locations with the added dimension of short interpretive trails at many sites. This program has been developed by the Department of Renewable Resources and whenever possible, integrated into sites developed by Tourism or other agencies.

Another notable change in theme development was the greater recognition given to First Nations history and their increasing involvement in all aspects of interpretive planning from site location to sign content (i.e. Teslin, Klwane river sites).

## 2.2 Program History Logic

The files contain little information concerning the original program logic. It would appear that the primary motivator was a desire to improve basic visitor information and awareness of Yukon geography and history. Anecdotal comments suggest that many Yukoners were frustrated by the number of visitors who had little idea of whether they were in the Yukon or Alaska. Others suggest the initial objective was to provide some uniformity to the mixture of signage already in place and some message consistency.

Archival correspondence also implies that signs were seen as a way of providing the visitor with a "break" during the drive and as a means of encouraging visitors to linger longer in the Yukon. The wood routed fabricated sign format first began to appear on a regular basis during the forties across North America and is still in use in many jurisdictions today. They remain simple to fabricate, inexpensive to produce and are very durable. They were introduced into the Yukon in the late seventies. As new space-age products have become available, their use has declined.

The diversity of signs in the early years suggests that the attributes of the individual site history dictated the sign message rather than any conscious attempt to reflect a particular theme. A simple routed sign panel hung between two posts and a cross beam was typically used. The signs were erected where most convenient and often out of context with their surroundings.

While the installation structure subsequently changed and different materials have been tried, there is no indication of how and why these changes were made. In some cases such as the mounting method for vertical signs, cost and simplicity seem to be the rationale. The 1976 Parks Design Standards Manual and Parks Canada guidelines appear to have been used as general reference documents.



*An alternative to a traditional wood sign; the low profile and use of natural materials lets the sign blend into its surroundings on the Dempster Highway*



*Historic building signage no longer used*



*A sign that resulted from a one-time only funding agreement*

***“With the exception of the Wildlife Viewing Program, no research appears to have been done to determine what visitors wanted.”***



*Johnson Crossing a typical highway lodge*

It would appear that many of the sites selected for interpretation had obvious attributes such as historical buildings, natural viewpoints or another existing use such as a grader turn around. It also looks as if the topic selected for interpretation during the program’s formative years reflected the site’s main feature.

No reference can be found which explains the logic behind the adoption of the use of particular warning sign symbols though they tend to reflect interpretation trends of the period. This is not surprising because there was little consistency in symbol usage across the country. At one point in the late eighties, the camera symbol was replaced with words identifying the type of site. It would have made more sense to use the word and logo in combination on the first few warning signs the visitor encountered on entering the Yukon. This would have explained the symbol meaning. But since this was not done, the question remains—why?

The files contain references to the development of internal departmental policy involving the sign program. The first, *Guidelines for Special Feature Signs Contribution Agreements* (October 1989) was created to respond to unsolicited requests for special features signs which could not be funded under existing programs. The regional tourism strategy would dictate contribution funding priority. The proposed sign must complement and not duplicate the existing departmental signage initiatives.

The department agreed to provide a one time capital cost contribution of up to \$1,000.00 for a specific sign project. The agreement was formally used twice, first with the Government of the Northwest Territories for a sign on the Klondike River encouraging visitors to take the Dempster Highway and visit the Northwest Territories. The Yukon Fish & Game Association also entered into an agreement to produce and erect direction signs to stocked lakes.

Following a complaint from a highway lodge which objected to the development of the “Icefield Ranges” interpretive site, the Government developed a policy which said such sites would not be developed within a half kilometer of existing tourist related businesses on private land. Also, no site would be developed within 1 kilometer without their input and agreement unless there was no suitable alternative. The other exception involved major highway intersections where regional orientation kiosks might be located.

The general lack of information concerning program logic and the basis for program decisions has meant the new strategy must be developed from scratch.

## 2.3 Program Issues

### 2.3.1 Agency Roles & Responsibilities

The key to the sign program has always been the degree of interagency support and co-operation. Renewable Resources (Parks Branch) has assisted in site selection, undertaken routed sign construction and erection and assisted with maintenance.

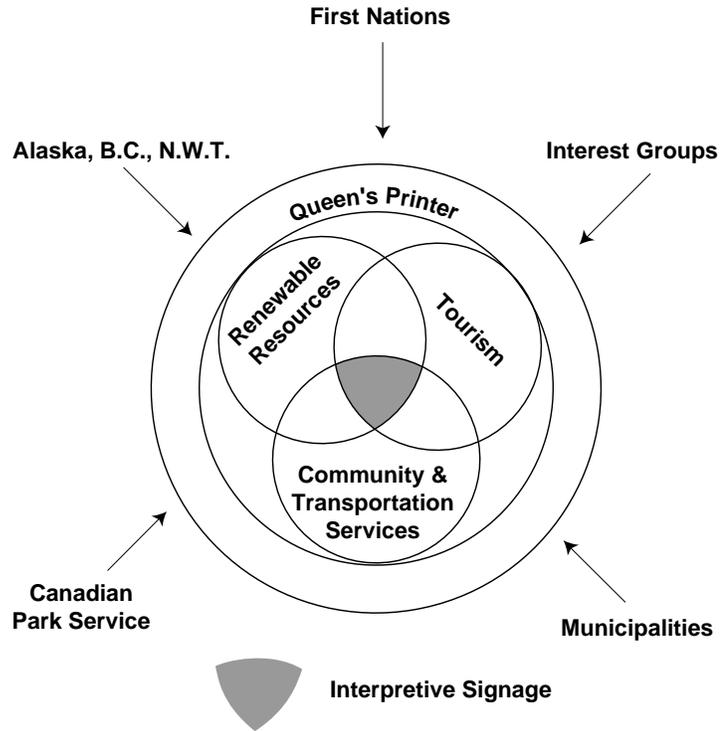
C & TS has modified and reconstructed pull-outs, fabricated and erected warning signs, and assisted with site maintenance. Much of the early work was done at cost and with a handshake using existing resources. However, as costs have risen and associated site infrastructure become more elaborate, informal arrangements have become less and less prevalent. This reflects the realities of today's budget restraints with the commensurate reduction of staff resources as well as the growth of the program.

Much of the focus over the past 15 years has been on putting the basic infrastructure elements in place. Little attention has been given to the planning required to manage maintenance costs and anticipate eventual replacement. In 1995, the focus is now shifting towards program rationalization and the strategic planning overlooked in the early years.

Three Yukon government departments are directly involved in some aspect of the interpretive signage program. Others, including First Nations, the Canadian Parks Service, various municipalities, interest groups and the adjoining jurisdictions of Alaska, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories are also involved in some interpretive signage projects.

The level of involvement and role of each agency reflects both its operating authority and in-house capabilities. Both Highways and Parks have sign fabrication capabilities and maintenance crews. Parks focuses on sandblasted and routed signs while Highways produces standard aluminum silk-screened or die cut vinyl and MDO plywood signs primarily for traffic-related purposes. Highways has year round maintenance crews while Parks operates on a seasonal basis except in the shop.

In recent years both Tourism and Renewable Resources (Wildlife Viewing Program) are increasingly using outside companies for sign fabrication. These porcelain enamel signs cannot be produced in-house or by Yukon manufacturers at this time.



### Summary of Roles and Primary Responsibilities

Agency	Mandate	Sign Roles & Responsibilities
<b>Renewable Resources</b> •Parks •Wildlife	Parks & Recreation Sites Wildlife Viewing program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all aspects within parks and camp grounds including planning,</li> <li>• construction &amp; maintenance lead role wildlife viewing program,</li> <li>• partnership role includes technical assistance, sign manufacturing, site construction and maintenance</li> </ul>
<b>Tourism</b> •Heritage  •Industry Services	Interpretive program management.  Regional tourism planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• non-commercial signage</li> <li>• all aspects heritage sites, lead role cultural</li> <li>• interpretation and points of interest, erection tourism promotion signage</li> <li>• relies on Parks and C&amp;TS for technical assistance, site development and maintenance</li> </ul>
<b>C&amp;TS</b> •Transportation Engineering •Transportation Maintenance	Traffic safety, Pull-out location, design Land use permit within ROW Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• final authority on land use within highway ROW including erection of commercial signage,</li> <li>• manufactures warning, directional, &amp; regulatory signage, builds pull outs and provides maintenance assistance; develops truck safety rest-stops</li> <li>• community/roadside services warning signs</li> </ul>



*Typical outdoor recreation site*



*A demand for more garbage cans and washroom facilities along the highways has created a range of ongoing maintenance requirements*

Since the Department of Tourism does not have a construction or maintenance capability, it must rely on either Parks or Highways crews to perform ongoing site maintenance such as surface grading and garbage pick-up. Both agencies are usually involved in site construction and sign erection to some degree.

In 1990 the three main agencies affected, (Tourism, Renewable Resources and C&TS) negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) concerning the planning, development and maintenance of public facilities along Yukon highways. The impetus for this agreement came from a recognition that the continuing demand for new wayside exhibit sites was creating problems for all the agencies involved and some program rationalization was needed to keep maintenance costs under control.

The MOU recognized that “the departments currently cooperate on an ad hoc, but complementary fashion”<sup>2</sup>. Tourism historically has focused on the development of Points of Interest sites for visitors, while Highways focused on the development of truck safety and community entry rest-stops. Renewable Resources focused on campground development and outdoor recreation sites.

Highway reconstruction has created a number of opportunities to develop pull-outs at nominal cost when the work can be co-ordinated with other agencies. Peepre (1988) noted a number of program deficiencies in his *Recreation Activities System Planning Study* that could be resolved through better program coordination. Concerns included duplication of pull-outs, poor or unattractive settings, access and egress safety issues, poor maintenance and inappropriate facilities. The Peepre study does not indicate which specific sites need to be re-examined nor does it cover all corridors.

The need to formalize many of the existing informal arrangements has largely been cost-driven as previously noted. The absence of a clear policy framework complicates the issue when program rationalization is required. New programs such as the wildlife viewing initiative fill interpretive gaps, yet begin to cloud boundaries between agency responsibilities. For example, the advance warning sign for the Takhini Burn site includes both the wildlife viewing and camera symbols as the site involves both agency’s elements. While perhaps a logical enough compromise to each agency’s goals, one is left to question whether this solution is effective or confusing to the public it is intended to serve.

<sup>2</sup> Interdepartmental MOU *Guidelines for the Development & Maintenance of Pull-Offs/Points of Interest/Recreation Sites*, July 12, 1990

One of the most notable public concerns raised in agency interviews is the proliferation and use of formal and informal pull-outs for unintended purposes such as overnight camping. During the past year all borrow pits and pull-outs have been signed with a list of “no’s”. Site problems have included garbage and RV holding tank discharge. This has led to a demand for more garbage cans and wash-room facilities along Yukon highways. The ongoing maintenance requirements may exceed the value of the signage itself. Not every site which has a sign needs to be accompanied by such facilities.

From our research it is clear that interpretive signage is accepted as an area where interdepartmental co-operation is essential. Good communication is essential regardless of which agency has any individual project lead. Signs must be looked in context with the site where they are erected and the subsequent ongoing associated maintenance costs.

Thus from the Department of Tourism’s perspective the following issues require resolution because the department is dependent on others for program implementation.

### 2.3.2 Theme Representation

Nine broad thematic categories have been identified in the existing sign inventory. This analysis suggests that overall, the current program covers a range of themes that would be of interest to visitors and residents alike. However, it is important to put this representation in context. There does not appear to be any glaring omissions or significant duplication of interpretive messages except for the Alaska Highway signage program.

Some sign copy is dated and reflects a particular historical perspective. First Nations history and land occupancy is certainly better represented in the last five years than in earlier years. There also appears to be a better balance between natural and cultural history theme representation with the most recent major site development projects (i.e. Takhini Burn, Kluane River) than with earlier projects.

In a spatial context, sign representation appears reasonable at first glance, averaging between 20 and 40 kilometers on the Alaska Highway and 25 kilometers on the Klondike Highway. However on the Alaska Highway there are some obvious anomalies with sign spacing as close as 1 kilometer to as much as 130 kilometers apart. Sign spacing on the Yukon River averages 67.5 kilometers. This is about right for the wilderness canoeist as it offers diversion without overly compromising the sense of “wilderness” so important to the overall trip experience.

## The Main Sign Development Questions Identified Include:

- how many and what types of wayside exhibits and interpretive signs are needed before saturation is reached?
- where can departmental efforts best be focused and what is the image the department wants to project?
- should the program be “market driven” by visitor needs or “education” driven by interpretive objectives?
- what, if any, is the present standard interpretive sign/exhibit design format, hierarchy, construction method and expected lifespan and what should it be?
- where can sites be combined to reduce costs and avoid duplication such as regional orientation sites at highway junctions?
- what are the ongoing maintenance costs likely to be and how should these costs be planned for and budgeted where other agencies are doing the work?
- can one interagency sign committee be the forum for interpretive signage planning and, if so, is the present structure workable?

## Thematic Representation Matrix

Thematic Category	Number of Signs	Degree of Representation
Historic-Settlement	41	generally good, but not all communities represented directly especially Watson Lake, Whitehorse and Haines Junction
Historic-Exploration & Mining; General	14	fair but dated and not in context with impacts or importance to Yukon economy
Historic-Exploration & Mining; Klondike Gold Rush	12	adequate in the Dawson area and most often mentioned influence on other related signage
Historic-Transportation & Communication;	25	adequate from post gold rush period but incomplete from First nation perspective
Historic-Transportation & Communication; Alaska Hwy.	20	Alaska Highway Anniversary signage has filled in gaps; well represented
Historic-General	12	has potential for further development
First Nations History	12	under-represented, notable improvement from 1988 on
Natural History	21	opportunity for expansion, with more emphasis on ecology; significant improvement through Wildlife Viewing Program
Regional Orientation	14	weak but improving; more work needed at major hwy. intersection points
Site identification (non-interpretation)	40	24 of 31 signs related to Alaska Hwy. milepost program, 9 are border crossing signs and 6 identify major sites

Note: Signs may be listed in more than one category given nature of sign content

### The Main Agency Planning Issues Include:

- the need to establish spacing criteria and site development priorities
- the need to co-ordinate new sign erection or replacement with road redevelopment schedules where possible
- the need for site and sign rationalization with a hierarchy responsive to visitor profiles and needs
- the need to clarify inter-program relationships where a corridor interpretive strategy is in place
- the role (if any) that the Tourism sign program should play in the provision of special, tourism related, directional/orientation signs for local communities and interest groups
- the extent of departmental assistance that should be provided to local groups or communities wanting to erect historical and interpretive signs



*Good site selection and planning meets visitor needs and interpretation objectives*



*Visitors generally preferred international symbols be used on warning signs*

The Campbell, Canol, and Nahanni Range Road corridors are poorly represented and this seems to reflect their current low traffic loads. Certainly in the late eighties the priority was upgrading the Alaska and Klondike highway corridors before the 1992 anniversary commemorating highway construction.

The location of existing pull-outs and signs along the study corridors are illustrated in the appendices.

### Audience Applicability

2.3.3

Little direct work has been conducted on visitor perspectives concerning the sign program. The 1987 Visitor Exit Survey (VES) is usually referenced and there may be relevant information in the 1994 survey when the results are fully analyzed.

In 1994 Tourism staff prepared a sign survey that was administered on random visits to 26 different sites during July. 113 parties were interviewed to determine the level of awareness, how the sites are used and why people stop. The questions also addressed issues such as spacing distance, the utility of warning signs and whether the sites and signs met visitor needs. Given the small sample size and the survey method, the study authors caution the user not to over-generalize the results.

With that caution in mind, and recognizing that such a survey had not been conducted before, the results are interesting. First, visitors are aware of the sites and their general purpose. They are being used for a variety of reasons, including taking a rest. Good views is listed as being the dominant reason for stopping.

High view sites such as Bove Island and Five Finger Rapids score much higher than similarly developed sites at Rancheria Falls and Kluane Lake. The data also suggests that sites such as the Tintina Trench, which is relatively poorly developed, should be upgraded because it is already a major stopping point. It is also a location with known potential for recreational site development.

The majority of participants indicated there was an adequate number of sites and a good balance in the amount and quality of information provided on the signs. There did not seem to be a preference either way for wood routed or laminated panels. It is not clear whether viewers recognize that the vertical panels are meant to be read from vehicles during a brief stop as opposed to the panel stands where the viewer is encouraged to leave the vehicle. Most sites are visited for under 20 minutes. The survey does not differentiate between time spent at major sites such as Teslin Lake or minor sites such as Takhini Crossing.

The majority of respondents had little difficulty finding the sites and generally preferred the use of international symbols on warning signs. Views on their placement differed with a preference for a 2 km. and 100 metre placement distance. Suggested improvements included making these signs larger, naming them and indicating which side of the road they are on.

A number of people use the Milepost as the standard reference text which suggests that how and where the sites are advertised is an important consideration. The Wildlife Viewing program for example has copied this technique and produced a guide book for its sites because this approach has proven popular in other jurisdictions. There does not appear to be any indication of whether the references in the current Yukon roadmap have improved visitor awareness.

This is a good example of the general move towards more strategic thinking because it takes advantage of the opportunity to integrate interpretation goals into publications commonly used by visitors.

In the 1994 survey, respondents indicated that washrooms, garbage bins and possibly picnic tables are appreciated at major sites but not that necessary at minor points. Since the provision of these facilities has major cost implications, their placement needs to be carefully considered. Sizing and maintenance activity are also influenced by the level of use.

The current priority Yukon tourism markets are illustrated on the next chart. We know that tour bus companies stop at a variety of sites along the way but the number of stops is dictated by fixed daily travel distances. Thus, buses leaving Watson Lake or Skagway have Whitehorse as the next overnight stop followed by Dawson and Beaver Creek. This limits the number of en route stops possible. Independent travellers have more flexibility and travel distance varies considerably depending on whether the traveller has a definite schedule or not.

As a general rule of thumb, there is a correlation between en route time, distance travelled and the probability of stopping. Thus the chance of stopping is greater after an hour of travel than it is after 15 minutes, all other factors being equal.

The form, copy size, print to background contrast and font size all influence sign readability. Other factors such as the plaque placement angle influence readability and durability. For example a vertical sign is generally unaffected by sun angles where an angled sign is, especially if the copy/background contrast is not sharp.



Visitors find high view sites like Bove Island (above) more interesting than similar developed sites such as Kluane Lake (below)



### Psychographic Traveller Profile

Segment	Market	Characteristics
<b>Style Conscious Adventurers (SCA's)</b>	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enjoy risk, danger and change in their lives</li> <li>• Trend-setters, seek variety in destinations; will "rough it"</li> <li>• Travel frequently; spend most of any segment</li> <li>• Tend to be young, male and single</li> <li>• Most are in western Canada (22%) and Ontario (19%)</li> <li>• High interest in Yukon as a destination</li> </ul>
<b>Organized Neighborhood Outdoors Folk (ONO's)</b>	29%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emulators and belongs; follow the lead of others</li> <li>• Enjoy outdoor living, getting off the beaten path</li> <li>• Interested in events, attractions, history</li> <li>• Interested in gambling; some interest in entertainment</li> <li>• Less frequent travellers who spend less</li> <li>• Like organized holidays, tours , use travel agents a lot</li> <li>• Older, middle class, less education</li> <li>• Reside almost entirely in U.S.; none in Canada</li> <li>• Profile fits many current Recreation vehicle travellers</li> </ul>

Source: McKim Baker Lovick BBDO Psychographic segmentation Study, Tourism Yukon 1992

### The Main Audience Needs Include:

- the need to determine what site furnishings are necessary
- the need to improve warning signage
- the need to “test market” sign solutions to make sure they meet visitor needs
- the need to determine whether the identity of the corridor is marketable
- the need to develop a current database that includes information about the site as well as the sign
- the need for consistent location monitoring to minimize vandalism and keep maintenance cost records

### Signs Erected Since 1982

1982	02
1983	30
1984	19
1985	19
1986	14
1987	02
1988	05
1989	04
1990	11
1991	02
1992	49
1993	09
1994	12
1995	11

### Seven Types of Sign Panels Currently In Use:

- Wood–sandblasted and routed or engraved
- Fiberglass Embedded Cibachrome
- Porcelain enamel–baked glass finish
- Cast aluminum and bronze
- Poly-tech–baked plastic paint finish
- MDO plywood–hand-painted or silk-screened
- Aluminum–silk-screened or die cut vinyl

This is the case with a number of panels such as Five Finger Rapids and some of the Alaska Highway commemoration panels.

Children and senior citizens may have trouble reading the angled panels and for different reasons. Children may not be tall enough while seniors may not have the quality of eye sight to read the text properly. These problems can be overcome through proper attention to sign design, placement, and consideration of user needs.

### Infrastructure Condition & Image Consistency

2.3.4

The records reveal that the majority of signs receive a yearly inspection except those along the Yukon River. A summary of the number of signs erected each year since 1982 is provided to the left.

There are seven types of sign panel types currently in use. The three most common sign types are wood routed and engraved, wood sandblasted and porcelain enamel. The emphasis on wood routed signs reflects in-house capabilities. Although the problems with surface finishing on the wood signs has been resolved (cracked and peeling varnish), replacement signs are usually identical to the original sign with little or no updating of messages and sign content.

The signs exhibit large blocks of type, set in upper case (caps) often without adequate space around the text. In some cases message length is excessive and exceeds standard readability criteria (i.e. see Flesch Type Readability Scale in Appendix 2).

The following series of photographs illustrates a range of typical issues encountered in the review of the existing sign inventory.

## Examples of Typical Existing Sign Issues

1

Classic example of four different signs competing for attention with different:

- sizes
- materials
- forms
- colors



2

- Large sign screens site feature it is interpreting
- Location of sign at top of bank prevents easy reading of text
- Extent of text crowds sign face



3

- Can't read black text on wood sign
- Can read white text on wood sign
- Both signs display long messages



5



- Silk Screened plywood with plexiglass cover
- Message at base of sign is too long and difficult to read

6



- Outhouse perched in front of main view at top of the bank
- Is there a less obvious location?

7



- Unusual elevated deck that appears totally out of context with its surroundings

8

- Signage location in 3 separate areas
- Location and access?
- No Base treatment, grade change



9

- Sign applied directly to historic building it is describing
- Difficult to read from road
- Single, upper case text in one paragraph



10

- Large vertical sign does not fit context where view is most important feature





*Carmacks signage invites travellers to take Campbell Highway*



*Mixed messages- at Watson Lake (left) and Johnson Crossing (below) signage appears to discourage travel*



The observations can be summarized as follows:

- Because of their uniformity, the wood routed signs often provide little continuity with the surrounding site and story being told. However they are simple to fabricate and relatively inexpensive given in-house capabilities
- In many cases sign placement disrupts the view or limits common photographic opportunity angles
- In most instances the standard pull-out is really a road widening with no clearly defined entry or exit point because it simplifies road maintenance
- At the new major interpretive sites the sign panels are generally better written with a more balanced view but the texts are gradually getting longer
- Relevance of some Alaska Highway Anniversary signage is difficult to appreciate without the accompanying brochure; what happens when the brochure is out of print?
- Many of the oldest stained, routed signs have lasted longer than the newer models
- The elaborate, elevated display decks used in many of the major sites appear out of context with their surroundings and overbuilt with little regard to long term maintenance implications
- With the exception of the vertical signs, the major wayside exhibits are not maintained in the winter and are unusable
- Wayside exhibits are currently identified with several different symbols (i.e. binoculars, camera) depending on the agency involved yet neither symbol has been tested to see which is more effective or whether differentiation is needed
- There is little or no co-ordination of site infrastructure including benches and garbage bin placement and no clear direction on their relationship to the sign or site
- Although a corridor symbol has been adopted for highway identification for some time it has not been used in a consistent manner or been adopted in other signage as a unifying element. Also the colors used, such as the yellow for the Klondike highway, are unreadable
- It is not clear what happens when certain painted sign boards need replacing (i.e. Alaska Highway "NWHS" Commemorative Signs)
- Landscaping efforts at most major interpretive sites have failed due to lack of care and attention to the timing of installation

**2.3.5 Construction/Maintenance Economics**

Sign fabrication cost records were ascertained from a review of the files and inter-agency correspondence plus personal interviews. The charts to the right represent typical sign project costs including design, fabrication and installation.

It is difficult to estimate accurately toilet holding tank installation costs. At Five Finger Rapids two tanks cost \$1,120.00 to install. Hy-ab rentals run \$150.00 day plus milage and are used to deliver and install site furnishings. Eduction service costs for toilets have increased substantially from \$54.50 in 1991 to \$74.50 in 1994 plus mileage.

The records indicate the costs to construct 5 major interpretive sites in recent years (not including sign component) were:

- Kluane Lake . . . . . \$22,742  
(private contractor in 1989)
- Bove Island . . . . . \$17,650  
(private contractor in 1990)
- Fraser . . . . . \$24,135  
(private contractor in 1989)
- Teslin Lake . . . . . \$16,585  
(private contractor in 1990)
- Haines Rd. (km. 162) . . . \$12,500  
(Renewable Resources existing site)

In 1994 Renewable Resources fabricated 7 point of interest signs for Tourism at a cost of \$7,350.00 which included posts and hardware but not erection. The 87 metal mile posts produced for the 50th Anniversary were fabricated by Duncan's Ltd. at a cost of \$106.00 each and painted by C&TS (\$67.50 each). The 15 porcelain enamel interpretive panels (approximate size 28"x40") cost \$27,000 to fabricate. \$22,000 was spent on consultants to research and write the text.

The cost of a typical 28"x40" porcelain enamel panel cost in 1993 broke down as follows:

- research and writing . \$1,000-1,500 (if done by a consultant)
- design . . . . . \$500-750 (if done by a consultant)
- fabrication . . . . . \$2,000-2,500
- metal frame stand . . . \$125 (produced by Renewable Resources)

Installation costs vary significantly depending on location, number of signs involved and whether maintenance crews are in the area.

Costs for the 9 new border crossing signs is estimated to be \$8,000 each, broken down into engineering and design (\$5,00), fabrication (\$7,000) and installation (\$450).

Community & Transportation Services				
Sign Type	Size	Cost	Installation Cost	Estimated Life
Rest Area Aluminum	120x45 cm	\$ 55.05	\$ 30-50	7-10 years
No Camping, Litter barrel	60x60 cm	\$ 40.40	\$ 30-50	7-10 years
Mounting Post & Hardware	each	\$ 40	in sign cost	10-15 years
2 km. Warning Tab	60x30 cm	\$ 23.63	\$ 30-50	7-10 years
Breakaway Sign Posts	each	\$ 100	in sign cost	10-15 years

Renewable Resources				
Sign Type	Size	Cost	Installation Cost	Estimated Life
Wood Routed Vertical Sign	51"x84"	\$ 600-750	varies	10 years
Sand Blasted Site Identification	16"x132"	\$ 1,200	varies	10 years
Garbage Cans & Base	each	\$ 1,050	\$ 30-50	25 years
Toilets (regular)	each	\$ 1,800	varies	10 years
Toilets (handicapped)	each	\$ 2,350		
Picnic Tables	each	\$ 180		10 years
Septic Holding Tanks (1,000 g)	each	\$ 1,050	varies	25 years

**Typical Fabrication & Installation Cost**



\$125      \$3,875      \$1,200      \$22,742  
(site development cost)

Who's Doing What?			
Sign Type	Ren. Res	C&TS	Private Sector
Wood-sandblasted and routed or engraved	✓		
Fiberglass Embedded Cibachrome			✓
Porcelain enamel-baked glass finish			✓
Cast aluminum and bronze			✓
Poly-tech-baked plastic paint finish			✓
MDO plywood-hand-painted or silk-screened		✓	✓
Aluminum-silk-screened or die cut vinyl		✓	

Five different local sign shops were consulted to review private sector capabilities and associated production costs. All porcelain enamel signs are manufactured outside the Yukon. Local capabilities vary significantly with varying degrees of work sub-contracted out. Most local shops have silk-screen and hand painted sign capabilities using wood or metal surfaces. Wood routed and sandblasted signs can be produced locally by one firm but at a substantially greater cost than Renewable Resources. Quotes for typical program signs included:

- 51"x84" wood routed sign . . . \$750-1,800
- 16"x132" sand blasted sign . . . \$1,750-2,000
- 24"x24" aluminum sign . . . . . \$75-200 (minimum order size)

It is difficult to accurately compare true costs between the service provided by the two government sign shops without knowing all actual overhead costs. Sign costs may also come down with volume orders.

As it currently stands each operation seems to have its own production speciality. The Highways Sign Shop specializes in road oriented signs; the Parks Shop in wood routed and sandblasted signs. The private sector is more involved in silk-screening and hand painted signs and general graphic design.

From a maintenance standpoint there is a wide variation in opinion as to sign durability. Some of the oldest vertical stained signs have lasted the longest and weathered well beyond their anticipated lifespan. None of the sandblasted site identification signs have suffered any damage.

Vandalism is a concern and tends to occur in spurts. Most damage is done by bullet holes. A number of porcelain enamel signs have been vandalized in this manner, highlighting one disadvantage of this type of sign over the vertical wood routed signage panels.

In other cases, identification signs are stolen regularly by tourists. The Yukon River sign and some of the more colorfully named sites along the highway suffer in this regard.

Once erected, most interpretive signs receive little if any direct maintenance. This is most apparent along the Yukon River. General site maintenance includes parking area surface grading, garbage removal and toilet cleaning/education. This latter cost is increasing steadily.

In 1990 McSkimming & Associates undertook an inventory of highway reststops including their approximate maintenance costs. Typical year-round costs for grading, site maintenance and litter pick-up appear to average \$2,500 a year.



Typical vandalism damage—\$1,500 replacement

McSkimming also found that single vehicles and truckers accounted for 90% of all rest stop users during the season with the remainder split evenly between local residents and bus tours. In 1994 in exchange for maintenance of five campgrounds and \$27,000, Renewable Resources took over the maintenance of 32 rest-stops during the summer peak tourist season.

### 2.3.6 Program Strengths & Weaknesses

There is no doubt that the program is working and travellers are stopping to read the signs and visit the new interpretive exhibits. Garbage volumes and education costs are a simple but crude measure of use and both are increasing. The Yukon program is more advanced than that of neighboring jurisdictions and is an important tool in raising visitor awareness of Yukon natural and cultural history.

The degree of partnership exhibited by the three main departments involved in this program provides a real opportunity to maximize development opportunities while controlling costs. Program rationalization is needed and joint use sites make sense whenever practical. One obvious opportunity lies in the ability of C&TS to construct wayside pull-outs at minimal cost during road reconstruction.

Co-operative long range planning is in everyone's best interests. Both the Parks and Highways sign shops need to know what demands will be placed on their services so they can plan yearly production schedules. Tourism needs to know both the capital and ongoing maintenance costs to prepare their annual budgets. Real opportunities exist to expand partnerships with the development of regional tourist sign kiosks at the junction of key highways similar to the Dempster Highway initiative. Some road and river corridors are naturally suited to the development of themes (i.e. Canol, Haines-parkway/heritage trail, Yukon River-heritage river).

Budgets are becoming increasingly tight and this will necessitate program rationalization. Some roads such as the Campbell and Canol highways do not have the traffic loads to justify major site development expenditures at this time, yet these types of facilities can help attract visitor traffic.

Recent initiatives such as the Dempster Interpretive Strategy and the Wildlife Viewing Program illustrate the government recognizes the value of strategic planning.

Throughout the research phase it was clear that there are significant program information gaps. As already alluded to, the files are inadequate from both a program planning, budgeting and maintenance management perspective.



An Example of New B.C. Government Regional Orientation Wayside Exhibit near key highway junction

### The major sign fabrication issues for the Department of Tourism

- when should which type of sign be used?
- the lack of detailed records on all aspects of sign development
- the absence of any maintenance management and replacement standards
- the number of signs which are near the end of their useful life
- the lack of a means to measure whether new technologies (i.e. talking signs, visitor radio) are being used and whether new symbols (i.e. talking sign) are understood by visitors
- private versus in-house fabrication; should in-house capability be a major consideration in the development of future sign fabrication guidelines?
- how can regional orientation sign kiosks be integrated with the proposals currently under review by C&TS in their proposed commercial sign policy?

*"The experience of the 50th Anniversary of the Alaska Highway points to the need for more lead time and forethought in responding to pressures associated with the decade of anniversaries now upon us."*



Alaska Highway 50th Anniversary Theme Sign

***“The biggest program deficiency is the lack of attention that has been paid to planning for ongoing maintenance and sign replacement. The absence of program logic and clear performance measures has impaired planning effectiveness. Criteria are needed for site selection and program rationalization.”***



Yukon River Thirty Mile section Canadian Heritage River plaque

Until recently, there was no one single map that showed all the existing interpretation sites and vehicle pull-outs. There is also a need to overlay potential interpretive opportunities on this map to analyze distribution and assist in site rationalization.

Another weakness is the absence of performance measures and any cost/benefit analysis. In 1994 Saskatchewan Highways commissioned a study of their tourist oriented directional signage to see whether it was effective. The study found the benefit/cost ratio of such signage could be substantial and far exceeded the cost of the signage erected. This would suggest that it may be possible to determine the cost/benefit of interpretive signs and way-side exhibits to the travelling public. This would help justify both the capital and maintenance costs associated with this program.

## Summary of Program Issues

2.4

The program issues can be summarized into those related to strategic planning and program rationalization, site development, sign design and ongoing maintenance. The Department of Tourism cannot deliver the program alone and must rely on the assistance of Renewable Resources and Community & Transportation Services.

At first blush, the program is about signs and the sign message. Traditionally, Heritage Branch has focused on the historical aspects and limited its interest to the cultural history components. It is now faced with the responsibility of delivering a program which has tourist visitation objectives as well as a heritage conservation/public education focus.

It must also integrate this initiative with Renewable Resources wildlife viewing initiatives and C&TS highway rest-stops program so all three initiatives work in a seamless and cost effective manner.

## Interpretation Trends

2.5

A number of Canadian jurisdictions are examining the tourist oriented signage that is currently in place. Ontario has a specific heritage sign plaque program with clear policies and guidelines. Manitoba and Saskatchewan have developed consistent “attraction” signage while Alberta is just starting on a comprehensive review of its own program. What is most impressive about the Saskatchewan and Alberta initiatives is their willingness to market test signage ideas.

Other trends in interpretation practice relevant to this study include:

- the introduction of talking signs and other interactive technology (i.e. CD-ROM, Internet)
- a move away from static to participatory exhibits with a focus on self-guidance and education
- increasing public support for, and emphasis on, holistic interpretation putting the subject matter into a contemporary perspective and blending cultural and natural history
- the introduction of new and more durable materials and higher quality computer-generated graphics
- thematic representation of areas from a tourist perspective (i.e. "Kluane Country")
- staff resource down-sizing, contracting out and cost recovery
- growth in agency partnerships with joint programs and compatible objectives
- more market centered tourism approach to interpretation; essential component of regional tourism planning
- more use of multi-media options to present a co-ordinated message in public literature and other media
- integration of public and private sector signage initiatives including corporate sponsorship
- the development of new symbols to indicate types of attractions and tourism services

### The Overall Program Issues for the Department of Tourism

- the Department cannot operate an effective program without the assistance of its major partners C&TS and Renewable Resources; a logical, integrated approach is needed
- the absence of basic design and fabrication standards along with guidelines for location frequency, on-site placement of signage and standards for supporting infrastructure
- the need for a common, user friendly, interdepartmental database containing information on construction and maintenance costs for planning and budgeting
- the need to establish a program logic that is publicly supported
- the need for program rationalization including lifespan standards and maintenance guidelines
- the lack of specific studies on visitor response to signage used and general site effectiveness
- the absence of program performance measures and interdepartmental communication at all levels to ensure all the partners support the program



*Signage is only one of many interpretive strategies. There is a saturation point*

**Interpretive Strategy Program Objectives**

- to give Yukon residents and visitors alike, an awareness for, and appreciation of, the mosaic of natural, cultural and historic features that comprise the Yukon
- to provide at suitable locations and appropriate intervals, representative interpretive messages that inform, provoke public awareness and stimulate interest in the history, culture and natural heritage of the Yukon
- to inform and educate residents and Yukon visitors alike about the need to protect and preserve the integrity of Yukon heritage resources
- to provide a cost effective and complete framework for the co-ordination, site selection, development and maintenance of interpretive sites and signs throughout the Yukon
- to provide a clear, concise policy for the planning, design, and presentation of interpretive signage portraying the natural heritage, culture and history of Yukon wide importance
- to present a consistent public image that reflects the full range of Yukon wide interpretive theme opportunities and their distinctive regional characteristics in a manner that encourages travellers to explore and visit all areas of the Yukon
- to orient residents and visitors to points of interest along various travel corridors throughout the Yukon



*"To communicate an accurate, balanced and representative story of the Yukon's diversified natural and cultural heritage"*

**Program Framework**

Given the diversity of existing Yukon interpretive signage, and significant investment of resources, it makes more sense to build on the program elements that exist rather than create an entirely new system. The present program can be reorganized to provide a simple, logical structure with a hierarchy of signage that provides flexibility for expansion and rationalization.

Renewable Resources, C&TS and Tourism have distinct programs with different objectives and interpretive mandates. The primary need is for program co-ordination and site rationalization. Traditionally, interpretation has been viewed as a signage program with site development and maintenance issues generally viewed as secondary considerations. Obviously, site characteristics dictate many sign placement locations but this is only one consideration. There are limits to growth and a point of sign saturation which needs to be defined. Site and sign, from a program perspective, also need to be considered in a holistic interpretive sense to present a consistent image and co-ordinated theme.

This framework provides direction on what the program parameters should be to provide some order to program delivery. It provides ideas on how much interpretive signage is needed before saturation is reached. It also suggests guidelines on where it should be placed, what the infrastructure requirements might be, and how maintenance can be managed.

**Mission Statement**

The mission statement reflects the Department of Tourism mandate and should be reflected directly in program delivery. Key concepts include accuracy, balance, diversity and representativeness.

*"To communicate an accurate, balanced and representative story promoting the Yukon's diversified natural and cultural heritage"*

**Objectives**

The program objectives are task specific reflecting the tourism department mandate and emphasizing the inter-agency partnership focus. The objectives are an essential ingredient of the program framework because they describe what will be undertaken, why and for what purpose.

The mandate covers both resident and visitor information and awareness needs while acknowledging both educational and tourism promotional functions. The objectives are action oriented. They promote cost effective program delivery, image and message consistency and careful locational planning. They should be measurable in both quantifiable and qualitative terms through such mechanisms as visitor exit surveys.

## 3.2 Interpretive Sign & Site Development Strategy

### Program Logic

#### 3.2.1

The Interpretive Program provides non-personal services usually in the form of in-place signage. There will always be numerous and different situations for using interpretive signage along interpretive trails, at overlooks, historic sites, day use sites, and road-side pull-offs. As there is a wide variety of unique subjects to interpret there are many signage options. While there is a need for image consistency this does not necessarily require complete standardization.

Since a comprehensive program framework does not currently exist the standardization option was considered and rejected for the following reasons. First, there did not seem to be any clear net benefit. The Yukon already has an extensive signage program in place. A certain degree of uniformity of approach already exists. Thus it made more sense to build on what already existed. Second, standardization limits flexibility and the ability to adapt quickly to changing needs and new technology. Third, a prescriptive approach does not build allies and this program requires co-operative partnerships to work effectively. For these reasons it is not appropriate to standardize interpretive signs for the different areas.

The Strategy and Guidelines have been designed to provide accurate interpretive information in a clear, concise manner consistent with good communication and graphic design principles. Interpretive signage also has a promotional and educational role that comes from increased awareness and accurate representation of the natural, cultural and heritage features of the Yukon.

## Basic Program Principles

- A variety of interpretive mediums is required to stimulate traveller interest and respond to changing resident and visitor education and information needs
- Interpretation should identify and respond to seasonal opportunities (i.e. wildlife migration)
- Interpretive signage along highway corridors should, whenever economically possible, be visible and accessible throughout the year
- Signage should present a consistent image and recognizable thematic structure
- Planning, development and maintenance of Yukon wide interpretive signage needs to be co-ordinated to present a unified whole
- Partnerships with Yukon First Nations, communities and associations helps to ensure the presentation of an accurate, balanced and representative picture of the Yukon's natural and cultural heritage
- Signage should factually inform, stimulate awareness of, and provoke interest in the natural and cultural heritage of the Yukon and not advertise individual commercial enterprises or products
- Official geographic place names should be used and translation of the interpretive message considered in a manner that both respects and reflects Yukon First Nations culture and Canada's official bilingualism legislation
- The location and manner of interpretation used should be compatible with the site, fostering education and awareness without compromising resource conservation objectives
- The best interpretation is short and concise with learning directly related to the experience
- Less is more; not all sites or interpretive opportunities are best interpreted through signage
- Supporting site infrastructure should encourage appropriate visitor behavior (i.e. pack-in, pack-out along river corridors)
- Negative regulatory signage should be avoided with rules explained in a positive tone
- Site features such as landmarks, wildlife viewing and historic site locations may over-ride ideal spacing distances and should take priority

*"The interpretive signage strategy applies to Yukon highways and the Yukon River corridor."*

The program framework has the following system design characteristics:

- allowance for the establishment of unifying program elements to provide a consistent image throughout the Yukon through the use of the Yukon wordmark, program logos (i.e. wildlife viewing binocular logos) or other recognizable signature feature to provide an identity for the whole and also each part
- allowance for interpretive method variation to meet specific site or program needs including corridor and regional identification without compromising Yukon wide system recognition
- recognition that spacing distances can only be a general guideline because some features such as landmarks and wildlife viewing opportunities are very site specific
- the system encourages the use of local materials and labor and different installation characteristics to meet site specific needs by allowing for the use of a variety of unifying program elements including sign form and shape, colour, material fabrication choice and message appearance
- the strategy provides policy guidelines, a framework for decision making and a process for inter-agency participation

Sign Order & Hierarchy				
Hierarchy	Frequency	Purpose	Government Agency Responsibility	Level of Control
<b>Territorial</b>	border crossings	identification & territory wide orientation	Tourism	High
<b>Regional</b>	ecoregion highway junction	highway/river corridor significant feature viewing opportunity regional orientation	Tourism-natural & cultural heritage; Renewable Resources wildlife viewing & day use recreation	Medium
<b>Community</b>	within communities	community stories	Community and/or First Nations sponsored initiatives supported by C&TS (i.e. entrance kiosk)	Medium
<b>Site Specific</b>	highways & corridors according to siting and spacing criteria	identification and interpretation of sites of particular heritage significance and visitor interest	Tourism-natural & cultural heritage; Renewable Resources-natural history & recreation Joinriver corridors	Low

### Six Sign Themes Are Proposed:

- territorial entrance identification
- orientation information and warning
- point of interest, safety and recreation area rest-stops
- natural history including wildlife viewing and ecology
- historic use, natural and cultural features
- First Nation cultural history, land use and occupation

### Order, Hierarchy & Flexibility

3.2.2

Based on the types of signs currently in place four broad signage categories can be defined from a hierarchical perspective. They are described as territorial, regional, community and site specific reflecting their purpose rather than organizational mandate.

Signage development responsibility varies with sign purpose. For example, territorial entry signage is clearly the responsibility of the Department of Tourism while community signage is more community driven and dependent on their commitment to development and maintenance.

In this instance, Tourism and Community & Transportation Services take on an advisory support role. This role may be expanded depending on the outcome of Cabinet's review of highway commercial signage. An option under consideration is the development of a standard community entrance kiosk to contain business advertising, a community map and other tourism related information.

The site specific category recognizes the need for flexibility and accommodates the range of signage already in place. Interpretive signage treatment reflects site character and takes into account criteria such as safety, spacing standards, site significance and available financial resources.

Talking sign technology can also be used to present other messages such as road condition reports, distances to services etc. in conjunction with the interpretive programming. However, before readily embracing this type of technology or any new method of signage fabrication or message presentation usability standards should be developed and minimum performance standards applied. Typical questions to ask include:

- has the product been market tested to ensure it meets Yukon market audience needs?
- will the product last for 8 to 10 years and result in capital and O&M cost economies?
- does the product or service provide “added value” to the traveller and meet program objectives?
- has consultation taken place with nearby lodge owners?
- do proposed facilities duplicate similar facilities in the area (i.e. campgrounds, lodges)?



*Territorial Entrance*



*Regional Orientation*



*Point of Interest*



*Historic Use*



*Natural History*



*First Nation Culture*

**Sign**



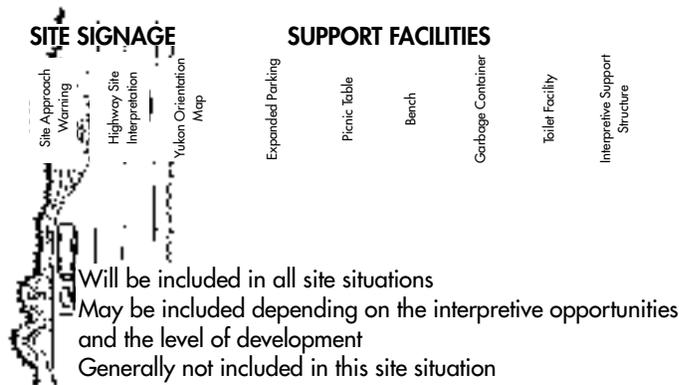
**Territorial Entrance**

Site development criteria for the new territorial border entrance signage is illustrated to the left with a site distribution map below.

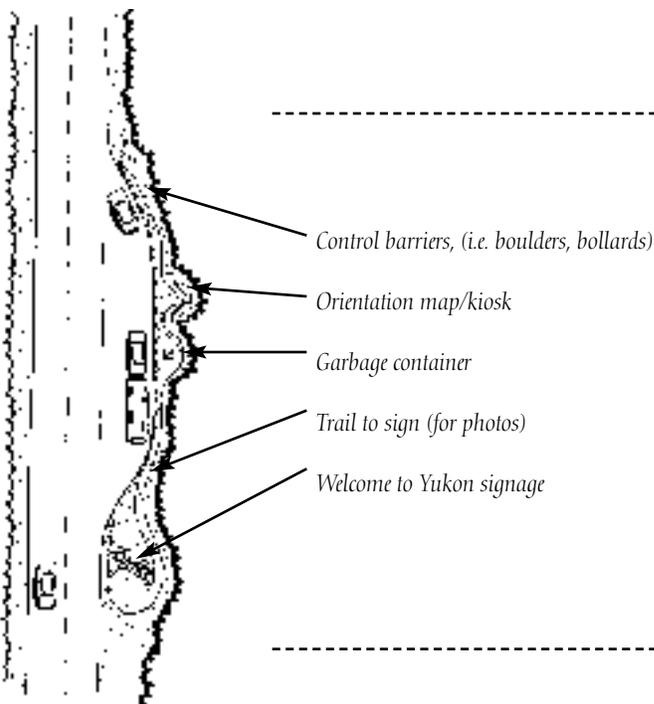
Signage on the North Canol and Nahanni Range Road may be required at some future date. Border signage can be developed on a stand alone basis or in conjunction with other initiatives but the focus should be on Yukon-wide visitor orientation. Support signage should describe the Yukon interpretive sign system visitors are going to see and would include a brief explanation of such things as the symbol system. This complements the information provided at the various visitor reception centers and the information contained on the Yukon roadmap.

Time spent at these sites would be minimal thus the extent of site furnishings will vary according to the extent of associated site development. Thus considerable variation is possible as is evident in comparing border crossing treatment on the Atlin Road to the Alaska Highway Beaver Creek international border crossing point. The signs themselves are standardized with no message variation. Size, colour, form, font type and shape are used as unifying elements.

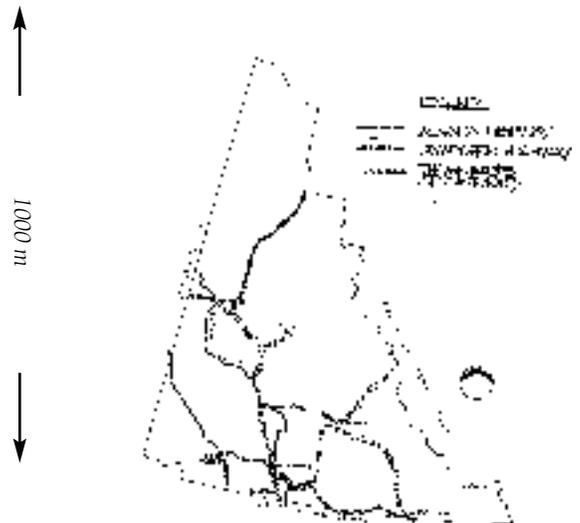
**Features**



**Layout**



**Map**

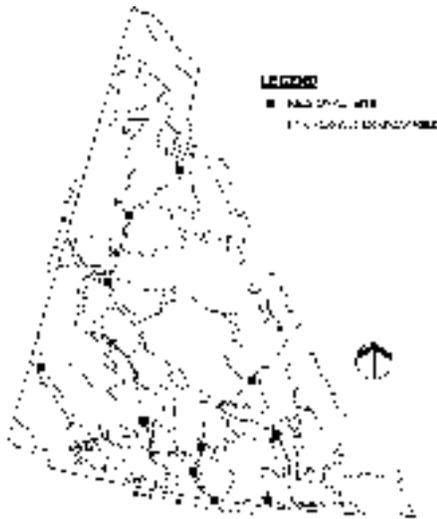


### 3.2.4 Regional Orientation

Site development criteria are illustrated to the right. The structure is loosely based on an ecoregion theme and the desire for regional tourism identification. The focus is regional differentiation. The criteria for site distribution and location is predicated on introducing the visitor to either discrete landform differences which are visually apparent or providing the visitor with a regional overview at highway corridor junction points. This approach first provides the opportunity for a new interpretive focus that illustrates biodiversity and landscape ecology. It also provides the flexibility to promote regional corridors such as the Silver Trail using historical, cultural or natural history theme elements. If a regional site is located at a major specific site, then both a general regional message and a site specific story are told.

Highway junction treatment is particularly important given the limited Yukon wide road network. This is an opportunity to introduce the use of different information delivery technologies such as "talking signs" which do not necessarily require site specific development to reach their intended audience because of their longer reception range. Talking signs and interpretive cassettes may work well in special cases where direct visitation needs to be discouraged. Typical situations might include avalanche slide zones or native cemeteries.

#### Map

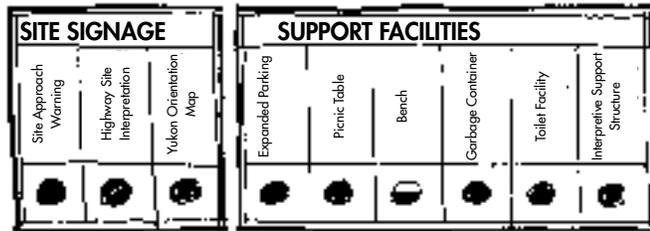


#### Sign



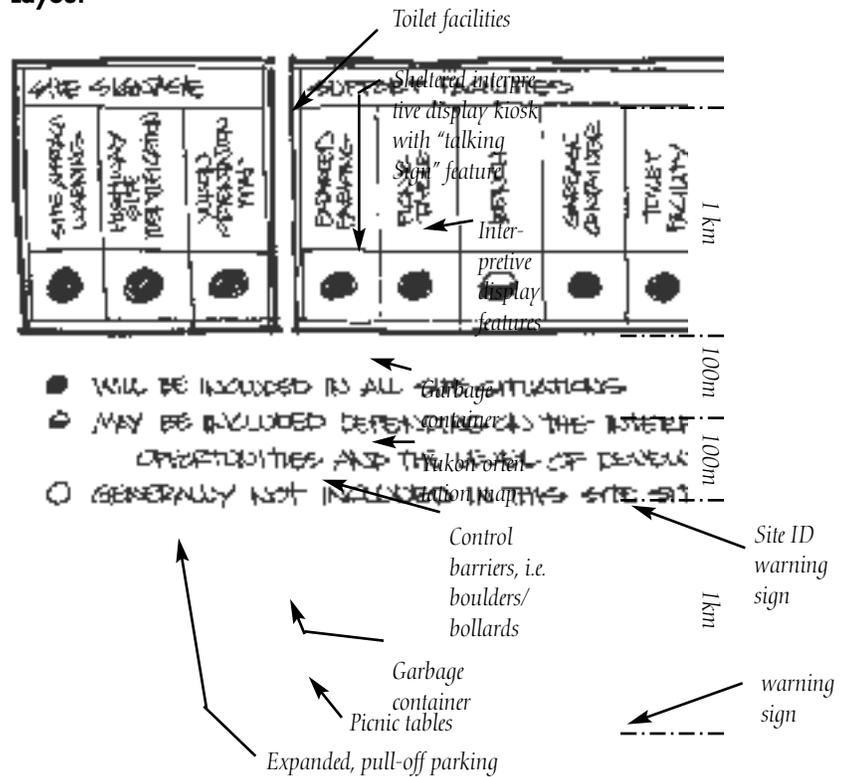
Identifies attraction, services (i.e. toilets and dumping stations) and other regional features of possible visitor interest

#### Features

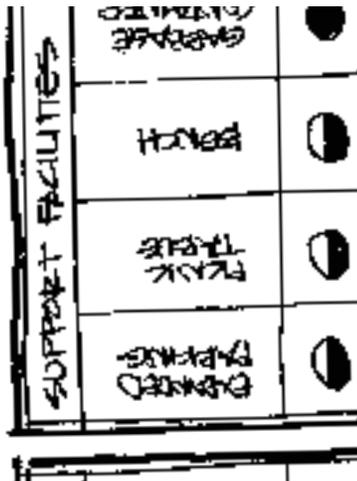


- Will be included in all site situations
- ◐ May be included depending on the interpretive opportunities and the level of development
- Generally not included in this site situation

#### Layout



Sign

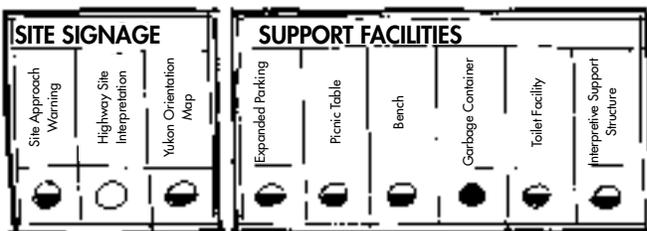


Community

The sketches to the left illustrate how communities might develop community entrance signage using various program thematic elements such as sign form and shape. At the present time, C&TS has developed community rest stops at one or more entrances to each community. These rest stops are often used by transient, en route commercial travellers as safety stops. Others stop only long enough for a toilet break because they are not intending to stop in the community. The Government of British Columbia has developed a community entrance program to encourage communities to spruce up their communities, reduce the number of commercial signs and improve visitor orientation to community services and attractions. Community response to a similar sort of program in the Yukon was generally favorable following public hearings associated with a review of the commercial sign regulations. Partnership support from government might include technical design, installation assistance or initial capital cost sharing but maintenance and long term site management would rest with the community.

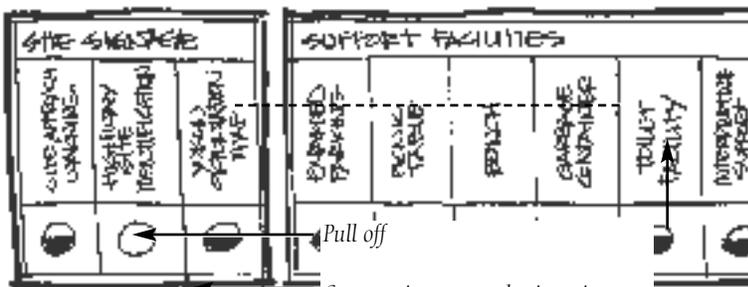
While it is important to acknowledge this information and interpretation opportunity within the larger program, it is envisioned that such initiatives would remain largely community driven and sponsored. Yukon Tourism's role would be limited and of an advisory nature to communities and C&TS reflecting their participation in regional tourism planning rather than interpretive sign programming.

Features



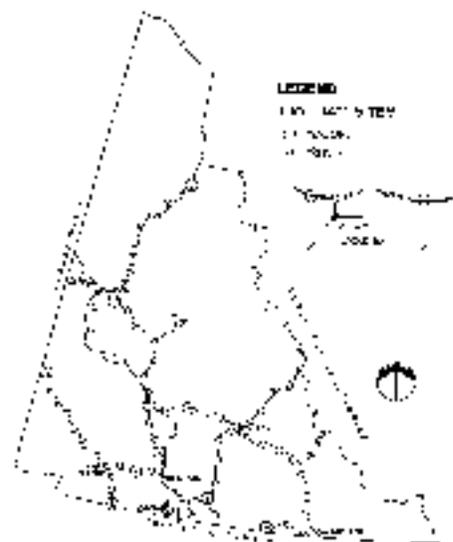
- Will be included in all site situations
- ◐ May be included depending on the interpretive opportunities and the level of development
- Generally not included in this site situation

Layout



- WILL BE INCLUDED
- ◐ MAY BE INCLUDED
- GENERALLY NOT INCLUDED
- Garbage container
- Exhibit structure (optional)
- Control barriers, i.e. boulders/bollards
- Point of interest, community info, warning sign

Map



### 3.2.6 Site Specific - Highway

Spacing distance along highway corridors reflects criteria such as time/distance travel ratios using a standard 100 kilometers speed limit, site significance and anticipated levels of visitor use. Five Finger Rapids would be an example of a major site; Takhini Crossing a minor site. Both types of sites allow for a wide range of sign types, formats and styles including talking signs.

A differentiation between major and minor sites has been made. As a general guideline major sites should be spaced at 50-100 km intervals with minor sites 40-50 km apart. However, as noted previously, historic sites, wildlife viewing opportunities etc. are location specific so some latitude in spacing standards is essential.

### Signs

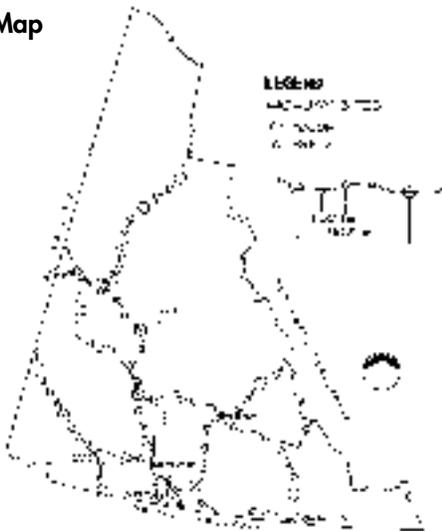


Major



Minor

### Map



Minor

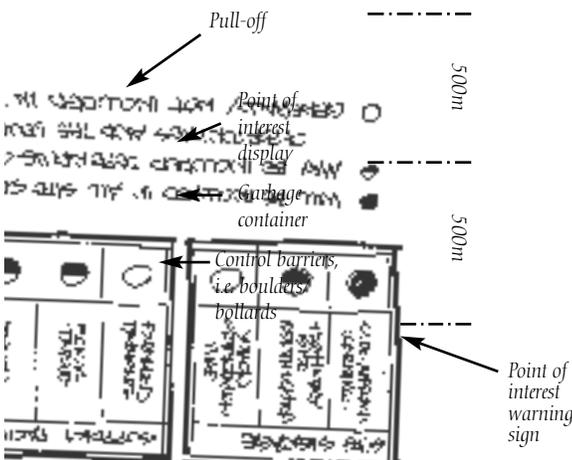
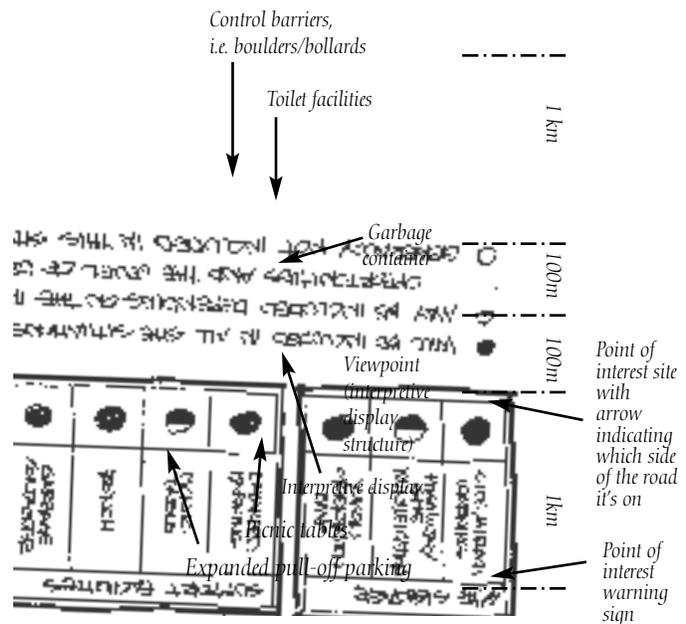
### SITE-SPECIFIC:

MAJOR  
MINOR

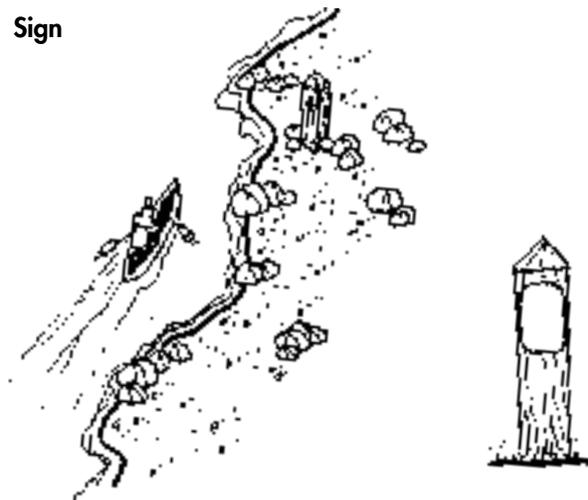
	SITE SIGNAGE			SUPPORT FACILITIES					
	Site Approach Warning	Highway Site Interpretation	Yukon Orientation Map	Expanded Parking	Picnic Table	Bench	Garbage Container	Toilet Facility	Interpretive Support Structure
MAJOR	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
MINOR	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

- Will be included in all site situations
- May be included depending on the interpretive opportunities and the level of development
- Generally not included in this site situation

### Major



**Sign**

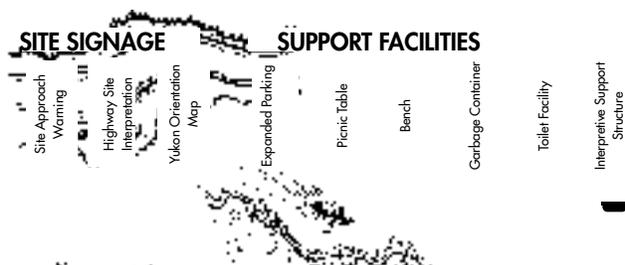


**Site Specific - River**

River and backcountry site specific signage is handled differently than roadside sites as illustrated to the left. A differentiation between major and minor sites has been made as well as between highway and river corridor. The latter distinction recognizes the different experiential priorities of the backcountry traveller as well as the practical maintenance realities of trying to service river corridor sites. Elaborate signs and infrastructure are generally out of place and intrusive in a backcountry or wilderness corridor environment. The level of supporting infrastructure should be consistent with wilderness management principles such as individual "pack-in, pack-out" responsibilities. Other mediums such as guidebooks, maps and brochures keyed to sites may be more effective than signs. The principle here is "less is more".

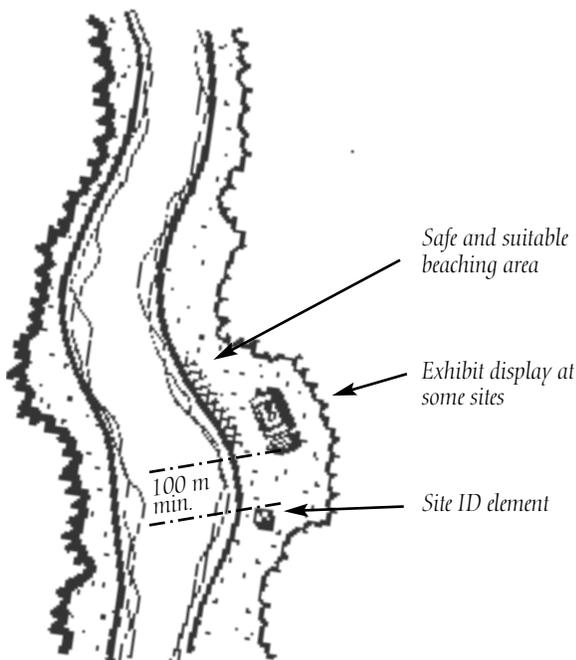
Hootalinqua would be an example of a typical major river site while Stewart Island would be a minor site. Exceptions to this rule would include road accessible campgrounds on the river such as Minto Landing and major historic sites such as Ft. Selkirk.

**Features**

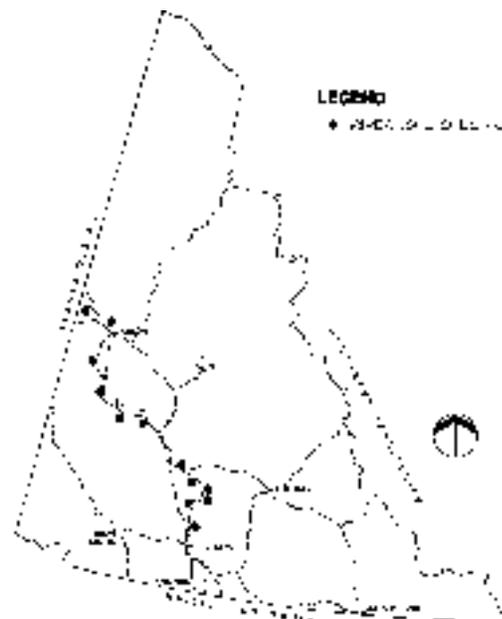


- Will be included in all site situations
- May be included depending on the interpretive opportunities and the level of development
- Generally not included in this site situation

**Layout**



**Map**





### Strategy Management Partnerships

It has been recognized from the outset that successful program implementation is dependent on maintaining and enhancing the current level of inter-agency co-operation.

#### First Nations Involvement

Yukon First Nations history is an essential component of the interpretive strategy in order to present an “accurate, balanced and representative story of the Yukon’s diversified natural and cultural heritage”. Land Claims Settlement Legislation provides for direct First Nations involvement in all matters related to the protection of their history and culture. Interpretive signage and site development fall within this definition.

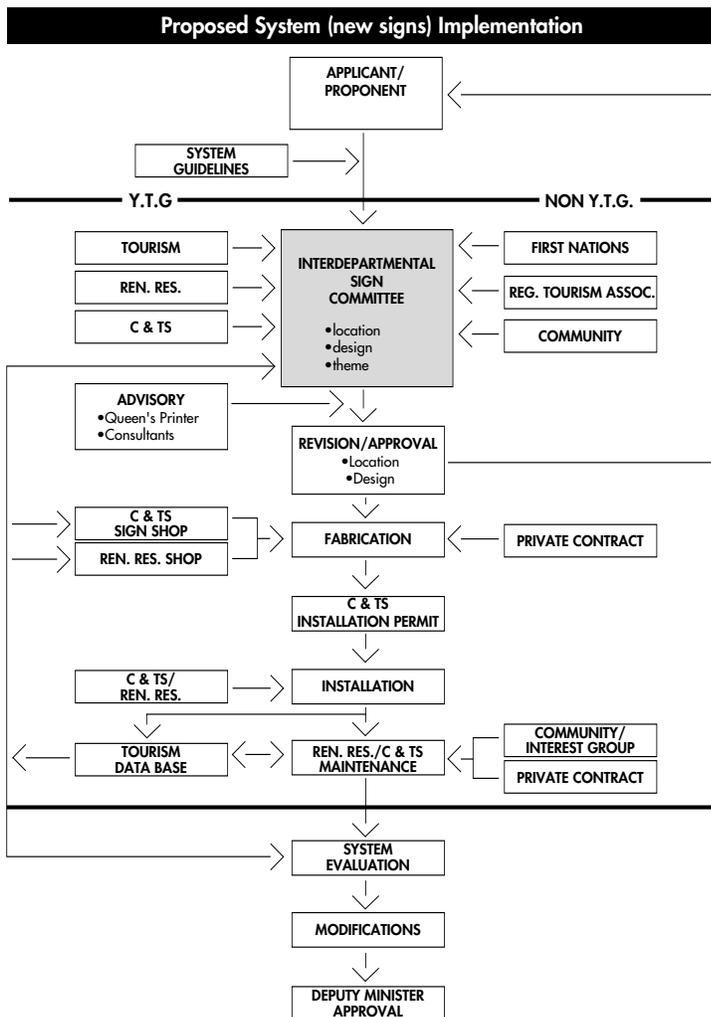
To this end Yukon First Nations will:

- be provided the opportunity to participate directly in the planning, theme development and presentation of interpretive opportunities within their traditional territories as prescribed in the applicable land claims settlement legislation
- be consulted on site redevelopment and signage replacement where First Nations interests have been identified
- be provided the opportunity to review and approve message translations where a First Nations component is included

#### Program Management Structure

The program management’s structure is based on co-operative partnership principles and modeled after the Wildlife Viewing Committee. It gives priority to program objectives and sets out a common process for dealing with all interpretive signage applications. Roles and responsibilities are dictated by the type of application, interpretive function and agency mandate. Illustrations on this page and the next describe the application process in flow chart form for new sign proposals and sign/site rationalization.

The common ingredient to both processes is the role of the interdepartmental sign committee. The core committee would be made up of the three departments currently responsible for some aspect of program delivery. Membership would be increased depending on the type of proposal before the committee and include both the initiating agency and affected interests. Thus an application in Kluane Country for example, could be brought forward by the regional tourism association and because of the location, involve both Parks Canada and the Champagne-Aishihik First Nation in the review committee. (It is assumed the applicant consults the system guidelines and this interpretive strategy in preparing their proposal.)



Thus the Sign Committee can focus on location, design, theme representation and maintenance issues in their review to arrive at a decision.

Once approved, there are several fabrication options including the C&TS and Parks shops or a private contractor. Prior to erection an installation permit is required from the Transportation Maintenance Branch. The same options are available for sign installation. Where maintenance is concerned more options are available including the local municipality or an interest group.

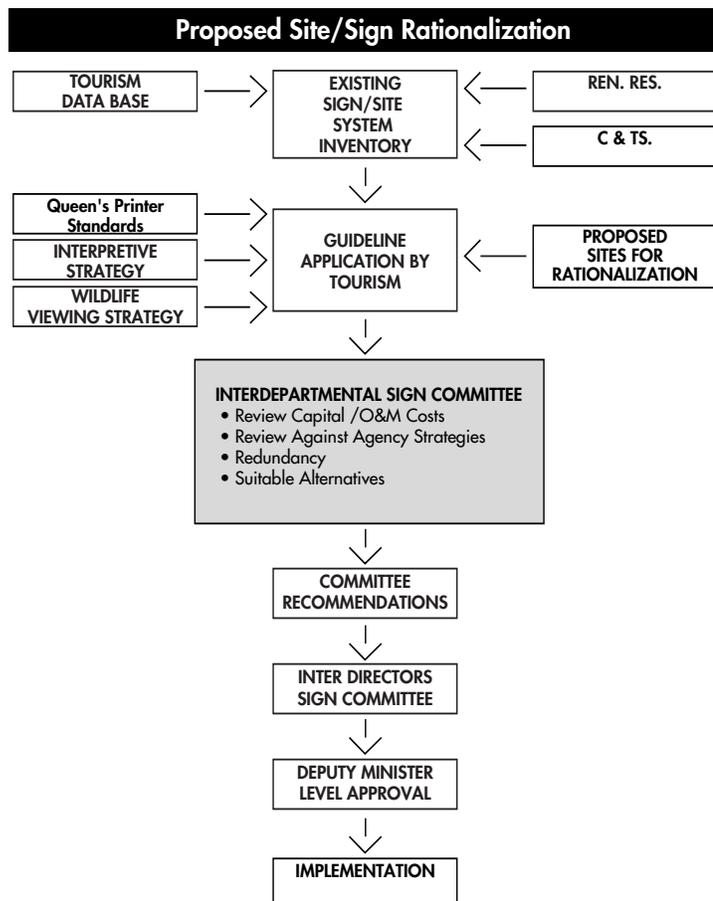
The process also includes provision for the approved application to be added to the Tourism database and eventually become part of the subsequent system evaluation process.

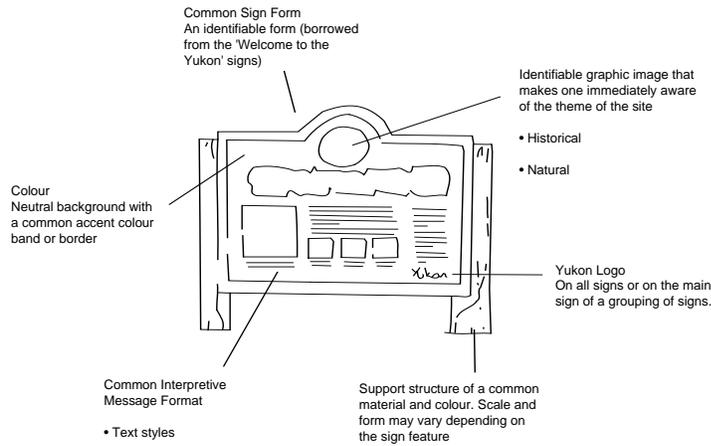
The evaluation process can be initiated as a result of the annual inspections or after a suitable implementation period to assess program effectiveness. It could for example, be timed to coincide with a visitor exit survey but should as a minimum occur at the mid point of anticipated sign system life (5 years). If major program adjustments are required the proposed revisions would be referred to the affected interdepartmental Directors prior to submission to the deputy Minister for approval.

Sign/site rationalization follows a slightly different process. Heritage Branch of Yukon Tourism is the lead agency responsible for initiating the review. Since it is charged with maintaining the database and has the most interpretive signage responsibilities it should initiate the process. The first step has already been taken in developing a new computerized database. The next step involves updating and completing the empty database records. The record should also include an as-built design sketch. Wildlife viewing sites should also be added to the data base. Each location should be assessed in the field against the broader, interpretive and wildlife viewing strategies and, where applicable, the more specific Dempster Highway Plan. In the future, other specific corridor plans will be based on this overall strategy.

The interdepartmental sign committee then reviews the capital and O&M costs associated with the rationalization proposal, discusses alternatives and evaluates the level of redundancy against agency mandates and operating strategies. The committee recommendations are forwarded to the affected department Deputy Minister for approval.

***“Interpretive signage within the campgrounds, parks, and historic sites or along off-road recreational trails remains the responsibility of the agency with management responsibility.”***





Yukon Government Wordmark prominently displayed



New Territorial Entrance sign design

## System Development Policy

4.1

Sign use and format should meet the following general policy guidelines:

### Form

The Territory has recently approved a new entrance sign design which will establish a new visual identity for visitors. As a basic design component the form or forms suggested by this sign should be used as a common element in the development of all new signs along road and river corridors.

### Colour

Like form, colour too should be used as a repetitive component to strengthen a unifying theme for signage such as in a corridor interpretive plan. The final colour palette should include a neutral background colour and supporting accent colour.

### Yukon Signature

The Yukon signature should be used on all sign panels as specified by the Queen's Printer. In groups of more than one attached signs, the signature should be displayed on the centre panel.

### Site & Sign Rationalization

4.1.1

The sign site rationalization process is described earlier. The priorities for sign/site rationalization should take into account the results of the site inspections conducted during the summer of 1995 and the application of the new strategy hierarchy. First priority should be given to those areas where road construction is anticipated. Second priority should be placed on resolving sign/site issues related to the upcoming anniversaries.

The third priority should be to resolve obvious anomalies such as the signage placement on the Carmacks Roadhouse. Fourth priority should be given to the elimination of site duplication to reduce interdepartmental maintenance costs. Fifth priority should look at site consolidation to reduce upgrade costs to meet strategy guidelines.

### New Site & Sign Development

4.1.2

The key to the recommended strategy is reaching agreement between all affected interests to put all government sponsored interpretive signage proposals through the standard review process. It is important that this occur right from the beginning so the procedure gains acceptance quickly and builds credibility.

Priorities for new sign/site development should focus on regional orientation and highway junctions, ecoregion identification and the upcoming anniversaries. Any community signage initiatives should come from the communities themselves following completion and adoption of the new commercial highway signage policy being developed by C&TS. The community kiosk program, if approved, would be the logical starting point with applications directed through the new Sign Committee.



*Information kiosks should be designed to reflect location and blend with site conditions*

**4.1.2.1 Site Support Facilities**

Each site has its own particular needs. The placement, types of materials used, and site layout should be consistent with the character of the site. For example vertical structures are out of place in a tundra setting and need to be screened accordingly. Depending on the site category a range of supporting facilities is required in addition to the basic interpretive sign(s). The following is an overview of possible facilities.

**Information Kiosks**

Generally these are small shelters used in combination with interpretive signs or exhibits. They contain panels on basic orientation, and in the case of a regional site, profile the regional historic, natural and cultural features.



**Toilets**

Toilets should be included for most sites and constructed to Yukon Parks design standards. Their site placement should be considered early in the design process so they are not visually obtrusive and do not obstruct views. However they should also be easily accessible to the traveller and take into account the need for weekly cleaning. The current lime green colour choice should be reconsidered as it is visually obtrusive.

**Picnic Tables**

Picnic tables that are located beside parking areas can encourage visitors to stay longer. Again the characteristics of individual sites will dictate the suitability of their use. Placement should also consider accessibility, weather and noise protection from the adjacent road and proximity to garbage cans and parking. Placement should not obstruct other visitor viewing of the interpretive signage.

**Garbage Containers**

All road accessible sites should include the standard Yukon Parks bearproof garbage container. In some cases placement of the garbage container can be integrated into the design of other facility elements to reduce visual obtrusiveness without compromising usability.



*Toilets should be unobtrusive yet easily accessible*



Viewing platforms can improve viewing angles and limit access beyond a certain point



Bench installed in conjunction with viewing platform compliments interpretive feature in unobtrusive manner



Viewscopes help direct user's sight to distant views

### Viewing Platforms

These raised platforms with railings can improve viewing angles for visitors. They can also control use of an area by limiting access to a point. Because they are expensive to construct and maintain, they should only be used when other natural site features cannot be taken advantage of.

### Brochure Dispenser

These outdoor structures are designed to store, protect and disperse interpretive or information brochures. They require regular maintenance to ensure that the brochures are available and are most appropriate in conjunction with major sites such as Five Finger Rapids where there is a significant interpretive trail.

### Benches

Located close to viewing areas or adjacent trails, benches provide users with a place to rest, sit and enjoy the scenery.

### Viewscopes

These interpretive aids help to direct users sight to distant landmarks such as mountain ranges or areas where wildlife may be seen on a regular basis. Viewscopes can be as simple as a tube directed towards a landmark of interest.

## Signage Design & Materials Application

4.2

Until now, interpretive signs have been constructed primarily of wood, with a routed message. Wood signs can continue to be used in many instances. They are easy to rout and sandblast, resistant to rot, and produce a rustic ambience. Other material including photo-sensitive material, porcelain enamel, embedded images and metal can be used effectively for interpretive signage, and may better fit specific themes than using only wood.

Below are a number of conditions that should apply to the signage system.

■ *Signs should be complementary to the theme and concepts being interpreted.*

This means looking into the use of different sign types; sandblasted cedar, silk screening on wood and metal, and the use of concrete or rocks for sign supports. The materials used should be consistent with theme and setting.

■ *Signs should be designed for specific user groups and the intended season of use.*

Different types of signs with various standards will be required for interpretive trails, roadside pull-offs and for specific interpretive resources.

In winter, signs will be covered with snow and therefore special designs will be necessary to keep specific signs functional. A completely vertical sign might be best for use at interpretive sites to be used through winter. For special winter interpretation, signs with a protective roof might best serve the situation.

■ *Signs must be designed to withstand vandalism such as gunshots and carving.*

No signage is completely resistant to vandalism. Wood is better than most metals in areas of hunting, as the bullet usually passes through wood where it only bends metal and exposes it to rust and surface deterioration. Metal signs are more resistant to carving, weathering, decay and insect attack and might be used where vandalism is expected.

Fixture and placement of the various signs will influence vandalism and where possible, these considerations should be taken into account during the design and implementation. In hunting areas, signs should be designed so that they do not present good targets. A vertical sign, specifically ones meant to convey the law, makes an ideal target. Care should be taken to place signs in locations where they cannot easily be damaged and remain readable. Supports might be protected by boulders with designs angled to make them difficult to hit.

■ *Signs should be constructed to prevent damage by animals.*

Materials that have an adverse taste to gnawing animals and birds such as porcupines, squirrels and woodpeckers should not be used. Plywood is a common example.

Often signs are attractive perching areas for birds, and the sign receives a white washing. As birds usually prefer to perch on a prominent and easily accessible perch, these can be provided away from the sign as direct appendages where this activity proves to be a problem.



*Well designed community sign*



*Protective roof effectively sheds snow from signage but parking area ploughing leaves berm, making it difficult to get close enough to read*



*Gun-shot damage*

## Interpretive Sign Use

Interpretive specialists have several media from which to choose. Each medium has inherent qualities that enable it to do a particular job better than any of the others.

A “yes” answer to any of these questions indicates that signs may not be as effective as a naturalist, exhibit, talking sign, audio station, or brochures. On the other hand, if the interpretive need can be served by a medium that is self-paced, photogenic, in place at all times, inexpensive to operate and maintain, a high quality interpretive sign or label should be considered. By keeping the objectives, audience and message in mind, the selection of the appropriate medium will be simplified. A variety of useful reference sources is provided in the bibliography.

## Sign & Site Design Considerations

### Sign Design

First impressions are important. This is true of signs as well as people. Though unrelated to the message itself, the quality of design and maintenance of signs may be equated with the quality of the message. Presumably, the sign with the best appearance will have the best message and the greatest expectation of reward. Hence, the design of the sign is an important factor in determining whether or not visitors will read it and accept its message.

Signs should be designed to minimize their intrusion on the site. The use of local materials for the sign and its support can make the sign more aesthetically acceptable and will help promote the theme of the area. For example, rock can be used in treeless areas, and massive posts in areas of old-growth timber.

The height of a sign can also be designed to fit the environment. In open, exposed settings, low profile signs are more appropriate; in a forest setting, elevated signs may be the best. In the Yukon, snow conditions vary significantly and may have a bearing on site placement and height. Many highway pull-outs are still ploughed so vertical signs will be readable (i.e. Takhini Crossing) while their lower counterparts with viewing decks (i.e. Bove Island) are covered by snow or are inaccessible because of a lack of maintenance.

### Message

The label for an object may need only the common name to identify it. However, if it is accompanied by the scientific name, phonetic spelling, and a map illustrating its geographic distribution or range increases the educational value. It is also more likely to be remembered.

### Sign use checklist

- Is a sign the right interpretive solution?
- Is another pull-out needed or can it be added to an existing site?
- Is the proposal consistent with the strategy?
- Has it been reviewed by the sign committee?
- Are program objectives being met by this medium's unique qualities?
- Is personal contact with visitors desirable and economically feasible?
- Does the message involve an object which can be exhibited?
- Can the message be enhanced with recorded authentic voices, bird songs, or other sound effects?
- Will the majority of visitors be near their radios or in situations where they are likely to tune in because they are looking for particular information?
- Do you want to provide something for the visitors to take home with them?

Interpretive messages are more complex. Regardless of length, they must perform a number of functions. They must gain visitors' attention, hold their interest, provide them with an understanding of the subject, and in some cases evoke a behavioral response. In a short message, these functions must be performed by the headline, lead paragraph, interior paragraph(s), and closing paragraph. The facts, spelling, grammar, and word choice must be accurate, concise and appealing to a variety of readers. Particular attention should be paid to language translations since words in one language may not have a direct counterpart.

First Nation involvement is crucial when translations are used or the message deals with their history and cultural.

### Accuracy and Clarity

The text must be accurate. If visitors notice the slightest error, their confidence in the whole message will be shaken. Review each phase of the sign production process word by word to see that errors have not been made in typesetting or stencil cutting. Putting even minor errors on public display may detract from the interpretive message and reflect in a negative manner on the program's administration. In a project representing a substantial investment of time, energy, and resources, a small scale model or mock-up may avoid costly mistakes and needless errors.

### Readability

Whether or not a visitor reads an interpretive sign depends on what Wilbur Shramm has called the "fraction of selection":

$$\text{Fraction of Selection} = \frac{\text{Expectation of Reward}}{\text{Effort Required}}$$

The larger the fraction for a particular sign, the more visitors will read it. Hence, the interpretive specialist must strive to maximize the fraction. This can be done by increasing the expectation of reward or decreasing the effort required.

Writing styles can also affect reader interest. If the style is very formal with unfamiliar words, the readers' interest and expectation of reward will be low. Hence, messages should be written in a conversational style (second person), using personal words and personal sentences.

A long block of continuous text is uninviting and discouraging. Therefore, if you want the average traveller to consider reading the message, it must be short and appear easy to read. Readability can be measured with tests such as the Flesch Readability Scale or Write Formula. These are included in the appendix 2.



Simple clear message which raises visitor interest



Well designed sign text and graphic combination

<b>How Typographic Factors Affect Sign Legibility and Reader Comprehension</b>			
	<b>Comprehension Level</b>		
	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Layout with black headlines	67%	19%	14%
Layout using high chroma color headlines	17%	18%	65%
Layout using low chroma color headlines	52%	28%	20%
Text printed in black	70%	19%	11%
Low intensity text color (deep purple, PMS 259)	51%	13%	36%
Medium intensity text color (French blue, PMS 286)	29%	22%	49%
Muted text color (olive green, PMS 399)	10%	13%	77%
High intensity text color (cyan or warm red)	10%	9%	81%
Black text on 10% cyan tint	68%	24%	8%
Black text on 20% cyan tint	56%	21%	23%
Black text on 30% cyan tint	38%	19%	43%
Black text on 40% cyan tint	22%	12%	66%
Black text on 10% black	63%	22%	15%
Black text on 20% black	33%	18%	49%
Black text on 30% black	3%	10%	87%
Black text on white	70%	19%	11%
White text on black	0%	12%	88%
Layout with totally justified setting	67%	19%	14%
Layout with ragged right setting	38%	22%	40%
Layout with ragged left setting	10%	18%	72%
Text printed in Times Roman	70%	19%	11%
Text printed in Times Roman Bold	30%	20%	50%

Adapted from "Type of Layout" by Glin Wheldon, Strathmoor Press

Although brief messages are desirable, some subjects require more text than others. The psychologically discouraging effect of seeing a long block of text can be minimized by using generous margins, large type, short lines, and short paragraphs. The advertising industry often uses a copy to background area ratio of 60/40%. Subheadings should also be used to "break up" the text and help carry the story along. The reading ease of the text is also improved by using short words and sentences.

A picture is worth a thousand words. This is especially true for interpretive signs and labels. Pictures carry the message and are strong attention getters. Simple line drawings or diagrams are best for maximum clarity and understanding.

Research studies of typographical factors affecting legibility provide guidelines for decreasing the effort required to read print. Most research is based on standard reading distances. However, several of the guidelines can be safely generalized and applied to interpretive signs, which often require greater viewing distances. Both the *Design Guidelines for Yukon Parks* and Parks Canada provide suitable guidelines. Type size should be consistent with Yukon target markets. For example, a high proportion of highway travellers are over 45 years of age and eyesight deteriorates with age. Thus a larger type size with good colour contrast is more readable to this user group.

The most legible colour combinations provide high brightness contrast between letters and background. For labels, black letters on a yellow background are better than red letters on a green background. Also, dark letters on a light background are better than light letters on a dark background. Hence, black on white is better than white on black. However, where a sign is to be used in subdued light, such as in a forest or to be read at night, the light letter on a dark background will be easier to read.

Although no real difference in legibility exists between dull and glossy reading surfaces, people assume that dull surfaces promote legibility, and prefer them to glossy surfaces. By providing signs with dull finishes, you can eliminate reflection and glare and meet the expectations of visitors.

The optimum angle of the reading surface to line of sight is 90 degrees. A deviation of as little as 15 degrees from this optimum can significantly decrease the efficiency of reading. Hence, interpretive signs should be oriented at 90 degrees to the line of sight of the average visitor. Steps can be provided at podium-style interpretive signs, horizontal display cases, and other interpretive devices where children may have trouble viewing them.

All modern uncluttered type faces or letter styles such as Helvetica Medium, Scotch Ropman, Garamond, or Antique are equally legible. For maximum legibility, avoid American Typewriter and the very decorative or highly ornamented styles, such as Old English, particularly in long blocks of text. Some letter styles are most appropriate with historic, scientific or artistic messages.

The most legible type form for interpretive signs is lower case, bold face. Messages written totally in capitals or italics are harder to read and should be used only to give special emphasis to a word, phrase, or sentence.

### 4.3 Site Inspection & Sign Maintenance Issues

Interpretive sign maintenance breaks down into two issues, site maintenance and sign repair. Both can be programmed to reflect design and construction standards as well as levels of use. Inspection and maintenance standards need to reflect program objectives, audience needs and service capabilities. For example, developing a maintenance program for the Yukon River corridor is much more difficult and costly than along the more accessible highway corridors where Highway maintenance crews pass by sites while undertaking their regular duties. Visitor volumes along rivers are minimal in comparison to roads and thus maintenance frequency can be adjusted accordingly.

#### 4.3.1 Principles

The following maintenance principles should be incorporated into the maintenance guidelines adopted for Yukon interpretive signage:

- the agency responsible for sign and site development has the responsibility to set site and sign maintenance standards in conjunction with the agencies asked to take on the maintenance responsibilities
- the public agency (or private contractor) responsible for site and sign maintenance should be the agency best able to undertake that function in a cost effective manner
- a standard inspection and maintenance record should be developed and maintained for all interpretive signs and sites to facilitate program evaluation and budgeting
- interpretive signs should be inspected at minimum at the beginning and end of each visitor season along highway corridors and at least once a year on the Yukon River

### Recommended Type Sizes U.S. Park Service Guidelines

Vertical Measurement	Viewing Distance
10 mm	1 Meters
13 mm	2 Meters
60 mm	9 Meters
100 mm	18 Meters
<b>Titles</b>	
60 - 72	Point Minimum
<b>Sub-titles</b>	
40 - 48	Point Minimum
<b>Body Text</b>	
24	Point Minimum
<b>Captions</b>	
18	Point Minimum

### The Main Sign Maintenance Issues Include:

- safety and public liability associated with the risk of accident due to poor maintenance resulting in facility disrepair and vandalism
- sanitation including toilet education and garbage pick-up
- parking and pull-off grading
- seasonality and disproportionate frequency of use of some sites
- aesthetics including the image of Yukon projected by the maintenance standards adopted
- costs associated with the above
- maintenance responsibility

*"The agency responsible for sign and site development has the responsibility to fund maintenance."*

### Capital & Maintenance Cost Projections

Site development and maintenance cost projections have been developed for each of the five different sign categories. The chart to the left shows the estimated basic capital costs for a minimum service package with upgrade options for supply and installation. Prices will of course vary with location and whether site development work can be co-ordinated with highway improvement projects. Individual sign installation costs exclusive of site development may range up to \$3,000—further emphasizing the need for careful construction coordination and scheduling.

It is important that the sign fabricators in the Department of Renewable Resources and C&TS sign shops be brought into the feedback loop so they can see how various materials and fabrication processes are standing up to use. This helps solve problems such as UV light weathering and varnish finish problems expeditiously. Field maintenance crews and construction staff often see simple ways to fix design problems based on their experience and this expertise should not be overlooked.

For planning and budgeting purposes the following lifespan standards can be applied:

- signs 8–10 years
- toilets 5–8 years
- bear proof garbage containers 10 years
- tables and benches 5–8 years

A number of factors affect pull-off size and parking area configuration including:

- level of anticipated use (i.e. volume)
- site conditions including proximity to fill
- type and combination of uses (i.e. interpretive site and truck safety stop)
- visibility and access safety considerations

As a general guideline the following minimum size standards would apply:

- |                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Minor Site (&lt;400 m2)</b> | <b>Major Site (&gt;700 m2)</b> |
| ■ 1 truck/tour bus             | ■ 2 trucks/tour buses          |
| ■ 2–3 RV's                     | ■ 5 RV's                       |
| ■ 3 vehicles                   | ■ 5 vehicles                   |

#### YUKON INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE CAPITAL COSTS

	TERRITORIAL SITE	REGIONAL SITE	COMMUNITY SITE	MAJOR	MINOR
<b>FACILITY STANDARDS MINIMUM SERVICE PACKAGE</b>	- PULL OFF/PARKING - BEAR PROOF GARBAGE CONTAINER - WELCOME TO YUKON SIGN FEATURE - YUKON ORIENTATION MAP - 1KM SITE APPROACH SIGN - BASIC SITE DEVELOPMENT - GRAVEL PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION	- PULL OFF/PARKING - BEAR PROOF GARBAGE CONTAINER - WELCOME TO YUKON SIGN FEATURE - YUKON ORIENTATION MAP (may or may not be incorporated into the display kiosks) - 1KM SITE APPROACH SIGN (2) - BASIC SITE DEVELOPMENT - GRAVEL PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION - TOILET FACILITY (2) - PICNIC TABLE (2)	- PULL OFF/PARKING - BEAR PROOF GARBAGE CONTAINER - WELCOME TO YUKON SIGN FEATURE - 500m SITE APPROACH SIGN - BASIC SITE DEVELOPMENT - GRAVEL PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION	- PULL OFF/PARKING - BEAR PROOF GARBAGE CONTAINER - INTERPRETIVE SIGN FEATURE - 100m SITE APPROACH SIGN (2) - BASIC SITE DEVELOPMENT - TOILET FACILITY (2) - PICNIC TABLE (1)	- PULL OFF/PARKING - BEARPROOF GARBAGE CONTAINER - INTERPRETIVE SIGN FEATURE - 500m SITE APPROACH SIGN (2)
<b>COST MAGNITUDE MINIMUM SERVICE PACKAGE UPGRADES</b>	\$24,000.00-\$28,000.00	\$46,000.00-\$50,000.00	\$20,000.00-\$24,000.00	\$33,000.00-\$37,000.00	\$17,000.00-\$21,000.00
*EXPANDED PARKING AREA	\$65/m2	\$65/m2	\$65/m2	\$65/m2	\$65/m2
*PAVE EXISTING PARKING	\$25/m2	\$25/m2	\$25/m2	\$25/m2	\$25/m2
*HARD SURFACE AREAS	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2
*BOLLARD/POST/SBOULDERS	\$25/ea	\$25/ea	\$25/ea	\$25/ea	\$25/m2
*EXPANDED SIGN FEATURE	\$2,000/panel	\$2,500/panel	\$2,000/panel	\$2,500/panel	\$1,500/panel
*PICNIC TABLES	\$300/ea	\$300/ea	\$300/ea	\$300/ea	\$300/ea
*BENCH	\$500/ea	\$500/ea	\$500/ea	\$500/ea	\$500/ea
*GRAVEL TRAIL	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2
*BEARPROOF GARBAGE CONTAINER	\$1,000	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200
*TOILETS	\$2,000-5,000	\$2,000-5,000	\$2,000-5,000	\$2,000-5,000	\$2,000-5,000
*VIEW/DECK	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2
*BOARDWALK	\$100/m	\$100/m	\$100/m	\$100/m	\$100/m
*OBSERVATION TOWER	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
*WOOD STAIRS	\$75/m	\$75/m	\$75/m	\$75/m	\$75/m

Costs represent estimated pricing for supply, and installation of each element. Costs do not include design or interpretive display features or development of interpretive messages.

The chart to the right estimates the yearly anticipated maintenance costs associated with each site category. Maintenance costs will vary significantly with level of use and degree of development. For example, Five Finger Rapids and Bove Island are popular stopping points and have higher general maintenance requirements because of the level of use. However, even if physical visitor numbers are comparable, operating costs for the Five Finger Rapids site will be higher because of the more extensive development that has taken place.

Lead time is a critical consideration for inter-departmental coordination to work effectively. Lead time considerations affect:

- sign/site location planning
- materials fabrication purchase
- construction and maintenance scheduling
- capital planning
- volume of anticipated work

From sign conception to fabrication and erection, allowing for the natural budgeting cycle will take from 6 months to 1 year.

Based on existing sign inventory alone and a 10 year replacement schedule, 12 to 15 signs will need to be replaced annually. In addition a 5% allowance should be included in the budget to cover exceptional situations such as vandalism replacement costs.

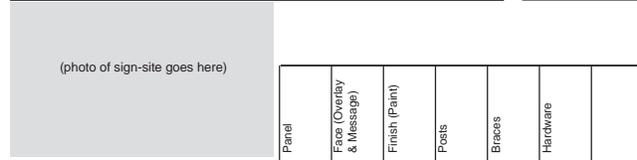
### YUKON INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE OPERATION and MAINTENANCE COSTS

SCHEDULE	ACTIVITY	YEARLY COST PER SITE			SPECIFIC INTERPRETIVE SITE	
		TERRITORIAL SITE	REGIONAL SITE	COMMUNITY SITE	MAJOR	MINOR
WEEKLY May-Sept.	- EMPTY GARBAGE CONTAINERS - PICK UP LITTER - BRIEF VISUAL CHECK OF SITE and REPORT DAMAGE	\$700.00	\$700.00	\$700.00	\$700.00	\$700.00
Bi-WEEKLY April and Oct.		\$300.00	\$450.00	\$300.00	\$400.00	\$300.00
MONTHLY Nov.-March		\$200.00	\$300.00	\$200.00	\$300.00	\$200.00
MONTHLY May-Sept.	- PUMP OUT TOILETS* - CHECK FOR VANDALISM and REPAIR - CHECK FOR GRAFFITI and CLEAN - CLEAN INTERPRETIVE DISPLAY - FILL OUT MONTHLY MAINTENANCE REPORT	\$200.00	\$250.00	\$2,000.00	\$250.00	\$2,000.00
Bi-MONTHLY Oct.-April		\$200.00	\$250.00	\$200.00	\$250.00	\$150.00
ANNUALLY		\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$150.00	\$100.00
ANNUALLY	- REGRADE GRAVEL PULL OFFS - SPRING CLEAN-UP - PRE-STAIN FURNISHINGS - FALL CHECK-UP	\$500.00	\$1,000.00	\$500.00	\$700.00	\$400.00
		\$250.00	\$450.00	\$250.00	\$400.00	\$250.00
		\$200.00	\$1,000.00	\$500.00	\$450.00	\$200.00
TOTAL		\$2,000.00	\$7,050.00	\$3,250.00	\$4,200.00	\$2,650.00

\* Maintenance schedule may vary depending on level of use. Tank pump-out costs average \$100/toilet tank

**Yukon Interpretive Signage** *maintenance form*

Site Location-Site Name	Inspection
Agency Responsible	Annual
Sign No.                      Sign Category	Spring
Inspected by _____ Date	Fall
Maintenance Standard	3 Years



<b>Problem</b>							
Cracks, Scratches, Tears							
Ply Separation							
Blisters, Rot, Corrosion							
Missing							
Unstable							
Dirty							

**Recommendation** *(Remove/Replace, On-site or shop repair)*

---

<b>Site Condition</b>	Cleanliness	On-site repair	Shop repair	Vandalised
Parking area				
Site cleanliness				
Outhouses & Waste Receptacles				
Benches, Tables & Other				
Decks & Railings				

**Remarks**

---



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A sample of a suggested maintenance form is included. The form can be used in conjunction with the automated database, but is intended more for day to day maintenance records. The redesigned form for the database has been set-up to allow the inspector to enter the data directly into a laptop computer at the time of the main inspections. The data can then be downloaded to the main database to save time and expense.

## Department of Tourism Development & Redevelopment Priorities

Implementation of the Interpretive Strategy Framework requires prioritization. The following recommendations provide direction on the first steps for successful implementation of the new strategy. They include:

- beginning immediately to apply the strategy to an assessment of current sign requests and establishing the Interdepartmental Sign Committee to review the proposals
- updating the new computerized database and records during the 1995 summer inspections to reflect the strategy and new record keeping format
- assigning strategy hierarchy and outlining associated rationale to all existing sign sites
- prioritizing major regional sites by corridor and confirming current deficiencies based on the strategy
- preparing graphic standards by category
- working with C&TS to improve warning sign logo use and consistency
- identifying site rationalization needs and applying co-operative management arrangements to planning, program budgeting and maintenance procedures
- establishing program performance measures to assess strategy implementation progress
- developing a test program to evaluate effectiveness of new products (i.e. talking signs)

## Conclusions

The Department of Tourism mandate for interpretive signs is defined in the strategy. It responds to the primary need for program coordination and formalizes a process for inter-agency cooperation. The present program has been re-organized to provide a simple, logical structure with a hierarchy of signage that allows program flexibility.

Accuracy, balance, diversity and representativeness are the key concepts reflected in the program logic. A departmental mission statement has been prepared which defines the program mandate:

***“To communicate an accurate, balanced and representative story promoting the Yukon’s diversified natural and cultural heritage.”***

The strategy provides guidelines for planning, design, capital budgeting and maintenance. Implementation priorities are explained and a rationale provided for the standards put forward. The biggest program deficiency was the lack of attention to planning for sign replacement and on-going maintenance. Criteria are now provided for site selection and program rationalization. A new computerized record system has been developed to facilitate program management and annual budgeting.

Based on the existing sign inventory alone and a 10 year replacement schedule, 12-15 signs need to be replaced annually. The most pressing new challenge is to improve regional orientation signage at highway junctions.



*“A picture is worth a thousand words”*

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## Appendix 1 - List of Contacts

### Department of Renewable Resources

Afan Jones	Outdoor Recreation Planner
Gary Vantell	Site Planner
Jack Schick	Parklands Interpretive Planner
Peter Frankish	Regional Superintendent
Hans Van De Werfhorst	Workshop foreperson
James Armstrong	Signmaker
Ed Leschart	Park Facilities Builder
Graham Baird	Wildlife Viewing Biologist
Julie Lefebvre	Wildlife Viewing Program Technician
Dave Mossop	Senior Small Game Biologist

### Department of Tourism

John Spicer	Director Industry Services
Robert Clark	Development Officer
Akio Saito	Development Officer (Dawson)
Ed Krahn	Museums Advisor
Doug Olynyk	Historic Sites Coordinator
Louise Profeit-Leblanc	Native Heritage Advisor
Robert Conrad	Acting/Historic Sites Planner
Greg Hare	Yukon Archaeologist
Ruth Gotthardt	Yukon Archaeologist
Pierre Germain	Market Research Officer

### Community & Transportation Services

Robert Magnuson	Manager, Maintenance & Planning
Mike McArthur	Maintenance Service Supervisor
Brian Tyhy	Maintenance Planning Technician
Eileen Fraser	Sign Shop Supervisor
Allan Nixon	Environmental Coordinator

### Industry

David Moyle	Executive Director TIAY
Pearle Callaghan	Executive Director, First Nation Tourism Industry Association of Yukon
Joe Muff	Total Point Inc.
Stephanie Churchhill	Inkspirationz Graphics
John Russell	Northwest Signs & Graphics
Mike Lane	Terra Firma Art Company
Duane Fast	Arcraft Advertising Ltd.
Terry-Lynn Gold	Sign Shop
Marg Wallace	Tundra Graphics & Silkscreen Ltd.

### Other

Dale Perry	Former Interpretive Sign Program Coordinator
Wanda Hook	Director, Industry Services, B.C. Ministry of Small Business & Culture
Sarah Gaunt	Champagne Aishihik First Nation
Brent Liddle	Canadian Park Service
Peter Simlinger	Graphic Designer, Vienna , Austria
Chris Robinson	Planning Advisor, Alberta Historic Sites & Archives

## Appendix 2 - Readability Formulas

### Flesch Readability Scale

1. Count the number of syllables in a 100 word sample (S).
2. Calculate the average number of words per sentence in the sample (W).
3. Calculate  $R = 206.835 - .846S - 1.015W$ .
4. Compare value to table:

Score	Reading Ease
90-100	very easy
80-90	easy
70-80	fairly easy
60-70	standard
50-60	fairly difficult
30-50	difficult
0-30	very difficult

Source: *The Art of Readable Writing* by Robert Flesch, 1949.

### The Write Formula

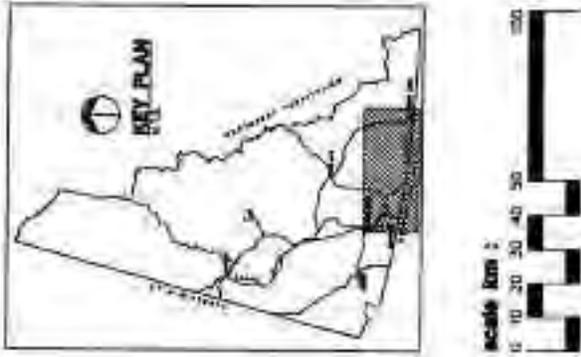
1. Count a 100 word sample
2. Count all one-syllable words except "the", "is", "are", "was", and "were". Count one point for each one-syllable word.
3. Count the number of sentences in the 100-word sample to the nearest period or semicolon and give three points for each sentence.
4. Add together the one-syllable word count and the three points for each sentence to get your grade.  
If your piece has less than 100 words, multiply your tally to get the equivalent of 100.

Score	Reading Ease
85-100 +	Children's Publications
75-85	Average American Reader
65-75	Above Average American Reader

\* A score of 80 is close to ideal.

Source: *Exhibits for the Small Museum, A Handbook*, by Arminta Neal, 1976.

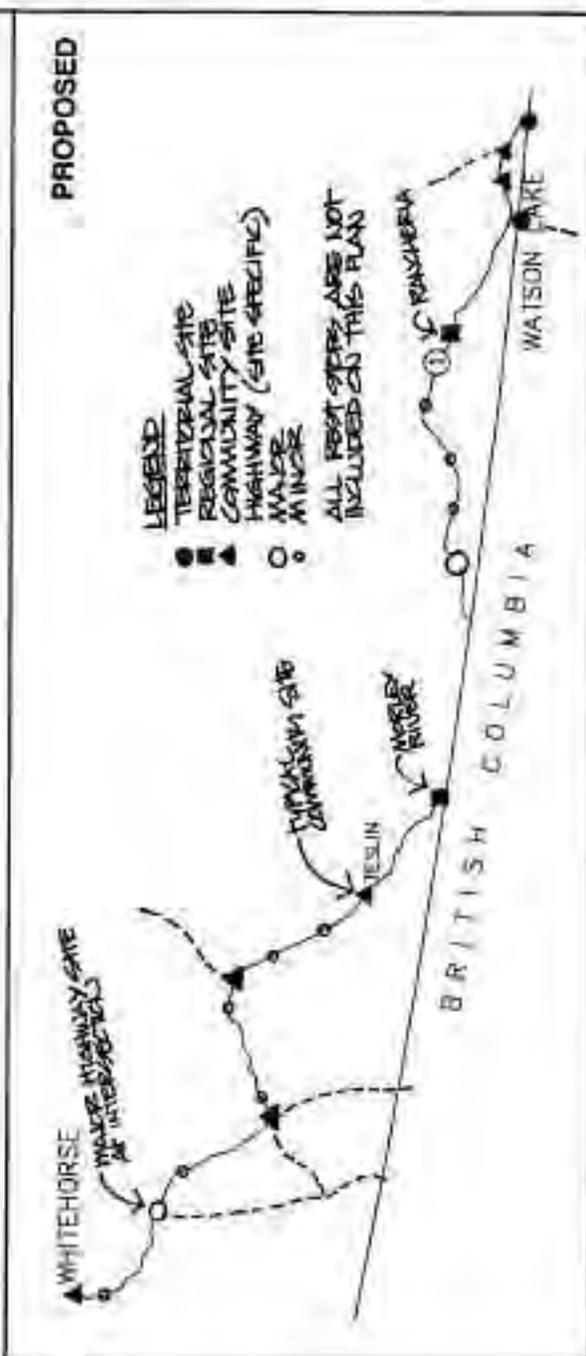
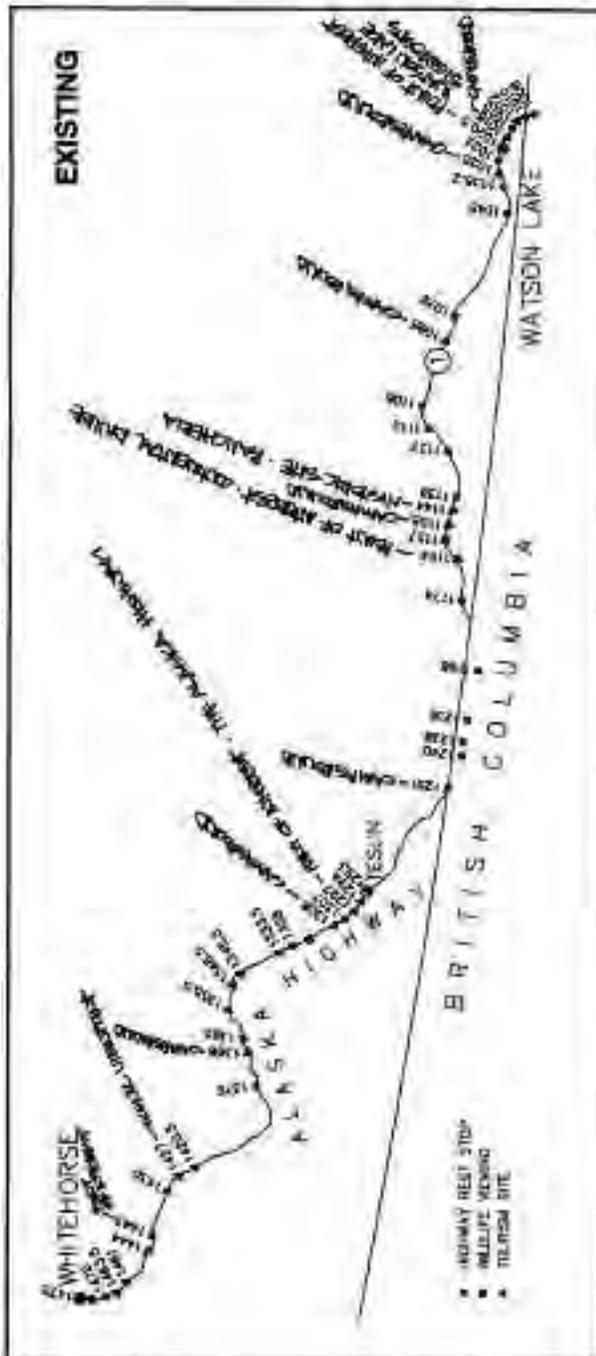
Appendix 3 - Strategy Application Alaska Highway South



**Yukon**

Interpretive Signage Strategy

STRATEGY APPLICATION  
ALASKA HIGHWAY SOUTH  
KM 1008 TO 1475







# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

**Legend :**

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE

scale km :



Highway name :

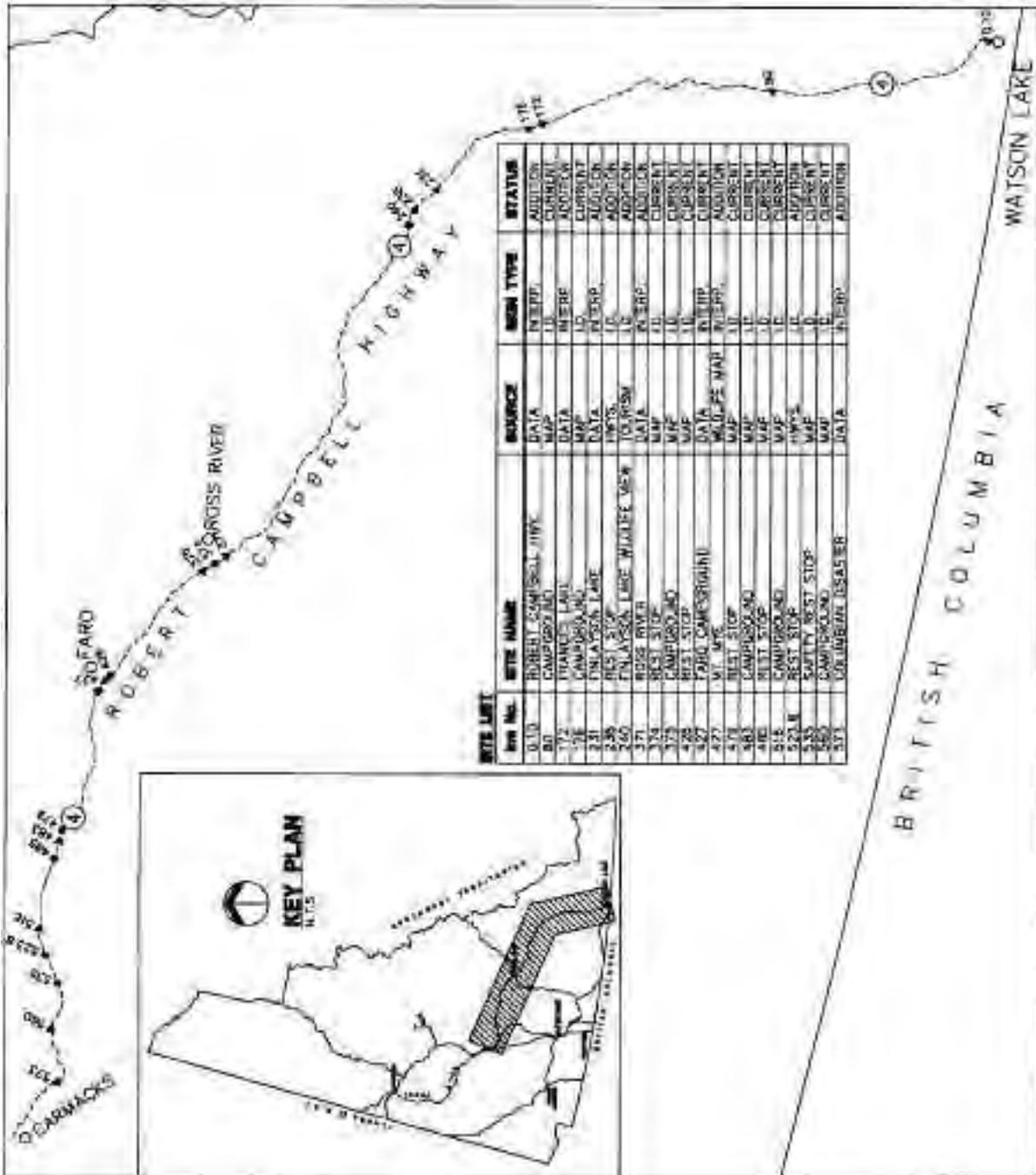
**Campbell Highway**

km 0.10 to 573

date 1 MAY 5, 1995

0WB :

**C-5**



# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

### Legend :

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE

### scale km :



### Highway name :

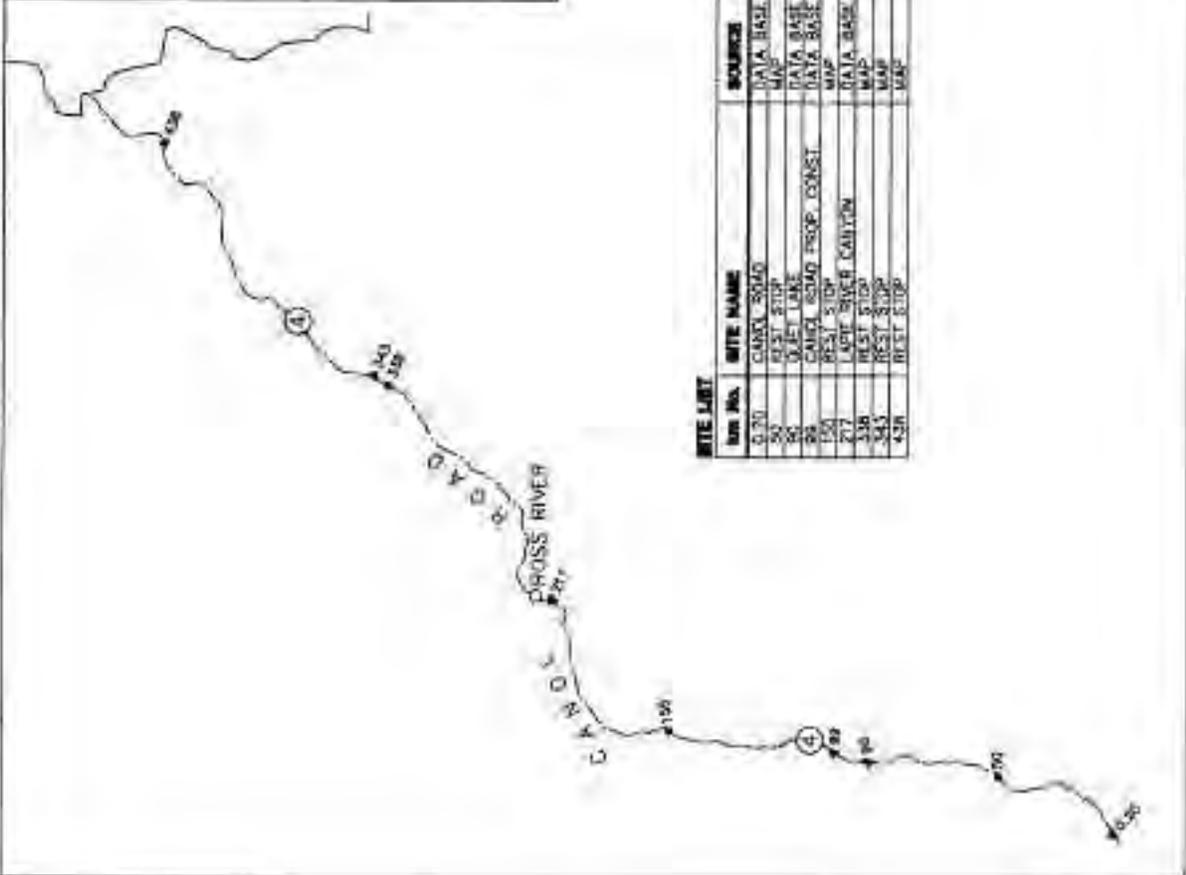
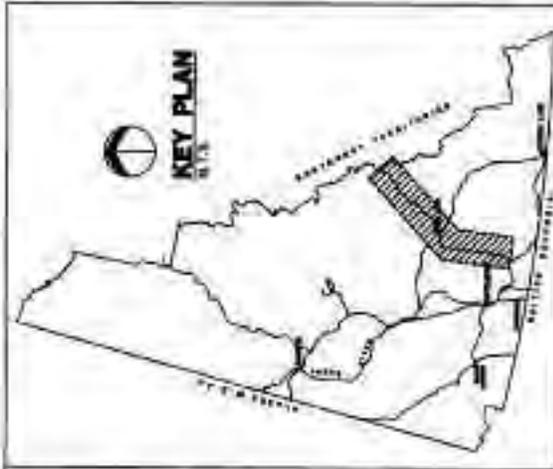
**Canol Road**

**km 0.20 to 438**

**date : MAY 5, 1995**

dwg :

**C-7**



### SITE LIST

km No.	SITE NAME	SOURCE	SIEN TYPE	STATUS
0.20	CANOL ROAD	DATA BASE	P.U.R.P.	ACCURATE
240	REST STOP	MAP	U.	CURRENT
245	REST STOP	MAP	U.	CURRENT
270	CANOL ROAD PROP. CONST.	DATA BASE	P.U.R.P.	ACCURATE
277	REST STOP	MAP	U.	CURRENT
290	LOVE SWEE CAUTION	DATA BASE	P.U.R.P.	ACCURATE
330	REST STOP	MAP	U.	CURRENT
345	REST STOP	MAP	U.	CURRENT
438	REST STOP	MAP	U.	CURRENT

# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

### Legend :

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE

scale km :



Highway name :

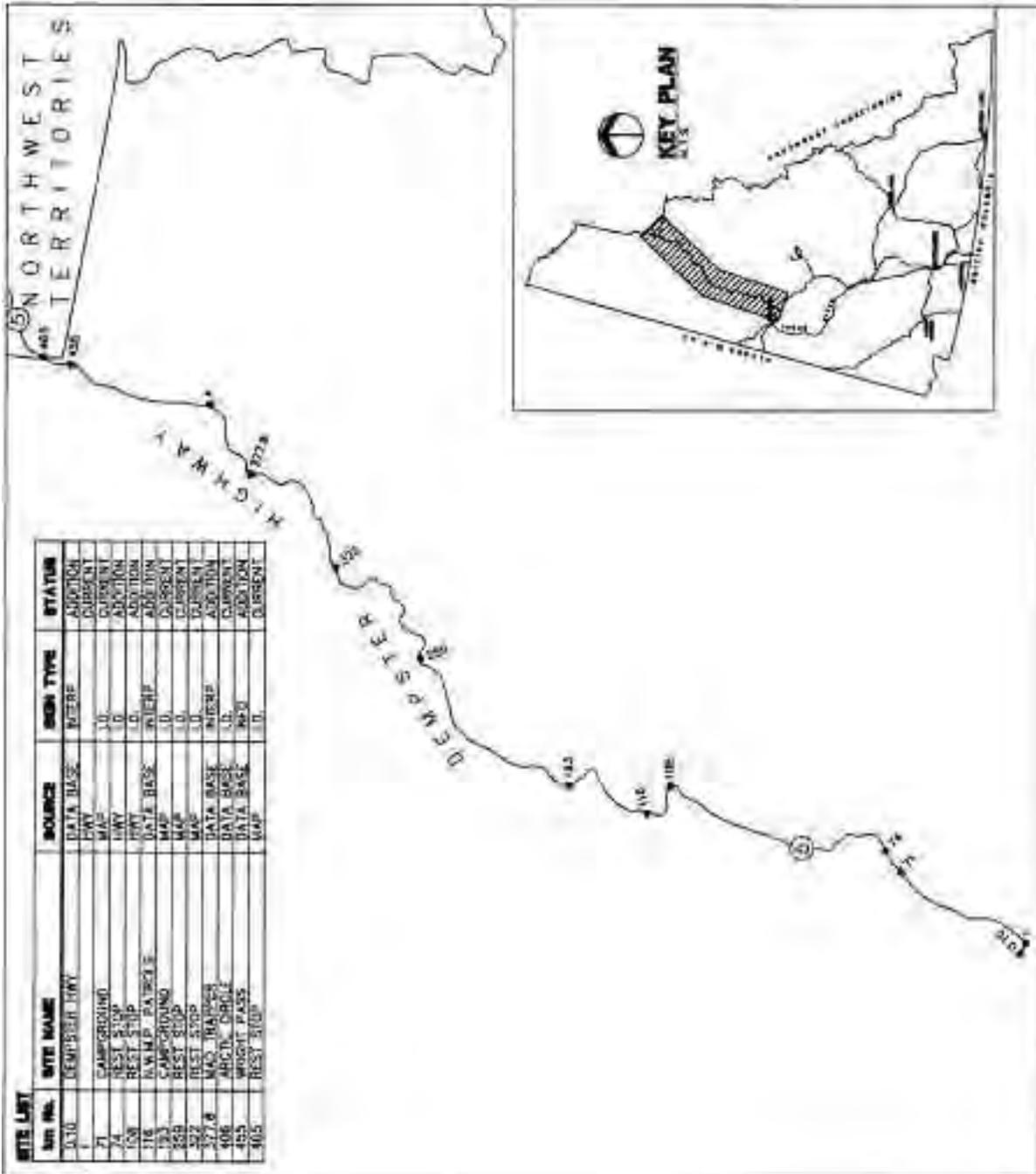
**Dempster Highway**

**km 0.10 to 485**

date : MAY 5, 1985

chrg :

**D-6**

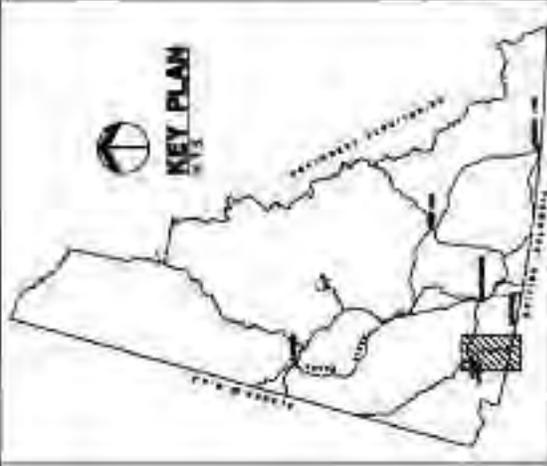


# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

### Legend :

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE



SITE NO.	SITE NAME	SOURCE	SIGN TYPE	STATUS
165	WELCOME TO THE YUKON	DATA BASE	N.O.	ACQUISITION
166	DALTON POST	WILDLIFE MAP	WILDLIFE	ACQUISITION
167	CAMPBELL	MAP	▲	ACQUISITION
168	YAT-SHELCHUK VALLEY	DATA BASE	N.O.	ACQUISITION
169	CAMPBELL	MAP	▲	ACQUISITION
170	REST STOP	MAP	●	ACQUISITION
171	CAMPBELL	MAP	▲	ACQUISITION
172	REST STOP	MAP	●	ACQUISITION



### scale km :



### Highway name :

**Haines Road South**

**km 145 to 242**

date : MAY 5, 1995

dwg :

**H-10**

# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

**Legend :**

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE

scale km :



Highway name :

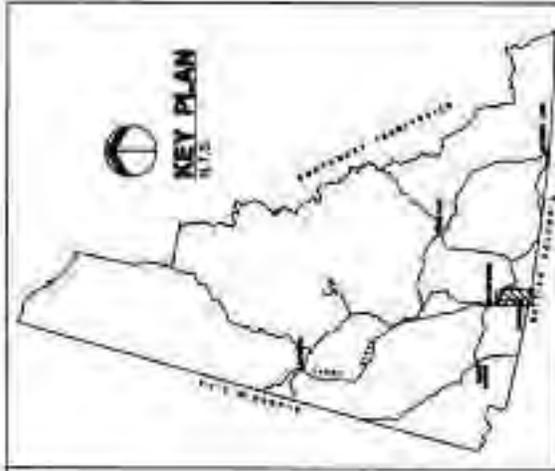
**Klondike Highway  
South**

**km 80 to 130**

date : MAY 5, 1995

dwg :

**K-3**



SITE LIST	Site No.	SITE NAME	SOURCE	SEMI TYPE	STATUS
	80	WELCOME TO THE YUKON	DATA	LD	ADDITION
	81	REST STOP	MAP	LD	CURRENT
	81.5	MINAS MIA	DATA	W STOP	ADDITION
	82	CONIFER	DATA	W STOP	ADDITION
	83	BEAR ISLAND	DATA	W STOP	ADDITION
	104	CAMPBELL'S CEMETERY	DATA	W STOP	ADDITION
	105.5	CARCROSS	DATA	W STOP	ADDITION
	107.5	CARCROSS DESERT	DATA	W STOP	ADDITION
	117.5	EMERALD LAKE	DATA	W STOP	ADDITION
	120.5	LEWIS LAKE	DATA	W STOP	CURRENT
	130	ROBBERSON	DATA	W STOP	ADDITION



# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

**Legend :**

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE

scale km :



Highway name :

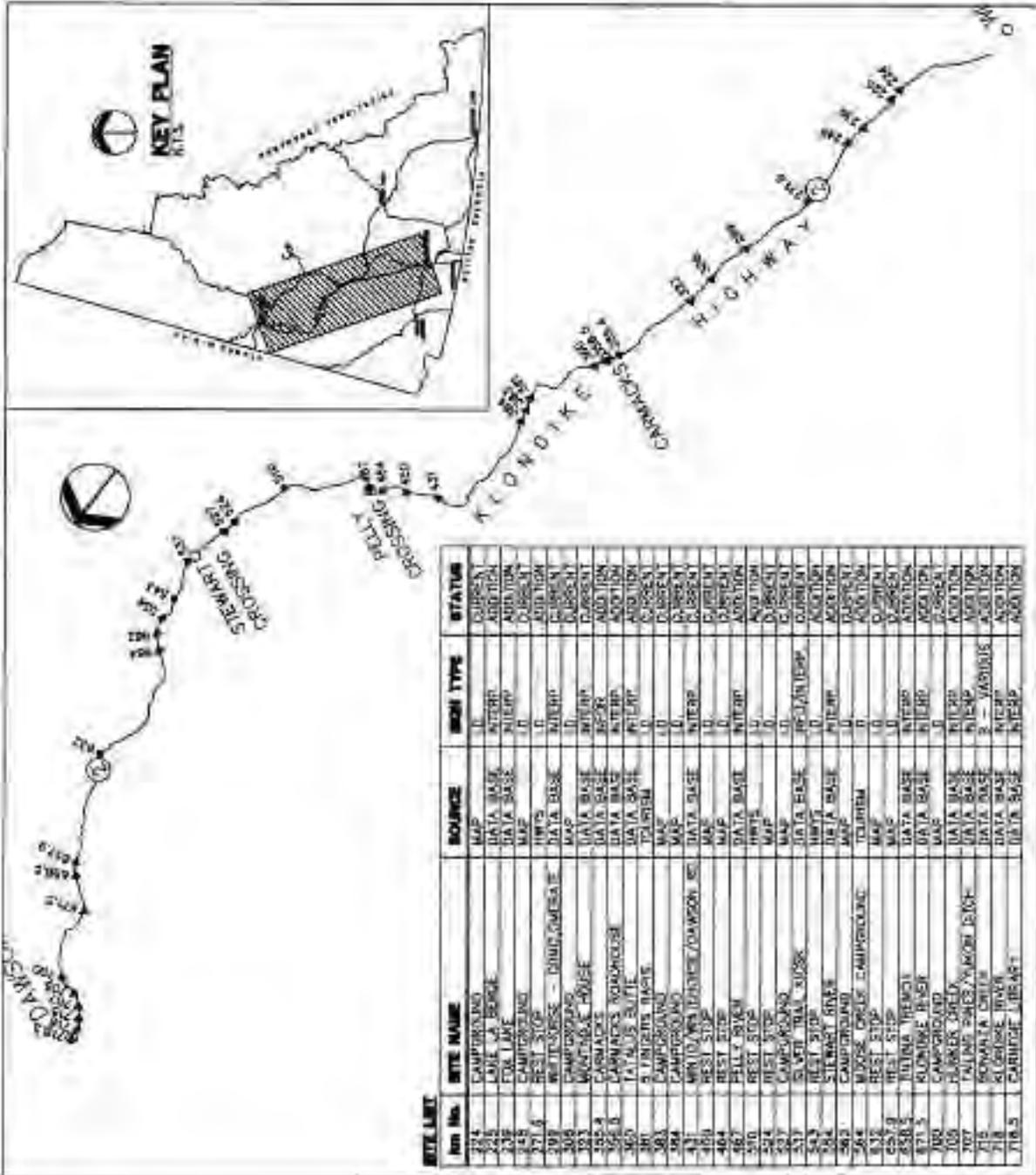
**Klondike Highway  
North**

**km 224 to 718.5**

date : MAY 5, 1997

chrg :

**K-4**

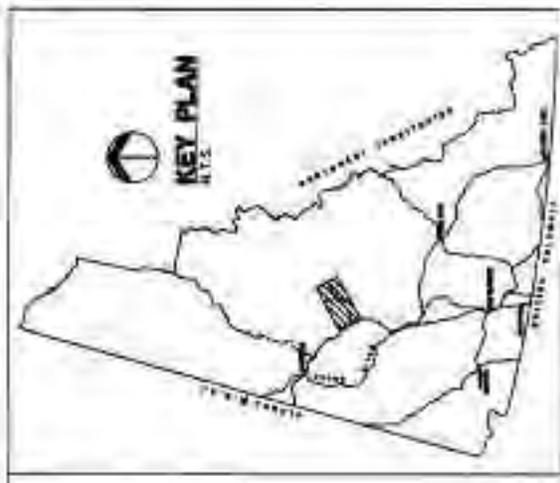


# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

**Legend :**

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE



SITE LIST	SITE No.	SITE NAME	SOURCE	SIGN TYPE	STATUS
	18	REST STOP	H.W.S.	RS	ASSTON
	44	REST STOP	MAP	RS	CURRENT
	52	CAMPGRINDLE	MAP	RS	CURRENT
	52	MAYO	DATA	ST/SP	ASSTON
		DUNCAN CREEK ROAD	DATA	ST/SP	ASSTON
		ELSA	DATA	ST/SP	ASSTON
	97	REST STOP	H.W.S.	RS	ASSTON
		KONG IRE	DATA	ST/SP	ASSTON
		DUNCAN BRULE ROAD	DATA	ST/SP	ASSTON



Highway name :

**Silver Trail**

**km 18 to 97**

date : MAY 5, 1995

dwg :

**S-8**



# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

Legend :

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE

scale km :



highway name :

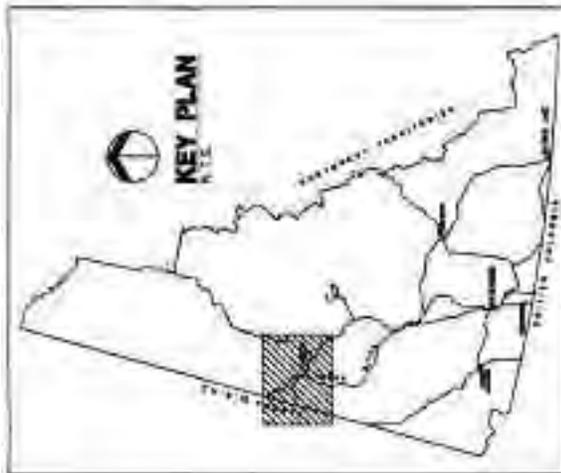
**Top of the World Highway**

km 0.10 to 105

date : MAY 5, 1995

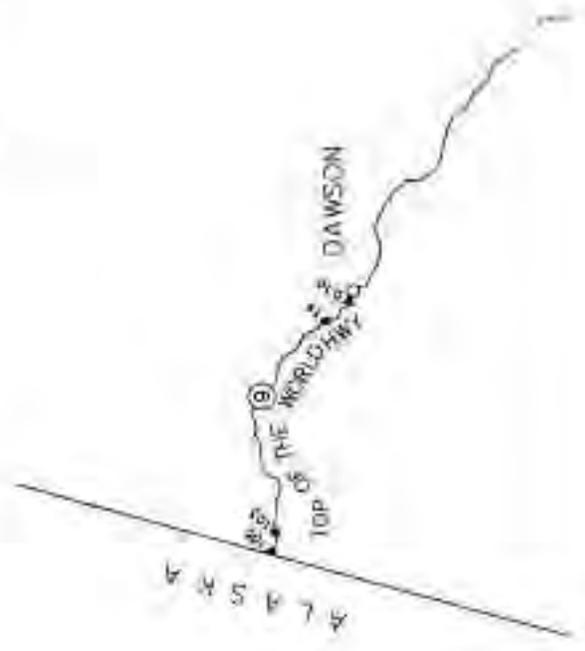
dwg :

**T-9**



**SITE LIST**

Site No.	SITE NAME	SOURCE	SIGN TYPE	STATUS
010	WEST DAWSON	DATA	INFORM	CURRENT
14	TOP OF THE WORLD	DATA	INFORM	ADDITION
14	REST STOP	DATA	INFORM	CURRENT
105	TOP OF THE WORLD HIB*	DATA	INFORM	ADDITION
103	REST STOP	MAP	INFORM	CURRENT
105	WELCOME TO THE YUKON	DATA	INFORM	ADDITION



# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

**Legend :**

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE

scale km :



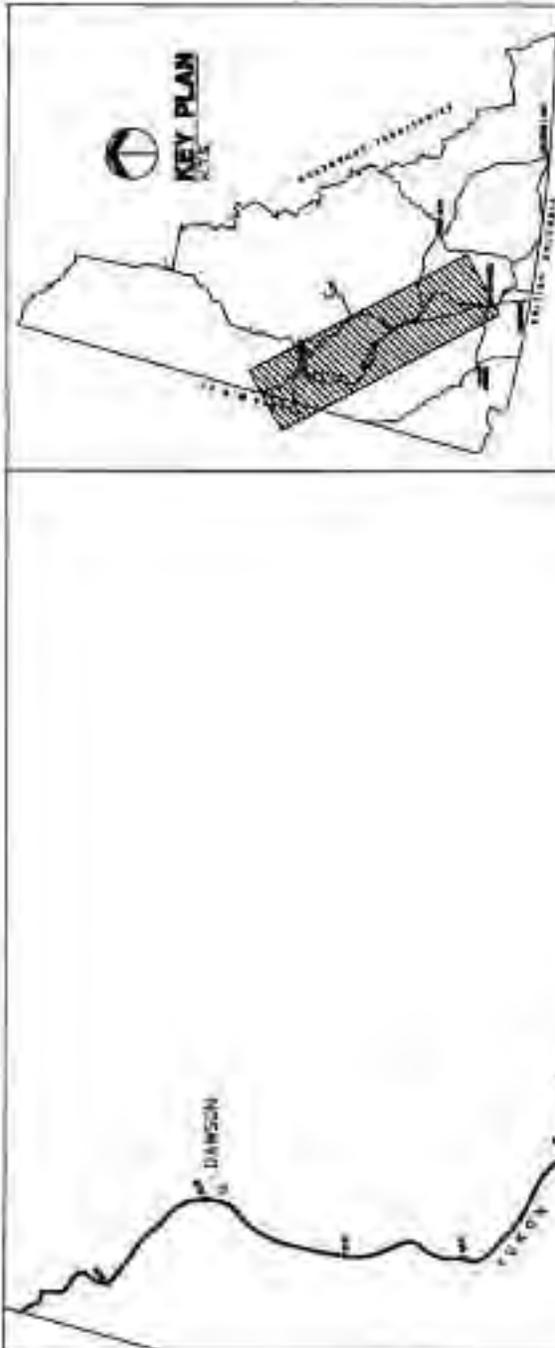
Highway name :

**Yukon River**  
**km 93 to 800**

date : MAY 3, 1995

chrg :

**Y-11**



**SITE LIST**

km No.	SITE NAME	SOURCE	MARK TYPE	STATUS
93	LOWER LASERIEZ CANYON	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
120	17 MIL WOOD CAMP	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
144	HOOTAIKOOKA	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
145	HOOTAIKOOKA ISLAND SHIP	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
201	BIG SALMON N.W.M.P. POST	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
216	OVERS OREDOX	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
390	5 FINGER COAL MINE	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
380	TUNNIA DUGGONS	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
454	PT. SODERSZUKON FIELD FORCE	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
510	SELOWN	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
525	STEWART ISLAND	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
600	FIFTY M.P. N.W.M.P. POST	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION



# Interpretive Signage Strategy Tourism Yukon

For  
**Heritage Branch  
Tourism Yukon**

By  
**Inukshuk Planning & Development**

In Association With

**EDA Collaborative Inc.  
Lynxpaw Services  
Aasman Design**

**July 1995**

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## Department of Tourism Interpretive Sign Mandate

*"To communicate an accurate, balanced and representative story promoting the Yukon's diversified natural and cultural heritage."*

## Executive Summary

The Government of Yukon erects interpretive signs to give residents and visitors alike, an awareness of the mosaic of Yukon natural, cultural and historic features. They are a simple, cost effective, year-round communication technique to inform, interest and educate the viewer.

The new sign strategy recognizes the Department can not work alone. Tourism does not have an exclusive program for interpretive signage. It must work co-operatively with other partners especially the departments of Renewable Resources and Community & Transportation Services to deliver a cost-effective and informative program.

Key concepts behind the new program logic include: accuracy, balance, diversity, flexibility and representativeness. The program framework is organizational by focus, building on what currently exists rather than developing a new structure. This reflects the nature of the issues uncovered in the situation analysis and the general utility of existing signage initiatives. Sign purpose, location, sign/site relationships and cost need to be considered together.

The program logic also provides a comprehensive framework for new site selection, site rationalization, construction planning and sign maintenance. A new records format has been developed and the existing records converted to a user-friendly, computerized database accessible to all user departments.

For the first time, guidelines for site furnishings such as garbage receptacles and toilets are set. The ongoing site maintenance costs associated with sign placement are acknowledged to be part of overall program cost. They are to be negotiated between the departments according to their respective maintenance capabilities.

The framework provides direction on what program parameters are needed to provide order, image continuity and effective message delivery to meet user needs. The sign strategy suggests unifying elements and offers guidelines instead of prescriptive standards. Guidelines cover sign design, materials application, readability and use of site furnishings.

A comprehensive program logic is spelled out for the first time. Site inspection and maintenance principles have been developed in response to the need for an integrated database and resolution of long-standing maintenance concerns. Capital and O&M cost projections have been prepared for all program elements and a 8-10 year life-cycle standard set. This means that 12 -15 signs will need to be replaced annually.

A signage hierarchy is proposed because there are limits to program growth and a point where sign saturation begins. This can now be defined by applying the principles in the strategy. The hierarchy has four levels.

At the territorial level this involves border crossing signs with a territory wide focus. Regional signage focuses on corridor or area key features. Logical locations include highway junctions, features of regional significance and ecoregion boundary points where regional differences are most apparent.

Community level signage tells community stories. The Department of Tourism has only an advisory role. The department provides technical assistance on request if there is an interpretive or regional orientation component. This avoids duplication and gives communities both design freedom and the ability to include a commercial component in any signage endeavor.

The fourth category of signage is site specific. It can be subdivided into major and minor sites with a distinction made between roadside and backcountry or river corridor sites. This is important because it recognizes the different experiential priorities of the river corridor traveller as well as the practical maintenance realities. Five Finger Rapids is an example of a major site while Takhini Crossing would be a minor roadside site. Stewart Island and Hootalinqua would be typical minor and major river sites.

An inter-departmental signage committee management structure is recommended. It provides a mechanism to co-ordinate signage initiatives, and discuss related issues such as site rationalization and maintenance. Roles and responsibilities are dictated by the type of application, interpretative function, agency capabilities and mandate. A common process is included for the review of all interpretative sign applications.

Establishment of the interdepartmental sign committee is identified as a priority. During the summer of 1995, all sites should be inspected and the records updated to reflect the new computerized format. Sites will be categorized to reflect the strategy hierarchy with regional deficiencies identified and site rationalization priorities established. Graphic standards will also need to be prepared for each sign category. The strategy recommends program performance measures be adopted to cover matters ranging from site spacing distance to maintenance frequency and program rationalization. Program deficiencies are identified in the report with priorities for resolution recommended. The most pressing program deficiency requiring attention involves regional orientation signage at major highway junctions.

## Interpretive Opportunities Currently Represented In The Yukon Sign Inventory

- territorial entrance identification
- orientation, information and warning
- points of interest, safety and recreation area rest-stops
- natural history including wildlife viewing and ecology
- historic use; natural and cultural features
- First Nation cultural history, land use and occupation



*Territorial Entrance*



*Regional Orientation*



*Point of Interest*



*Historic Use*



*Natural History*



*First Nation Culture*



*A typical Sign is an inscribed board, plate, or space that provides information, warning or guidance*



*A typical Wayside Exhibit interprets features or events on a site to develop a theme or a story and differs from a sign by providing explanations*

Effective interpretive signage improves visitor experience in a variety of ways. First, signs are silent, 24 hour-a-day, four season, communication tools providing direction, identification and information of interest to the traveller. Exhibit signage enhances visitor understanding and experience through learning at leisure. These signs stimulate visitor interest in the Yukon's natural, cultural and historic features by the stories they tell.

Interpretive signage and wayside exhibits also have a third, more subtle purpose, especially along highway corridors. They can delay travellers, thus extending their stay within the region and increasing the likelihood of them spending money locally. This objective is particularly relevant to the Yukon where the majority of visitors are Alaska-bound.

The quality, appearance and frequency of interpretive signage and wayside exhibits influences the visitor's impressions and image of the Yukon. Done well, they complement other marketing initiatives and can motivate a change in behavior. For example, the visitor enroute to Dawson may divert for a side trip down the "Silver Trail" to Elsa and Mayo because of the exhibit at Stewart Crossing. The extra day spent in the area puts from \$65.00 to \$100.00 directly into the community economy.

The reaction of the highway traveller and backcountry user to signage along a trail or river may differ. The backcountry, wilderness traveller may perceive such signage as an inappropriate intrusion, out of context with the environment. Signage and site development policy must respect and respond to a range of visitor needs.

A working definition of both a sign and a wayside exhibit is needed to put the Yukon sign program in perspective. The following definitions have been used.<sup>1</sup>

- A Sign is an inscribed board, plate, or space that provides information, warning or guidance
- A Wayside Exhibit interprets features or events on a site to develop a theme or a story and differs from a sign by providing explanations

The Yukon has one of the most comprehensive interpretive sign programs in the country.

<sup>1</sup> Trapp, S., Gross, M & Zimmerman, R. *Signs, Trails and Wayside Exhibits: Connecting People and Places* Interpretive Handbook Series, University of Wisconsin 1994

There are 203 signs at approximately 125 sites contained in the database illustrating a broad range of themes about Yukon geography, natural and cultural history. With the exception of the Yukon River and Herschel Island, the signs are located along the main highway corridors.

## 1.1 Purpose of the Strategy

This strategy defines the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Tourism for interpretive signage. It provides a comprehensive program framework and logic for site selection, design, construction and maintenance of Yukon interpretive signage. It recognizes from the outset that the Department of Tourism does not have an exclusive mandate for signage program delivery and must work cooperatively with the departments of Renewable Resources (RR) and Community & Transportation Services (C&TS) to deliver a cost-effective and informative program that responds to visitor needs. The strategy provides a framework for interdepartmental communication and cooperation.

Over the past 15 years, Tourism Yukon has installed interpretive signage along Yukon highways and the Yukon River. Both the departments of Community & Transportation Services and Renewable Resources have been partners in this process and continue to develop programs of their own. For example, C&TS has erected new anti-litter signage and adopted a policy concerning the use of symbology standards. The department has also developed a series of truck pull-offs in response to new federal regulations limiting trucker driving times. In 1994 C&TS also completed a policy review of commercial signage along Yukon highways. One solution, generally favored by the department and supported by many at community meetings, would see the development of a standard community information kiosk.

Renewable Resources initiated a very successful, Yukon-wide Wildlife Viewing Program in 1991 which relies heavily on the development of wayside exhibits at key locations. All these types of initiatives have implications for the placement of interpretive signs and site selection.

A number of key events makes the preparation of a departmental interpretive signage strategy a timely initiative. These include:

- completion of regional tourism strategies emphasizing the role and value of interpretive signage and point-of-interest site development



*The current system has a variety of problems including sign placement and frequency, materials choice, style and form*



*New anti-litter signage from Community and Transportation Services*



*Example of signage from Renewable Resources' successful Wildlife Viewing program*

## The strategy answers many questions about:

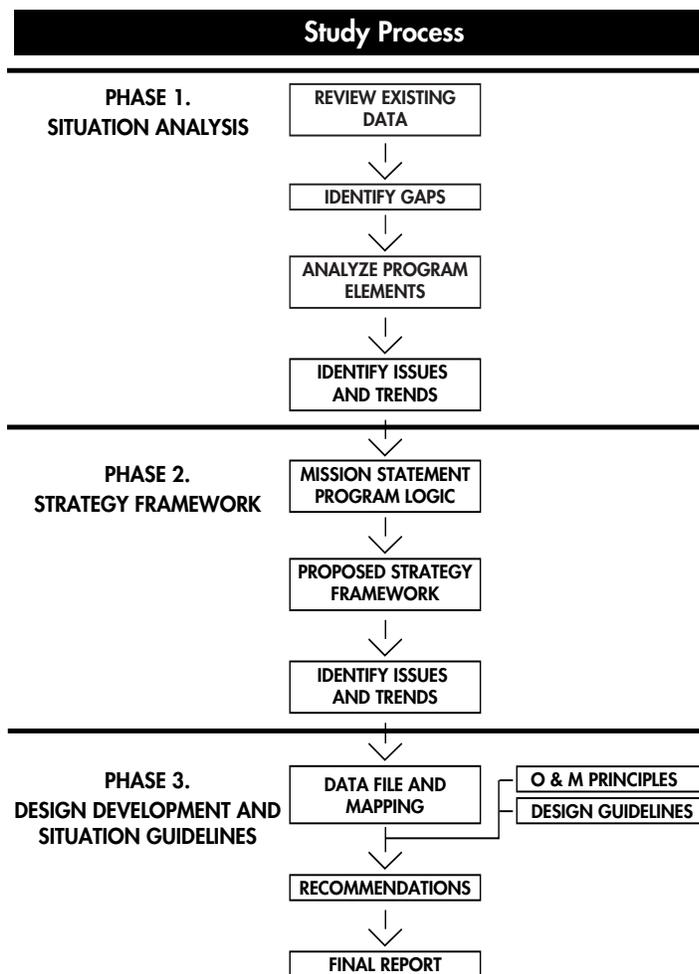
- the strengths and weaknesses of the existing interpretive signage program
- the main issues involved in program delivery
- opportunities to improve effective program delivery
- the present capital and O&M costs and what refurbishment of the existing infrastructure will involve
- how program co-ordination, signage, site development quality, and interpretive effectiveness can be improved while controlling costs
- what the role and responsibilities of the Department of Tourism should be
- what heritage themes should be represented in a Yukon-wide interpretive strategy and whether they should be presented on a regional or corridor basis
- whether there should be a uniform standard for all interpretive facilities or the regionally based approach continued

- signing of an interdepartmental Memorandum of Understanding between the three departments covering development and maintenance of pull-offs, points-of-interest and recreation sites in 1990
- completion of strategic plans for wildlife viewing, and interpretation of the Dempster Highway Corridor
- completion of a highway stopping point inventory (McSkimming 1990), and sign inventory of the 125 existing sites (Tourism 1994)
- replacement of the Alaska Highway "mile-posts" in 1992 and development of a new style of Point of Interest site (i.e. Bove Island, Kluane River)

A decade of anniversary commemorations also started in 1992 making interpretive signage a government priority. The 1994 site inventory review revealed a number of issues which warrant program re-evaluation. Some signage is acknowledged to be redundant, out-of-date and in poor condition. Site selection and development standards vary considerably reflecting uncertainty concerning site purpose or agency mandate. Some interpretive themes (i.e. Gold Rush) are well represented; others are not (i.e. First Nation's cultural history).

Sign development and maintenance has been a shared responsibility with Renewable Resources and C&TS because these departments have the ability to utilize crews for construction and maintenance. Capital and O&M costs are increasingly straining the existing partnership budgets. Certain issues such as supporting infrastructure (i.e. pull-off maintenance, outhouse education, and garbage disposal) are an ongoing headache. Site furniture standards need to be applied in a consistent manner. Also, no spacing distances exist so there is no sense of order and hierarchy.

All completed regional plans encourage construction of additional roadside pull-offs, viewpoints, and signs as part of their "regional image". This creates an expectation that the program can be easily expanded without acknowledging the ensuing capital and maintenance costs which arise.



## Approach

The approach used to develop the strategy is described to the left. The process involved a review of the sign inventory photographic records, interviews with affected agencies and a sample of affected sign users to determine the main issues. The existing program was analyzed to identify strengths and weaknesses, determine previous program logic and current operating procedures.

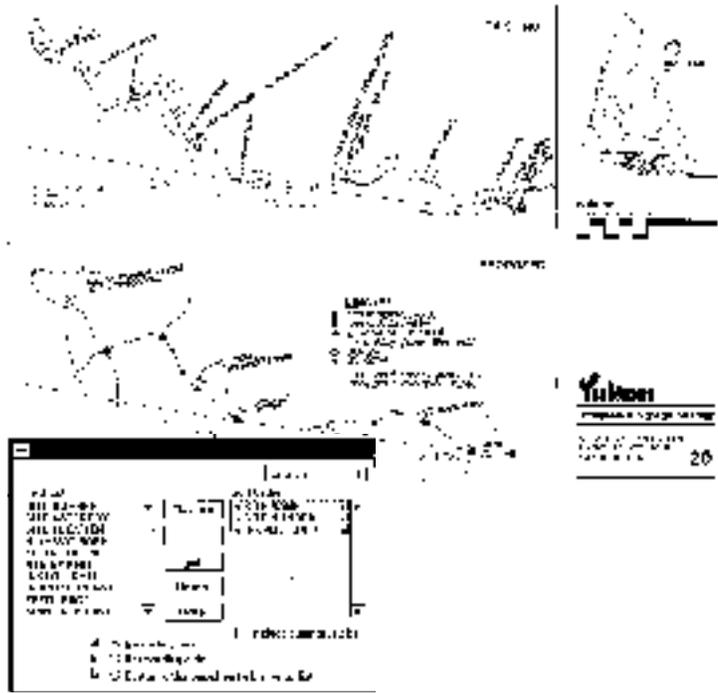
The degree of reliance on inter-agency participation and the need for co-operation was very quickly apparent. For this reason, the approach was adjusted to bring the other affected departments into the planning and project review process.

Opportunities and constraints to program operation were identified and current interpretive trends researched. Program costs were also tabulated. A new data base records system was designed to meet all potential user needs and the conversion process initiated. This resulted in a situation analysis report which was reviewed by interdepartmental representatives.

In stage two, a preliminary strategy and program framework was developed based on market needs. The proposed strategy is based on a market-driven approach. A mission statement clarifying roles, responsibilities and program objectives followed, based on a partnership focus. An organizational sign hierarchy, principal interpretive themes and general sign and site development policy were then created. The results were summarized in a *Concept & Principles Report* and reviewed by the Steering Committee.

The final project phase involved preparing an implementation strategy and working process for interdepartmental co-operation. Direction on general design guidelines, program priorities and associated cost projections have been formalized to facilitate program operation and maintenance. Sketches, graphs and charts illustrate the strategy, taking into account a range of possible users.

This final report summarizes the new program logic and provides a blueprint for future program operation including existing site rationalization.



A new computerized data base system was assembled



Typical Interpretive Sign prior to 1985



*Recent regional tourism strategies encourage the use of regional orientation signs to “delay” or “divert” visitors*

**Program History & Current Situation** **2.1**

The program has evolved over the past 15 years. It started as a series of simple, vertical wood routed panels identifying Gold Rush era features near Dawson. The next series of signs focused on the Yukon River, the Alaska and Klondike highways. These initial signs were intended to provide basic information and encourage visitors to “take a break” as they headed north to Alaska or “down river” to Dawson.

During the initial years the majority of funding support came through a Federal-Territorial Tourism Development Agreement. By the late 1980’s, the department experimented with the use of different sign construction materials and began to develop wayside exhibits at key features.

The role of the signage program is changing with a greater emphasis on interpretive stories rather than a single message. The focus is now more on wayside exhibit development and regional orientation in support of completed regional tourism plans. These new regional tourism strategies recognize the value of signs and wayside exhibits (i.e. Campbell Region). They aid visitor awareness of an area’s attributes and may cause visitors to alter their travel plans.



*A greater recognition of First Nations history*

Yukon interpretive signage has evolved from simple, routed message boards to complex porcelain enamel panels complete with photographs and rendered artwork.



*Attractions in their own right, above and below*

The mid-eighties also saw many communities adopt mainstreet improvement programs that included community entrance signs and a variety of interpretive signs and wayside exhibits. Many of these community initiatives were undertaken with the help of Tourism and Parks Branch staff. The Watson Lake Sign Post Forest and Burwash Landing gold pan are two examples that have become tourism “sign” attractions in their own right.



Strategic interpretive planning evolved in the late 1980’s as planning for the Alaska Highway 50th Anniversary got underway. A Dempster Highway Interpretive Strategy was initiated resulting in the adoption of a consistent motif and interpretive theme developed in conjunction with the Government of the Northwest Territories. The focus also shifted to orientation exhibits highlighting several regional themes. For the first time, a comprehensive Yukon-wide strategic planning approach was used to develop a wildlife viewing program.

This program places a heavy emphasis on the use of interpretive signage at key locations with the added dimension of short interpretive trails at many sites. This program has been developed by the Department of Renewable Resources and whenever possible, integrated into sites developed by Tourism or other agencies.

Another notable change in theme development was the greater recognition given to First Nations history and their increasing involvement in all aspects of interpretive planning from site location to sign content (i.e. Teslin, Klwane river sites).

## 2.2 Program History Logic

The files contain little information concerning the original program logic. It would appear that the primary motivator was a desire to improve basic visitor information and awareness of Yukon geography and history. Anecdotal comments suggest that many Yukoners were frustrated by the number of visitors who had little idea of whether they were in the Yukon or Alaska. Others suggest the initial objective was to provide some uniformity to the mixture of signage already in place and some message consistency.

Archival correspondence also implies that signs were seen as a way of providing the visitor with a "break" during the drive and as a means of encouraging visitors to linger longer in the Yukon. The wood routed fabricated sign format first began to appear on a regular basis during the forties across North America and is still in use in many jurisdictions today. They remain simple to fabricate, inexpensive to produce and are very durable. They were introduced into the Yukon in the late seventies. As new space-age products have become available, their use has declined.

The diversity of signs in the early years suggests that the attributes of the individual site history dictated the sign message rather than any conscious attempt to reflect a particular theme. A simple routed sign panel hung between two posts and a cross beam was typically used. The signs were erected where most convenient and often out of context with their surroundings.

While the installation structure subsequently changed and different materials have been tried, there is no indication of how and why these changes were made. In some cases such as the mounting method for vertical signs, cost and simplicity seem to be the rationale. The 1976 Parks Design Standards Manual and Parks Canada guidelines appear to have been used as general reference documents.



*An alternative to a traditional wood sign; the low profile and use of natural materials lets the sign blend into its surroundings on the Dempster Highway*



*Historic building signage no longer used*



*A sign that resulted from a one-time only funding agreement*

***“With the exception of the Wildlife Viewing Program, no research appears to have been done to determine what visitors wanted.”***



*Johnson Crossing a typical highway lodge*

It would appear that many of the sites selected for interpretation had obvious attributes such as historical buildings, natural viewpoints or another existing use such as a grader turn around. It also looks as if the topic selected for interpretation during the program’s formative years reflected the site’s main feature.

No reference can be found which explains the logic behind the adoption of the use of particular warning sign symbols though they tend to reflect interpretation trends of the period. This is not surprising because there was little consistency in symbol usage across the country. At one point in the late eighties, the camera symbol was replaced with words identifying the type of site. It would have made more sense to use the word and logo in combination on the first few warning signs the visitor encountered on entering the Yukon. This would have explained the symbol meaning. But since this was not done, the question remains—why?

The files contain references to the development of internal departmental policy involving the sign program. The first, *Guidelines for Special Feature Signs Contribution Agreements* (October 1989) was created to respond to unsolicited requests for special features signs which could not be funded under existing programs. The regional tourism strategy would dictate contribution funding priority. The proposed sign must complement and not duplicate the existing departmental signage initiatives.

The department agreed to provide a one time capital cost contribution of up to \$1,000.00 for a specific sign project. The agreement was formally used twice, first with the Government of the Northwest Territories for a sign on the Klondike River encouraging visitors to take the Dempster Highway and visit the Northwest Territories. The Yukon Fish & Game Association also entered into an agreement to produce and erect direction signs to stocked lakes.

Following a complaint from a highway lodge which objected to the development of the “Icefield Ranges” interpretive site, the Government developed a policy which said such sites would not be developed within a half kilometer of existing tourist related businesses on private land. Also, no site would be developed within 1 kilometer without their input and agreement unless there was no suitable alternative. The other exception involved major highway intersections where regional orientation kiosks might be located.

The general lack of information concerning program logic and the basis for program decisions has meant the new strategy must be developed from scratch.

## 2.3 Program Issues

### 2.3.1 Agency Roles & Responsibilities

The key to the sign program has always been the degree of interagency support and co-operation. Renewable Resources (Parks Branch) has assisted in site selection, undertaken routed sign construction and erection and assisted with maintenance.

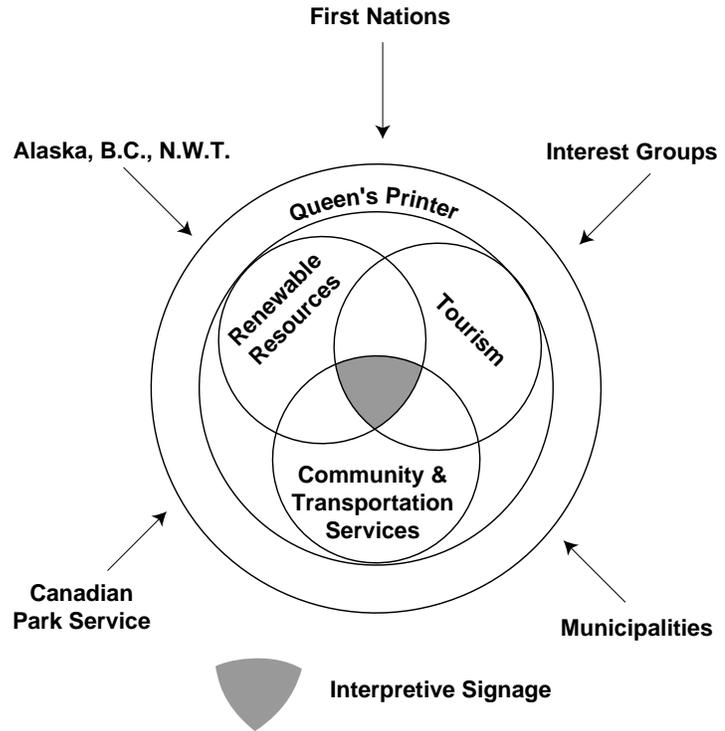
C & TS has modified and reconstructed pull-outs, fabricated and erected warning signs, and assisted with site maintenance. Much of the early work was done at cost and with a handshake using existing resources. However, as costs have risen and associated site infrastructure become more elaborate, informal arrangements have become less and less prevalent. This reflects the realities of today's budget restraints with the commensurate reduction of staff resources as well as the growth of the program.

Much of the focus over the past 15 years has been on putting the basic infrastructure elements in place. Little attention has been given to the planning required to manage maintenance costs and anticipate eventual replacement. In 1995, the focus is now shifting towards program rationalization and the strategic planning overlooked in the early years.

Three Yukon government departments are directly involved in some aspect of the interpretive signage program. Others, including First Nations, the Canadian Parks Service, various municipalities, interest groups and the adjoining jurisdictions of Alaska, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories are also involved in some interpretive signage projects.

The level of involvement and role of each agency reflects both its operating authority and in-house capabilities. Both Highways and Parks have sign fabrication capabilities and maintenance crews. Parks focuses on sandblasted and routed signs while Highways produces standard aluminum silk-screened or die cut vinyl and MDO plywood signs primarily for traffic-related purposes. Highways has year round maintenance crews while Parks operates on a seasonal basis except in the shop.

In recent years both Tourism and Renewable Resources (Wildlife Viewing Program) are increasingly using outside companies for sign fabrication. These porcelain enamel signs cannot be produced in-house or by Yukon manufacturers at this time.



### Summary of Roles and Primary Responsibilities

Agency	Mandate	Sign Roles & Responsibilities
<b>Renewable Resources</b> •Parks •Wildlife	Parks & Recreation Sites Wildlife Viewing program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all aspects within parks and camp grounds including planning,</li> <li>• construction &amp; maintenance lead role wildlife viewing program,</li> <li>• partnership role includes technical assistance, sign manufacturing, site construction and maintenance</li> </ul>
<b>Tourism</b> •Heritage  •Industry Services	Interpretive program management.  Regional tourism planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• non-commercial signage</li> <li>• all aspects heritage sites, lead role cultural</li> <li>• interpretation and points of interest, erection tourism promotion signage</li> <li>• relies on Parks and C&amp;TS for technical assistance, site development and maintenance</li> </ul>
<b>C&amp;TS</b> •Transportation Engineering •Transportation Maintenance	Traffic safety, Pull-out location, design Land use permit within ROW Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• final authority on land use within highway ROW including erection of commercial signage,</li> <li>• manufactures warning, directional, &amp; regulatory signage, builds pull outs and provides maintenance assistance; develops truck safety rest-stops</li> <li>• community/roadside services warning signs</li> </ul>



*Typical outdoor recreation site*



*A demand for more garbage cans and washroom facilities along the highways has created a range of ongoing maintenance requirements*

Since the Department of Tourism does not have a construction or maintenance capability, it must rely on either Parks or Highways crews to perform ongoing site maintenance such as surface grading and garbage pick-up. Both agencies are usually involved in site construction and sign erection to some degree.

In 1990 the three main agencies affected, (Tourism, Renewable Resources and C&TS) negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) concerning the planning, development and maintenance of public facilities along Yukon highways. The impetus for this agreement came from a recognition that the continuing demand for new wayside exhibit sites was creating problems for all the agencies involved and some program rationalization was needed to keep maintenance costs under control.

The MOU recognized that "the departments currently cooperate on an ad hoc, but complementary fashion"<sup>2</sup>. Tourism historically has focused on the development of Points of Interest sites for visitors, while Highways focused on the development of truck safety and community entry rest-stops. Renewable Resources focused on campground development and outdoor recreation sites.

Highway reconstruction has created a number of opportunities to develop pull-outs at nominal cost when the work can be co-ordinated with other agencies. Peepre (1988) noted a number of program deficiencies in his *Recreation Activities System Planning Study* that could be resolved through better program coordination. Concerns included duplication of pull-outs, poor or unattractive settings, access and egress safety issues, poor maintenance and inappropriate facilities. The Peepre study does not indicate which specific sites need to be re-examined nor does it cover all corridors.

The need to formalize many of the existing informal arrangements has largely been cost-driven as previously noted. The absence of a clear policy framework complicates the issue when program rationalization is required. New programs such as the wildlife viewing initiative fill interpretive gaps, yet begin to cloud boundaries between agency responsibilities. For example, the advance warning sign for the Takhini Burn site includes both the wildlife viewing and camera symbols as the site involves both agency's elements. While perhaps a logical enough compromise to each agency's goals, one is left to question whether this solution is effective or confusing to the public it is intended to serve.

<sup>2</sup> Interdepartmental MOU *Guidelines for the Development & Maintenance of Pull-Offs/Points of Interest/Recreation Sites*, July 12, 1990

One of the most notable public concerns raised in agency interviews is the proliferation and use of formal and informal pull-outs for unintended purposes such as overnight camping. During the past year all borrow pits and pull-outs have been signed with a list of “no’s”. Site problems have included garbage and RV holding tank discharge. This has led to a demand for more garbage cans and wash-room facilities along Yukon highways. The ongoing maintenance requirements may exceed the value of the signage itself. Not every site which has a sign needs to be accompanied by such facilities.

From our research it is clear that interpretive signage is accepted as an area where interdepartmental co-operation is essential. Good communication is essential regardless of which agency has any individual project lead. Signs must be looked in context with the site where they are erected and the subsequent ongoing associated maintenance costs.

Thus from the Department of Tourism’s perspective the following issues require resolution because the department is dependent on others for program implementation.

### 2.3.2 Theme Representation

Nine broad thematic categories have been identified in the existing sign inventory. This analysis suggests that overall, the current program covers a range of themes that would be of interest to visitors and residents alike. However, it is important to put this representation in context. There does not appear to be any glaring omissions or significant duplication of interpretive messages except for the Alaska Highway signage program.

Some sign copy is dated and reflects a particular historical perspective. First Nations history and land occupancy is certainly better represented in the last five years than in earlier years. There also appears to be a better balance between natural and cultural history theme representation with the most recent major site development projects (i.e. Takhini Burn, Kluane River) than with earlier projects.

In a spatial context, sign representation appears reasonable at first glance, averaging between 20 and 40 kilometers on the Alaska Highway and 25 kilometers on the Klondike Highway. However on the Alaska Highway there are some obvious anomalies with sign spacing as close as 1 kilometer to as much as 130 kilometers apart. Sign spacing on the Yukon River averages 67.5 kilometers. This is about right for the wilderness canoeist as it offers diversion without overly compromising the sense of “wilderness” so important to the overall trip experience.

## The Main Sign Development Questions Identified Include:

- how many and what types of wayside exhibits and interpretive signs are needed before saturation is reached?
- where can departmental efforts best be focused and what is the image the department wants to project?
- should the program be “market driven” by visitor needs or “education” driven by interpretive objectives?
- what, if any, is the present standard interpretive sign/exhibit design format, hierarchy, construction method and expected lifespan and what should it be?
- where can sites be combined to reduce costs and avoid duplication such as regional orientation sites at highway junctions?
- what are the ongoing maintenance costs likely to be and how should these costs be planned for and budgeted where other agencies are doing the work?
- can one interagency sign committee be the forum for interpretive signage planning and, if so, is the present structure workable?

## Thematic Representation Matrix

Thematic Category	Number of Signs	Degree of Representation
Historic-Settlement	41	generally good, but not all communities represented directly especially Watson Lake, Whitehorse and Haines Junction
Historic-Exploration & Mining; General	14	fair but dated and not in context with impacts or importance to Yukon economy
Historic-Exploration & Mining; Klondike Gold Rush	12	adequate in the Dawson area and most often mentioned influence on other related signage
Historic-Transportation & Communication;	25	adequate from post gold rush period but incomplete from First nation perspective
Historic-Transportation & Communication; Alaska Hwy.	20	Alaska Highway Anniversary signage has filled in gaps; well represented
Historic-General	12	has potential for further development
First Nations History	12	under-represented, notable improvement from 1988 on
Natural History	21	opportunity for expansion, with more emphasis on ecology; significant improvement through Wildlife Viewing Program
Regional Orientation	14	weak but improving; more work needed at major hwy. intersection points
Site identification (non-interpretation)	40	24 of 31 signs related to Alaska Hwy. milepost program, 9 are border crossing signs and 6 identify major sites

Note: Signs may be listed in more than one category given nature of sign content

### The Main Agency Planning Issues Include:

- the need to establish spacing criteria and site development priorities
- the need to co-ordinate new sign erection or replacement with road redevelopment schedules where possible
- the need for site and sign rationalization with a hierarchy responsive to visitor profiles and needs
- the need to clarify inter-program relationships where a corridor interpretive strategy is in place
- the role (if any) that the Tourism sign program should play in the provision of special, tourism related, directional/orientation signs for local communities and interest groups
- the extent of departmental assistance that should be provided to local groups or communities wanting to erect historical and interpretive signs



*Good site selection and planning meets visitor needs and interpretation objectives*



*Visitors generally preferred international symbols be used on warning signs*

The Campbell, Canol, and Nahanni Range Road corridors are poorly represented and this seems to reflect their current low traffic loads. Certainly in the late eighties the priority was upgrading the Alaska and Klondike highway corridors before the 1992 anniversary commemorating highway construction.

The location of existing pull-outs and signs along the study corridors are illustrated in the appendices.

### Audience Applicability

2.3.3

Little direct work has been conducted on visitor perspectives concerning the sign program. The 1987 Visitor Exit Survey (VES) is usually referenced and there may be relevant information in the 1994 survey when the results are fully analyzed.

In 1994 Tourism staff prepared a sign survey that was administered on random visits to 26 different sites during July. 113 parties were interviewed to determine the level of awareness, how the sites are used and why people stop. The questions also addressed issues such as spacing distance, the utility of warning signs and whether the sites and signs met visitor needs. Given the small sample size and the survey method, the study authors caution the user not to over-generalize the results.

With that caution in mind, and recognizing that such a survey had not been conducted before, the results are interesting. First, visitors are aware of the sites and their general purpose. They are being used for a variety of reasons, including taking a rest. Good views is listed as being the dominant reason for stopping.

High view sites such as Bove Island and Five Finger Rapids score much higher than similarly developed sites at Rancheria Falls and Kluane Lake. The data also suggests that sites such as the Tintina Trench, which is relatively poorly developed, should be upgraded because it is already a major stopping point. It is also a location with known potential for recreational site development.

The majority of participants indicated there was an adequate number of sites and a good balance in the amount and quality of information provided on the signs. There did not seem to be a preference either way for wood routed or laminated panels. It is not clear whether viewers recognize that the vertical panels are meant to be read from vehicles during a brief stop as opposed to the panel stands where the viewer is encouraged to leave the vehicle. Most sites are visited for under 20 minutes. The survey does not differentiate between time spent at major sites such as Teslin Lake or minor sites such as Takhini Crossing.

The majority of respondents had little difficulty finding the sites and generally preferred the use of international symbols on warning signs. Views on their placement differed with a preference for a 2 km. and 100 metre placement distance. Suggested improvements included making these signs larger, naming them and indicating which side of the road they are on.

A number of people use the Milepost as the standard reference text which suggests that how and where the sites are advertised is an important consideration. The Wildlife Viewing program for example has copied this technique and produced a guide book for its sites because this approach has proven popular in other jurisdictions. There does not appear to be any indication of whether the references in the current Yukon roadmap have improved visitor awareness.

This is a good example of the general move towards more strategic thinking because it takes advantage of the opportunity to integrate interpretation goals into publications commonly used by visitors.

In the 1994 survey, respondents indicated that washrooms, garbage bins and possibly picnic tables are appreciated at major sites but not that necessary at minor points. Since the provision of these facilities has major cost implications, their placement needs to be carefully considered. Sizing and maintenance activity are also influenced by the level of use.

The current priority Yukon tourism markets are illustrated on the next chart. We know that tour bus companies stop at a variety of sites along the way but the number of stops is dictated by fixed daily travel distances. Thus, buses leaving Watson Lake or Skagway have Whitehorse as the next overnight stop followed by Dawson and Beaver Creek. This limits the number of en route stops possible. Independent travellers have more flexibility and travel distance varies considerably depending on whether the traveller has a definite schedule or not.

As a general rule of thumb, there is a correlation between en route time, distance travelled and the probability of stopping. Thus the chance of stopping is greater after an hour of travel than it is after 15 minutes, all other factors being equal.

The form, copy size, print to background contrast and font size all influence sign readability. Other factors such as the plaque placement angle influence readability and durability. For example a vertical sign is generally unaffected by sun angles where an angled sign is, especially if the copy/background contrast is not sharp.



Visitors find high view sites like Bove Island (above) more interesting than similar developed sites such as Kluane Lake (below)



### Psychographic Traveller Profile

Segment	Market	Characteristics
<b>Style Conscious Adventurers (SCA's)</b>	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enjoy risk, danger and change in their lives</li> <li>• Trend-setters, seek variety in destinations; will "rough it"</li> <li>• Travel frequently; spend most of any segment</li> <li>• Tend to be young, male and single</li> <li>• Most are in western Canada (22%) and Ontario (19%)</li> <li>• High interest in Yukon as a destination</li> </ul>
<b>Organized Neighborhood Outdoors Folk (ONO's)</b>	29%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emulators and belongers; follow the lead of others</li> <li>• Enjoy outdoor living, getting off the beaten path</li> <li>• Interested in events, attractions, history</li> <li>• Interested in gambling; some interest in entertainment</li> <li>• Less frequent travellers who spend less</li> <li>• Like organized holidays, tours , use travel agents a lot</li> <li>• Older, middle class, less education</li> <li>• Reside almost entirely in U.S.; none in Canada</li> <li>• Profile fits many current Recreation vehicle travellers</li> </ul>

Source: McKim Baker Lovick BBDO Psychographic segmentation Study, Tourism Yukon 1992

### The Main Audience Needs Include:

- the need to determine what site furnishings are necessary
- the need to improve warning signage
- the need to “test market” sign solutions to make sure they meet visitor needs
- the need to determine whether the identity of the corridor is marketable
- the need to develop a current database that includes information about the site as well as the sign
- the need for consistent location monitoring to minimize vandalism and keep maintenance cost records

### Signs Erected Since 1982

1982	02
1983	30
1984	19
1985	19
1986	14
1987	02
1988	05
1989	04
1990	11
1991	02
1992	49
1993	09
1994	12
1995	11

### Seven Types of Sign Panels Currently In Use:

- Wood–sandblasted and routed or engraved
- Fiberglass Embedded Cibachrome
- Porcelain enamel–baked glass finish
- Cast aluminum and bronze
- Poly-tech–baked plastic paint finish
- MDO plywood–hand-painted or silk-screened
- Aluminum–silk-screened or die cut vinyl

This is the case with a number of panels such as Five Finger Rapids and some of the Alaska Highway commemoration panels.

Children and senior citizens may have trouble reading the angled panels and for different reasons. Children may not be tall enough while seniors may not have the quality of eye sight to read the text properly. These problems can be overcome through proper attention to sign design, placement, and consideration of user needs.

### Infrastructure Condition & Image Consistency

2.3.4

The records reveal that the majority of signs receive a yearly inspection except those along the Yukon River. A summary of the number of signs erected each year since 1982 is provided to the left.

There are seven types of sign panel types currently in use. The three most common sign types are wood routed and engraved, wood sandblasted and porcelain enamel. The emphasis on wood routed signs reflects in-house capabilities. Although the problems with surface finishing on the wood signs has been resolved (cracked and peeling varnish), replacement signs are usually identical to the original sign with little or no updating of messages and sign content.

The signs exhibit large blocks of type, set in upper case (caps) often without adequate space around the text. In some cases message length is excessive and exceeds standard readability criteria (i.e. see Flesch Type Readability Scale in Appendix 2).

The following series of photographs illustrates a range of typical issues encountered in the review of the existing sign inventory.

## Examples of Typical Existing Sign Issues

1

Classic example of four different signs competing for attention with different:

- sizes
- materials
- forms
- colors



2

- Large sign screens site feature it is interpreting
- Location of sign at top of bank prevents easy reading of text
- Extent of text crowds sign face



3

- Can't read black text on wood sign
- Can read white text on wood sign
- Both signs display long messages



5



- Silk Screened plywood with plexiglass cover
- Message at base of sign is too long and difficult to read

6



- Outhouse perched in front of main view at top of the bank
- Is there a less obvious location?

7



- Unusual elevated deck that appears totally out of context with its surroundings

8

- Signage location in 3 separate areas
- Location and access?
- No Base treatment, grade change



9

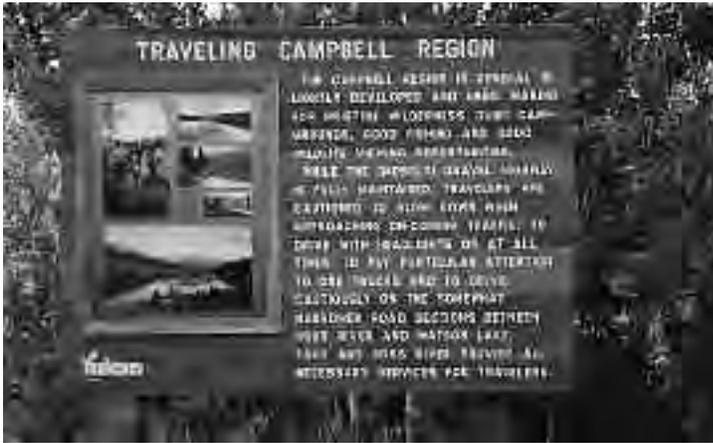
- Sign applied directly to historic building it is describing
- Difficult to read from road
- Single, upper case text in one paragraph



10

- Large vertical sign does not fit context where view is most important feature





*Carmacks signage invites travellers to take Campbell Highway*



*Mixed messages- at Watson Lake (left) and Johnson Crossing (below) signage appears to discourage travel*



The observations can be summarized as follows:

- Because of their uniformity, the wood routed signs often provide little continuity with the surrounding site and story being told. However they are simple to fabricate and relatively inexpensive given in-house capabilities
- In many cases sign placement disrupts the view or limits common photographic opportunity angles
- In most instances the standard pull-out is really a road widening with no clearly defined entry or exit point because it simplifies road maintenance
- At the new major interpretive sites the sign panels are generally better written with a more balanced view but the texts are gradually getting longer
- Relevance of some Alaska Highway Anniversary signage is difficult to appreciate without the accompanying brochure; what happens when the brochure is out of print?
- Many of the oldest stained, routed signs have lasted longer than the newer models
- The elaborate, elevated display decks used in many of the major sites appear out of context with their surroundings and overbuilt with little regard to long term maintenance implications
- With the exception of the vertical signs, the major wayside exhibits are not maintained in the winter and are unusable
- Wayside exhibits are currently identified with several different symbols (i.e. binoculars, camera) depending on the agency involved yet neither symbol has been tested to see which is more effective or whether differentiation is needed
- There is little or no co-ordination of site infrastructure including benches and garbage bin placement and no clear direction on their relationship to the sign or site
- Although a corridor symbol has been adopted for highway identification for some time it has not been used in a consistent manner or been adopted in other signage as a unifying element. Also the colors used, such as the yellow for the Klondike highway, are unreadable
- It is not clear what happens when certain painted sign boards need replacing (i.e. Alaska Highway "NWHS" Commemorative Signs)
- Landscaping efforts at most major interpretive sites have failed due to lack of care and attention to the timing of installation

**2.3.5 Construction/Maintenance Economics**

Sign fabrication cost records were ascertained from a review of the files and inter-agency correspondence plus personal interviews. The charts to the right represent typical sign project costs including design, fabrication and installation.

It is difficult to estimate accurately toilet holding tank installation costs. At Five Finger Rapids two tanks cost \$1,120.00 to install. Hy-ab rentals run \$150.00 day plus mileage and are used to deliver and install site furnishings. Education service costs for toilets have increased substantially from \$54.50 in 1991 to \$74.50 in 1994 plus mileage.

The records indicate the costs to construct 5 major interpretive sites in recent years (not including sign component) were:

- Kluane Lake . . . . . \$22,742  
(private contractor in 1989)
- Bove Island . . . . . \$17,650  
(private contractor in 1990)
- Fraser . . . . . \$24,135  
(private contractor in 1989)
- Teslin Lake . . . . . \$16,585  
(private contractor in 1990)
- Haines Rd. (km. 162) . . . \$12,500  
(Renewable Resources existing site)

In 1994 Renewable Resources fabricated 7 point of interest signs for Tourism at a cost of \$7,350.00 which included posts and hardware but not erection. The 87 metal mile posts produced for the 50th Anniversary were fabricated by Duncan's Ltd. at a cost of \$106.00 each and painted by C&TS (\$67.50 each). The 15 porcelain enamel interpretive panels (approximate size 28"x40") cost \$27,000 to fabricate. \$22,000 was spent on consultants to research and write the text.

The cost of a typical 28"x40" porcelain enamel panel cost in 1993 broke down as follows:

- research and writing . \$1,000-1,500 (if done by a consultant)
- design . . . . . \$500-750 (if done by a consultant)
- fabrication . . . . . \$2,000-2,500
- metal frame stand . . . \$125 (produced by Renewable Resources)

Installation costs vary significantly depending on location, number of signs involved and whether maintenance crews are in the area.

Costs for the 9 new border crossing signs is estimated to be \$8,000 each, broken down into engineering and design (\$5,00), fabrication (\$7,000) and installation (\$450).

**Community & Transportation Services**

Sign Type	Size	Cost	Installation Cost	Estimated Life
Rest Area Aluminum	120x45 cm	\$ 55.05	\$ 30-50	7-10 years
No Camping, Litter barrel	60x60 cm	\$ 40.40	\$ 30-50	7-10 years
Mounting Post & Hardware	each	\$ 40	in sign cost	10-15 years
2 km. Warning Tab	60x30 cm	\$ 23.63	\$ 30-50	7-10 years
Breakaway Sign Posts	each	\$ 100	in sign cost	10-15 years

**Renewable Resources**

Sign Type	Size	Cost	Installation Cost	Estimated Life
Wood Routed Vertical Sign	51"x84"	\$ 600-750	varies	10 years
Sand Blasted Site Identification	16"x132"	\$ 1,200	varies	10 years
Garbage Cans & Base	each	\$ 1,050	\$ 30-50	25 years
Toilets (regular)	each	\$ 1,800	varies	10 years
Toilets (handicapped)	each	\$ 2,350		
Picnic Tables	each	\$ 180		10 years
Septic Holding Tanks (1,000 g)	each	\$ 1,050	varies	25 years

**Typical Fabrication & Installation Cost**



\$125      \$3,875      \$1,200      \$22,742  
(site development cost)

Who's Doing What?			
Sign Type	Ren. Res	C&TS	Private Sector
Wood-sandblasted and routed or engraved	✓		
Fiberglass Embedded Cibachrome			✓
Porcelain enamel-baked glass finish			✓
Cast aluminum and bronze			✓
Poly-tech-baked plastic paint finish			✓
MDO plywood-hand-painted or silk-screened		✓	✓
Aluminum-silk-screened or die cut vinyl		✓	

Five different local sign shops were consulted to review private sector capabilities and associated production costs. All porcelain enamel signs are manufactured outside the Yukon. Local capabilities vary significantly with varying degrees of work sub-contracted out. Most local shops have silk-screen and hand painted sign capabilities using wood or metal surfaces. Wood routed and sandblasted signs can be produced locally by one firm but at a substantially greater cost than Renewable Resources. Quotes for typical program signs included:

- 51"x84" wood routed sign . . . \$750-1,800
- 16"x132" sand blasted sign . . . \$1,750-2,000
- 24"x24" aluminum sign . . . . . \$75-200 (minimum order size)

It is difficult to accurately compare true costs between the service provided by the two government sign shops without knowing all actual overhead costs. Sign costs may also come down with volume orders.

As it currently stands each operation seems to have its own production speciality. The Highways Sign Shop specializes in road oriented signs; the Parks Shop in wood routed and sandblasted signs. The private sector is more involved in silk-screening and hand painted signs and general graphic design.

From a maintenance standpoint there is a wide variation in opinion as to sign durability. Some of the oldest vertical stained signs have lasted the longest and weathered well beyond their anticipated lifespan. None of the sandblasted site identification signs have suffered any damage.

Vandalism is a concern and tends to occur in spurts. Most damage is done by bullet holes. A number of porcelain enamel signs have been vandalized in this manner, highlighting one disadvantage of this type of sign over the vertical wood routed signage panels.

In other cases, identification signs are stolen regularly by tourists. The Yukon River sign and some of the more colorfully named sites along the highway suffer in this regard.

Once erected, most interpretive signs receive little if any direct maintenance. This is most apparent along the Yukon River. General site maintenance includes parking area surface grading, garbage removal and toilet cleaning/education. This latter cost is increasing steadily.

In 1990 McSkimming & Associates undertook an inventory of highway reststops including their approximate maintenance costs. Typical year-round costs for grading, site maintenance and litter pick-up appear to average \$2,500 a year.



Typical vandalism damage—\$1,500 replacement

McSkimming also found that single vehicles and truckers accounted for 90% of all rest stop users during the season with the remainder split evenly between local residents and bus tours. In 1994 in exchange for maintenance of five campgrounds and \$27,000, Renewable Resources took over the maintenance of 32 rest-stops during the summer peak tourist season.

### 2.3.6 Program Strengths & Weaknesses

There is no doubt that the program is working and travellers are stopping to read the signs and visit the new interpretive exhibits. Garbage volumes and education costs are a simple but crude measure of use and both are increasing. The Yukon program is more advanced than that of neighboring jurisdictions and is an important tool in raising visitor awareness of Yukon natural and cultural history.

The degree of partnership exhibited by the three main departments involved in this program provides a real opportunity to maximize development opportunities while controlling costs. Program rationalization is needed and joint use sites make sense whenever practical. One obvious opportunity lies in the ability of C&TS to construct wayside pull-outs at minimal cost during road reconstruction.

Co-operative long range planning is in everyone's best interests. Both the Parks and Highways sign shops need to know what demands will be placed on their services so they can plan yearly production schedules. Tourism needs to know both the capital and ongoing maintenance costs to prepare their annual budgets. Real opportunities exist to expand partnerships with the development of regional tourist sign kiosks at the junction of key highways similar to the Dempster Highway initiative. Some road and river corridors are naturally suited to the development of themes (i.e. Canol, Haines-parkway/heritage trail, Yukon River-heritage river).

Budgets are becoming increasingly tight and this will necessitate program rationalization. Some roads such as the Campbell and Canol highways do not have the traffic loads to justify major site development expenditures at this time, yet these types of facilities can help attract visitor traffic.

Recent initiatives such as the Dempster Interpretive Strategy and the Wildlife Viewing Program illustrate the government recognizes the value of strategic planning.

Throughout the research phase it was clear that there are significant program information gaps. As already alluded to, the files are inadequate from both a program planning, budgeting and maintenance management perspective.



An Example of New B.C. Government Regional Orientation Wayside Exhibit near key highway junction

### The major sign fabrication issues for the Department of Tourism

- when should which type of sign be used?
- the lack of detailed records on all aspects of sign development
- the absence of any maintenance management and replacement standards
- the number of signs which are near the end of their useful life
- the lack of a means to measure whether new technologies (i.e. talking signs, visitor radio) are being used and whether new symbols (i.e. talking sign) are understood by visitors
- private versus in-house fabrication; should in-house capability be a major consideration in the development of future sign fabrication guidelines?
- how can regional orientation sign kiosks be integrated with the proposals currently under review by C&TS in their proposed commercial sign policy?

*"The experience of the 50th Anniversary of the Alaska Highway points to the need for more lead time and forethought in responding to pressures associated with the decade of anniversaries now upon us."*



Alaska Highway 50th Anniversary Theme Sign

***"The biggest program deficiency is the lack of attention that has been paid to planning for ongoing maintenance and sign replacement. The absence of program logic and clear performance measures has impaired planning effectiveness. Criteria are needed for site selection and program rationalization."***



Yukon River Thirty Mile section Canadian Heritage River plaque

Until recently, there was no one single map that showed all the existing interpretation sites and vehicle pull-outs. There is also a need to overlay potential interpretive opportunities on this map to analyze distribution and assist in site rationalization.

Another weakness is the absence of performance measures and any cost/benefit analysis. In 1994 Saskatchewan Highways commissioned a study of their tourist oriented directional signage to see whether it was effective. The study found the benefit/cost ratio of such signage could be substantial and far exceeded the cost of the signage erected. This would suggest that it may be possible to determine the cost/benefit of interpretive signs and way-side exhibits to the travelling public. This would help justify both the capital and maintenance costs associated with this program.

## Summary of Program Issues

2.4

The program issues can be summarized into those related to strategic planning and program rationalization, site development, sign design and ongoing maintenance. The Department of Tourism cannot deliver the program alone and must rely on the assistance of Renewable Resources and Community & Transportation Services.

At first blush, the program is about signs and the sign message. Traditionally, Heritage Branch has focused on the historical aspects and limited its interest to the cultural history components. It is now faced with the responsibility of delivering a program which has tourist visitation objectives as well as a heritage conservation/public education focus.

It must also integrate this initiative with Renewable Resources wildlife viewing initiatives and C&TS highway rest-stops program so all three initiatives work in a seamless and cost effective manner.

## Interpretation Trends

2.5

A number of Canadian jurisdictions are examining the tourist oriented signage that is currently in place. Ontario has a specific heritage sign plaque program with clear policies and guidelines. Manitoba and Saskatchewan have developed consistent "attraction" signage while Alberta is just starting on a comprehensive review of its own program. What is most impressive about the Saskatchewan and Alberta initiatives is their willingness to market test signage ideas.

Other trends in interpretation practice relevant to this study include:

- the introduction of talking signs and other interactive technology (i.e. CD-ROM, Internet)
- a move away from static to participatory exhibits with a focus on self-guidance and education
- increasing public support for, and emphasis on, holistic interpretation putting the subject matter into a contemporary perspective and blending cultural and natural history
- the introduction of new and more durable materials and higher quality computer-generated graphics
- thematic representation of areas from a tourist perspective (i.e. "Kluane Country")
- staff resource down-sizing, contracting out and cost recovery
- growth in agency partnerships with joint programs and compatible objectives
- more market centered tourism approach to interpretation; essential component of regional tourism planning
- more use of multi-media options to present a co-ordinated message in public literature and other media
- integration of public and private sector signage initiatives including corporate sponsorship
- the development of new symbols to indicate types of attractions and tourism services

### The Overall Program Issues for the Department of Tourism

- the Department cannot operate an effective program without the assistance of its major partners C&TS and Renewable Resources; a logical, integrated approach is needed
- the absence of basic design and fabrication standards along with guidelines for location frequency, on-site placement of signage and standards for supporting infrastructure
- the need for a common, user friendly, interdepartmental database containing information on construction and maintenance costs for planning and budgeting
- the need to establish a program logic that is publicly supported
- the need for program rationalization including lifespan standards and maintenance guidelines
- the lack of specific studies on visitor response to signage used and general site effectiveness
- the absence of program performance measures and interdepartmental communication at all levels to ensure all the partners support the program



*Signage is only one of many interpretive strategies. There is a saturation point*

## Interpretive Strategy Program Objectives

- to give Yukon residents and visitors alike, an awareness for, and appreciation of, the mosaic of natural, cultural and historic features that comprise the Yukon
- to provide at suitable locations and appropriate intervals, representative interpretive messages that inform, provoke public awareness and stimulate interest in the history, culture and natural heritage of the Yukon
- to inform and educate residents and Yukon visitors alike about the need to protect and preserve the integrity of Yukon heritage resources
- to provide a cost effective and complete framework for the co-ordination, site selection, development and maintenance of interpretive sites and signs throughout the Yukon
- to provide a clear, concise policy for the planning, design, and presentation of interpretive signage portraying the natural heritage, culture and history of Yukon wide importance
- to present a consistent public image that reflects the full range of Yukon wide interpretive theme opportunities and their distinctive regional characteristics in a manner that encourages travellers to explore and visit all areas of the Yukon
- to orient residents and visitors to points of interest along various travel corridors throughout the Yukon



*"To communicate an accurate, balanced and representative story of the Yukon's diversified natural and cultural heritage"*

## Interpretive Strategy Program Framework

3.0

### Program Framework

3.1

Given the diversity of existing Yukon interpretive signage, and significant investment of resources, it makes more sense to build on the program elements that exist rather than create an entirely new system. The present program can be reorganized to provide a simple, logical structure with a hierarchy of signage that provides flexibility for expansion and rationalization.

Renewable Resources, C&TS and Tourism have distinct programs with different objectives and interpretive mandates. The primary need is for program co-ordination and site rationalization. Traditionally, interpretation has been viewed as a signage program with site development and maintenance issues generally viewed as secondary considerations. Obviously, site characteristics dictate many sign placement locations but this is only one consideration. There are limits to growth and a point of sign saturation which needs to be defined. Site and sign, from a program perspective, also need to be considered in a holistic interpretive sense to present a consistent image and co-ordinated theme.

This framework provides direction on what the program parameters should be to provide some order to program delivery. It provides ideas on how much interpretive signage is needed before saturation is reached. It also suggests guidelines on where it should be placed, what the infrastructure requirements might be, and how maintenance can be managed.

#### Mission Statement

3.1.1

The mission statement reflects the Department of Tourism mandate and should be reflected directly in program delivery. Key concepts include accuracy, balance, diversity and representativeness.

*"To communicate an accurate, balanced and representative story promoting the Yukon's diversified natural and cultural heritage"*

#### Objectives

3.1.2

The program objectives are task specific reflecting the tourism department mandate and emphasizing the inter-agency partnership focus. The objectives are an essential ingredient of the program framework because they describe what will be undertaken, why and for what purpose.

The mandate covers both resident and visitor information and awareness needs while acknowledging both educational and tourism promotional functions. The objectives are action oriented. They promote cost effective program delivery, image and message consistency and careful locational planning. They should be measurable in both quantifiable and qualitative terms through such mechanisms as visitor exit surveys.

## 3.2 Interpretive Sign & Site Development Strategy

### Program Logic

#### 3.2.1

The Interpretive Program provides non-personal services usually in the form of in-place signage. There will always be numerous and different situations for using interpretive signage along interpretive trails, at overlooks, historic sites, day use sites, and road-side pull-offs. As there is a wide variety of unique subjects to interpret there are many signage options. While there is a need for image consistency this does not necessarily require complete standardization.

Since a comprehensive program framework does not currently exist the standardization option was considered and rejected for the following reasons. First, there did not seem to be any clear net benefit. The Yukon already has an extensive signage program in place. A certain degree of uniformity of approach already exists. Thus it made more sense to build on what already existed. Second, standardization limits flexibility and the ability to adapt quickly to changing needs and new technology. Third, a prescriptive approach does not build allies and this program requires co-operative partnerships to work effectively. For these reasons it is not appropriate to standardize interpretive signs for the different areas.

The Strategy and Guidelines have been designed to provide accurate interpretive information in a clear, concise manner consistent with good communication and graphic design principles. Interpretive signage also has a promotional and educational role that comes from increased awareness and accurate representation of the natural, cultural and heritage features of the Yukon.

## Basic Program Principles

- A variety of interpretive mediums is required to stimulate traveller interest and respond to changing resident and visitor education and information needs
- Interpretation should identify and respond to seasonal opportunities (i.e. wildlife migration)
- Interpretive signage along highway corridors should, whenever economically possible, be visible and accessible throughout the year
- Signage should present a consistent image and recognizable thematic structure
- Planning, development and maintenance of Yukon wide interpretive signage needs to be co-ordinated to present a unified whole
- Partnerships with Yukon First Nations, communities and associations helps to ensure the presentation of an accurate, balanced and representative picture of the Yukon's natural and cultural heritage
- Signage should factually inform, stimulate awareness of, and provoke interest in the natural and cultural heritage of the Yukon and not advertise individual commercial enterprises or products
- Official geographic place names should be used and translation of the interpretive message considered in a manner that both respects and reflects Yukon First Nations culture and Canada's official bilingualism legislation
- The location and manner of interpretation used should be compatible with the site, fostering education and awareness without compromising resource conservation objectives
- The best interpretation is short and concise with learning directly related to the experience
- Less is more; not all sites or interpretive opportunities are best interpreted through signage
- Supporting site infrastructure should encourage appropriate visitor behavior (i.e. pack-in, pack-out along river corridors)
- Negative regulatory signage should be avoided with rules explained in a positive tone
- Site features such as landmarks, wildlife viewing and historic site locations may over-ride ideal spacing distances and should take priority

*"The interpretive signage strategy applies to Yukon highways and the Yukon River corridor."*

The program framework has the following system design characteristics:

- allowance for the establishment of unifying program elements to provide a consistent image throughout the Yukon through the use of the Yukon wordmark, program logos (i.e. wildlife viewing binocular logos) or other recognizable signature feature to provide an identity for the whole and also each part
- allowance for interpretive method variation to meet specific site or program needs including corridor and regional identification without compromising Yukon wide system recognition
- recognition that spacing distances can only be a general guideline because some features such as landmarks and wildlife viewing opportunities are very site specific
- the system encourages the use of local materials and labor and different installation characteristics to meet site specific needs by allowing for the use of a variety of unifying program elements including sign form and shape, colour, material fabrication choice and message appearance
- the strategy provides policy guidelines, a framework for decision making and a process for inter-agency participation

Sign Order & Hierarchy				
Hierarchy	Frequency	Purpose	Government Agency Responsibility	Level of Control
<b>Territorial</b>	border crossings	identification & territory wide orientation	Tourism	High
<b>Regional</b>	ecoregion highway junction	highway/river corridor significant feature viewing opportunity regional orientation	Tourism-natural & cultural heritage; Renewable Resources wildlife viewing & day use recreation	Medium
<b>Community</b>	within communities	community stories	Community and/or First Nations sponsored initiatives supported by C&TS (i.e. entrance kiosk)	Medium
<b>Site Specific</b>	highways & corridors according to siting and spacing criteria	identification and interpretation of sites of particular heritage significance and visitor interest	Tourism-natural & cultural heritage; Renewable Resources-natural history & recreation Joint/river corridors	Low

### Six Sign Themes Are Proposed:

- territorial entrance identification
- orientation information and warning
- point of interest, safety and recreation area rest-stops
- natural history including wildlife viewing and ecology
- historic use, natural and cultural features
- First Nation cultural history, land use and occupation

### Order, Hierarchy & Flexibility

3.2.2

Based on the types of signs currently in place four broad signage categories can be defined from a hierarchical perspective. They are described as territorial, regional, community and site specific reflecting their purpose rather than organizational mandate.

Signage development responsibility varies with sign purpose. For example, territorial entry signage is clearly the responsibility of the Department of Tourism while community signage is more community driven and dependent on their commitment to development and maintenance.

In this instance, Tourism and Community & Transportation Services take on an advisory support role. This role may be expanded depending on the outcome of Cabinet's review of highway commercial signage. An option under consideration is the development of a standard community entrance kiosk to contain business advertising, a community map and other tourism related information.

The site specific category recognizes the need for flexibility and accommodates the range of signage already in place. Interpretive signage treatment reflects site character and takes into account criteria such as safety, spacing standards, site significance and available financial resources.

Talking sign technology can also be used to present other messages such as road condition reports, distances to services etc. in conjunction with the interpretive programming. However, before readily embracing this type of technology or any new method of signage fabrication or message presentation usability standards should be developed and minimum performance standards applied. Typical questions to ask include:

- has the product been market tested to ensure it meets Yukon market audience needs?
- will the product last for 8 to 10 years and result in capital and O&M cost economies?
- does the product or service provide “added value” to the traveller and meet program objectives?
- has consultation taken place with nearby lodge owners?
- do proposed facilities duplicate similar facilities in the area (i.e. campgrounds, lodges)?



*Territorial Entrance*



*Regional Orientation*



*Point of Interest*



*Historic Use*



*Natural History*



*First Nation Culture*

**Sign**



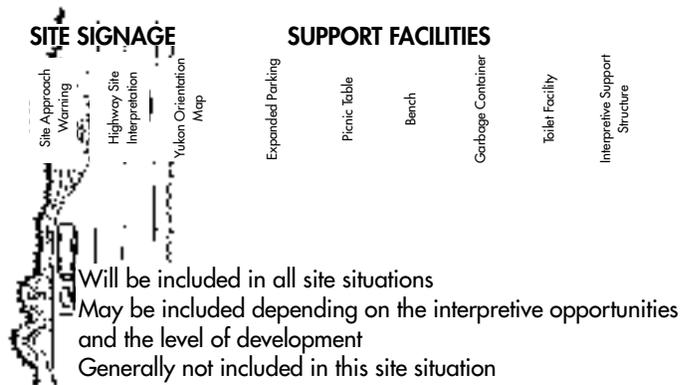
**Territorial Entrance**

Site development criteria for the new territorial border entrance signage is illustrated to the left with a site distribution map below.

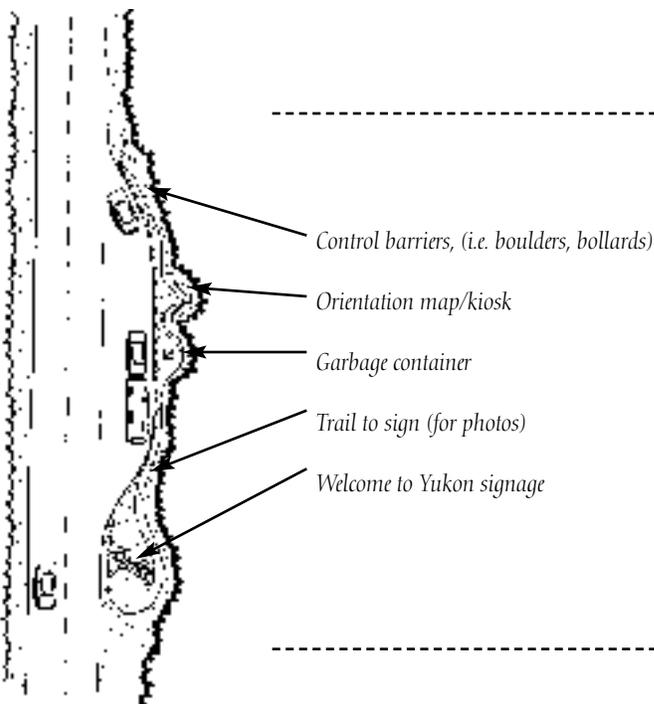
Signage on the North Canol and Nahanni Range Road may be required at some future date. Border signage can be developed on a stand alone basis or in conjunction with other initiatives but the focus should be on Yukon-wide visitor orientation. Support signage should describe the Yukon interpretive sign system visitors are going to see and would include a brief explanation of such things as the symbol system. This complements the information provided at the various visitor reception centers and the information contained on the Yukon roadmap.

Time spent at these sites would be minimal thus the extent of site furnishings will vary according to the extent of associated site development. Thus considerable variation is possible as is evident in comparing border crossing treatment on the Atlin Road to the Alaska Highway Beaver Creek international border crossing point. The signs themselves are standardized with no message variation. Size, colour, form, font type and shape are used as unifying elements.

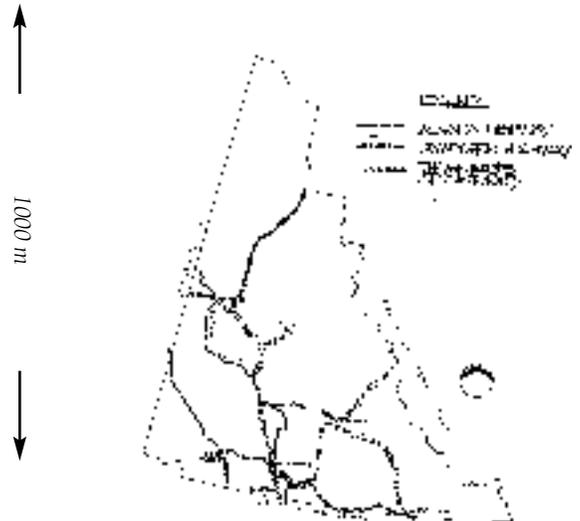
**Features**



**Layout**



**Map**

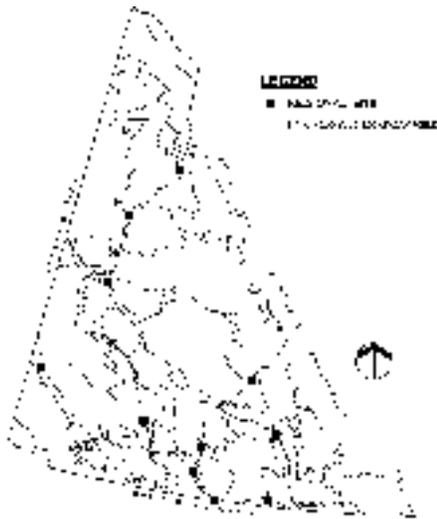


### 3.2.4 Regional Orientation

Site development criteria are illustrated to the right. The structure is loosely based on an ecoregion theme and the desire for regional tourism identification. The focus is regional differentiation. The criteria for site distribution and location is predicated on introducing the visitor to either discrete landform differences which are visually apparent or providing the visitor with a regional overview at highway corridor junction points. This approach first provides the opportunity for a new interpretive focus that illustrates biodiversity and landscape ecology. It also provides the flexibility to promote regional corridors such as the Silver Trail using historical, cultural or natural history theme elements. If a regional site is located at a major specific site, then both a general regional message and a site specific story are told.

Highway junction treatment is particularly important given the limited Yukon wide road network. This is an opportunity to introduce the use of different information delivery technologies such as "talking signs" which do not necessarily require site specific development to reach their intended audience because of their longer reception range. Talking signs and interpretive cassettes may work well in special cases where direct visitation needs to be discouraged. Typical situations might include avalanche slide zones or native cemeteries.

### Map

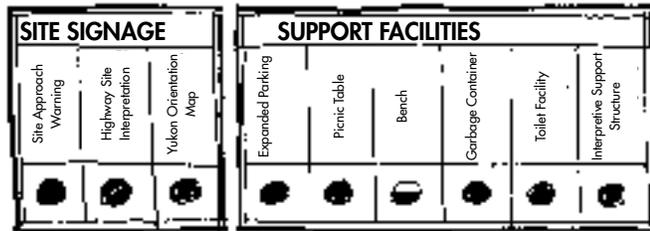


### Sign



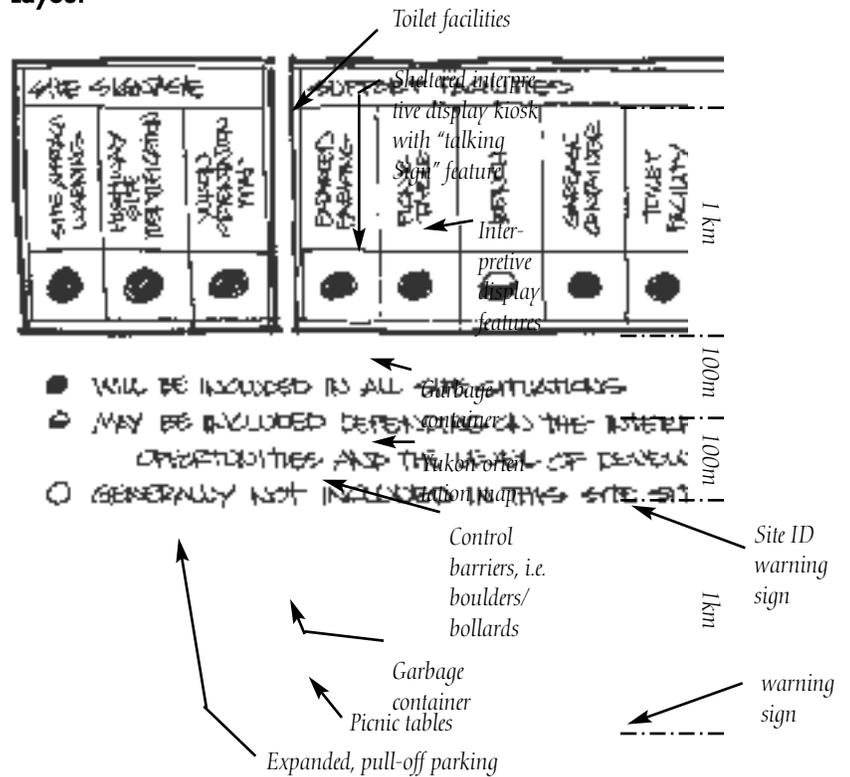
Identifies attraction, services (i.e. toilets and dumping stations) and other regional features of possible visitor interest

### Features

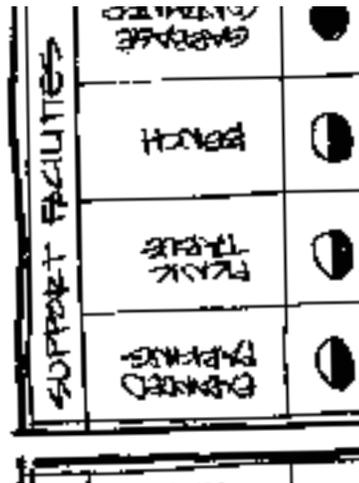


- Will be included in all site situations
- ◐ May be included depending on the interpretive opportunities and the level of development
- Generally not included in this site situation

### Layout



Sign

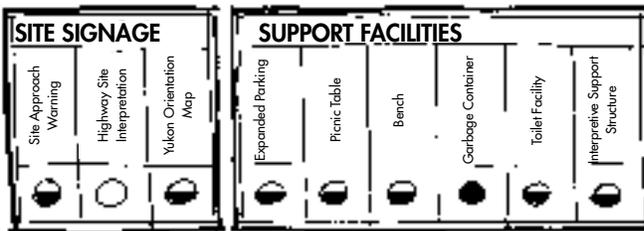


Community

The sketches to the left illustrate how communities might develop community entrance signage using various program thematic elements such as sign form and shape. At the present time, C&TS has developed community rest stops at one or more entrances to each community. These rest stops are often used by transient, en route commercial travellers as safety stops. Others stop only long enough for a toilet break because they are not intending to stop in the community. The Government of British Columbia has developed a community entrance program to encourage communities to spruce up their communities, reduce the number of commercial signs and improve visitor orientation to community services and attractions. Community response to a similar sort of program in the Yukon was generally favorable following public hearings associated with a review of the commercial sign regulations. Partnership support from government might include technical design, installation assistance or initial capital cost sharing but maintenance and long term site management would rest with the community.

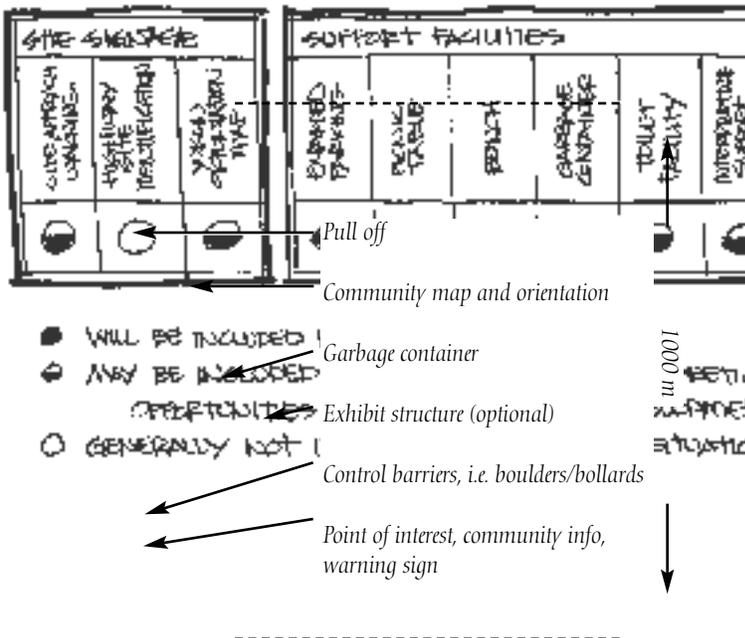
While it is important to acknowledge this information and interpretation opportunity within the larger program, it is envisioned that such initiatives would remain largely community driven and sponsored. Yukon Tourism's role would be limited and of an advisory nature to communities and C&TS reflecting their participation in regional tourism planning rather than interpretive sign programming.

Features

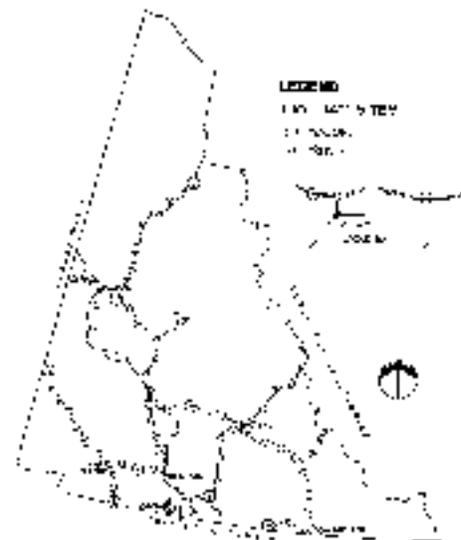


- Will be included in all site situations
- ◐ May be included depending on the interpretive opportunities and the level of development
- Generally not included in this site situation

Layout



Map



### 3.2.6 Site Specific - Highway

Spacing distance along highway corridors reflects criteria such as time/distance travel ratios using a standard 100 kilometers speed limit, site significance and anticipated levels of visitor use. Five Finger Rapids would be an example of a major site; Takhini Crossing a minor site. Both types of sites allow for a wide range of sign types, formats and styles including talking signs.

A differentiation between major and minor sites has been made. As a general guideline major sites should be spaced at 50-100 km intervals with minor sites 40-50 km apart. However, as noted previously, historic sites, wildlife viewing opportunities etc. are location specific so some latitude in spacing standards is essential.

### Signs

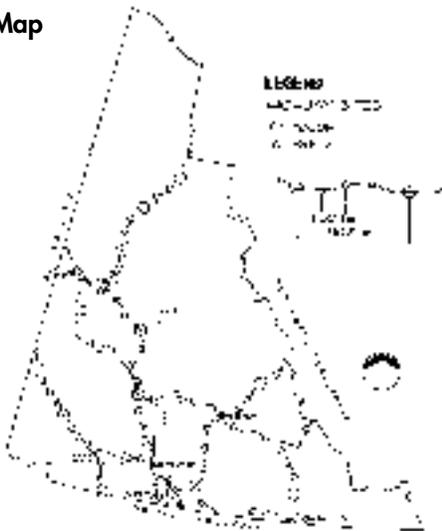


Major



Minor

### Map



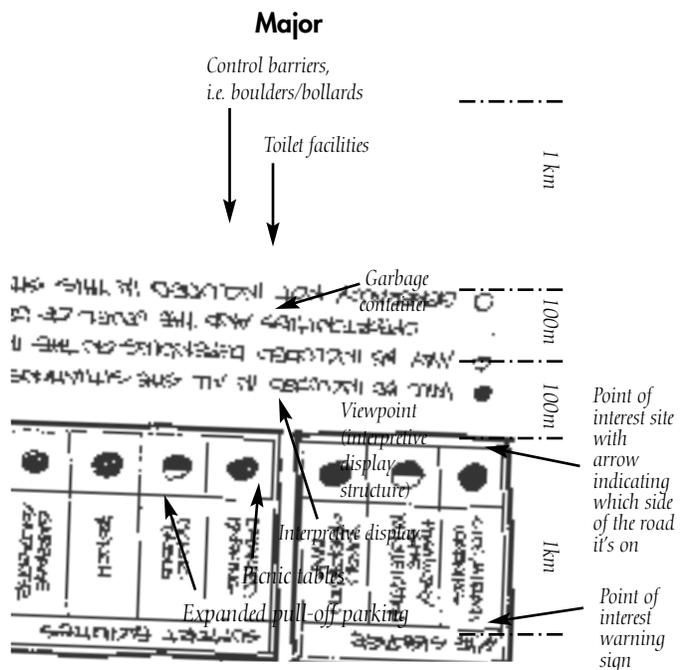
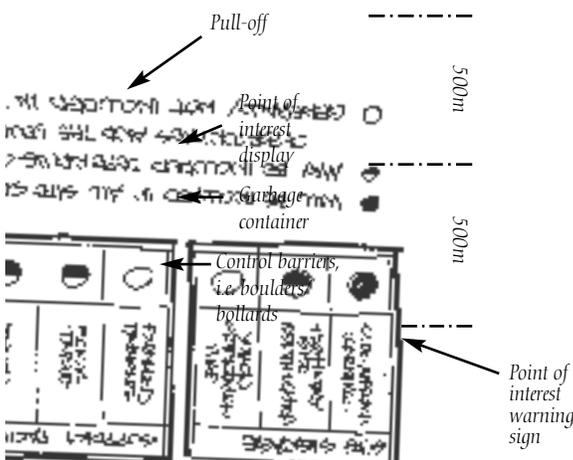
Minor

### SITE-SPECIFIC:

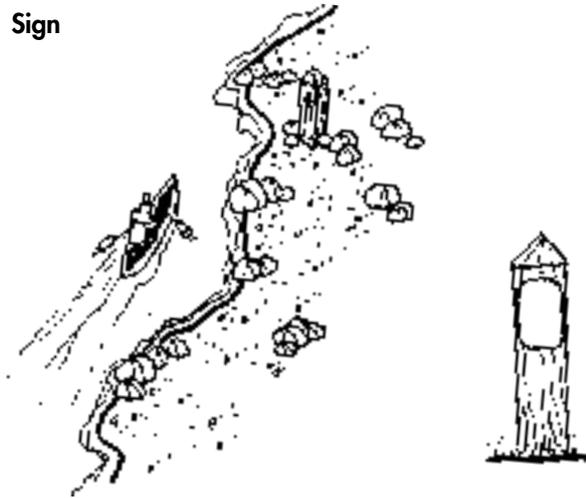
MAJOR  
MINOR

	SITE SIGNAGE			SUPPORT FACILITIES					
	Site Approach Warning	Highway Site Interpretation	Yukon Orientation Map	Expanded Parking	Picnic Table	Bench	Garbage Container	Toilet Facility	Interpretive Support Structure
MAJOR	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
MINOR	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

- Will be included in all site situations
- May be included depending on the interpretive opportunities and the level of development
- Generally not included in this site situation



**Sign**

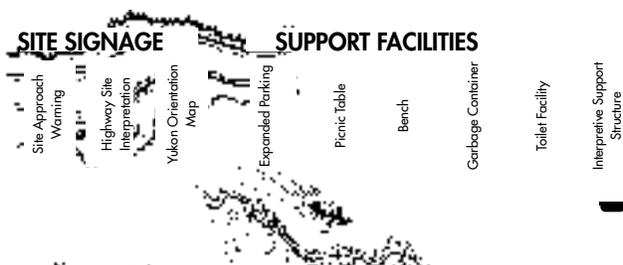


**Site Specific - River**

River and backcountry site specific signage is handled differently than roadside sites as illustrated to the left. A differentiation between major and minor sites has been made as well as between highway and river corridor. The latter distinction recognizes the different experiential priorities of the backcountry traveller as well as the practical maintenance realities of trying to service river corridor sites. Elaborate signs and infrastructure are generally out of place and intrusive in a backcountry or wilderness corridor environment. The level of supporting infrastructure should be consistent with wilderness management principles such as individual "pack-in, pack-out" responsibilities. Other mediums such as guidebooks, maps and brochures keyed to sites may be more effective than signs. The principle here is "less is more".

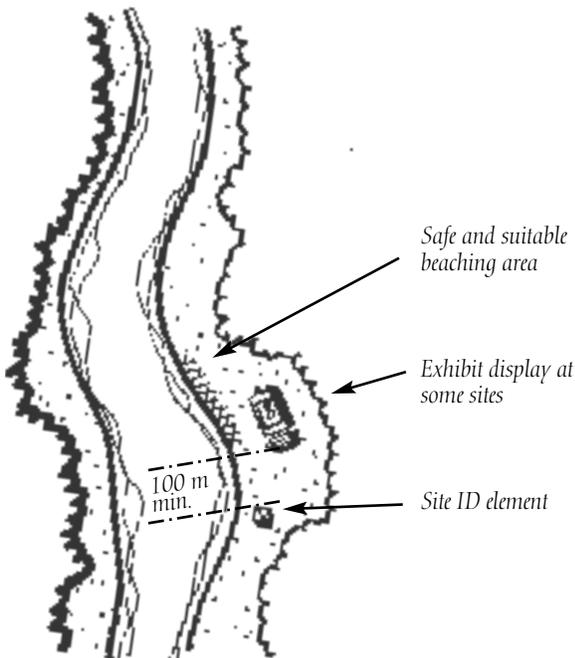
Hootalinqua would be an example of a typical major river site while Stewart Island would be a minor site. Exceptions to this rule would include road accessible campgrounds on the river such as Minto Landing and major historic sites such as Ft. Selkirk.

**Features**

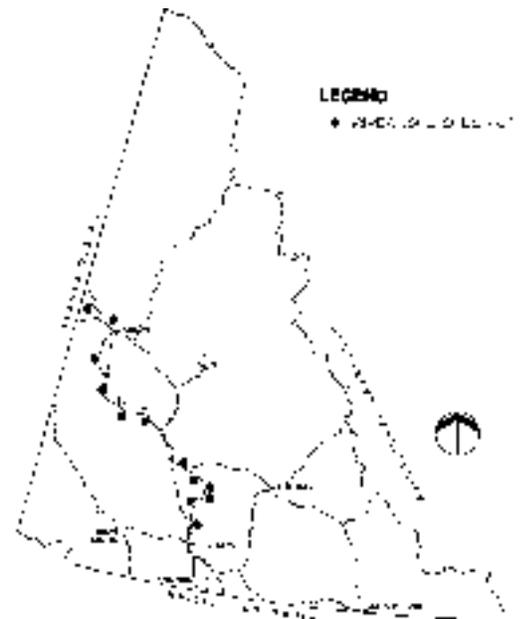


- Will be included in all site situations
- May be included depending on the interpretive opportunities and the level of development
- Generally not included in this site situation

**Layout**



**Map**



### 3.3 Strategy Application

Specific to the proposed design system is the recognition that certain guidelines are critical to its success. The system needs a common context and structure which still allows for flexibility in the use of different sign styles/material and adaptability to accommodate signage approaches currently in use.

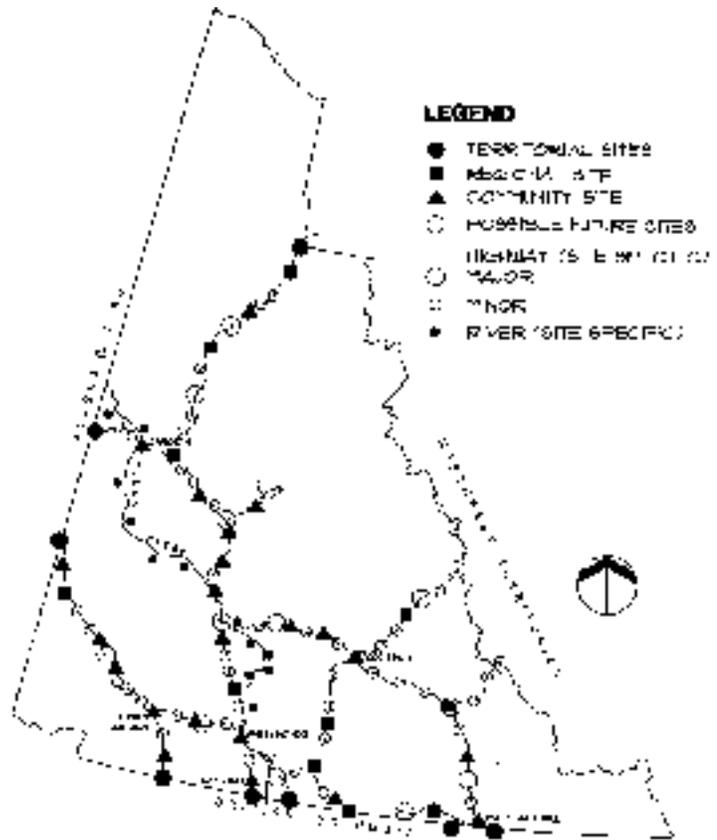
Subject, approach, overall design, colour combinations, surface preparation, materials, angle of installation, lighting, maintenance, quality of construction, layout and format, lettering and shoreline will all affect the appearance and success of a particular sign. The site layout, access, signs and support facilities will also affect the success of the installation. Each design should be presented to the Interdepartmental Sign Committee for review and approval.

The chart to the right graphically illustrates how the signage hierarchy can be applied across the Yukon.

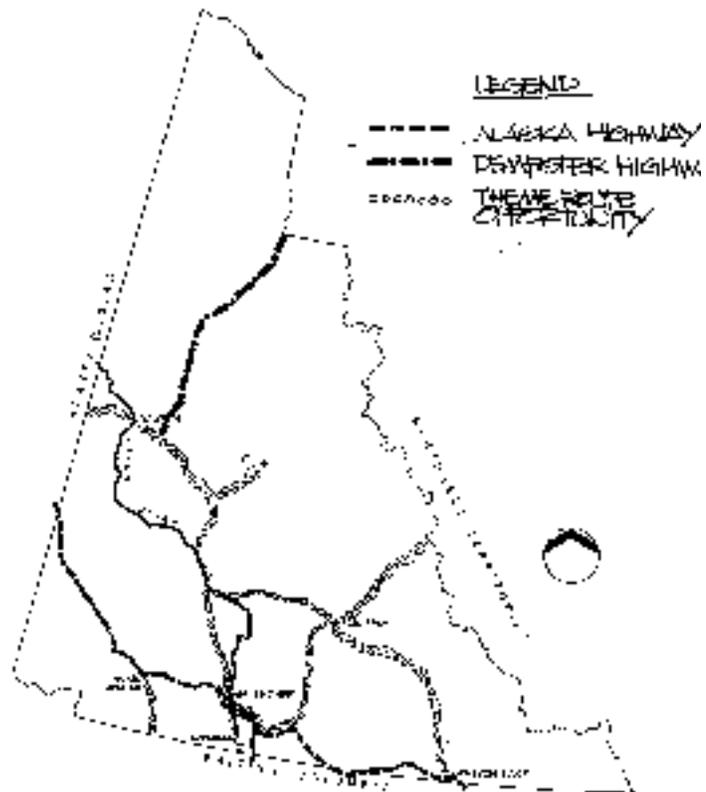
Various theme concepts can be applied to different corridors. For example, the signage program for the Alaska Highway in 1992 commemorates construction of the road. The Canol Road also has a similar history that can be thematically represented as well as potential to develop associated story lines describing the original First Nation travel route between Ross River and Ft. Norman. Theme route opportunities are illustrated to the right

Shape, form and colour could be used as unifying elements consistent with the pattern established by the border crossing signage. The level of infrastructure development should correspond to their interpretive significance with all infrastructure elements present.

Appendix 3 contains 11 drawings illustrating the existing sign database in graphic form. The first letter of the drawing number is the highway code which will be cross-referenced to the computerized sign inventory.



*Sign Hierarchy Application*



*Sign Hierarchy Application*

### Strategy Management Partnerships

It has been recognized from the outset that successful program implementation is dependent on maintaining and enhancing the current level of inter-agency co-operation.

#### First Nations Involvement

Yukon First Nations history is an essential component of the interpretive strategy in order to present an “accurate, balanced and representative story of the Yukon’s diversified natural and cultural heritage”. Land Claims Settlement Legislation provides for direct First Nations involvement in all matters related to the protection of their history and culture. Interpretive signage and site development fall within this definition.

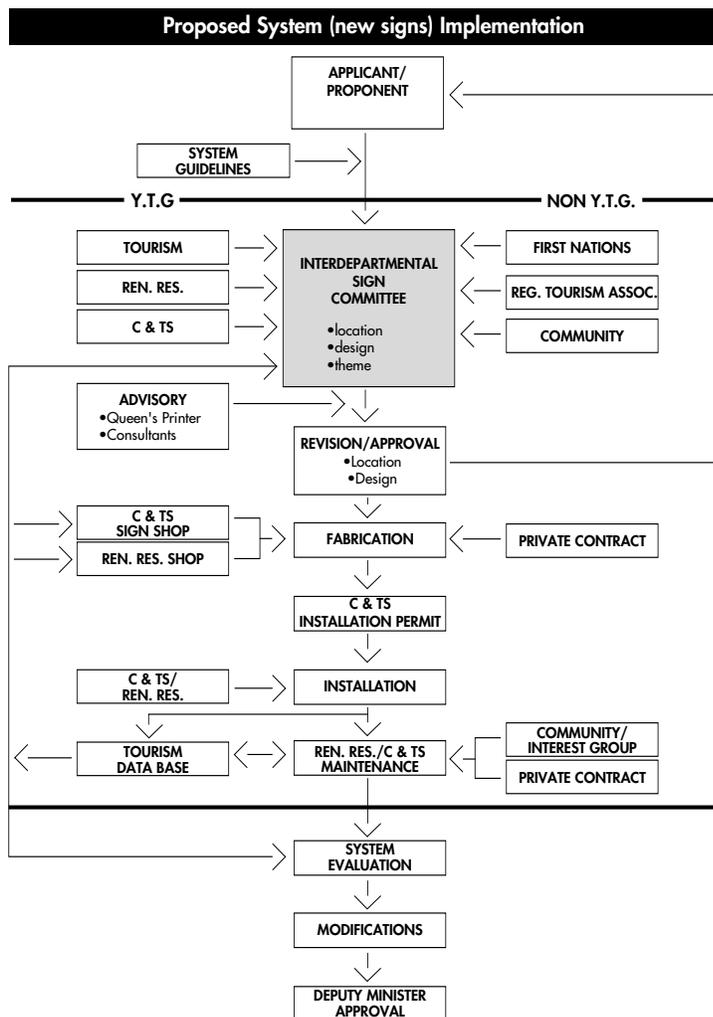
To this end Yukon First Nations will:

- be provided the opportunity to participate directly in the planning, theme development and presentation of interpretive opportunities within their traditional territories as prescribed in the applicable land claims settlement legislation
- be consulted on site redevelopment and signage replacement where First Nations interests have been identified
- be provided the opportunity to review and approve message translations where a First Nations component is included

#### Program Management Structure

The program management’s structure is based on co-operative partnership principles and modeled after the Wildlife Viewing Committee. It gives priority to program objectives and sets out a common process for dealing with all interpretive signage applications. Roles and responsibilities are dictated by the type of application, interpretive function and agency mandate. Illustrations on this page and the next describe the application process in flow chart form for new sign proposals and sign/site rationalization.

The common ingredient to both processes is the role of the interdepartmental sign committee. The core committee would be made up of the three departments currently responsible for some aspect of program delivery. Membership would be increased depending on the type of proposal before the committee and include both the initiating agency and affected interests. Thus an application in Klwane Country for example, could be brought forward by the regional tourism association and because of the location, involve both Parks Canada and the Champagne–Aishihik First Nation in the review committee. (It is assumed the applicant consults the system guidelines and this interpretive strategy in preparing their proposal.)



Thus the Sign Committee can focus on location, design, theme representation and maintenance issues in their review to arrive at a decision.

Once approved, there are several fabrication options including the C&TS and Parks shops or a private contractor. Prior to erection an installation permit is required from the Transportation Maintenance Branch. The same options are available for sign installation. Where maintenance is concerned more options are available including the local municipality or an interest group.

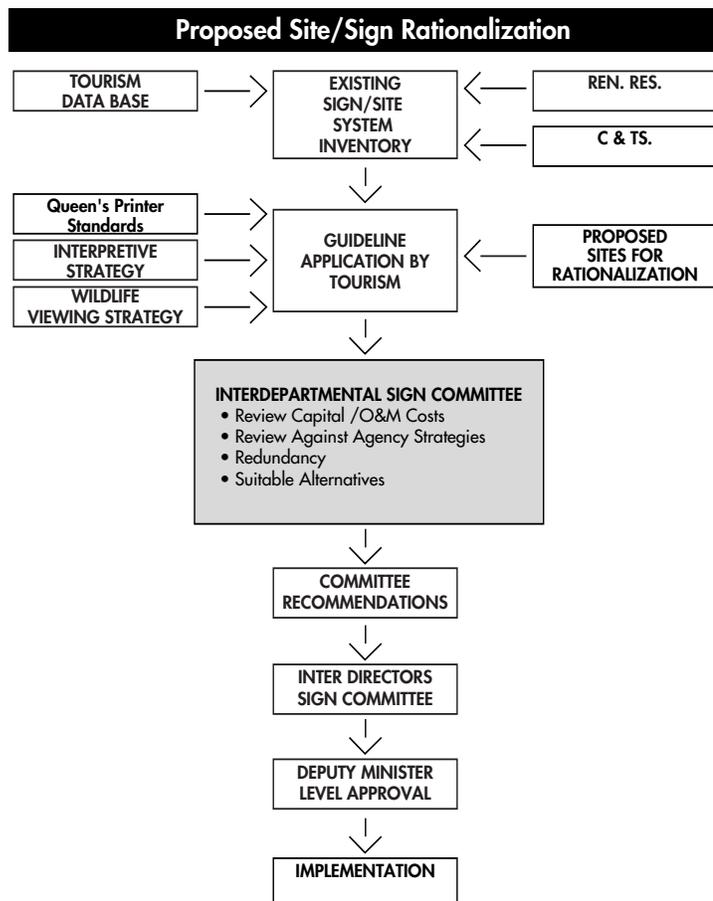
The process also includes provision for the approved application to be added to the Tourism database and eventually become part of the subsequent system evaluation process.

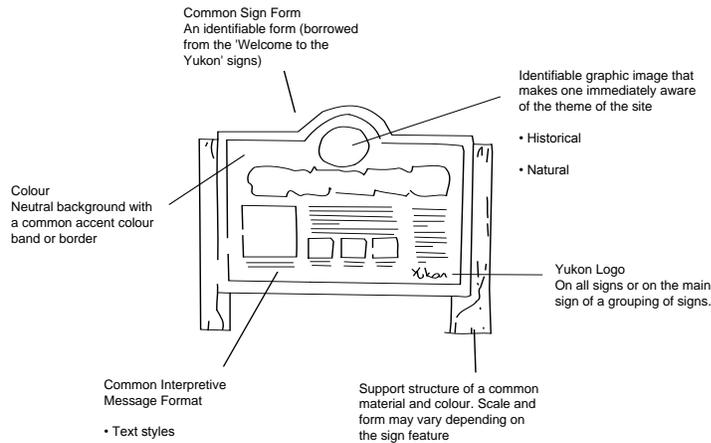
The evaluation process can be initiated as a result of the annual inspections or after a suitable implementation period to assess program effectiveness. It could for example, be timed to coincide with a visitor exit survey but should as a minimum occur at the mid point of anticipated sign system life (5 years). If major program adjustments are required the proposed revisions would be referred to the affected interdepartmental Directors prior to submission to the deputy Minister for approval.

Sign/site rationalization follows a slightly different process. Heritage Branch of Yukon Tourism is the lead agency responsible for initiating the review. Since it is charged with maintaining the database and has the most interpretive signage responsibilities it should initiate the process. The first step has already been taken in developing a new computerized database. The next step involves updating and completing the empty database records. The record should also include an as-built design sketch. Wildlife viewing sites should also be added to the data base. Each location should be assessed in the field against the broader, interpretive and wildlife viewing strategies and, where applicable, the more specific Dempster Highway Plan. In the future, other specific corridor plans will be based on this overall strategy.

The interdepartmental sign committee then reviews the capital and O&M costs associated with the rationalization proposal, discusses alternatives and evaluates the level of redundancy against agency mandates and operating strategies. The committee recommendations are forwarded to the affected department Deputy Minister for approval.

***“Interpretive signage within the campgrounds, parks, and historic sites or along off-road recreational trails remains the responsibility of the agency with management responsibility.”***





## System Development Policy

4.1

Sign use and format should meet the following general policy guidelines:

### Form

The Territory has recently approved a new entrance sign design which will establish a new visual identity for visitors. As a basic design component the form or forms suggested by this sign should be used as a common element in the development of all new signs along road and river corridors.

### Colour

Like form, colour too should be used as a repetitive component to strengthen a unifying theme for signage such as in a corridor interpretive plan. The final colour palette should include a neutral background colour and supporting accent colour.

### Yukon Signature

The Yukon signature should be used on all sign panels as specified by the Queen's Printer. In groups of more than one attached signs, the signature should be displayed on the centre panel.



Yukon Government Wordmark prominently displayed

## Site & Sign Rationalization

4.1.1

The sign site rationalization process is described earlier. The priorities for sign/site rationalization should take into account the results of the site inspections conducted during the summer of 1995 and the application of the new strategy hierarchy. First priority should be given to those areas where road construction is anticipated. Second priority should be placed on resolving sign/site issues related to the upcoming anniversaries.

The third priority should be to resolve obvious anomalies such as the signage placement on the Carmacks Roadhouse. Fourth priority should be given to the elimination of site duplication to reduce interdepartmental maintenance costs. Fifth priority should look at site consolidation to reduce upgrade costs to meet strategy guidelines.

## New Site & Sign Development

4.1.2

The key to the recommended strategy is reaching agreement between all affected interests to put all government sponsored interpretive signage proposals through the standard review process. It is important that this occur right from the beginning so the procedure gains acceptance quickly and builds credibility.



New Territorial Entrance sign design

Priorities for new sign/site development should focus on regional orientation and highway junctions, ecoregion identification and the upcoming anniversaries. Any community signage initiatives should come from the communities themselves following completion and adoption of the new commercial highway signage policy being developed by C&TS. The community kiosk program, if approved, would be the logical starting point with applications directed through the new Sign Committee.



*Information kiosks should be designed to reflect location and blend with site conditions*

**4.1.2.1 Site Support Facilities**

Each site has its own particular needs. The placement, types of materials used, and site layout should be consistent with the character of the site. For example vertical structures are out of place in a tundra setting and need to be screened accordingly. Depending on the site category a range of supporting facilities is required in addition to the basic interpretive sign(s). The following is an overview of possible facilities.

**Information Kiosks**

Generally these are small shelters used in combination with interpretive signs or exhibits. They contain panels on basic orientation, and in the case of a regional site, profile the regional historic, natural and cultural features.



**Toilets**

Toilets should be included for most sites and constructed to Yukon Parks design standards. Their site placement should be considered early in the design process so they are not visually obtrusive and do not obstruct views. However they should also be easily accessible to the traveller and take into account the need for weekly cleaning. The current lime green colour choice should be reconsidered as it is visually obtrusive.

**Picnic Tables**

Picnic tables that are located beside parking areas can encourage visitors to stay longer. Again the characteristics of individual sites will dictate the suitability of their use. Placement should also consider accessibility, weather and noise protection from the adjacent road and proximity to garbage cans and parking. Placement should not obstruct other visitor viewing of the interpretive signage.

**Garbage Containers**

All road accessible sites should include the standard Yukon Parks bearproof garbage container. In some cases placement of the garbage container can be integrated into the design of other facility elements to reduce visual obtrusiveness without compromising usability.



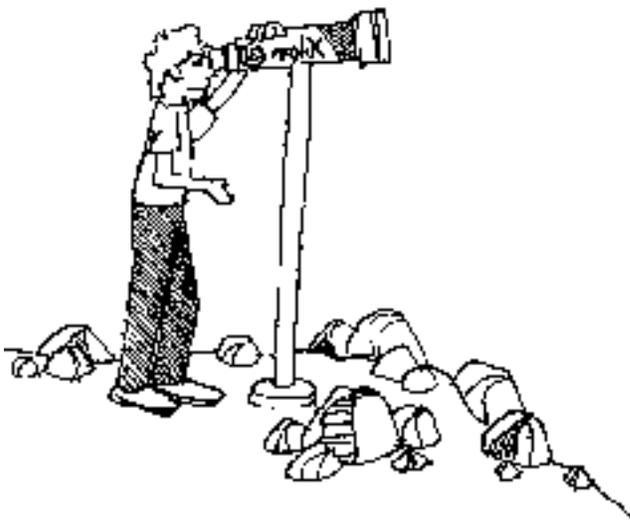
*Toilets should be unobtrusive yet easily accessible*



Viewing platforms can improve viewing angles and limit access beyond a certain point



Bench installed in conjunction with viewing platform compliments interpretive feature in unobtrusive manner



Viewscopes help direct user's sight to distant views

### Viewing Platforms

These raised platforms with railings can improve viewing angles for visitors. They can also control use of an area by limiting access to a point. Because they are expensive to construct and maintain, they should only be used when other natural site features cannot be taken advantage of.

### Brochure Dispenser

These outdoor structures are designed to store, protect and disperse interpretive or information brochures. They require regular maintenance to ensure that the brochures are available and are most appropriate in conjunction with major sites such as Five Finger Rapids where there is a significant interpretive trail.

### Benches

Located close to viewing areas or adjacent trails, benches provide users with a place to rest, sit and enjoy the scenery.

### Viewscopes

These interpretive aids help to direct users sight to distant landmarks such as mountain ranges or areas where wildlife may be seen on a regular basis. Viewscopes can be as simple as a tube directed towards a landmark of interest.

## Signage Design & Materials Application

4.2

Until now, interpretive signs have been constructed primarily of wood, with a routed message. Wood signs can continue to be used in many instances. They are easy to rout and sandblast, resistant to rot, and produce a rustic ambience. Other material including photo-sensitive material, porcelain enamel, embedded images and metal can be used effectively for interpretive signage, and may better fit specific themes than using only wood.

Below are a number of conditions that should apply to the signage system.

■ *Signs should be complementary to the theme and concepts being interpreted.*

This means looking into the use of different sign types; sandblasted cedar, silk screening on wood and metal, and the use of concrete or rocks for sign supports. The materials used should be consistent with theme and setting.

■ *Signs should be designed for specific user groups and the intended season of use.*

Different types of signs with various standards will be required for interpretive trails, roadside pull-offs and for specific interpretive resources.

In winter, signs will be covered with snow and therefore special designs will be necessary to keep specific signs functional. A completely vertical sign might be best for use at interpretive sites to be used through winter. For special winter interpretation, signs with a protective roof might best serve the situation.

■ *Signs must be designed to withstand vandalism such as gunshots and carving.*

No signage is completely resistant to vandalism. Wood is better than most metals in areas of hunting, as the bullet usually passes through wood where it only bends metal and exposes it to rust and surface deterioration. Metal signs are more resistant to carving, weathering, decay and insect attack and might be used where vandalism is expected.

Fixture and placement of the various signs will influence vandalism and where possible, these considerations should be taken into account during the design and implementation. In hunting areas, signs should be designed so that they do not present good targets. A vertical sign, specifically ones meant to convey the law, makes an ideal target. Care should be taken to place signs in locations where they cannot easily be damaged and remain readable. Supports might be protected by boulders with designs angled to make them difficult to hit.

■ *Signs should be constructed to prevent damage by animals.*

Materials that have an adverse taste to gnawing animals and birds such as porcupines, squirrels and woodpeckers should not be used. Plywood is a common example.

Often signs are attractive perching areas for birds, and the sign receives a white washing. As birds usually prefer to perch on a prominent and easily accessible perch, these can be provided away from the sign as direct appendages where this activity proves to be a problem.



*Well designed community sign*



*Protective roof effectively sheds snow from signage but parking area ploughing leaves berm, making it difficult to get close enough to read*



*Gun-shot damage*

## Interpretive Sign Use

Interpretive specialists have several media from which to choose. Each medium has inherent qualities that enable it to do a particular job better than any of the others.

A “yes” answer to any of these questions indicates that signs may not be as effective as a naturalist, exhibit, talking sign, audio station, or brochures. On the other hand, if the interpretive need can be served by a medium that is self-paced, photogenic, in place at all times, inexpensive to operate and maintain, a high quality interpretive sign or label should be considered. By keeping the objectives, audience and message in mind, the selection of the appropriate medium will be simplified. A variety of useful reference sources is provided in the bibliography.

## Sign & Site Design Considerations

### Sign Design

First impressions are important. This is true of signs as well as people. Though unrelated to the message itself, the quality of design and maintenance of signs may be equated with the quality of the message. Presumably, the sign with the best appearance will have the best message and the greatest expectation of reward. Hence, the design of the sign is an important factor in determining whether or not visitors will read it and accept its message.

Signs should be designed to minimize their intrusion on the site. The use of local materials for the sign and its support can make the sign more aesthetically acceptable and will help promote the theme of the area. For example, rock can be used in treeless areas, and massive posts in areas of old-growth timber.

The height of a sign can also be designed to fit the environment. In open, exposed settings, low profile signs are more appropriate; in a forest setting, elevated signs may be the best. In the Yukon, snow conditions vary significantly and may have a bearing on site placement and height. Many highway pull-outs are still ploughed so vertical signs will be readable (i.e. Takhini Crossing) while their lower counterparts with viewing decks (i.e. Bove Island) are covered by snow or are inaccessible because of a lack of maintenance.

### Message

The label for an object may need only the common name to identify it. However, if it is accompanied by the scientific name, phonetic spelling, and a map illustrating its geographic distribution or range increases the educational value. It is also more likely to be remembered.

### Sign use checklist

- ✓ Is a sign the right interpretive solution?
- ✓ Is another pull-out needed or can it be added to an existing site?
- ✓ Is the proposal consistent with the strategy?
- ✓ Has it been reviewed by the sign committee?
- ✓ Are program objectives being met by this medium's unique qualities?
- ✓ Is personal contact with visitors desirable and economically feasible?
- ✓ Does the message involve an object which can be exhibited?
- ✓ Can the message be enhanced with recorded authentic voices, bird songs, or other sound effects?
- ✓ Will the majority of visitors be near their radios or in situations where they are likely to tune in because they are looking for particular information?
- ✓ Do you want to provide something for the visitors to take home with them?

Interpretive messages are more complex. Regardless of length, they must perform a number of functions. They must gain visitors' attention, hold their interest, provide them with an understanding of the subject, and in some cases evoke a behavioral response. In a short message, these functions must be performed by the headline, lead paragraph, interior paragraph(s), and closing paragraph. The facts, spelling, grammar, and word choice must be accurate, concise and appealing to a variety of readers. Particular attention should be paid to language translations since words in one language may not have a direct counterpart.

First Nation involvement is crucial when translations are used or the message deals with their history and cultural.

### Accuracy and Clarity

The text must be accurate. If visitors notice the slightest error, their confidence in the whole message will be shaken. Review each phase of the sign production process word by word to see that errors have not been made in typesetting or stencil cutting. Putting even minor errors on public display may detract from the interpretive message and reflect in a negative manner on the program's administration. In a project representing a substantial investment of time, energy, and resources, a small scale model or mock-up may avoid costly mistakes and needless errors.

### Readability

Whether or not a visitor reads an interpretive sign depends on what Wilbur Shramm has called the "fraction of selection":

$$\text{Fraction of Selection} = \frac{\text{Expectation of Reward}}{\text{Effort Required}}$$

The larger the fraction for a particular sign, the more visitors will read it. Hence, the interpretive specialist must strive to maximize the fraction. This can be done by increasing the expectation of reward or decreasing the effort required.

Writing styles can also affect reader interest. If the style is very formal with unfamiliar words, the readers' interest and expectation of reward will be low. Hence, messages should be written in a conversational style (second person), using personal words and personal sentences.

A long block of continuous text is uninviting and discouraging. Therefore, if you want the average traveller to consider reading the message, it must be short and appear easy to read. Readability can be measured with tests such as the Flesch Readability Scale or Write Formula. These are included in the appendix 2.



Simple clear message which raises visitor interest



Well designed sign text and graphic combination

<b>How Typographic Factors Affect Sign Legibility and Reader Comprehension</b>			
	<b>Comprehension Level</b>		
	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Layout with black headlines	67%	19%	14%
Layout using high chroma color headlines	17%	18%	65%
Layout using low chroma color headlines	52%	28%	20%
Text printed in black	70%	19%	11%
Low intensity text color (deep purple, PMS 259)	51%	13%	36%
Medium intensity text color (French blue, PMS 286)	29%	22%	49%
Muted text color (olive green, PMS 399)	10%	13%	77%
High intensity text color (cyan or warm red)	10%	9%	81%
Black text on 10% cyan tint	68%	24%	8%
Black text on 20% cyan tint	56%	21%	23%
Black text on 30% cyan tint	38%	19%	43%
Black text on 40% cyan tint	22%	12%	66%
Black text on 10% black	63%	22%	15%
Black text on 20% black	33%	18%	49%
Black text on 30% black	3%	10%	87%
Black text on white	70%	19%	11%
White text on black	0%	12%	88%
Layout with totally justified setting	67%	19%	14%
Layout with ragged right setting	38%	22%	40%
Layout with ragged left setting	10%	18%	72%
Text printed in Times Roman	70%	19%	11%
Text printed in Times Roman Bold	30%	20%	50%

Adapted from "Type of Layout" by Glin Wheldon, Strathmoor Press

Although brief messages are desirable, some subjects require more text than others. The psychologically discouraging effect of seeing a long block of text can be minimized by using generous margins, large type, short lines, and short paragraphs. The advertising industry often uses a copy to background area ratio of 60/40%. Subheadings should also be used to "break up" the text and help carry the story along. The reading ease of the text is also improved by using short words and sentences.

A picture is worth a thousand words. This is especially true for interpretive signs and labels. Pictures carry the message and are strong attention getters. Simple line drawings or diagrams are best for maximum clarity and understanding.

Research studies of typographical factors affecting legibility provide guidelines for decreasing the effort required to read print. Most research is based on standard reading distances. However, several of the guidelines can be safely generalized and applied to interpretive signs, which often require greater viewing distances. Both the *Design Guidelines for Yukon Parks* and Parks Canada provide suitable guidelines. Type size should be consistent with Yukon target markets. For example, a high proportion of highway travellers are over 45 years of age and eyesight deteriorates with age. Thus a larger type size with good colour contrast is more readable to this user group.

The most legible colour combinations provide high brightness contrast between letters and background. For labels, black letters on a yellow background are better than red letters on a green background. Also, dark letters on a light background are better than light letters on a dark background. Hence, black on white is better than white on black. However, where a sign is to be used in subdued light, such as in a forest or to be read at night, the light letter on a dark background will be easier to read.

Although no real difference in legibility exists between dull and glossy reading surfaces, people assume that dull surfaces promote legibility, and prefer them to glossy surfaces. By providing signs with dull finishes, you can eliminate reflection and glare and meet the expectations of visitors.

The optimum angle of the reading surface to line of sight is 90 degrees. A deviation of as little as 15 degrees from this optimum can significantly decrease the efficiency of reading. Hence, interpretive signs should be oriented at 90 degrees to the line of sight of the average visitor. Steps can be provided at podium-style interpretive signs, horizontal display cases, and other interpretive devices where children may have trouble viewing them.

All modern uncluttered type faces or letter styles such as Helvetica Medium, Scotch Ropman, Garamond, or Antique are equally legible. For maximum legibility, avoid American Typewriter and the very decorative or highly ornamented styles, such as Old English, particularly in long blocks of text. Some letter styles are most appropriate with historic, scientific or artistic messages.

The most legible type form for interpretive signs is lower case, bold face. Messages written totally in capitals or italics are harder to read and should be used only to give special emphasis to a word, phrase, or sentence.

### 4.3 Site Inspection & Sign Maintenance Issues

Interpretive sign maintenance breaks down into two issues, site maintenance and sign repair. Both can be programmed to reflect design and construction standards as well as levels of use. Inspection and maintenance standards need to reflect program objectives, audience needs and service capabilities. For example, developing a maintenance program for the Yukon River corridor is much more difficult and costly than along the more accessible highway corridors where Highway maintenance crews pass by sites while undertaking their regular duties. Visitor volumes along rivers are minimal in comparison to roads and thus maintenance frequency can be adjusted accordingly.

#### 4.3.1 Principles

The following maintenance principles should be incorporated into the maintenance guidelines adopted for Yukon interpretive signage:

- the agency responsible for sign and site development has the responsibility to set site and sign maintenance standards in conjunction with the agencies asked to take on the maintenance responsibilities
- the public agency (or private contractor) responsible for site and sign maintenance should be the agency best able to undertake that function in a cost effective manner
- a standard inspection and maintenance record should be developed and maintained for all interpretive signs and sites to facilitate program evaluation and budgeting
- interpretive signs should be inspected at minimum at the beginning and end of each visitor season along highway corridors and at least once a year on the Yukon River

### Recommended Type Sizes U.S. Park Service Guidelines

Vertical Measurement	Viewing Distance
10 mm	1 Meters
13 mm	2 Meters
60 mm	9 Meters
100 mm	18 Meters
<b>Titles</b>	
60 - 72	Point Minimum
<b>Sub-titles</b>	
40 - 48	Point Minimum
<b>Body Text</b>	
24	Point Minimum
<b>Captions</b>	
18	Point Minimum

### The Main Sign Maintenance Issues Include:

- safety and public liability associated with the risk of accident due to poor maintenance resulting in facility disrepair and vandalism
- sanitation including toilet education and garbage pick-up
- parking and pull-off grading
- seasonality and disproportionate frequency of use of some sites
- aesthetics including the image of Yukon projected by the maintenance standards adopted
- costs associated with the above
- maintenance responsibility

*"The agency responsible for sign and site development has the responsibility to fund maintenance."*

**YUKON INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE CAPITAL COSTS**

	TERRITORIAL SITE	REGIONAL SITE	COMMUNITY SITE	MAJOR	MINOR
<b>FACILITY STANDARDS MINIMUM SERVICE PACKAGE</b>	- PULL OFF/PARKING - BEAR PROOF GARBAGE CONTAINER - WELCOME TO YUKON SIGN FEATURE - YUKON ORIENTATION MAP - 1KM SITE APPROACH SIGN - BASIC SITE DEVELOPMENT - GRAVEL PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION	- PULL OFF/PARKING - BEAR PROOF GARBAGE CONTAINER - WELCOME TO YUKON SIGN FEATURE - YUKON ORIENTATION MAP (may or may not be incorporated into the display kiosk) - 100m SITE APPROACH SIGN (2) - BASIC SITE DEVELOPMENT - GRAVEL PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION - TOILET FACILITY (2) - PICNIC TABLE (2)	- PULL OFF/PARKING - BEAR PROOF GARBAGE CONTAINER - WELCOME TO YUKON SIGN FEATURE - 500m SITE APPROACH SIGN - BASIC SITE DEVELOPMENT - GRAVEL PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION	- PULL OFF/PARKING - BEAR PROOF GARBAGE CONTAINER - INTERPRETIVE SIGN FEATURE - 100m SITE APPROACH SIGN (2) - BASIC SITE DEVELOPMENT - GRAVEL PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION - TOILET FACILITY (2) - PICNIC TABLE (1)	- PULL OFF/PARKING - BEAR PROOF GARBAGE CONTAINER - INTERPRETIVE SIGN FEATURE - 500m SITE APPROACH SIGN (2)
<b>COST MAGNITUDE MINIMUM SERVICE PACKAGE UPGRADES</b>	\$24,000.00-\$28,000.00	\$46,000.00-\$50,000.00	\$20,000.00-\$24,000.00	\$33,000.00-\$37,000.00	\$17,000.00-\$21,000.00
*EXPANDED PARKING AREA	\$65/m2	\$65/m2	\$65/m2	\$65/m2	\$65/m2
*PAVE EXISTING PARKING	\$25/m2	\$25/m2	\$25/m2	\$25/m2	\$25/m2
*HARD SURFACE AREAS	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2
*BOLLARD/POSTS/BUILDERS	\$25/ea	\$25/ea	\$25/ea	\$25/ea	\$25/m2
*EXPANDED SIGN FEATURE	\$2,000/panel	\$2,500/panel	\$2,000/panel	\$2,500/panel	\$1,500/panel
*PICNIC TABLES	\$300/ea	\$300/ea	\$300/ea	\$300/ea	\$300/ea
*BENCH	\$500/ea	\$500/ea	\$500/ea	\$500/ea	\$500/ea
*GRAVEL TRAIL	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2
*BEARPROOF GARBAGE CONTAINER	\$1,000	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200
*TOILETS	\$2,000-5,000	\$2,000-5,000	\$2,000-5,000	\$2,000-5,000	\$2,000-5,000
*VIEW-DECK	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2	\$50/m2
*BOARDWALK	\$100/m	\$100/m	\$100/m	\$100/m	\$100/m
*OBSERVATION TOWER	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
*WOOD STAIRS	\$75/m	\$75/m	\$75/m	\$75/m	\$75/m

Costs represent estimated pricing for supply, and installation of each element. Costs do not include design of interpretive display features or development of interpretive messages.

**Capital & Maintenance Cost Projections**

Site development and maintenance cost projections have been developed for each of the five different sign categories. The chart to the left shows the estimated basic capital costs for a minimum service package with upgrade options for supply and installation. Prices will of course vary with location and whether site development work can be co-ordinated with highway improvement projects. Individual sign installation costs exclusive of site development may range up to \$3,000-further emphasizing the need for careful construction coordination and scheduling.

It is important that the sign fabricators in the Department of Renewable Resources and C&TS sign shops be brought into the feedback loop so they can see how various materials and fabrication processes are standing up to use. This helps solve problems such as UV light weathering and varnish finish problems expeditiously. Field maintenance crews and construction staff often see simple ways to fix design problems based on their experience and this expertise should not be overlooked.

For planning and budgeting purposes the following lifespan standards can be applied:

- signs 8-10 years
- toilets 5-8 years
- bear proof garbage containers 10 years
- tables and benches 5-8 years

A number of factors affect pull-off size and parking area configuration including:

- level of anticipated use (i.e. volume)
- site conditions including proximity to fill
- type and combination of uses (i.e. interpretive site and truck safety stop)
- visibility and access safety considerations

As a general guideline the following minimum size standards would apply:

- |                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Minor Site (&lt;400 m2)</b> | <b>Major Site (&gt;700 m2)</b> |
| ■ 1 truck/tour bus             | ■ 2 trucks/tour buses          |
| ■ 2-3 RV's                     | ■ 5 RV's                       |
| ■ 3 vehicles                   | ■ 5 vehicles                   |

The chart to the right estimates the yearly anticipated maintenance costs associated with each site category. Maintenance costs will vary significantly with level of use and degree of development. For example, Five Finger Rapids and Bove Island are popular stopping points and have higher general maintenance requirements because of the level of use. However, even if physical visitor numbers are comparable, operating costs for the Five Finger Rapids site will be higher because of the more extensive development that has taken place.

Lead time is a critical consideration for inter-departmental coordination to work effectively. Lead time considerations affect:

- sign/site location planning
- materials fabrication purchase
- construction and maintenance scheduling
- capital planning
- volume of anticipated work

From sign conception to fabrication and erection, allowing for the natural budgeting cycle will take from 6 months to 1 year.

Based on existing sign inventory alone and a 10 year replacement schedule, 12 to 15 signs will need to be replaced annually. In addition a 5% allowance should be included in the budget to cover exceptional situations such as vandalism replacement costs.

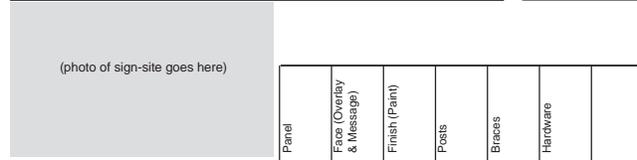
### YUKON INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE OPERATION and MAINTENANCE COSTS

SCHEDULE	ACTIVITY	YEARLY COST PER SITE			SPECIFIC INTERPRETIVE SITE	
		TERRITORIAL SITE	REGIONAL SITE	COMMUNITY SITE	MAJOR	MINOR
WEEKLY May-Sept.	- EMPTY GARBAGE CONTAINERS - PICK UP LITTER - BRIEF VISUAL CHECK OF SITE and REPORT DAMAGE	\$700.00	\$700.00	\$700.00	\$700.00	\$700.00
Bi-WEEKLY April and Oct.		\$300.00	\$450.00	\$300.00	\$400.00	\$300.00
MONTHLY Nov.-March		\$200.00	\$300.00	\$200.00	\$300.00	\$200.00
MONTHLY May-Sept.	- PUMP OUT TOILETS* - CHECK FOR VANDALISM and REPAIR - CHECK FOR GRAFFITI and CLEAN - CLEAN INTERPRETIVE DISPLAY - FILL OUT MONTHLY MAINTENANCE REPORT	\$200.00	\$250.00	\$2,000.00	\$250.00	\$2,000.00
Bi-MONTHLY Oct.-April		\$200.00	\$250.00	\$200.00	\$250.00	\$150.00
		\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$150.00	\$100.00
ANNUALLY	- REGRADE GRAVEL PULL OFFS - SPRING CLEAN-UP - PRE-STAIN FURNISHINGS - FALL CHECK-UP	\$500.00	\$1,000.00	\$500.00	\$700.00	\$400.00
		\$250.00	\$450.00	\$250.00	\$400.00	\$250.00
		\$200.00	\$1,000.00	\$500.00	\$450.00	\$200.00
TOTAL		\$2,000.00	\$7,050.00	\$3,250.00	\$4,200.00	\$2,650.00

\* Maintenance schedule may vary depending on level of use. Tank pump-out costs average \$100/fixture tank

**Yukon Interpretive Signage** *maintenance form*

Site Location-Site Name	Inspection
Agency Responsible	Annual
Sign No.                      Sign Category	Spring
Inspected by _____ Date	Fall
Maintenance Standard	3 Years



Problem	Panel	Face (Overlay & Message)	Finish (Paint)	Posts	Braces	Hardware
Cracks, Scratches, Tears						
Ply Separation						
Blisters, Rot, Corrosion						
Missing						
Unstable						
Dirty						

**Recommendation** *(Remove/Replace, On-site or shop repair)*

---

Site Condition	Cleanliness	On-site repair	Shop repair	Vandalised
Parking area				
Site cleanliness				
Outhouses & Waste Receptacles				
Benches, Tables & Other				
Decks & Railings				

**Remarks**

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A sample of a suggested maintenance form is included. The form can be used in conjunction with the automated database, but is intended more for day to day maintenance records. The redesigned form for the database has been set-up to allow the inspector to enter the data directly into a laptop computer at the time of the main inspections. The data can then be downloaded to the main database to save time and expense.

**4.5**

**Department of Tourism Development & Redevelopment Priorities**

Implementation of the Interpretive Strategy Framework requires prioritization. The following recommendations provide direction on the first steps for successful implementation of the new strategy. They include:

- beginning immediately to apply the strategy to an assessment of current sign requests and establishing the Interdepartmental Sign Committee to review the proposals
- updating the new computerized database and records during the 1995 summer inspections to reflect the strategy and new record keeping format
- assigning strategy hierarchy and outlining associated rationale to all existing sign sites
- prioritizing major regional sites by corridor and confirming current deficiencies based on the strategy
- preparing graphic standards by category
- working with C&TS to improve warning sign logo use and consistency
- identifying site rationalization needs and applying co-operative management arrangements to planning, program budgeting and maintenance procedures
- establishing program performance measures to assess strategy implementation progress
- developing a test program to evaluate effectiveness of new products (i.e. talking signs)

**Conclusions**

The Department of Tourism mandate for interpretive signs is defined in the strategy. It responds to the primary need for program coordination and formalizes a process for inter-agency cooperation. The present program has been re-organized to provide a simple, logical structure with a hierarchy of signage that allows program flexibility.

Accuracy, balance, diversity and representativeness are the key concepts reflected in the program logic. A departmental mission statement has been prepared which defines the program mandate:

***“To communicate an accurate, balanced and representative story promoting the Yukon’s diversified natural and cultural heritage.”***

The strategy provides guidelines for planning, design, capital budgeting and maintenance. Implementation priorities are explained and a rationale provided for the standards put forward. The biggest program deficiency was the lack of attention to planning for sign replacement and on-going maintenance. Criteria are now provided for site selection and program rationalization. A new computerized record system has been developed to facilitate program management and annual budgeting.

Based on the existing sign inventory alone and a 10 year replacement schedule, 12-15 signs need to be replaced annually. The most pressing new challenge is to improve regional orientation signage at highway junctions.



*“A picture is worth a thousand words”*

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## Appendix 1 - List of Contacts

### Department of Renewable Resources

Afan Jones	Outdoor Recreation Planner
Gary Vantell	Site Planner
Jack Schick	Parklands Interpretive Planner
Peter Frankish	Regional Superintendent
Hans Van De Werfhorst	Workshop foreperson
James Armstrong	Signmaker
Ed Leschart	Park Facilities Builder
Graham Baird	Wildlife Viewing Biologist
Julie Lefebvre	Wildlife Viewing Program Technician
Dave Mossop	Senior Small Game Biologist

### Department of Tourism

John Spicer	Director Industry Services
Robert Clark	Development Officer
Akio Saito	Development Officer (Dawson)
Ed Krahn	Museums Advisor
Doug Olynyk	Historic Sites Coordinator
Louise Profeit-Leblanc	Native Heritage Advisor
Robert Conrad	Acting/Historic Sites Planner
Greg Hare	Yukon Archaeologist
Ruth Gotthardt	Yukon Archaeologist
Pierre Germain	Market Research Officer

### Community & Transportation Services

Robert Magnuson	Manager, Maintenance & Planning
Mike McArthur	Maintenance Service Supervisor
Brian Tyhy	Maintenance Planning Technician
Eileen Fraser	Sign Shop Supervisor
Allan Nixon	Environmental Coordinator

### Industry

David Moyle	Executive Director TIAY
Pearle Callaghan	Executive Director, First Nation Tourism Industry Association of Yukon
Joe Muff	Total Point Inc.
Stephanie Churchhill	Inkspirationz Graphics
John Russell	Northwest Signs & Graphics
Mike Lane	Terra Firma Art Company
Duane Fast	Arcraft Advertising Ltd.
Terry-Lynn Gold	Sign Shop
Marg Wallace	Tundra Graphics & Silkscreen Ltd.

### Other

Dale Perry	Former Interpretive Sign Program Coordinator
Wanda Hook	Director, Industry Services, B.C. Ministry of Small Business & Culture
Sarah Gaunt	Champagne Aishihik First Nation
Brent Liddle	Canadian Park Service
Peter Simlinger	Graphic Designer, Vienna , Austria
Chris Robinson	Planning Advisor, Alberta Historic Sites & Archives

## Appendix 2 - Readability Formulas

### Flesch Readability Scale

1. Count the number of syllables in a 100 word sample (S).
2. Calculate the average number of words per sentence in the sample (W).
3. Calculate  $R = 206.835 - .846S - 1.015W$ .
4. Compare value to table:

Score	Reading Ease
90-100	very easy
80-90	easy
70-80	fairly easy
60-70	standard
50-60	fairly difficult
30-50	difficult
0-30	very difficult

Source: *The Art of Readable Writing* by Robert Flesch, 1949.

### The Write Formula

1. Count a 100 word sample
2. Count all one-syllable words except "the", "is", "are", "was", and "were". Count one point for each one-syllable word.
3. Count the number of sentences in the 100-word sample to the nearest period or semicolon and give three points for each sentence.
4. Add together the one-syllable word count and the three points for each sentence to get your grade.  
If your piece has less than 100 words, multiply your tally to get the equivalent of 100.

Score	Reading Ease
85-100 +	Children's Publications
75-85	Average American Reader
65-75	Above Average American Reader

\* A score of 80 is close to ideal.

Source: *Exhibits for the Small Museum, A Handbook*, by Arminta Neal, 1976.







# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

**Legend :**

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE

scale km :



Highway name :

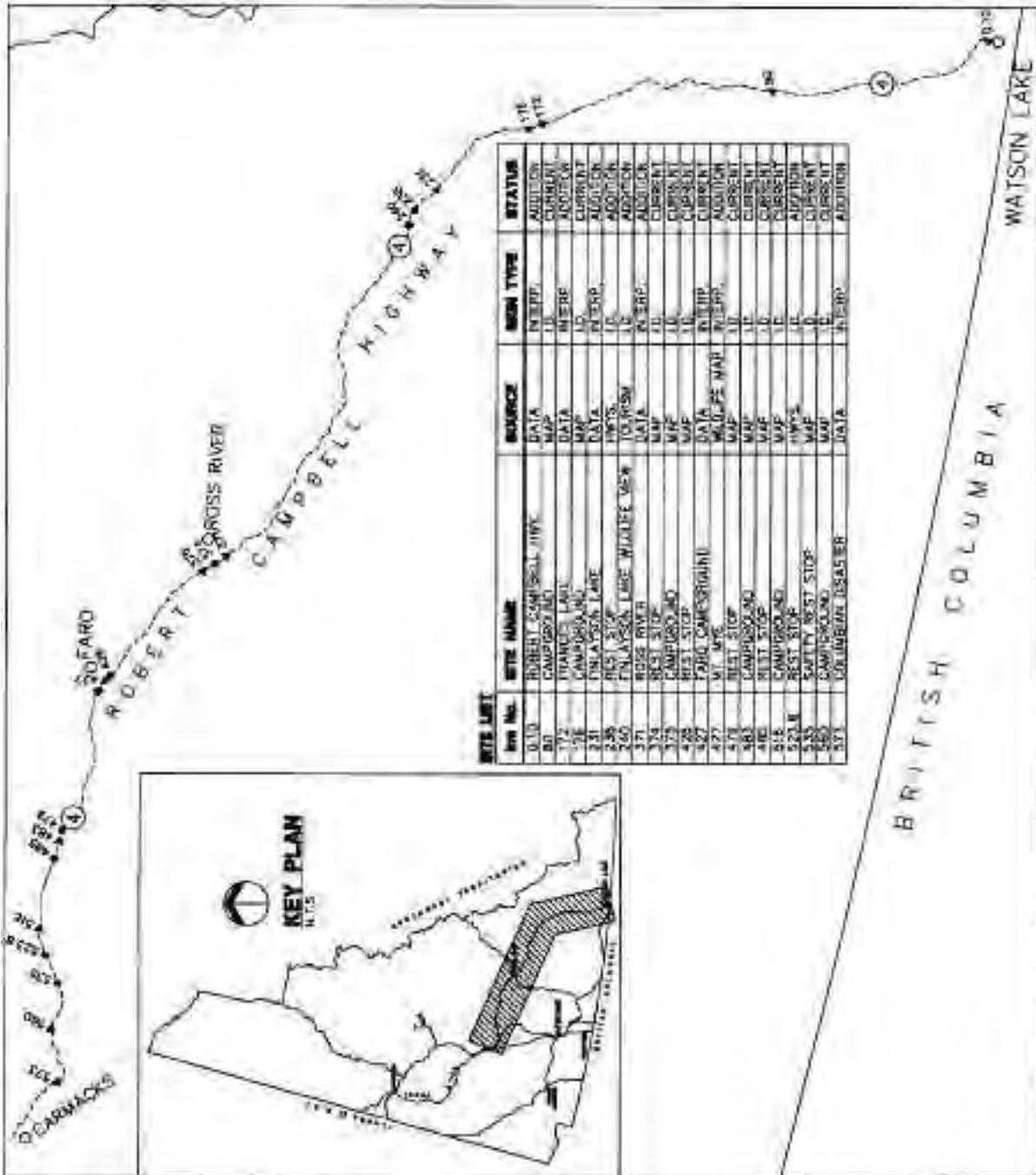
**Campbell Highway**

km 0.10 to 573

date 1 MAY 5, 1995

OWB :

**C-5**



# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

### Legend :

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE

### scale km :



### Highway name :

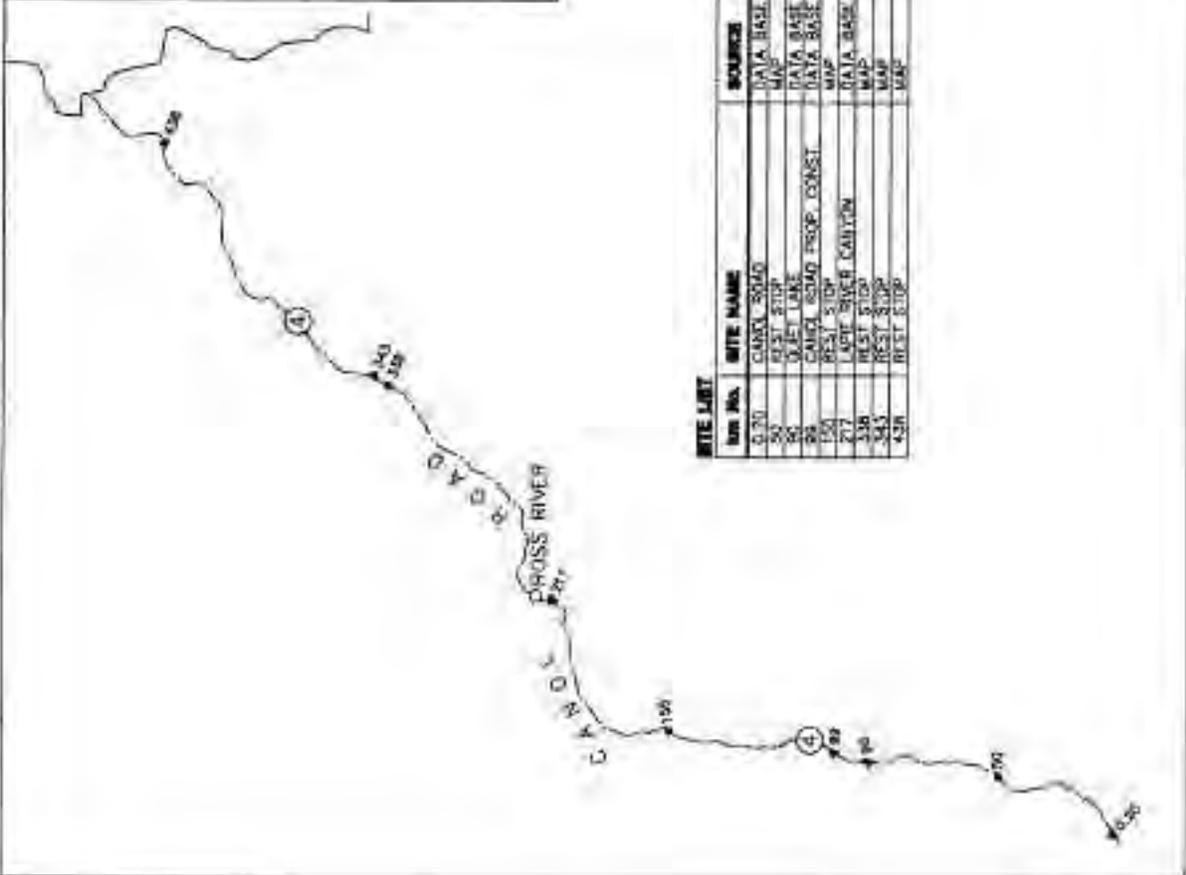
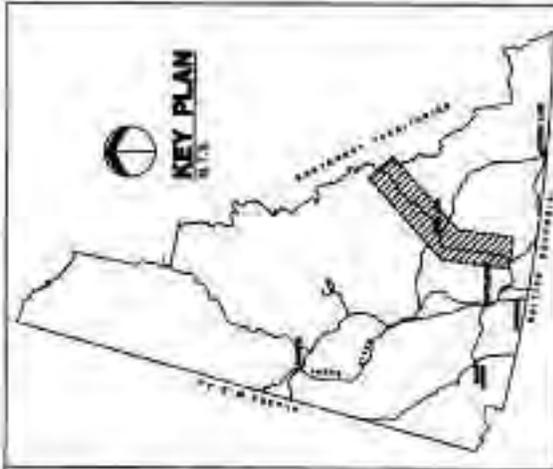
**Canol Road**

**km 0.20 to 438**

**date : MAY 5, 1995**

dwg :

**C-7**



### SITE LIST

km No.	SITE NAME	SOURCE	SIGN TYPE	STATUS
0.20	CANOL ROAD	DATA BASE	P-100P	ACCURATE
240	REST STOP	MAP	U	DUBIOUS
245	REST STOP	DATA BASE	P-100P	DUBIOUS
270	REST STOP	DATA BASE	P-100P	ACCURATE
275	CANOL ROAD PROP. CONST.	DATA BASE	P-100P	ACCURATE
300	REST STOP	MAP	U	DUBIOUS
330	LOVE TRUCK CAUTION	DATA BASE	P-100P	ACCURATE
345	REST STOP	MAP	U	DUBIOUS
438	REST STOP	MAP	U	DUBIOUS

# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

### Legend :

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE

scale km :



Highway name :

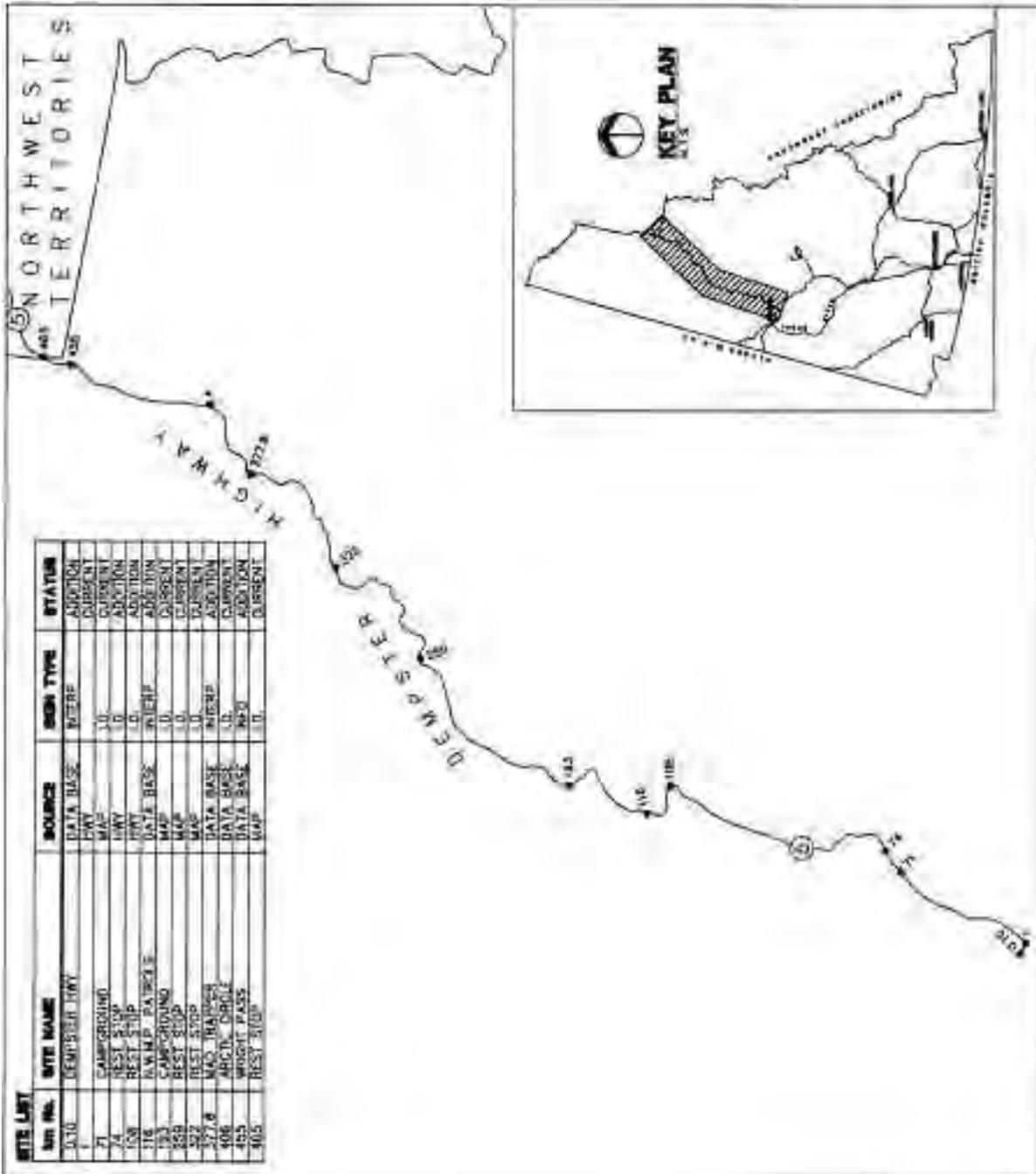
**Dempster Highway**

**km 0.10 to 485**

date : MAY 5, 1985

chrg :

**D-6**

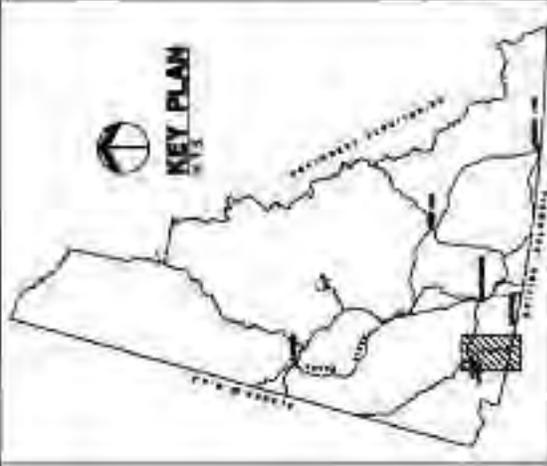


# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

### Legend :

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE



SITE NO.	SITE NAME	SOURCE	SIGN TYPE	STATUS
165	WELCOME TO THE YUKON	DATA BASE	N.O.	ACQUISITION
166	DALTON POST	WILDLIFE MAP	WILDLIFE	ACQUISITION
167	CAMPBELL	MAP	▲	ACQUISITION
168	YAT-SHEGHEEN VALLEY	DATA BASE	N.O.	ACQUISITION
169	CAMPBELL	MAP	▲	ACQUISITION
170	REST STOP	MAP	●	ACQUISITION
171	CAMPBELL	MAP	▲	ACQUISITION
172	REST STOP	MAP	●	ACQUISITION



Highway name :

**Haines Road  
South**  
km 145 to 242

date : MAY 5, 1995

dwg :

**H-10**

# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

**Legend :**

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- TOURISM SITE

scale km :



Highway name :

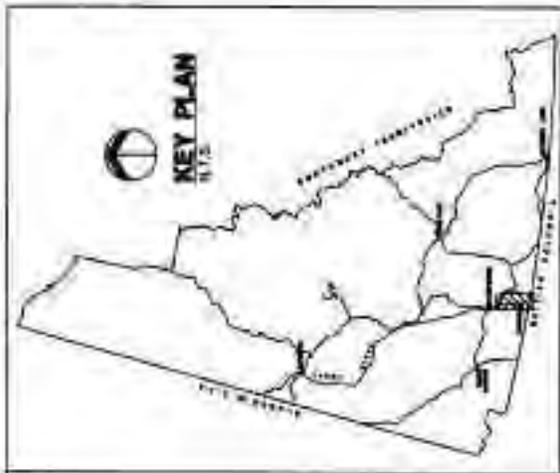
**Klondike Highway South**

**km 80 to 130**

date : MAY 5, 1995

dwg :

**K-3**



SITE LIST	Site No.	SITE NAME	SOURCE	SEEM TYPE	STATUS
	80	WELCOME TO THE YUKON	DATA	LD	ADDITION
	81	REST STOP	MAP	LD	CURRENT
	81.1	MINAS MIA	DATA	INTSP	ADDITION
	81.2	CONIFER	DATA	INTSP	ADDITION
	81.3	BEAR ISLAND	DATA	INTSP	ADDITION
	104	CAMPBELL'S CEMETERY	DATA	INTSP	ADDITION
	105.1	CARCROSS	DATA	INTSP	ADDITION
	107.1	CARCROSS DESERT	DATA	INTSP	ADDITION
	117.1	EMERALD LAKE	DATA	INTSP	ADDITION
	120.1	LEWIS LAKE	DATA	INTSP	CURRENT
	130	ROBBERSON	DATA	INTSP	ADDITION



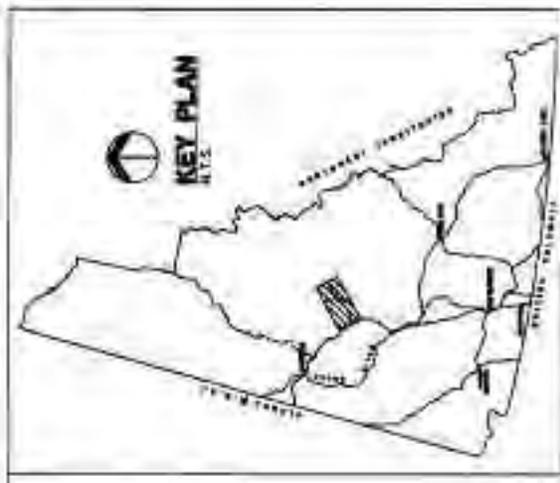


# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

**Legend :**

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE



SITE LIST	SITE No.	SITE NAME	SOURCE	SIGN TYPE	STATUS
	18	REST STOP	HWYS	RS	ASSTON
	44	REST STOP	MAPS	RS	CURRENT
	52	CAMPGRINDLE	MAP	RS	CURRENT
	52	MAYO	DATA	STLSP	ASSTON
		DUNCAN CREEK ROAD	DATA	STLSP	ASSTON
		ELSA	DATA	INTSP	ASSTON
	97	REST STOP	HWYS	RS	ASSTON
		KONG IRE	DATA	INTSP	ASSTON
		DUNCAN BRULE ROAD	DATA	INTSP	ASSTON



Highway name :

**Silver Trail**

**km 18 to 97**

date : MAY 5, 1995

dwg :

**S-8**



# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

Legend :

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE

scale km :



highway name :

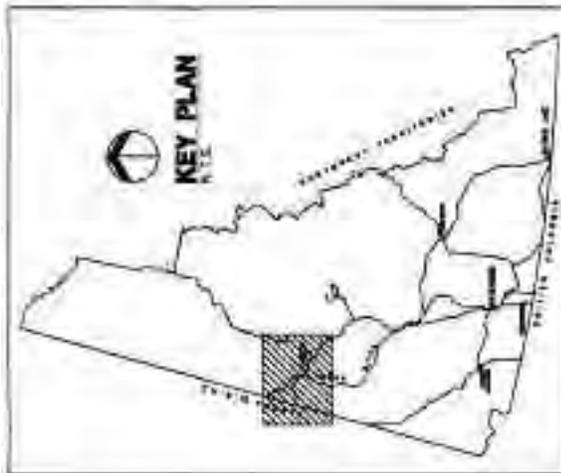
**Top of the World Highway**

km 0.10 to 105

date : MAY 5, 1995

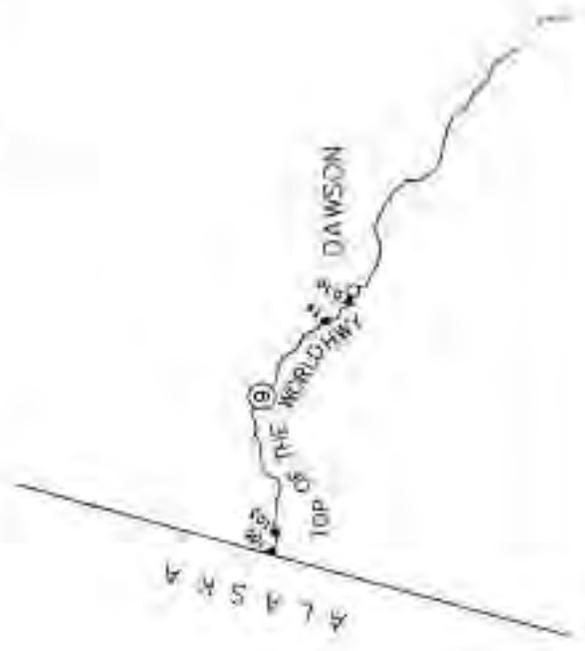
dwg :

**T-9**



**SITE LIST**

Site No.	Site Name	Source	Sign Type	Status
010	WEST DAWSON	DATA	INFORM	CURRENT
14	TOP OF THE WORLD	DATA	INFORM	ADDITION
14	REST STOP	DATA	INFORM	CURRENT
105	TOP OF THE WORLD HIB*	DATA	INFORM	ADDITION
103	REST STOP	MAP	INFORM	CURRENT
105	WELCOME TO THE YUKON	DATA	INFORM	ADDITION



# Yukon

## Interpretive Site and Signage Database

**Legend :**

- HIGHWAY REST STOP
- WILDLIFE VIEWING
- ▲ TOURISM SITE

scale km :



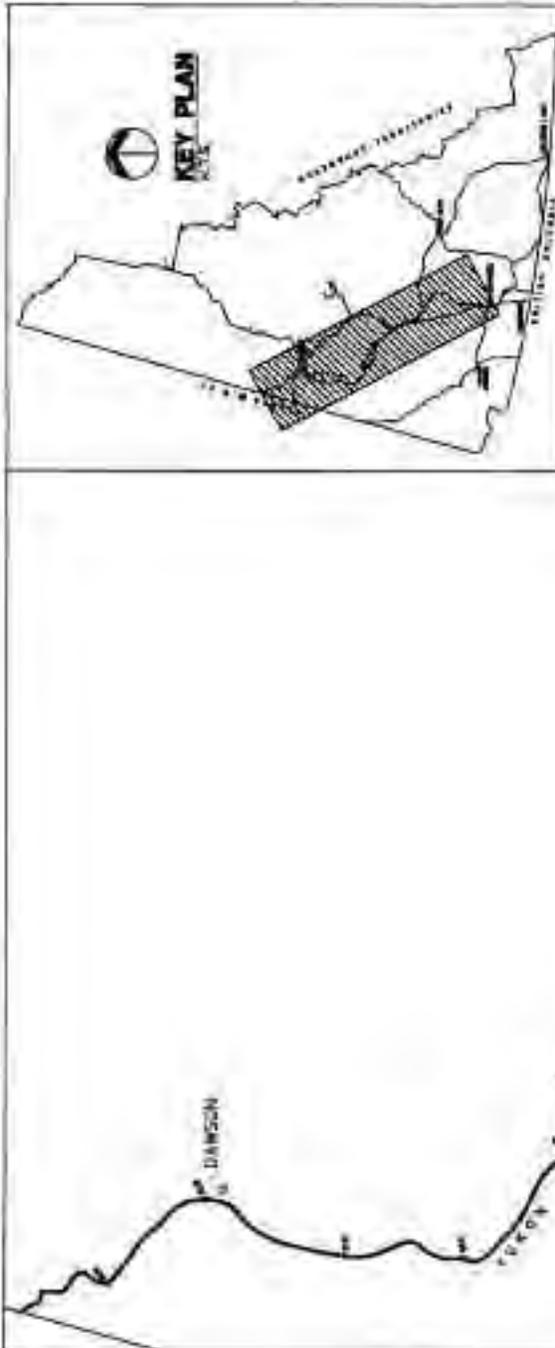
Highway name :

**Yukon River**  
**km 93 to 800**

date : MAY 3, 1995

chrg :

**Y-11**



**SITE LIST**

km No.	SITE NAME	SOURCE	MARK TYPE	STATUS
93	LOWER LASERIEZ COMBOW	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
129	17 MIL WOOD CAMP	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
144	HOOTAIKOOKA	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
145	HOOTAIKOOKA ISLAND SHIP	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
201	BIG SALMON N.W.M.P. POST	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
216	OVERSE OBJECT	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
350	5 FINGER COAL MINE	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
360	TUNNIA DISBURSING	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
454	PT. SOUDERS/YUKON FIELD FORCE	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
511	SEALOWN	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
525	STEWART ISLAND	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION
600	FIFTY M.P. N.W.M.P. POST	DATA BASE	R-STRP	ADDITION