THE YUKON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM OBSERVATORY, CANADA

Preliminary Study for the UNWTO
International Network of Sustainable Tourism
Observatories (INSTO)

Yukon

Rainbow at Talus Lake, Tombstone Territorial Park. *Robert Postma*

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Cover photo: People enjoying the mountain view in Tombstone Territorial Park. *Robert Postma*

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CanNor	Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
CCIS	Creative and Cultural Industries Strategy
CYFN	Council of Yukon First Nations
DMO	Destination Management Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSTC	Global Sustainable Tourism Council
INSTO	International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories
ITAC	Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada
NPS	Net Promoter Score
RV	Recreational Vehicle
SGYFN	Self Governing Yukon First Nations
T&C	Department of Tourism and Culture (the Government of Yukon)
TIAY	Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon
TOTA	Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
YESAA	Yukon Environmental and Socioeconomic Assessment Act
YFNCT	Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association
YG	The Government of Yukon
YSTF	Yukon Sustainable Tourism Framework
YSTO	Yukon Sustainable Tourism Observatory
YTAB	The Yukon Tourism Advisory Board
YTDS	The Yukon Tourism Development Strategy

Moose cow with two calves at McClusky Lake, Peel Watershed. *Peter Mather*

INTRODUCTION

Prior to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Yukon had a strong and burgeoning tourism industry. Building on decades of growth, the years 2017 and 2018 saw record levels of visitation. On the heels of this growth, and with a view to the future, in 2018, the Government of Yukon's Department of Tourism and Culture (T&C) coordinated a Yukon-wide engagement process, to develop a vision for tourism in which all Yukoners could see themselves. A Steering Committee[1] was formed to provide strategic advice on the development of a multi-year, goal-oriented strategy. The result was the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy (YTDS)* "Sustainable Tourism. Our Path. Our Future. 2018-2028," a plan for the entire Yukon (not only the Government of Yukon). The vision is for tourism to be a vibrant, sustainable component of the Yukon's economy and society for the benefit of future generations.

The goals of the strategy—which are broadly supported by Yukoners, including the Yukon's tourism industry—are to have sustainable tourism development, a thriving tourism economy and resident support for tourism.

To measure progress on the sustainable tourism development goal, the *YTDS* called for the establishment, by 2021, of a framework that measures the sustainability of tourism development. The department identified three main criteria to guide the development of such a framework, including the following.

- The ways in which sustainable tourism are measured must reflect the vision, goals and actions outlined in the *YTDS*, which represents a community-based approach to tourism planning and development.
- Alignment with global best practices in sustainable tourism monitoring.
- A flexible and collaborative approach to monitoring, communication of results and identification of priorities.

Based on these criteria, the department identified options for consideration by the *YTDS* Steering Committee and is now seeking to implement its recommendations to:

- adopt the United Nations World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO) framework; and
- become a member of the network to obtain support and guidance with framework implementation.

Implementing the framework and becoming an INSTO member will provide the sector with knowledge on the state of sustainability within the industry from year to year. This knowledge will help the sector establish priorities and make informed decisions and investments that support sustainable tourism development. In addition, by becoming the first INSTO member north of the 60th parallel, the Yukon may positively influence sustainable tourism development in other northern destinations.

1 Steering Committee members are listed in Appendix 3.

ABOUT

Yukon Geography, Communities and the Economy

The Yukon is one of Canada's vast northern territories with approximately 483,450km^2 of land and enclosed waterbodies. Situated in the northwestern part of Canada (figure 1.0), the Yukon shares its southern boundary with British Columbia and the western boundary with Alaska. The Beaufort Sea forms its northern coastline and the eastern boundary with the Northwest Territories follows the height of land between the Yukon and Mackenzie Rivers.

Figure 1.0 Yukon on the map

Kaskawulsh Glacier, Kluane National Park. George *Fischer*

For its size, the Yukon's population is small, at 42,827. Population growth has been steady over the years, with significant growth trends observed since 2015 in Dawson City and Whitehorse. Whitehorse is the most populous, with approximately 33,600 residents, followed by Dawson City with 2,261. The Yukon's other communities have populations of 1,500 or less (the population statistics in this paragraph are referenced from the Government of Yukon, 2020b).

Yukon First Nations are the first peoples of the territory and make up approximately 20 per cent of the Yukon's population (the Government of Yukon, 2020c). The 14 First Nations have traditional territories that cover almost all the land in the Yukon (figure 1.1). Indigenous peoples in the Northwest Territories and British Columbia also have traditional territory in the Yukon.

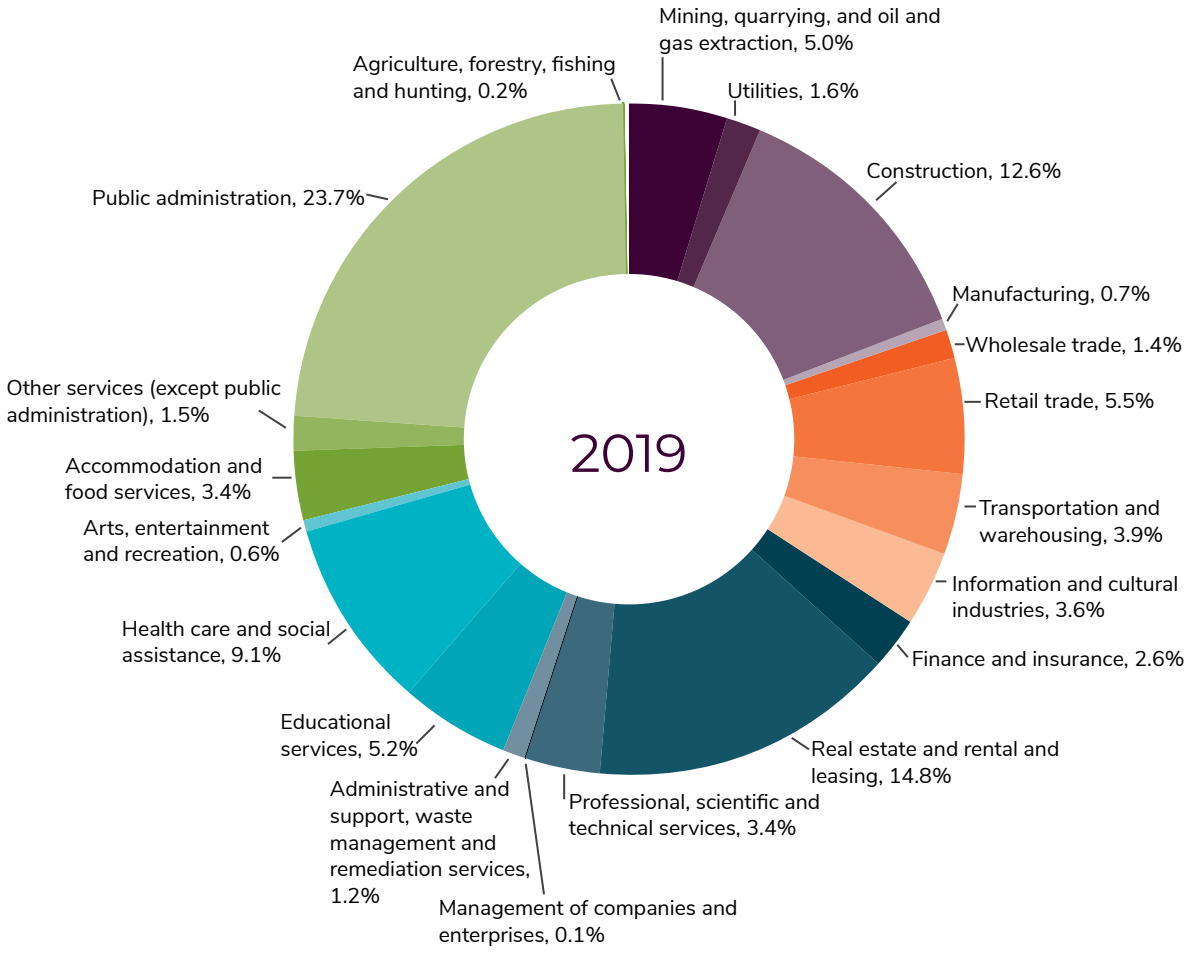
Figure 1.1 Traditional Territories of Yukon First Nations

Source: *open.Yukon.ca/information/publications/first-nations-traditional-territories*

First Nations are important partners in governing the Yukon. Eleven Yukon First Nations have signed Self Government Agreements, under which they can make laws on their Settlement Lands and provide programs and services for their citizens. The Government of Yukon works with all Yukon First Nations to deliver programs and services to Yukoners and manage the territory's land and resources.

Activities of a governmental nature comprise the bulk of the Yukon's economy. Real estate/rental/leasing and construction activities are the second and third largest contributors to the Yukon's GDP (see figure 1.2)

Figure 1.2 Per centage share of Yukon's GDP by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

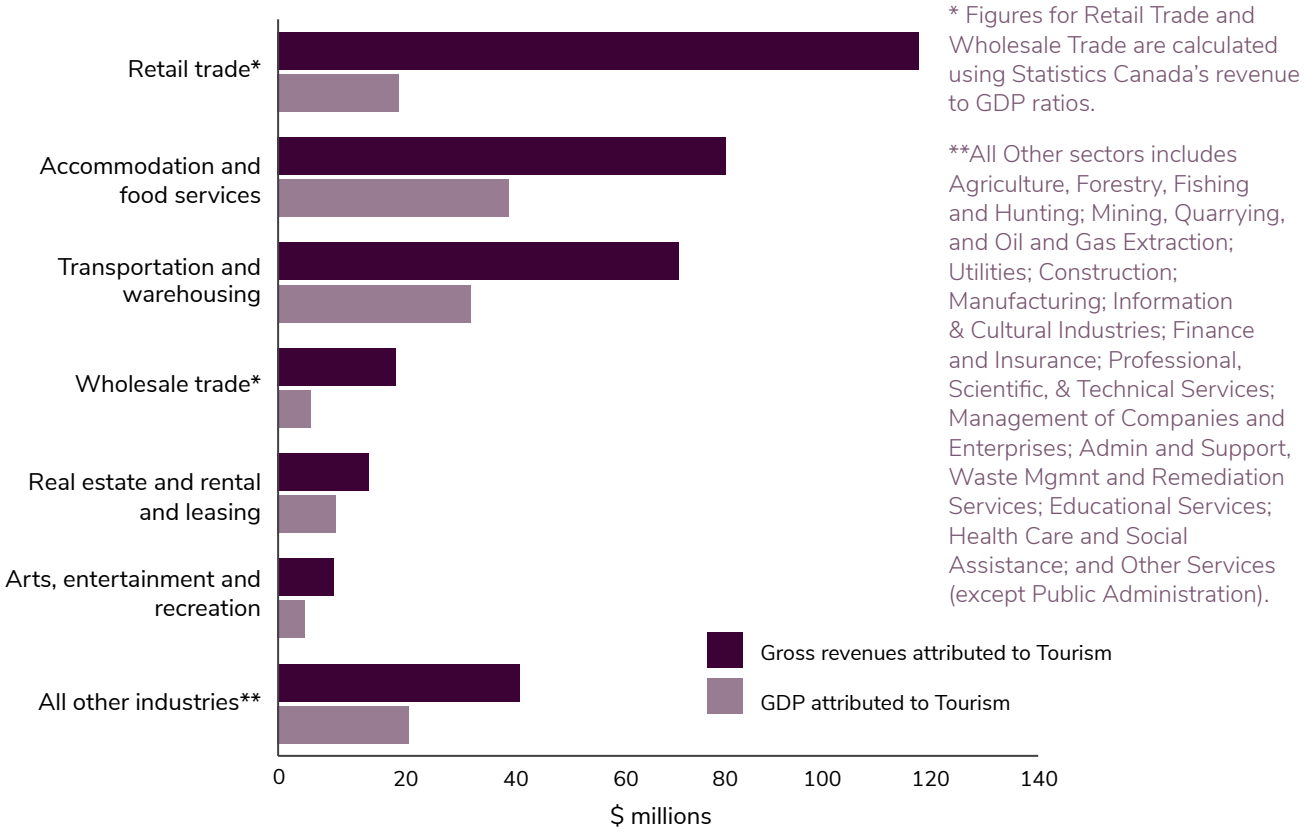


Source: *https://the Yukon.ca/sites/the Yukon.ca/files/ybs/gdp_2019_0.pdf*

Tourism

Tourism is a key industry in the territory and accounted for approximately five per cent of the Yukon's total GDP in 2018 (Statistics Canada 2018 *in* Yukon Bureau of Statistics, 2019a p. 10) – a strong showing, considering tourism's share of Canada's GDP in 2019 was two per cent (Destination Canada, 2019a, p.10). For Yukon businesses, $367.8 million of their gross revenue was attributable to tourism in 2018 (see figure 1.3).

Figure 1.3 Revenue and GDP attributable to tourism, 2018



Source: *https://the Yukon.ca/sites/the Yukon.ca/files/ybs/2019_business_survey_report.pdf*

In terms of jobs, tourism provided 2,360 in 2019. This represents nine per cent of all jobs in the Yukon's labour market that year, which was close to the national rate of almost 9.8 per cent (the Government of Yukon, 2019b). Of these jobs, 92 per cent were employee-based and eight per cent were self-employed. The majority were full-time (55 per cent) while the minority, or 45 per cent, were part-time (same reference as previous). The average compensation was $31.13/hour (same reference as previous).

The last Yukon Business Survey from 2019 indicated that the largest number of vacant positions that year were in sales and service occupations, such as food and beverage, cashiers, food counter attendants and kitchen helpers. Results from the 2021 Yukon Business Survey will be available in 2022.

A wide range of attractions draw visitors to the Yukon. Natural wonders, Indigenous tourism and other cultural experiences, sites and centres, historic sites, museums, Klondike Gold Rush history, festivals and events, the arts, and shopping and dining experiences are to name a few.

In the last Yukon Visitor Exit Survey conducted in 2017-2018, the most common reason visitors cited for visiting was leisure and recreation (the Government of Yukon, 2018). The second most common reason was being in transit. This is not unexpected, given the Yukon is *en route* to Alaska. The third most common reason, was to visit friends and family and the fourth was for business. Table 1.0 shows the top 10 activities participated in by all visitors in 2017-2018.

Table 1.0 Top 10 activities participated in by all visitors in 2017-2018

Activity	Number of activities completed
Visit a Visitor Information Centre	278,300
Visit a historic site, park or building	267,900
Visit a museum	265,500
Wildlife viewing or birdwatching without guide	205,500
Camping without guide	169,100
Hiking without guide	136,400
Visit a cultural centre	103,500
Take a community walking tour	72,600
Visit friends or relatives	60,200
Use a recreation facility (the Canada Games Centre, for example)	31,300

Source: *https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/tc/tc-visitor-exit-survey-2017-18.pdf*

To help travellers—both residents and visitors—by providing advice, travel tips, and road and weather information, the Government of Yukon operates six visitor information centers. One is open year-round and the others are open May-September. Eight cultural centers serve as places for First Nations to celebrate their heritage and ways of life. They also provide travellers with Yukon First Nations' cultural context and perspectives. Two are open year-round. Parks Canada operates visitor information centers at national parks and historic sites. A full listing of services, facilities and attractions may be found in Tourism Yukon's guidebooks, published by the Government of Yukon every year at: *https://www.travelYukon.com/en/guidebooks*.

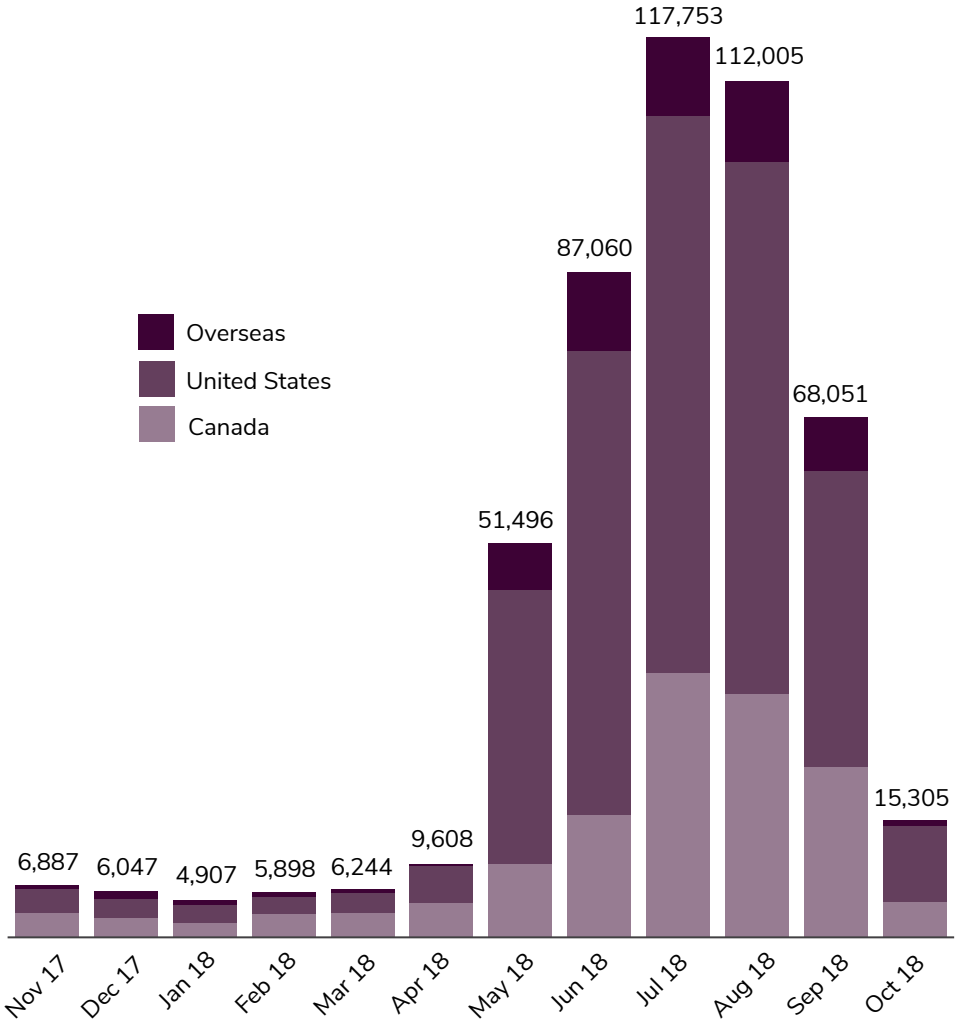
Fireweed lines the Alaska Highway as a camper drives towards Haines Junction, from Whitehorse.
Government of Yukon /Justin Kennedy

There are five main ways to enter the Yukon by road: three are via Alaska and two are via British Columbia.

Two airlines (Air North, Yukon's Airline and Air Canada) provide year-round service to the Yukon from within Canada and two airlines provide seasonal service (WestJet within Canada and Condor direct from Germany). Domestic seat capacity to/from the Yukon was approximately 309,000 in 2018, and international seat capacity was 4600 (Tourism Yukon, 2018).

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of visitors to the Yukon was on the rise. Yukon Visitor Exit Survey results from November 2017-October 2018, showed that an estimated 491,300 visitors came to the Yukon. This is an increase of 25 per cent over estimates from 2012, the last year the survey was conducted[2]. The majority of visitors came in July and August (see figure 1.4). July had the highest visitation rate and January had the lowest (the Government of Yukon, 2018).

Figure 1.4 Monthly count of visitors, 2017-2018



Source: *https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/tc/tc-visitor-exit-survey-2017-18.pdf*

2 The next Yukon Visitor Exit Survey will take place in 2022/2023.

Historically, most visitors to the Yukon come from the United States (see table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Per cent of all visitors by country/region of origin, 2017-2018

Country/Region	Per Cent of Visitors
United States	62%
Canada	28%
Overseas	10%
Europe	5%
Australia/New Zealand	3%
Asia	0.4%
Central America, Mexico and Caribbean	0.3%
South America	0.2%

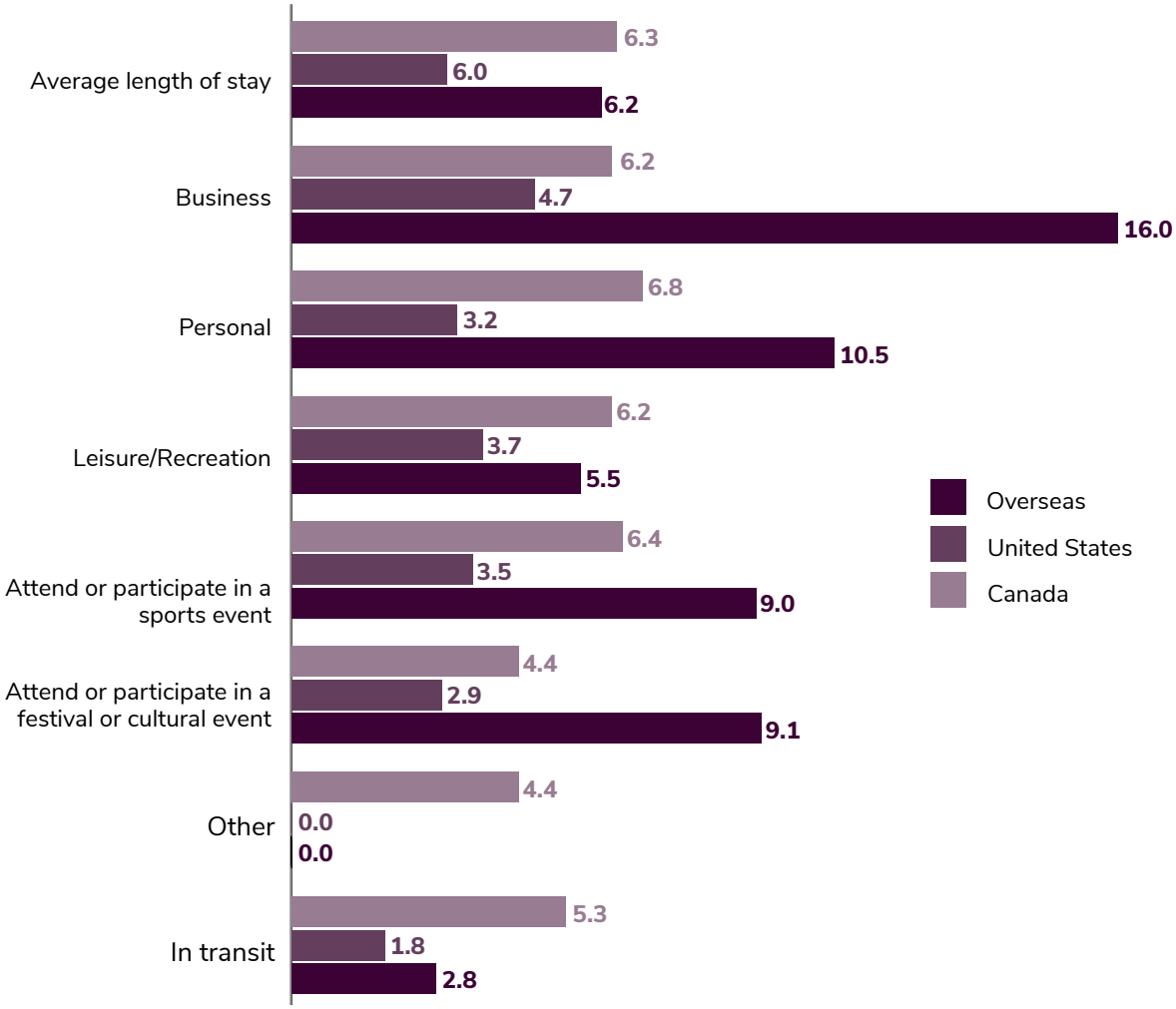
Source: *https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/tc/tc-visitor-exit-survey-2017-18.pdf*

Given the Yukon is both vast and remote, most visitors spend at least one night. The average length of stay for all visitors in 2017-2018, was 4.3 nights. Figure 1.5

The Sign Post Forest is a must stop for anyone traveling through Watson Lake. *The Government of Yukon*

shows that Canadians and overseas visitors stay the longest, on average, across all purposes of travel.

Figure 1.5 Length of stay by main purpose of travel, 2017-2018



Source: *https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/tc/tc-visitor-exit-survey-2017-18.pdf*

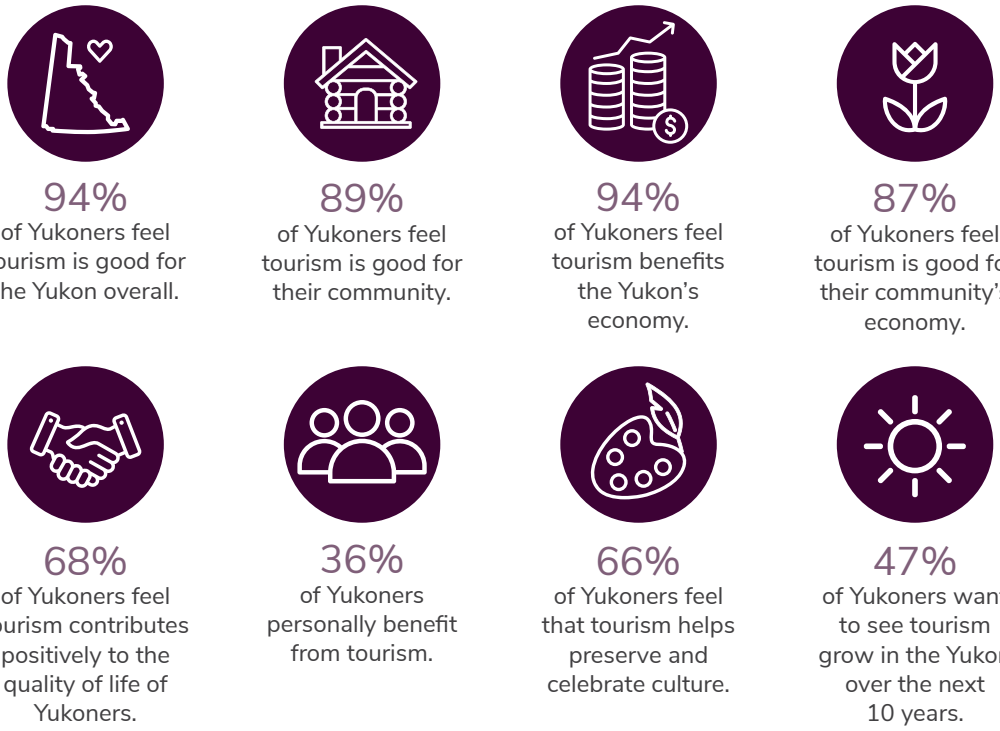
Nearly one-third (32 per cent) of all visitors' trips to the Yukon in 2017-2018 included or were part of a travel package. Visitors spent $429 million on travel packages in the Yukon. Excluding travel packages, visitors spent $149 million in 2017-2018. Visitors spent the most on transportation ($48 m), followed by accommodation ($40m), food and beverages ($34m), clothing and gifts ($9m), recreation and entertainment ($9m), and other activities ($8m). In-Yukon expenses per-person, per-trip, averaged $399.

In terms of visitor satisfaction with tourism, the Net Promoter Score ® (NPS) is a simple indicator used to measure the likelihood of a person to recommend or refer a product or service to friends and family. When asked to rate on a scale of zero to 10 how likely they would be to recommend a friend or colleague visit the Yukon, visitors

most often chose 10. Eighty-three per cent of visitors were Promoters, while two per cent were Detractors. This resulted in a NPS score of +81 for recommending the Yukon to a friend or colleague.

Resident satisfaction with tourism was first measured in 2019, before the global pandemic began. Results were overwhelmingly positive, showing that 94 per cent of Yukoners agreed that tourism is good for the Yukon. Eighty-nine per cent agreed that tourism is good for their community. Preliminary results from the 2021 survey indicate very similar rates of satisfaction. Other positive highlights from the 2019 report are shown in figure 1.6.

Figure 1.6 Highlights from the 2019 Resident Perceptions of Tourism Survey Results (pre-pandemic)



Source: *https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/tc/tc-resident-perceptions-tourism-survey-2019_0.pdf*

In terms of negative perceptions of tourism, the 2019 report showed that 35 per cent of Yukoners said that visitor traffic negatively affects travel on Yukon highways and in communities. A few Yukoners were in agreement with other negative perception statements, including the following.

- Tourism makes it hard for Yukoners to enjoy local attractions (14% of Yukoners).
- Tourism has a negative impact on the Yukon's natural resources (for example hunting, fishing, gathering and water resources) (21%).
- Visitors make it hard for Yukoners to enjoy wilderness (11%).
- Tourism causes damage to the Yukon's environment (21%).
- Tourism makes it hard to find housing (14%).

Sector Strengths

Tourism has long been recognized by the sector and Yukoners as an important contributor to Yukon cultures, environments and economies. These views are reflected in the *YTDS* and are further validated by results from the Resident Perceptions of Tourism Survey. The absence of mass tourism in the Yukon has likely contributed to the shaping of these viewpoints.

The pursuit of and desire for sustainable tourism in the Yukon goes back nearly 30 years, to establishment of the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon (WTAY) in 1993. Responsible tourism—or tourism that is environmentally, socio-culturally and economically sustainable—is at the core of their Code of Conduct for Operating Wilderness Tours. This Code must be complied with by WTAY members and may also be used to help educate clients and Yukon visitors about low-impact wilderness recreation.

Around the same time, a sustainable tourism regime was established through the provisions of the Inuvialuit Final Agreement for the Firth River corridor, an area of great cultural and natural significance in North Yukon.

In 2005, one of the Yukon's most significant land use planning processes began. The Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan[3], finalized in 2019, provides a sustainable development framework for land management in the North Yukon planning region. It is designed to protect the significant natural and cultural resources of the region, while still allowing for current and future economic development.

Another landmark sustainability initiative unfolded in 2017-2018 — development of the *YTDS*. This 10-year, goal-oriented strategy for tourism in the Yukon reflects the views of tourism operators and organizations, Yukon First Nations governments and citizens, municipalities, development corporations, the arts and culture communities and the public. The *YTDS* constitutes a made-in-the Yukon, community-driven tourism development strategy that balances growth with a healthy community and sustainable practices. Since its development, the *YTDS* has been foundational to how the sector moves forward and its content covers many aspects of sustainability as defined by the UNWTO INSTO framework. And because it was developed in 2017-2018, two years of progress were made on advancing some of its goals and action plans before the global COVID-19 pandemic began.

One of the most important of these—from a governance perspective—is the action plan, "establish a task force to recommend a governance model for tourism." This action was completed in 2019 and the task force's recommendation was for T&C's line department structure to continue alongside the Yukon Tourism Advisory Board

3 This plan is available at: https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/emr/emr-peel-watershed-regional-land-use-plan_0.pdf.

(YTAB)[4], appointed in March 2020, to provide advice to the minister of T&C on strategic issues facing the tourism industry and on *YTDS* implementation.

The YTAB's first focus was to provide advice and expertise to the Government of Yukon on its response to COVID-19 impacts on the Yukon's tourism industry, which resulted in T&C being able to provide some of the best COVID-19 related relief and support programs in Canada. In addition, T&C worked with the YTAB from 2019-2021 to develop a sustainable tourism framework to help the sector meet its sustainable tourism development goal.

Today, many government and non-government tourism organizations are fulfilling strategic priorities that relate to sustainability, including Self-Governing Yukon First Nations (SGYFN). Self Government Agreements require each SGYFN, the Government of Yukon and municipalities to promote compatible land uses of specified settlement lands and adjacent non-settlement lands, which are near municipalities. These provisions exist to avoid land uses that have substantial adverse impacts on the peaceful use and enjoyment of proximal properties.

The role Yukon First Nations play in all sectors of the Yukon economy is critical. With respect to the tourism sector, Self Government and Land Claim Agreements have resulted in major investments that can be directly linked to tourism-sector benefits. For example:

Travellers board an Air North flight in Whitehorse, en-route to Old Crow.
The Government of Yukon

"The Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation's Final Agreement made it possible for the First Nation to acquire a 49 per cent interest in Air North, Yukon's Airline. This investment provides economic sustainability for the First Nation, jobs for its citizens and a transportation lifeline to Old Crow, the Yukon's only fly-in community. This investment also benefits Air North's hundreds of employees, and all Air North customers who travel to and from the Yukon, and to Yukon communities."

From: *https://mappingtheway.ca/stories/air-north-yukons-airline-economic-investment-and-lifeline-vuntut-gwitchin-first-nation*

4 The YTAB's membership represents a diversity of perspectives including tourism businesses, Yukon First Nations, Yukon's cultural and/or heritage sectors, Yukon's communities and francophone and youth.

Sector Challenges

Like many destinations the world over, challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic are front-of-mind for tourism operators, organizations and associations. As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, part of the challenge for these groups will be determining the new normal and having sufficient resources to operate, especially in light of the anticipated need to shift back and forth from recovery to relief over the coming months and years. Many operators are also facing COVID-19 related supply-chain issues that affect the availability of rental cars, food, flights and other resources and services. For governments and nongovernment tourism organizations, one of the challenges will be working to ensure a future where travel is safe, secure and comfortable/convenient for all travellers, including both residents and visitors.

Chronic challenges facing operators relate to attracting and retaining labour, accessing affordable housing, accessing land for tourism development purposes, and having adequate internal and external transportation linkages.

On the sustainability front, Yukon businesses do not yet have a clear path forward for pursing sustainability certification. However, tourism-sector data that will soon be available through framework monitoring activities will likely serve as important resources for these pursuits.

Another anticipated challenge for the sector is climate change and weather disruptions, which will strongly influence decision making on desired destinations by potential travellers.

Sector Opportunities

Currently, the biggest opportunity for the sector is that the Yukon has maintained its global brand position—in terms of trip desirability—over the past two years, which should result in future bookings and contribute to sector recovery. The desirability of the Yukon as a destination has to do with its wide-open spaces, small population, safety protocols, unique northern experiences, Indigenous tourism experiences and outdoor/wilderness opportunities. All of this, combined with the fact that the global demand for sustainable tourism is rising and the Yukon's momentum for its development is gaining, means that there is a significant opportunity for the Yukon's tourism sector to thrive when travel picks up again.

There is also opportunity for reconciliation[5] to be supported through Indigenous tourism and learning opportunities. There is strong potential for this to occur, given the Yukon's key explorer quotient segmentation market is "the learner."

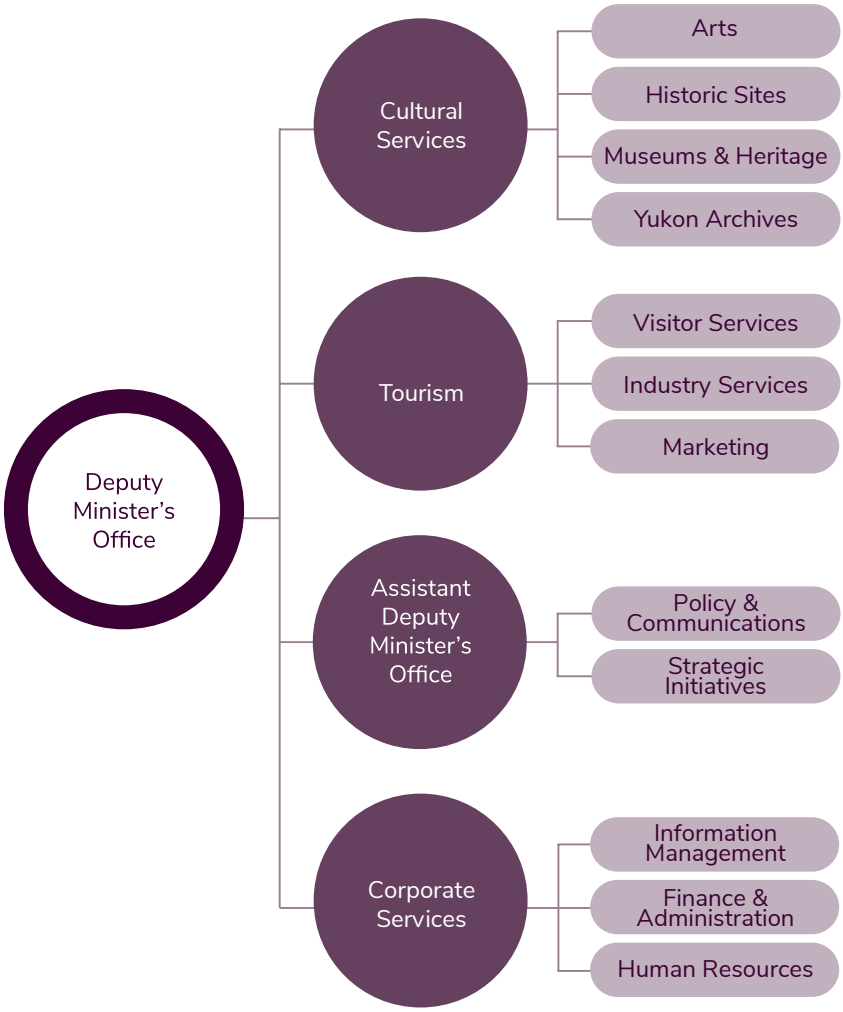
Another community-related opportunity is the fact that businesses are reconnecting with residents on tourism experiences and development, which positions growth in a way so that future generations can thrive.

5 Reconciliation is the process of establishing a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and nonAboriginal peoples in Canada.

The Government of Yukon's Department of Tourism and Culture

T&C serves the Yukon's tourism sector as one of the territory's destination marketing and management organizations. The main function of the department is to facilitate long-term economic, sustainable growth for the tourism, culture and heritage industries. T&C operates with a line department structure shown in figure 1.7.

Figure 1.7 T&C organizational chart



The four Cultural Services Branch units—Arts, Historic Sites, Museums and Heritage, and Yukon Archives—deliver services such as the following.

- Funding for the arts, museums and First Nations' cultural centres.
- Operating the Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre and delivering programing.
- Managing archaeological and palaeontological collections.
- Conserving and interpreting the Yukon's historic sites.
- Supporting Yukon geographical place names programs.
- Preserving the Yukon's documentary heritage at Yukon Archives.

Boat launch procession and ceremony for the Canada 150 boat builders/Adaka Cultural Festival, 2017. *The Government of Yukon.*

The three Tourism Branch units—Marketing, Industry Services, and Visitor Services—deliver the following services.

- Visitor information services through six visitor information centres located across the Yukon.
- Support for tourism operators through funding programs, product development advice, research services, and advancement of tourism values across a variety of policy, land use planning and economic development processes.
- Marketing services designed to promote the Yukon as a year-round travel destination.

In 2019, a task force was appointed to review T&C's structure. The intent of the review was to recommend an improved model that better aligns the efforts of government and industry in a manner that maximizes the efficiency of destination management and supports tourism industry growth. The recommendation was to retain the existing model of governance and appoint the YTAB to provide advice to the minister of T&C on strategic issues facing the industry and *YTDS* implementation.

Asters in flower in the Carcross Desert. *Government of Yukon.*

The work of T&C's Tourism Branch is guided by the *YTDS*, the core components of which are outlined in Appendix 1. Ten years of funding to implement a sustainable tourism measurement framework—key to the *YTDS* goal, "sustainable tourism development"—have been secured by T&C through the government's Our Clean Future Strategy for climate change, energy and a green economy.

T&C works very closely with a wide range of destination management and marketing organizations, non-government tourism organizations and organizations involved in the tourism sector located in and outside of the territory. The department provides transfer payments and funding to support Yukon-based tourism organizations and has memorandums of understanding with partners in and out of the Yukon outlining collective approaches to tourism management and promotional activities.

Similarly, the department works very closely with municipal, First Nations and federal governments to address issues and opportunities related to tourism and destination management for the Yukon.

DMOs in the region and other organizations and governments who play a role in tourism management are listed in Appendix 4.

THE YUKON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM OBSERVATORY

Goals and Objectives

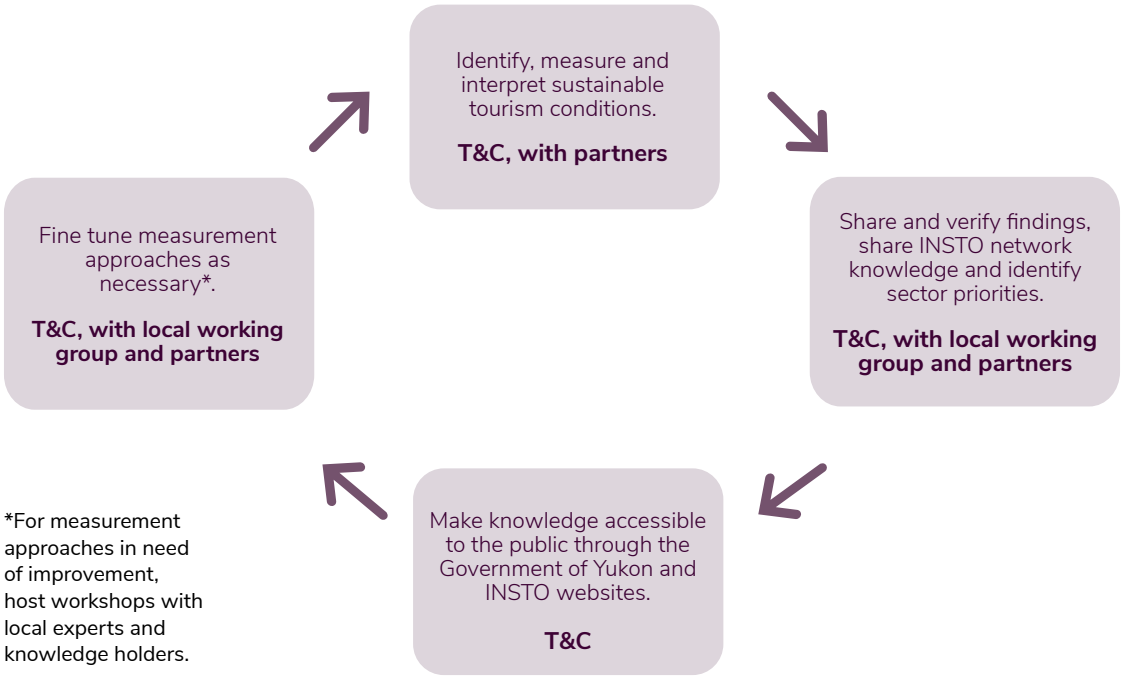
The Government of Yukon is applying to become a member of the INSTO and is adopting the INSTO framework. Once accepted as a network member, the government will host the Yukon Sustainable Tourism Observatory (YSTO). The YSTO's main goal is to support sustainable tourism development efforts in the Yukon.

To meet this goal, YSTO's main objectives are as follows.

- Coordinate the creation of knowledge on the state of the Yukon's tourism sector.
- Recognize the importance of local knowledge and perspectives by collaborating with local tourism organizations, governments, communities and others to (1) identify, measure and interpret the conditions of sustainable tourism and (2) identify sector priorities.
- Foster tourism-sector awareness of sustainable tourism development by ensuring transparency and accessibility of YSTF data, key findings and INSTO network knowledge.

A visual representation of how YSTO's objectives will be met through annual activities is shown in figure 1.8.

Figure 1.8 Annual YSTO activities



*For measurement approaches in need of improvement, host workshops with local experts and knowledge holders.

Paul Hamlyn of Whitehorse, departs the start line in Whitehorse, during day one of the Yukon Quest 300, 2022.
The Government of Yukon / Justin Kennedy

Local Working Group

The role of the local working group is to ensure continuous commitment to constant, regular and timely monitoring efforts. Preliminary discussions about YSTO's local working group membership have begun. Membership details will be confirmed in 2022. Terms of reference will also be developed, based on the annual project activities shown in figure 1.8.

Key Elements and Indicators

The YSTO will work with a variety of organizations and governments to identify, measure and interpret the conditions across 17 key elements of tourism on an annual basis. Eleven of them are required for monitoring by INSTO members.

- Governance
- Yukon resident sentiment
- Destination economic benefits
- Employment and human resources
- Tourism seasonality
- Energy management
- Solid waste management
- Wastewater management
- Water management
- Climate action
- Accessibility, diversity, equity and inclusivity

INSTO members have the freedom to identify additional key elements that are relevant and unique to their destinations. Currently, six of these have been identified as important to Yukoners[6].

- Infrastructure
- Natural environment
- Cultural sustainability
- Yukon resident travel
- Health and safety
- Visitor sentiment

6 These elements are based on the tourism vision, goals, values and action plans developed by Yukoners through the *YTDS* engagement process.

All key elements of sustainable tourism and their monitoring goals are summarized in table 1.2. Monitoring goals were developed by T&C and are based on *YTDS* and *Our Clean Future* content and best-practices in sustainable tourism management. These may change over time if deemed necessary by the local working group or others involved in YSTF activities and discussions.

Table 1.2 Key elements of sustainable tourism and monitoring goals

INSTO Key Elements	
Governance	Effective leadership and coordination across the Yukon's tourism sector.
Economic benefits	A thriving tourism economy.
Employment and human resources	A diverse, skilled and experienced tourism-sector labour force.
Yukon resident sentiment	Alignment between sustainable tourism development and Yukoners' core values.
Tourism seasonality	Year-round tourism that maximizes available capacity in the shoulder and winter seasons.
Solid and hazardous waste management	Responsible management of solid and hazardous waste generated by the Yukon's tourism sector and visitors.
Wastewater management	Responsible wastewater management by the Yukon's tourism sector and visitors.
Water management	Responsible water use and management by the Yukon's tourism sector and visitors.
Energy management	Responsible and renewable energy use and management by the Yukon's tourism sector and visitors.
Climate action	Sustainable tourism development that addresses climate action.
Accessibility, inclusivity, equity and diversity	Tourism contributes to accessibility, inclusivity, equity and diversity in the Yukon.
The Yukon's Key Elements	
Cultural sustainability	Tourism benefits Yukon's cultures, communities and heritage.
Natural environment	Tourism contributes to the stewardship and enjoyment of the Yukon's natural environment.
Yukon resident travel	Responsible Yukon resident travel.
Visitor sentiment	Positive visitor sentiments towards the Yukon.
Infrastructure	Resilient community infrastructure and access to and around the Yukon.
Health and safety	Keep residents and visitors healthy and safe.

To understand key element conditions, a suite of indicators for each one will be measured annually. The indicators proposed in this document represent a starting point and were chosen, because they:

- reflect currently available information and engagements held to-date[7];
- reflect the *YTDS*, which is based on comprehensive engagement with Yukoners; and
- are based on best practices in sustainable tourism monitoring (for example, they are used by other INSTO observatories or they appear in the Global Sustainable Tourism Council's Destination Criteria[8]).

Indicators for key elements significantly lacking in measurement structure—wastewater, water, energy and solid/hazardous waste management—were identified at a workshop held in March 2020, with Whitehorse-area experts and knowledge holders. More workshops like these will be held over time to ensure that all key elements reflect the perspectives of a range of regions, organizations and governments.

Tables 1.3-2.9 list the indicators proposed for year one of YSTF monitoring. If indicators have been monitored historically, or will be in year one of monitoring, they are marked with "YES" in the "monitored" column. Those marked with "NO" have not yet been monitored, because of a lack of available or known data. Indicators marked with "AVAILABLE" indicate that data is available—and publicly, in some cases—but a partnership with the organization who stewards the data has not yet been established.

A couple enjoys the scenic views at Twin Lakes Campground, located at km 308 along the Klondike Highway. *The Government of Yukon*

7 Organizations and governments with whom engagements about the framework and possible indicators/data sources have been held are shown in Appendix 2 and reflected in tables 1.3-2.9.

8 The GSTC Criteria are a global standard for sustainability certification in travel and tourism – they reflect best practices and indicators from a variety of cultural and geopolitical contexts. Alongside destination-identified indicators, many INSTO members incorporate GSTC Criteria into their sustainable tourism frameworks.

A cross country skier enjoys the spring conditions around Chadburn Lake in Whitehorse. *Mark Kelly*

Governance

Monitoring goal: Effective leadership and coordination across the Yukon's tourism sector

The *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* states that for the tourism sector to thrive, be developed sustainably and have a positive impact on Yukoners, the Government of Yukon requires coordinated approaches and mechanisms to provide balanced, but supportive physical, regulatory, fiscal and social environments. Similarly, coordination between the territorial government and other stakeholders and partners is fundamental to reaching the vision and goals, while respecting the core values outlined in the strategy.

Since publication of the *YTDS* in 2018, the Government of Yukon and the YTAB have worked hard to provide stronger tourism-sector leadership and a more coordinated approach to tourism development that balances economic, environmental, community and cultural values. Development of the YSTF and submission of the INSTO membership application are key actions taken to date. Other efforts are shown in table 1.3.

In terms of governance efficiency, T&C implemented a governance task force recommendation in 2019 to utilize a made-in-the Yukon model of governance. The model optimizes the benefits of its line-department structure while also giving tourism industry partners and stakeholders a more direct role in governance. This model of governance will be in place for the foreseeable future and will be monitored through the YSTF. Working towards a coordinated, client-focused model of governance that allows the tourism industry to access government programs and services in an efficient manner is also important and will be monitored through the YSTF and *YTDS* implementation.

Many other aspects of governance such as communications planning and Indigenous engagement play a key role in advancing the monitoring goal for governance. T&C will work together with other government departments to report on the variety of indicators across these and other measurement themes.

In terms of land use and regulatory control, there are several mechanisms. The Land Titles Act is the primary tool used for land use permitting and disposition of Yukon (public) lands and Yukon First Nations regimes for Settlement Land. Regional land use plans and the Yukon Environmental and Socioeconomic Assessment Act (YESAA) legislation also play a role. The larger question of "how is the land to be used?" is addressed through regional land use plans, which have been created for two of 10 Yukon regions to date (seven are proposed to be completed through Umbrella Final Agreement[9] (UFA)-based agreements). Minimizing land use conflicts, promoting the cultural values of Yukon Indigenous Peoples and ensuring sustainable development

9 The Umbrella Final Agreement is a framework for negotiating the individual Final Agreements. It was signed on May 29, 1993, by the Government of Canada, the Government of Yukon and the Council of Yukon First Nations.

are the main objectives of these regional plans. YESAA legislation helps ensure that development projects that trigger an assessment are undertaken in a way that is consistent with land use plans. For regions without completed plans, the YESAA process tries to foster beneficial socio-economic change without undermining the ecological and social systems on which communities, their residents and societies in general, depend.

Tr'ondek Hwech'in First Nation performers at the Dänojà Zho Cultural Centre, Dawson City.
Government of Yukon/Cathie Archbould

Table 1.3 Governance

GOVERNANCE				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Sustainable tourism development	Reference to sustainability principles in the strategy/plan.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 A2	YES	YG (T&C)
	Establish and implement a framework to measure and monitor the sustainability of tourism development by 2021.	*YTDS* Goal 2 (YG, 2018), Our Clean Future Strategy, Action I10 (YG, 2020)	YES	YG (T&C, Department of Environment)
	Measurement framework with results recorded and publicized at least annually.	INSTO member requirement, GSTC Criteria v.2.0 A3	YES (2023)	YG (T&C, Department of Environment)
	Written evidence of monitoring and reporting of actions and outcomes.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 A3	YES (2023)	YG (T&C, Department of Environment)
	Schedule in place for framework review.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 A3	YES	YG (T&C, Department of Environment)
	Create an award program by 2022 to recognize the achievements of local green businesses and organizations.	Our Clean Future Strategy, Action I5 (YG, 2020)	YES	YG (Department of Economic Development)
	Identify and develop options to address potential regulatory and policy barriers to the growth of green businesses in the Yukon by 2023.	Our Clean Future Strategy , Action I3 (YG, 2020)	YES	YG (Department of Economic Development)
	Visitors are provided with educational tools to help them travel in a way that aligns with community values.	GSTC criteria v.2.0 A6	AVAILABLE	YFNCT
Efficiency and supports	Establish a task force to recommend a governance model for tourism.	*YTDS* Action Plan 1.1 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C)
	One-government approach to tourism.	*YTDS* Action Plan 1.1 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C, Department of Economic Development)
Communications plan	A published document setting out the current destination strategy and action.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 A2	YES	YG (T&C)
	The strategy is clearly visible and available online.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 A2	YES	YG (T&C)

Community and Indigenous engagement	Evidence of stakeholder consultation, meetings, etc. in developing the plan.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 A2	YES	YG (T&C)
	Evidence of regular and ongoing engagement with Yukon's communities and First Nations that reflect reconciliation efforts.	Reflects planned annual YSTF workshops	YES	YG (T&C)
Management structure	Documentary evidence showing relevant makeup and responsibilities of T&C's Tourism Branch, the YTAB and the YSTO's local working group.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 A1	YES	YG (T&C)
	Management guidelines and processes, which demonstrate awareness and adherence to sustainability principles and transparency in operations and letting of contracts.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 A1	YES	YG (Department of Highways and Public Works)
Financial sustainability	A financial plan and budget showing current and future funding sources.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 A1	YES	YG (T&C)
Land use and regulatory control	The destination has planning guidelines, regulations and/or policies which control the location and nature of development, require environmental, economic, and socio-cultural impact assessment.	*YTDS* Goal 2 (YG, 2018)	AVAILABLE	YESAB, YG (Department of Energy, Mines and Resources), Land Use Plans
	Tourism values are advanced across a variety of policy, land use planning, and economic development processes.	*YTDS* Goal 2 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C)
	Ensure clarity and fairness within the regulatory framework, and provide better tools to enable the sustainable growth and development of tourism (for example available land for development).	*YTDS* Action Plan 1.3 (YG, 2018)	NO	YG (T&C, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources)
Destination promotion	Current information and promotional material with appropriate content.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 A7	YES	YG (T&C)
	A process exists for checking the accuracy and appropriateness of destination promotion and information.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 A7	YES	YG (T&C)
	Evidence of consultation with local communities and environmental and cultural bodies on communications content and delivery.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 A7	YES	YG (T&C)

Economic Benefits

Monitoring Goal: A thriving tourism economy

The monitoring goal for this key element is one of the three goals identified in the *YTDS*.

The health of the tourism economy has long been interpreted by looking at revenue. Every two years since 2010, the Government of Yukon's Business Survey measures the amount of gross revenue that businesses attribute to tourism. The Business Survey also measures tourism's contributions to the GDP.

The average length of stay and visitor spend are two other key indicators that provide insight into revenues. These indicators are monitored every five years through the government's Visitor Exit Survey[10]. The Visitor Exit Survey also provides data on visitor spend.

Occupancy rates for hotels and private short-term rental accommodations are two other indicators that can help us understand revenues. The Government of Yukon has been reporting on hotel occupancy for many years—through annual tourism reports—although the third-party provided data that is used only represents a portion of the actual number of hotel rooms. Since 2019, the government has purchased data on private short-term rental accommodations from AirDNA.

A valuable monitoring effort into the future will be understanding how economic benefits are distributed across a range of demographics: are new as well as established businesses able to participate in the visitor economy? What about businesses of a range of sizes and from a variety of Yukon communities? Are tourism businesses owned and operated by people who represent a variety of ages, genders and cultural backgrounds? Answering these questions may help the sector identify potential barriers to entry. In the meantime, results from the Yukon Resident Perceptions of Tourism[11] study on resident perceptions of economic benefits may provide some insights.

Ensuring financial support for tourism development is another important component of building a thriving tourism economy. The Department of Tourism and Culture currently monitors aspects of this.

10 The Visitor Exit Survey is conducted with travellers exiting the Yukon via the Whitehorse and Dawson city airports and travellers exiting by land via British Columbia, the Northwest Territories and on domestic flights.

11 This study is conducted every two years by the Yukon Bureau of Statistics since 2019.

Table 1.4 Economic Benefits

ECONOMIC BENEFITS				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Tourism revenue	Per cent GDP attributable to tourism.	*YTDS* Goal 1 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (Yukon Bureau of Statistics)
	Revenue to Yukon businesses attributable to tourism.	*YTDS* Goal 1 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (Yukon Bureau of Statistics)
	Occupancy rates (select fixed roof and private short-term rental accommodations).	*YTDS* Goal 1 (YG, 2018) + monitored by INSTO member TOTA	YES	CBRE, AirDNA
	Average length of stay of visitors.	*YTDS* Goal 1 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C and Yukon Bureau of Statistics), AirDNA
	Visitor spend (total spent by all visitors in the Yukon, excluding packages).	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 B1	YES	YG (T&C and Yukon Bureau of Statistics)
Distribution of economic benefits	Percentage of tourism-based businesses by gender, First Nations' ownership, community, size of business (revenue), age of business (number of years in operation to reflect new tourism business startups), age of business owner, Yukoner vs. visitor spend.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 B1	NO	
	Resident perceptions of economic benefits from tourism are monitored.	*YTDS* Goal 1 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C, Yukon Bureau of Statistics)
Tourism development and supports	Financial programs, incentives, and supports for tourism development are in place, align with the goals of the *YTDS*, the Tourism Relief and Recovery Plan, and support outstanding visitor experiences.	*YTDS* Action Plan 2.1 (YG, 2018)	NO	YG (T&C , Departments of Economic Development, Education and Environment), CanNor
	Support the development of visitor experiences as per Action Plan 2.2 of the *YTDS*.	*YTDS* Action Plan 2.2 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C)

Employment and Human Resources

Monitoring Goal: A diverse, skilled and experienced tourism-sector labour force

Finding and retaining workers was one of the biggest challenges the Yukon's tourism industry faced prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Hence the *YTDS* action plan, "support the tourism industry's access to a skilled and experienced workforce."

The Government of Yukon helps organize and fund a variety of training, recruitment and retention initiatives for the tourism sector. Yukon's University and several non-government organizations also provide training initiatives. Efforts to reflect the full range of capacity development opportunities available in the Yukon will commence in 2022 so that gaps in programming may be identified.

Labour market supports for transportation and housing are also important to consider—especially housing— given the lack of affordable options across all Yukon communities. The government's Housing Corporation has programs and funding initiatives that help support the provision of affordable housing. Data on the vacancy rate and median rent for rental-units also provide insights - this data has been gathered by the government's Bureau of Statistics since 2014.

The number and quality of employment opportunities are gathered and reported on every four years by Statistics Canada, through the Tourism Satellite Account. Since 2012, these statistics have been reported on in the Tourism Employment Report published by the government's Bureau of Statistics every three years.

In addition to paid employees, the Yukon's tourism sector relies strongly upon volunteers to help ensure festivals and events run smoothly. The number of volunteers relied upon annually for these purposes is unknown.

Chef Glenys Baltimore and Chef Cat McInroy pictured during the 2019 Yukon Culinary Festival, Whitehorse area. *Michelle Doucette*

Table 1.5 Employment and human resources

EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCES				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Capacity development	Annual number of tourism-sector training programs/ courses available locally.	*YTDS* Action Plan 2.1 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C)
	Recruitment/retention programs in place.	*YTDS* Action Plan 2.1 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (Department of Education)
Labour market supports	Tourism industry has access to labour market supports for transportation and housing.	*YTDS* Action Plan 2.1 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (Yukon Housing Corporation)
	Vacancy rate and median rent for rental units.	Reflects existing monitoring effort	YES	YG (Yukon Bureau of Statistics)
Number and quality of employment opportunities in the tourism sector	Number of jobs in the tourism industries, average weekly hours worked, average hourly wage (full-time).	*YTDS* Action Plan 2.1 (YG, 2018)	YES	Statistics Canada
	Annual percentage/ number of Yukoners who do unpaid volunteer work to support festivals and events.	Volunteers are key to the success of Yukon festivals and events, which play a role in attracting visitors to the Yukon	NO	

Yukon Resident Sentiment

Monitoring Goal: Alignment between sustainable tourism development and Yukoners' core values

In 2019, the Government of Yukon began surveying Yukoners on their attitudes towards tourism, perceptions of concerns and benefits, and aspirations related to tourism volumes. This was done to help ensure that tourism aligns with Yukoners' core values. The survey also provides a metric to verify achievement of one of the three *YTDS* goals – that 80% of Yukoners have a positive attitude about tourism. This survey will be the main mechanism through which to understand resident sentiment and will be carried out every two years[12]. The ability to understand satisfaction with tourism by Indigenous respondents will be explored in future surveys to strengthen awareness of how satisfaction may vary across different groups.

Table 1.6 Yukon resident sentiment

YUKON RESIDENT SENTIMENT				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Yukon resident perceptions of tourism	Percentage of Yukoners who agree that tourism is good for the Yukon/ their community.	*YTDS* Goal 3 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C, Yukon Bureau of Statistics)
	Resident perceptions of tourism are monitored.			
	Resident aspirations regarding visitor volumes in their community/the Yukon are monitored.			

12 The 2021 survey instrument was modified to include questions on how COVID-19 influences resident sentiments towards travel and travellers.

Tourism Seasonality

Monitoring Goal: Year-round tourism that maximizes available capacity in the shoulder and winter seasons

To strengthen year-round tourism, supports for its development and promotion must be in place. Three *YTDS* action plans speak to these supports and appear as indicators in table 1.7.

To measure the degree of tourism seasonality, tourist arrivals are monitored at four of the territory's main points of entry/exit: Beaver Creek, Little Gold, Pleasant Camp, and Fraser[13]. Statistics Canada also reports on international travellers entering the Yukon at the Whitehorse, Dawson City and Old Crow airports (direct international flights). In addition to these datasets, the Government of Yukon monitors travellers exiting the Yukon via the Whitehorse and Dawson City airports (domestic flights), as well as visitors exiting by land via British Columbia (via the South Klondike and Stewart Cassiar highways), the Northwest Territories (via the Dempster Highway) and Alaska (via the Alaska, Haines and Top of the World highways). Other indicators that provide insight into the degree of seasonality are shown in table 1.7.

Northern lights above the Keno sign post on Keno Hill, Keno, Silver trail. *Robert Postma*

13 Entries at these points are tracked by the Canadian Border Services Agency, or CBSA, and reported on by CBSA and Statistics Canada. Exits at Beaver Creek, Little Gold, Pleasant Camp and Fraser are tracked and reported on by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Table 1.7 Tourism seasonality

TOURISM SEASONALITY				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Shoulder and winter season development and promotion	Yukon is marketed as a year-round tourism destination.	*YTDS* Action Plan 4.1 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C)
	Support the development of shoulder and winter season festivals and events that enhance visitor experience.	*YTDS* Action Plan 2.2 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C, Department of Economic Development)
	Support the development of niche and emerging experiences to strengthen the role they play in bolstering the shoulder and winter seasons.	*YTDS* Action Plan 2.2 (YG, 2018)	NO	
Degree of seasonality and capacity	Tourist arrivals by month or quarter.	Monitored by INSTO members TOTA and Portugal.	YES	YG (T&C, Yukon Bureau of Statistics), CBSA/Statistics Canada, U.S. Department of Transportation
	Occupancy rates for hotel and private short-term rental accommodations per month and in peak quarter.	Monitored by INSTO member TOTA	YES	AirDNA, CBRE
	Percentage of Yukon tourism-based businesses reporting that they are seasonal.	Reflects existing monitoring effort	YES	YG (Yukon Bureau of Statistics)
	Operating season length of visitor information centers.	Same as above	YES	YG (T&C), Parks Canada
	Operating season length of campground facilities and services.	Same as above	YES	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada
	Number of events and festivals hosted during the shoulder and winter seasons.	Same as above	YES	What's Up Yukon
	Number of meetings and conferences hosted during shoulder and winter seasons.	Same as above	YES	Yukon Convention Bureau
	Number of sporting events hosted during the shoulder and winter seasons.	Same as above	YES	Sport Yukon

Solid and Hazardous Waste Management

Monitoring Goal: Responsible management of solid and hazardous waste generated by the Yukon's tourism sector and visitors

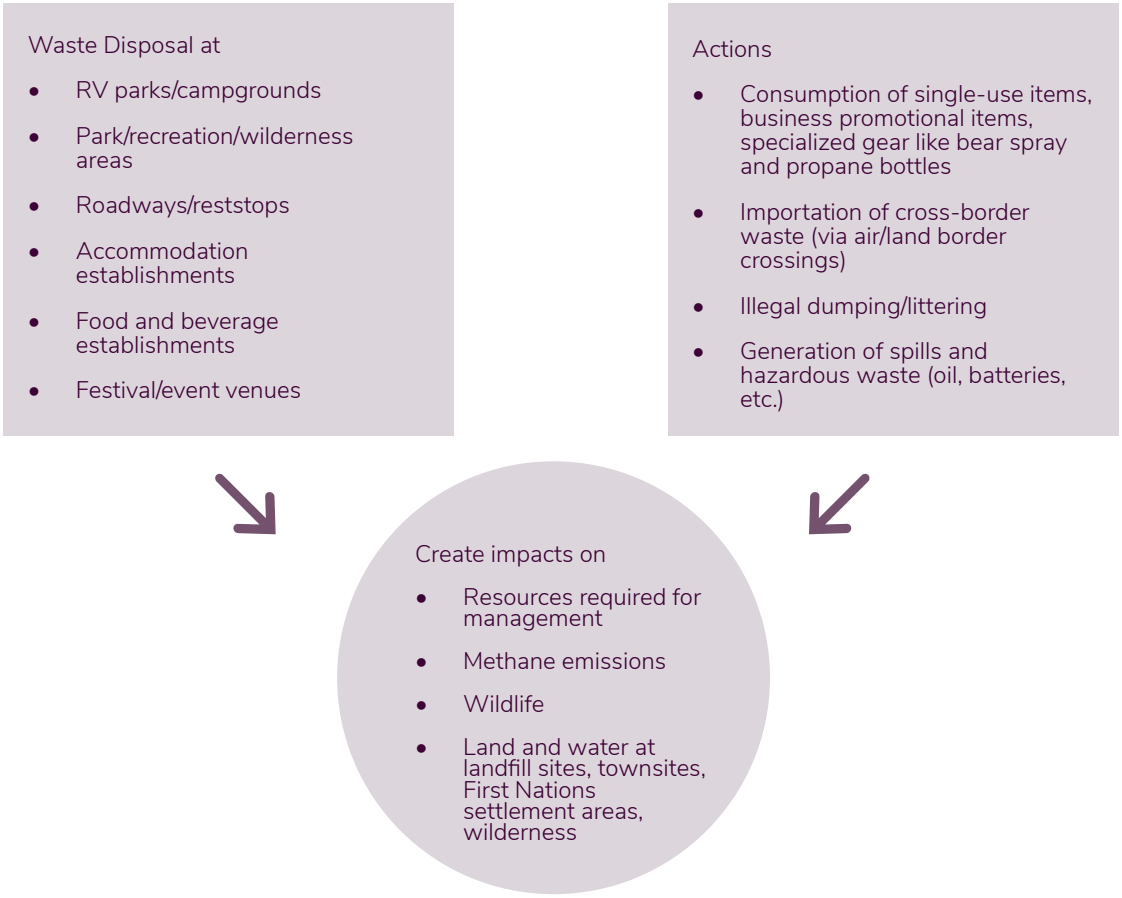
A variety of waste management services provided by governments and non-profit organizations are relied upon by residents, businesses and visitors alike, including the following.

- Waste and compost pickup services in Yukon municipalities.
- Unincorporated community landfills.
- Waste-transfer stations.
- Municipally operated landfills, which also have recycling and compost facilities.
- For and non-profit recycling services.
- Non-profit waste reduction organizations.
- Waste service infrastructure at highway rest stops, campgrounds and recreation areas.
- Solid human waste infrastructure at highway rest stops and front and backcountry campground and recreation areas.
- Waste reduction education resources for wilderness travelers.
- The wilderness tourism licensing system, which requires licensees to abide by low-impact waste disposal practices.

These infrastructures and others like them help support the responsible management of solid and hazardous waste. However, the impacts tourism activities have on these infrastructures is not well known. To learn more about the impacts and how to better measure and manage them into the future, T&C held a workshop in March, 2020, with individuals familiar with solid waste management issues in the Whitehorse area[14]. Figure 1.9 shows an example of the tourism activities that generate waste and areas of impact.

14 Wastewater, energy and water management issues were also discussed.

Figure 1.9 Examples of tourism activities that generate waste and areas of impact.



The impacts shown in figure 1.9 were then used by participants to identify potential indicators and sources of data for measuring them over time. These are shown in table 1.8 alongside indicators that reflect the *YTDS*, the work of the Government of Yukon, Parks Canada and other organizations.

Several workshop-identified indicators do not currently have known data sources, which will be important for the YSTO to address in future monitoring efforts. Other important aspects of waste management to consider into the future include waste management perspectives from communities outside of Whitehorse (especially those with proposed landfill and waste-transfer station closures) and gaps in the waste management system, such as high-use recreation areas without waste infrastructure.

Table 1.8 Solid and hazardous waste management

SOLID AND HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Waste disposal and separation infrastructure	Maintain current assets while exploring opportunities for new and improved waste management infrastructure.	*YTDS* Action Plan 1.2 (YG, 2018)	YES, AVAILABLE, AVAILABLE	YG (departments of Environment, Community Services), City of Whitehorse, Town of Dawson City
	Capacities of waste receptacles at rest stops on Yukon highways are observed and used by travelers only (i.e. receptacles are not used for household waste).		NO	
	Assess options for establishing a comprehensive waste diversion system in YG buildings offering tourism facilities (including visitor information centers, Yukon Archives, Beringia Centre), including reuse, recycling, compost, and e-waste collection by 2030.	Our Clean Future Strategy, Action I12 (YG, 2020)	YES	YG (Department of Highways and Public Works)
	Percentage of campgrounds with waste separation infrastructure.	Based on waste, energy, water and wastewater workshop results[15]	YES	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada
	Number of events/year that rent zero waste bins (compost, garbage, recycling).	Same as above	YES	Zero Waste Yukon
	Percentage of tourism enterprises separating different types of waste.	Same as above	NO	
Education	Educational tools available to support proper solid and hazardous waste reduction and waste disposal by travelers.	Same as above, GSTC Criteria v. 2.0 D9	NO	

15 Held on March 10, 2020 with experts and knowledge holders from the following governments, businesses and organizations: Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Zero Waste Yukon, Raven Recycling Society, City of Whitehorse, Yukon University (waste and wastewater program coordinator), YG (departments of Environment, Energy, Mines and Resources, Health and Social Services, Climate Change Secretariat), and ATCO Electric. Indicators and data sources for monitoring wastewater, solid waste, energy and water management were discussed and identified.

Monitor and mitigate waste volume, methane emissions and plastic waste	Develop legislation that will enable the Government of Yukon to restrict or prohibit the production, supply or distribution of appropriate single use bags by 2021.	Our Clean Future Strategy, Action I13 (YG, 2020)	YES	YG (Department of Environment)
	Volume of solid and hazardous waste and methane emissions generated by tourism.	Based on waste, energy, water and wastewater workshop results	NO	
	Number of accommodation establishments providing bottled water.	Same as above	NO	
Monitor and mitigate waste impacts on land, water, plants, fish and wildlife	Tourism-related waste impacts on the land are monitored and mitigated.	Same as above	YES	YG (Department of Environment)
	Percentage of campgrounds with bear-proof waste bins.	Same as above	YES	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada
	Percentage of campgrounds with bear-proof food storage bins.	Reflects existing monitoring effort	YES	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada
	Percentage of tourism enterprises with measures in place to protect fish and wildlife from waste.	Based on waste, energy, water and wastewater workshop results	NO	
	The impacts on those with no voice (the land, fish and wildlife) are considered in solid and hazardous waste management	Same as above	NO	
Human waste infrastructure	The standard distance between outhouses at rest stops on Yukon highways and their design follow best practices.	Same as above	YES	YG (Department of Highways and Public Works)
	Public restrooms available in all communities.	Current gap	NO	
	Outhouses placed and serviced at high-use recreation areas.	Reflects existing monitoring effort	AVAILABLE	Lake Laberge Renewable Resource Council and the Yukon Canoe and Kayak Club

Wastewater Management

Monitoring Goal: Responsible wastewater management by the Yukon's tourism sector and visitors

The responsible management of wastewater infrastructure[16] in municipalities and unincorporated communities across the Yukon is, by and large, handled by municipal governments and/or the Government of Yukon[17]. For visitors or residents traveling via recreational vehicles (RVs) equipped with septic holding tanks, a number of sites are available for disposal.

Infrastructures like these help support responsible management of wastewater within the tourism sector, but not a great deal is known about how tourism activity impacts these and related infrastructures. To learn more about them and how to better measure and manage impacts into the future, the workshop referred to in footnote fifteen included a component on wastewater. Workshop-identified indicators are shown in table 1.9 alongside complementary indicators. Learning more about wastewater management issues in communities outside of Whitehorse will be important to future monitoring efforts.

16 This includes the regulations and guidelines in place for the siting, maintenance and testing of discharge from septic tanks and wastewater treatment systems.

17 For commercial operations outside of municipal wastewater collection zones, septic systems must be approved by the government's Department of Health and Social Services. Private sewage disposal systems are required onsite for operations with pressurized water systems – for those without (i.e. no running water), pit toilets may be used. Operations that host more than 49 people onsite or generate volumes of water that the Yukon Water Board classifies as Class A or Class B must apply to the Yukon Water Board for a water license/wastewater disposal system.

Table 1.9. Wastewater management

WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Wastewater handling infrastructure	Regulations and guidelines for the siting, maintenance, and testing of discharge from septic tanks and wastewater treatment systems.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 D8	AVAILABLE	Public works departments within the municipalities of Whitehorse, Mayo, Faro, Haines Junction, Watson Lake and Carmacks, YG for unincorporated communities and Dawson City
	Educational tools available for visitors to support proper RV-septic wastewater disposal.	Based on waste, energy, water and wastewater workshop results	NO	
	Adequacy of wastewater management infrastructure is assessed regularly.	Same as above	NO	
Capacity	Government support to appropriate organizations to help fund wastewater treatment/ management.	Same as above	NO	

Water Management

Monitoring Goal: Responsible water use and management by the Yukon's tourism sector and visitors

Water and wetlands are vital to the lives and health of the Yukon's people, economy and natural environment. They provide habitat for fish, plants and animals and support basic life processes. Wetlands in particular, are essential to maintaining water flows, flood protection, purifying water and recharging and discharging groundwater. People use water for drinking, washing and bathing, and cultural and spiritual purposes. Water bodies and wetlands also provide places for people to hunt, fish, trap, recreate and travel. And for tour operators who guide visitors on river trips, water is a critical environmental value.

To ensure that Yukoners, visitors, plants, fish and wildlife can all access quality water sources for a range of purposes, the Yukon and federal governments carry out a variety of activities. Regulations, acts, policies, licensing processes and First Nations Final Agreements also guide the conservation, development and utilization of waters. Indicators and data sources that reflect these activities, regulations and processes are provided in table 2.0. Indicators that reflect the impacts tourism activities in particular may have on water systems are also included in the table – these were identified at the workshop described in footnote seventeen. Important to note is that the measurement of water use beyond the bulk volume consumed by municipalities is not possible at this time.

People of all ages visit the public viewing gallery at the Whitehorse Rapids Fish Ladder to see the annual salmon migration up the Yukon River. *Peter Mather*

Table 2.0 Water management

WATER MANAGEMENT				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Monitor quality and quantity	Destination monitors water quality for drinking, recreational and ecological purposes using quality standards.	GSTC Criteria v. 2.0 D7	YES	YG (departments of Environment, Community Services, Highways and Public Works)
	Destination publishes water quality data.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 D7	YES	YG (Department of Environment)
	Destination has a licensing process that guides the conservation, development and utilization of waters.	Yukon Water Strategy and Action Plan (YG, 2014)	YES	YESAB, Yukon Water Board, YG (departments of Environment, and Energy, Mines and Resources)
	Adapt existing surface and groundwater monitoring networks by 2026 to be able to track long-term trends in water quality and quantity in a changing climate.	Our Clean Future Strategy, Action P2 (YG, 2020)	YES	YG (Department of Environment)
Risk assessment	Water risks are assessed and documented.	GSTC Criteria v. 2.0 D6	YES	YESAB, YG (Department of Environment)
Monitor usage	Percentage of municipal water volume used by accommodation establishments.	Based on waste, energy, water and wastewater workshop results	NO	
Capacity	Government support to appropriate organizations to help fund the provision of potable water for visitors	Same as above	NO	
	Cost of drinking water provision by community.	To determine the above	NO	
Conservation	Presence of educational tools to support visitor-directed water conservation.	Based on waste, energy, water and wastewater workshop results	NO	
	Percentage of tourism enterprises taking actions to reduce water use (for example applied for YG water-saving appliance rebates).	Monitored by INSTO member Portugal	NO	
Satisfaction	Visitor and resident satisfaction with water and water viewing infrastructure[18] in the destination.	Based on waste, energy, water and wastewater workshop results	NO	

18 Boardwalks, wharfs, beaches, etc.

Energy Management

Monitoring Goal: Responsible energy usage and management by the Yukon's tourism sector and visitors

Yukoners use both renewable and non-renewable energy sources to meet their heating, cooling, electricity and transportation needs. These energy sources include propane, wood/biomass, diesel oil, gasoline, aviation fuel, liquefied natural gas, and hydroelectric and solar-generated sources. Increasing Yukoners' access to renewable sources of energy that are also reliable and affordable is part of a Yukon-wide initiative called *Our Clean Future* being led by the Government of Yukon.

This initiative will benefit the Yukon's tourism sector and visitors. Understanding rates of energy consumption within the sector and what tourism businesses are currently doing to reduce their energy consumption and utilize renewable sources are unknown at the moment, but important. Knowledge gained in these areas could be used to better direct energy conservation efforts within the sector.

The Whitehorse Dam, where the Schwatka Lake reservoir flows through to the Yukon River, provides electrical power generation for Whitehorse. *Government of Yukon*

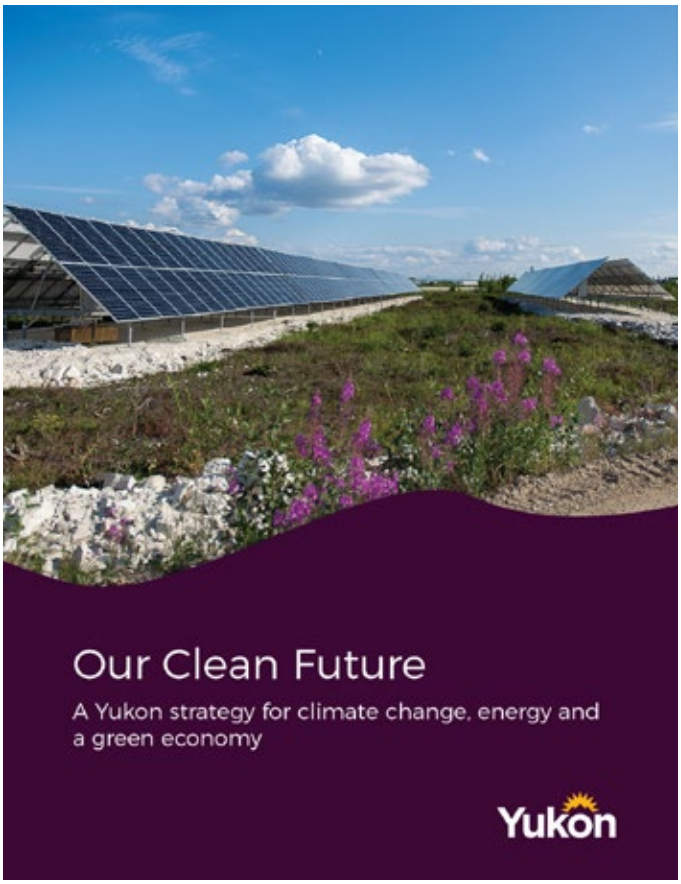
Table 2.1 Energy management

ENERGY MANAGEMENT				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Monitor usage	Percentage of electricity and fuel use attributable to the Yukon's tourism sector, by month.	Based on waste, energy, water and wastewater workshop results	NO	
	Electricity/fuel use attributable to YG tourism facilities.	Same as above	AVAILABLE	YG (Department of Energy, Mines and Resources)
Energy conservation	The destination has targets to reduce energy consumption, improve efficiency in its use, as well as increase renewable energy use.	Our Clean Future Strategy (YG, 2020), GSTC Criteria v.2.0.	YES	YG (Climate Change Secretariat)
	Number of tourism-based businesses with strategies in place to reduce energy consumption and their associated savings.	Based on waste, energy, water and wastewater workshop results	NO	
	Educational tools available for visitors to support efficient energy use.	Same as above	NO	
	Percentage of rental vehicle fleet that is zero emission/number of electric vehicle registrations counted via the Visitor Exit Survey.	Save as above	YES	YG (departments of Highways and Public Works, T&C and Yukon Bureau of Statistics)
	Continue to install fast-charging stations across the Yukon to make it possible to travel between all road-accessible Yukon communities by 2027 and work with neighbouring governments and organizations to explore options to connect Yukon with B.C., N.W.T. and Alaska.	Our Clean Future Strategy, Action T4 (YG 2020)	YES	YG (Department of Energy, Mines and Resources)
	Number of electric vehicle charging stations throughout the Yukon.	Reflects existing work	YES	YG (Department of Energy, Mines and Resource
	Visitor use of public transportation is monitored.	Based on waste, energy, water and wastewater workshop results	NO	
	The number of operators using renewable heat sources.	Same as above	NO	
	Solar hot water heating promotions directed to tourism businesses.	Same as above	NO	
Innovation	Emergence of tourism-related energy innovation and its impacts on energy consumption and reduction.	Same as above	NO	

Climate Action

Monitoring Goal: Sustainable tourism development that addresses climate action

In the Yukon, climate change is threatening ecosystems, subsistence harvesting, infrastructure, leisure activities and many other aspects of life. These realities are common in polar regions around the world, where the effects of climate change are more pronounced than in other regions. One of the Yukon's strongest collective responses to the climate crisis is *Our Clean Future: A Strategy for Climate Change, Energy and a Green Economy* (2020). It was developed over the course of three years by the Government of Yukon in partnership with Yukon First Nations, transboundary First Nations and Inuvialuit and Yukon municipalities. Within the strategy, specific and tangible actions that the government will take are put forward, as well as the actions planned by Indigenous and municipal partners. There are many regional-level actions listed in the strategy. Only those that specifically pertain to tourism, however, are included in table 2.2. One of the most notable of these is the development and implementation of a system for tracking greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) emissions from the Yukon's tourism sector. The system was developed in 2021 and results for the years 2017-2019 will be available soon, as well as resources to support the sector reduce emissions. GHG emissions will be monitored every five years. *Our Clean Future* will be the main mechanism through which climate change related actions will be monitored and reported on.



The work of tourism businesses and other organizations, like Parks Canada, to reduce climate impacts are also important to understand. And because of the global nature of the climate crisis, international efforts, policies and other actions should influence future iterations of the YSTF.

Table 2.2 Climate action

CLIMATE ACTION				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Tourism asset risk assessment	Work collaboratively with First Nations and the Inuvialuit to document information from historic sites and culturally important places on the Yukon's North Slope that are at risk due to climate change by 2024.	Our Clean Future Strategy, Action P8 (YG, 2020)	YES	YG (T&C, Department of Environment), Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
Visitor education	Educate visitors about climate change impacts in the Yukon.	Reflects current work	YES	Parks Canada
Monitor GHG emissions from tourism	Develop and implement a system to track GHG emissions from the Yukon's tourism sector by 2020-2021.	*YTDS* Goal 2 (YG, 2018), Our Clean Future Strategy, Action I11 (YG, 2020)	YES	YG (T&C, Yukon Bureau of Statistics, Department of Environment)
Reduce GHG emissions from tourism	Understand the actions the tourism sector is taking, and the support needed, to reduce GHG emissions.	To inform the indicator below	NO (2023/24)	YG (Yukon Bureau of Statistics)
	Provide support (financial and educational resources) to businesses and organizations to develop and implement best practices for reducing GHG attributable to tourism.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 D10	NO	
	Evaluate the potential to generate renewable electricity at remote historic sites co-managed by the Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations by 2022.	Our Clean Future Strategy, Action E5 (YG, 2020)	YES	YG (T&C, Department of Environment)
	Information for enterprises and visitors on carbon offsetting schemes that meet recognized standards.	Our Clean Future Strategy (YG, 2020)	YES	Government of Canada, YG (Department of Environment)
	Consider and where possible reduce the GHG footprint of park operations.	Yukon Parks Strategy (YG, 2020)	YES	YG (Department of Environment)

Accessibility, Inclusivity, Equity and Diversity

Monitoring Goal: Tourism contributes to accessibility, inclusivity, equity and diversity in the Yukon

Municipal, First Nations, territorial and federal governments all help to facilitate accessible and inclusive attractions, services and public buildings. Together, they have made some of the Yukon's greatest features—the outdoors and sites of historic and cultural significance—more inclusive and accessible. Businesses and organizations have also made progress in this regard. For example, in 2021, two different funding opportunities were made available through Inclusion Yukon[19] and Soulfly Experiences[20]. The opportunities were designed to increase the availability of accessible equipment to businesses and nongovernment organizations and accessible tourism opportunities for all travelers including aging persons, families and persons with disabilities (limited mobility, blind/limited vision, deaf/limited hearing, cognitive or intellectual spectrum differences and dietary restrictions).

Ensuring travellers are able to plan the details of their trip in advance is another important aspect of this key element of sustainable tourism. A few resources are available through Parks Canada, the Government of Yukon and individual business/operator websites, but more are needed to help travellers plan the full range of their transportation, accommodation, dining and experience needs in advance.

A discussion with operators, tourism NGOs and those with expertise in universal design, accessibility, inclusivity, equity and diversity is needed to further develop the list of indicators in table 2.3 and their data sources.

Former Whitehorse Mayor, Dan Curtis, rolls out some paint for the Black, Indigenous and People of Colour crosswalk at the corner of Front and Main Street. *City of Whitehorse*

19 Inclusion Yukon is an organization dedicated to including all people living in the Yukon in every walk of life. For more information visit www.inclusionyukon.org

20 Soulfly Experiences is a business that designs inclusive, barrier-free travel packages and a-la-carte experiences. For more information visit www.soulflyexperiences.com

Accessible trails at the Wolf Creek Campground, Whitehorse. *Government of Yukon / Justin Kennedy*

Table 2.3 Accessibility, inclusivity, equity and diversity

ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSIVITY, EQUITY AND DIVERSITY				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**PARTNERS**
Accessibility and inclusivity of tourist attractions throughout the destination	Number of trails, campsites, and other facilities that are accessible and inclusive.	GSTC Criteria v. 2.0, B8	YES, YES, AVAILABLE	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada, municipalities
	Number of attractions with universal access.	Monitored by INSTO member TOTA	NO	
	Existence of public transport suitable for those with mobility challenges.	Monitored by INSTO member TOTA, reflects current work	YES	City of Whitehorse
	Number of tour companies in the Yukon offering tours/guides trained for persons with disabilities.	Monitored by INSTO member TOTA	NO	
	Gender neutral washrooms available at key visitor sites.	Reflects current work	YES	YG (T&C), Parks Canada
	Visitor satisfaction with the accessibility and inclusivity of the destination.	GSTC Criteria v. 2.0, A6	NO	
Access to public buildings, hotels and services	Number of restaurants, hotels and public buildings with universal access restrooms and outhouses.	Monitored by INSTO member TOTA	NO	
	Number of hotels and private short-term rental accommodations with universal access rooms.	Monitored by INSTO member TOTA	NO	
	Availability of opportunities for businesses and organizations to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of operations.	Reflects the monitoring goal	NO	
Trip planning resources	Details of accessibility included in visitor information about key sites.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0, B8	YES	YG (T&C, Department of Environment), Parks Canada
	Information on accessibility included in communications about the destination as a whole.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 B8	YES	YG (T&C)
	Online trip planning resources are accessible.	Reflects current work	YES	YG (T&C), Parks Canada
Policy and programs	Existence of accessibility and inclusivity policy and programs.	Monitored by INSTO member TOTA	YES	YG (T&C, Department of Environment)
Diversity and equity in cultural programming	Fund and review criteria that seek broad and representative applicants for arts and culture funding.	Reflects existing monitoring effort	YES	YG (T&C)

Wood carvings at the Big Jonathan Heritage Centre in Selkirk First Nation Traditional Territory, Pelly Crossing.
Justin Kennedy

Cultural Sustainability

Monitoring Goal: Tourism benefits the Yukon's cultures, communities and heritage

Cultural diversity and a rich heritage are part of the fabric of Yukon's society and make it a warm, welcoming and engaging place to live and visit. Heritage, culture and cultural industries[21] are a distinct and important part of the Yukon's social and economic benefits.

Many supports for the development of arts, culture and heritage experiences and attractions are provided by the Government of Yukon, through a range of programs and funding opportunities. The structure of, and long-term vision for, these programs and supports are guided by policy and legislation and will also occur through implementation of the *YTDS* and the *Creative and Cultural Industries Strategy (CCIS)*.

Supports for Indigenous tourism in particular, represent a core component of the *YTDS*, because Yukon First Nations' knowledge, values and cultures are fundamental to the Yukon's identity. Understanding visitor awareness of, and access to Indigenous tourism experiences also provide important insights – the Yukon Visitor Exit Survey is a source of data on this topic. Ensuring guidance is in place for visitor behavior around Indigenous cultural resources is also important. Parks Canada and the Government of Yukon have guidelines and regulations in place for Indigenous cultural resources managed by each entity.

21 These industries are quite diverse, but essentially include all industries which generate cultural, artistic or heritage products and content for consumers and marketplaces.

Table 2.4 Cultural sustainability

CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Arts, culture and heritage tourism experiences	Support arts, culture, and heritage experiences and attractions that deepen visitor experience and showcase the Yukon's unique northern identities.	*YTDS* Action Plan 2.2 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C)
Yukon First Nations tourism products and experiences	Support new and enhanced visitor experiences and awareness for Yukon First Nations tourism, including the opportunity for better alignment of cultural and visitor information centres.	*YTDS* Action Plan 3.2 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C)
	Support bringing together Yukon First Nations, development corporations, YFNCT and the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) to discuss how to work together to support First Nations tourism development in the Yukon.	*YTDS* Action Plan 3.1 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C)
	Provide opportunities for tourism partnerships with Yukon First Nations.	Reflects current work	YES	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada
Degree of visitor participation in First Nations cultural experiences	Percentage of visitors that attended a First Nations cultural festival, participated in a First Nations cultural experience with a guide/host, visited a cultural centre.	Reflects existing monitoring effort	YES	YG (T&C)
Visitor management	Guidelines and/or regulations in place to guide visitor behaviour around cultural resources (including cultural centres).	GSTC Criteria v. 2.0 C6	YES	YG (T&C, Department of Environment), Parks Canada
	Respectful travel protocols are available to visitors for travel in Yukon First Nations Traditional Territories and communities.	Reflects current work	YES, AVAILABLE	YG (T&C), CYFN
Preserve and celebrate culture	Resident perceptions of tourism's influence on the preservation and celebration of culture are monitored.	*YTDS* Goal 3 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C, Yukon Bureau of Statistics)

Swans gather along the shoreline of Marsh Lake during their annual spring migration. *Government of Yukon*

Natural Environment

Monitoring Goal: Tourism contributes to the stewardship and enjoyment of the Yukon's natural environment

Ensuring there is adequate protection of the Yukon's environment is an important way to approach the stewardship and enjoyment of it. Parks and protected areas play a big role in the Yukon's economy through tourism, recreation, local employment and entrepreneurship. They are also essential to the Yukon's wilderness tourism industry, which includes over 100 licensed wilderness tourism operators.

In both the territorial and federal park systems, the zoning, acts and regulations used for establishing and managing protected areas represent a key aspect of protection that can be reported on. The extent to which co-management with Indigenous partners occurs is also important.

The protection of ecological integrity within the park systems will be measured by reporting on invasive species monitoring, removal and communication programs as well as efforts to reduce and mitigate tourism-related impacts (including impacts on wildlife). Even though Parks Canada and the Government of Yukon have systems in place for managing visitors at natural sites and providing guidance for wildlife viewing and interactions, a larger-scale approach is needed given that many residents and visitors recreate outside of parks and protected areas.

Lastly, data on resident perceptions of tourism's influence on the natural environment, natural resources and access to wilderness also can also provide insight – this data is gathered every two years through the Government of Yukon's Resident Perceptions of Tourism Survey.

Table 2.5 Natural environment

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Protection and access	Preserve lands and natural heritage.	*YTDS* Value (YG, 2018)	YES, YES, AVAILABLE	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada, Yukon First Nations
	Monitor and remove invasive species.	Our Clean Future Strategy, Action P6 (YG, 2020)	YES	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada, Yukon Invasive Species Council
	Communications with visitors and businesses/ operators on reducing spread of invasive species.	GSTC Criteria v. 2.0 D2	YES	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada
	Evidence of action to manage and mitigate tourism-related impacts in or around natural sites.	GSTC Criteria v. 2.0 D1	YES	YG (T&C, Department of Environment), Parks Canada
	Resident perceptions of tourism's influence on the Yukon's natural environment, natural resources (for example hunting, fishing, gathering and water resources) and access to wilderness are monitored.	*YTDS* Goal 3 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C, Yukon Bureau of Statistics)
Collaborative management with Indigenous partners	Parks and protected areas are jointly managed with Indigenous partners while honouring Indigenous rights, languages, harvesting and traditional uses of the land.	Yukon Parks Strategy (YG, 2020)	YES	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada
Visitor management at natural sites	The destination has a system for the management of visitors within and around parks and protected areas, which takes into account their carrying capacity and seeks to optimize visitor flow and minimize adverse impacts.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 D2	YES	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada
	The destination has a system for the management of visitors who recreate in areas outside of parks and protected areas, which seeks to minimize adverse impacts.	GSTC Criteria v. 2.0 D2	*NO*	
	Guidelines have been prepared and published for visitor behaviour at sensitive sites, which are made available to visitors and tour guides before and at the time of the visit.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 D2	YES	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada
	A code of practice for tour operators and tour guides on visitor management at natural sites.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 D2	YES, YES, AVAILABLE	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada, WTAY
Wildlife viewing and interactions	Reference to specific international, national, and local laws, standards and guidelines that apply in the destination regarding animal welfare and conservation of species.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 D4	YES	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada
	Visitor access to codes of practice for wildlife interactions including viewing.	Reflects current work	YES, YES, AVAILABLE	YG (Department of Environment), Parks Canada, WildWise Yukon

Yukon Resident Travel

Monitoring Goal: Responsible Yukon resident travel

Yukoners value many aspects of their ways of life, communities, heritage, culture, and wilderness. Travel experiences help reinforce these values and play an important role in shaping the identities of residents and enhancing their quality of life. When Yukoners travel within their home territory, the tourism and greater economy benefits. This is especially important as the sector recovers from the pandemic.

Promoting Yukon resident travel can influence resident travel rates. The government monitors these efforts. Actual rates of resident travel are tracked every two years through the Government of Yukon's Resident Perceptions of Tourism Survey, since 2019.

Table 2.6 Yukon resident travel

YUKON RESIDENT TRAVEL				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Yukon resident travel promotions	Explore opportunities for in-destination marketing.	*YTDS* Action Plan 4.2 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C)
Yukon resident travel	Number of YG campsite nights booked/year by Yukon residents.	Reflects existing monitoring effort	YES	YG (Department of Environment)
	Annual visitation by Yukoners to visitor information centers, museums and cultural centres.	Reflects existing monitoring effort	YES	YG (T&C)
	Annual visitation by Yukoners to Parks Canada sites.	Same as above	YES	Parks Canada
	Annual number of vacation days Yukoners spend in Yukon.	Same as above	YES	YG (T&C, Yukon Bureau of Statistics)

Visitor Sentiment

Monitoring Goal: Positive visitor sentiments towards the Yukon

Visitor satisfaction with the Yukon as a destination is currently captured through Net Promoter Score (NPS), an indicator tool developed by Frederick Reichheld, and Bain and Company in 2002. NPS is a simple metric that can be used to measure the intention to recommend/refer a travel destination and is typically used as an indicator of overall satisfaction with travel. Other tourism organizations in Canada that utilize NPS include Destination BC (British Columbia) and Destination Canada. T&C has been measuring NPS since 2017 through the Yukon Visitor Exit Survey[22].

In terms of tourism industry standards that help support visitor satisfaction, one of the *YTDS* action plans is to create industry-led service and accommodation sector standards that improve the quality of visitor experiences. Standards and/or certification around sustainability will also factor into visitor satisfaction, given the increased global demand for sustainable travel experiences[23]. At this time, the Yukon's tourism sector does not have a clear path forward regarding sustainability certification for businesses.

Determining how to strengthen visitor sentiments could be done by asking visitors how standards, services and experiences could be improved. The Government of Yukon's Yukon Visitor Exit Survey could be adapted to include such questions.

Table 2.7 Visitor sentiment

VISITOR SENTIMENT				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Perceptions of the destination	Visitor satisfaction with the Yukon as a destination.	GSTC Criteria v.2.0 A6	YES	YG (T&C)
Service and accommodation sector standards	Develop and implement industry standards: create industry-led service and accommodation sector standards that improve the quality of visitor experiences.	*YTDS* Action Plan 2.1 (YG, 2018)	NO	

22 Similar data was gathered in the 2012-2013 Visitor Exit Survey, but because the ranking scale was statement-based rather than numerical, comparability is somewhat limited.

23 Booking.com's recent sustainable travel report showed that 83% of global travellers think that sustainable travel is vital and 61% said that the pandemic has made them want to travel more sustainably.

Infrastructure

Monitoring Goal: Resilient community infrastructure and access to and around the Yukon

The Yukon is a large area with a relatively small population and limited human and financial resources for managing the vast network of roads, airports, communications and other infrastructures that support tourism.

Efforts to improve signage, air access, road and other infrastructure are underway as a result of a variety of efforts by the Government of Yukon and Parks Canada. Engagement with municipalities and Yukon First Nations is also needed so that infrastructure improvements made at these levels are also reflected in the YSTF.

Table 2.8 Infrastructure

INFRASTRUCTURE				
MEASUREMENT THEME	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Access to/from and within the Yukon and connectivity	Improve signage to better support businesses, communities and visitor experiences across the Yukon. Work in partnership to incorporate Traditional Territories, languages and local artistry into signage.	*YTDS* Action Plan 1.2 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C, Department of Environment), Parks Canada
	Ensure convenient and affordable air access to and around Yukon.	*YTDS* Action Plan 1.2	NO	YG (Department of Highways and Public Works, T&C)
	Maintain safe reliable roads and community infrastructure, while exploring opportunities for new and improved infrastructure, such as pullouts, viewpoints, wireless technology and connectivity.	*YTDS* Action Plan 1.2	YES	YG (departments of Environment, Highways and Public Works, Energy Mines and Resources, Community Services)
	Better manage access to the Yukon's trails, lakes, rivers, historic sites and heritage resources, including infrastructure, in a way that is respectful, sustainable and safe.	*YTDS* Action Plan 1.2	YES	YG (T&C, Department of Environment)

Public Health and Safety

Monitoring Goal: Keep residents and visitors healthy and safe

Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the YTAB requested public health and safety be added to the list of *YTDS* core values, because Yukoners value a future where travel is safe, secure and comfortable/convenient.

Indicators that reflect health and safety in light of current and foreseen COVID-19 circumstances are shown in table 2.9. They are based on the Government of Yukon's policies, actions taken to-date and research initiatives.

More work could be done across the sector on ensuring the needs of both residents and visitors are identified and addressed in the delivery of health and safety services. This includes the response aspect of health and safety.

A fly fisherperson casts for Pike in the Southern Lakes Region of the Yukon. *Government of Yukon / Justin Kennedy*

Table 2.9 Public health and safety

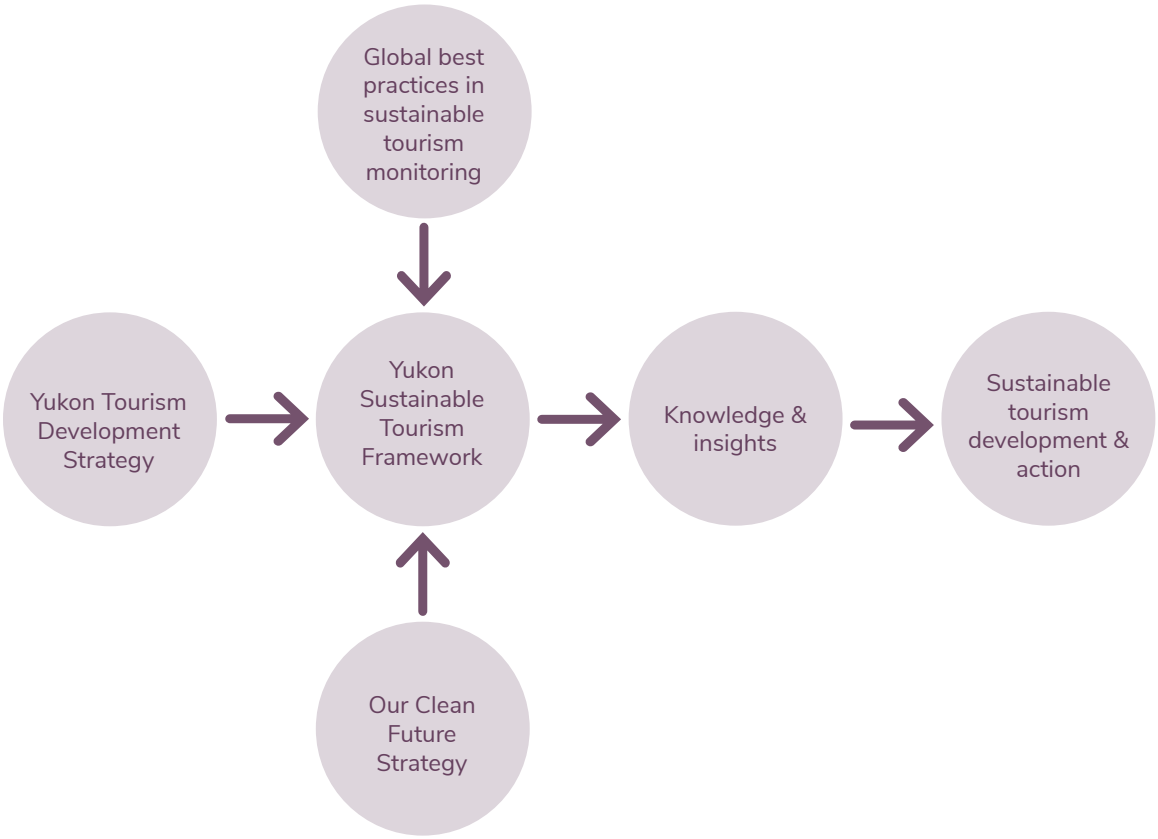
PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY				
MEASUREMENT THEMES	**INDICATORS**	**RATIONALE**	**MONITORED**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Resident perceptions of health and safety	Resident perceptions of how visitors and tourism influence health and well-being are monitored.	*YTDS* Goal 3 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C, Yukon Bureau of Statistics)
	Resident sentiments towards travel and hosting visitors are monitored.	*YTDS* Goal 3 (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (T&C, Yukon Bureau of Statistics)
Health and hygiene protocols	Destination-level health and hygiene protocols are in place, based on evidence and align with resident sentiments towards travel and tourism.	*YTDS* Value (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (Department of Health and Social Services)
	Business-level health and hygiene protocols in place.	GSTC Criteria v. 2.0 B7	YES, AVAILABLE	YG (Department of Health and Social Services), TIA Yukon
	Destination and business-level health and hygiene practices are monitored.	*YTDS* Value (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (Department of Health and Social Services)
	Health and hygiene protocols are based on robust cleaning and sanitization procedures that encourage adoption of reuse models.	One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme, UN (2020)	NO	
Health and safety services and responses	The needs of visitors and residents are identified and addressed in the delivery of health and safety services.	GSTC criteria v.2.0 B7	YES	YG (Department of Health and Social Services), Parks Canada
	Health and safety responses are planned for and actively practiced in the destination.	GSTC Criteria v. 2.0 B7, *YTDS* Value (YG, 2018)	YES	YG (Department of Health and Social Services), Parks Canada
Active recreation and wellness	Enrich and diversify park experiences.	Yukon Parks Strategy (YG, 2020)	YES	YG (Department of Environment)

CONCLUSION

The Yukon Sustainable Tourism Framework represents the YSTO's initial path forward in sustainable tourism monitoring. It is supported, in principle, by several key nongovernment tourism organizations in the Yukon, including the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon, the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon, the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association, the Klondike Visitors Association, the Yukon Historical and Museums Association and Sport Yukon.

One of the main strengths of the framework's design is that it reflects both global best practices for sustainable tourism monitoring and local strategies for tourism development and climate change.

Figure 2.0. YSTF Design



This design helps ensure the framework results in the production of knowledge that is relevant and valuable to the Yukon's tourism sector for making decisions and investments, establishing priorities and sharing lessons learned with other destinations around the world. Sustainable tourism development and action are the desired outcomes. Ultimately, these outcomes will help the Yukon's tourism sector realize their vision: for tourism to be a vibrant, sustainable component of the Yukon's economy and society for the benefit of future generations.

Next Steps, 2022-2030

2022

- T&C develop data management solutions for partners and members of the public to upload data, download customizable data and access YSTF findings.
- T&C, with local working group, host a meeting with partners, local tourism organizations, governments, operators, communities and others to announce INSTO membership and share next steps.
- T&C, with partners, measure and interpret sustainable tourism conditions for the initial reference years 2019 and 2020.

2023

- T&C, with local working group, host the first annual workshop event with partners, local tourism organizations, governments, operators and others (share/verify first annual report findings, share INSTO network knowledge and identify sector priorities).
- T&C make YSTF knowledge (including key findings and data summaries) accessible to the public through the Government of Yukon and INSTO websites.
- T&C, with local working group and partners, fine tune measurement approaches as needed.
- T&C, with partners, measure and interpret sustainable tourism conditions for the years 2021 and 2022.

2024

- T&C, with local working group, host the second annual workshop event with partners, local tourism organizations, governments, operators, communities and others.
- T&C make YSTF knowledge accessible to the public through the Government of Yukon and INSTO websites.
- T&C, with local working group and partners, fine tune the measurement approaches as needed.
- T&C, with partners, measure and interpret sustainable tourism conditions for the year 2023.

Annual activities in 2025 through 2030 will follow the same format as outlined in 2024.

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APPENDIX 1

YTDS Components

Figure 2.0 provides a summary of the *YTDS* including the vision, goals, core values and action plans, which fall under the "pillars of success" categories.

Figure 2.1 Core components of the *YTDS*

VISION: Our vision is for tourism to be a vibrant, sustainable component of the Yukon's economy and society for the benefit of future generations.
Goals
Thriving Tourism Economy
Sustainable Tourism Development
Resident Support for Tourism
Core Values
Love Our Yukon
Encourage a thriving tourism sector
Preserve and enjoy our natural environment
Honour our heritage
Celebrate our cultures
Build healthy communities
Develop partnerships
Foster innovation
Keep residents and visitors healthy and safe
Four Pillars for Success
Creating the foundation for generational change
Outstanding visitors experiences
Vibrant First Nations History & Culture
Sharing Yukon's story

All action plans developed and implemented over the life of the strategy are meant to support the vision, goals and values. The strategy will be reviewed regularly to ensure its components remain relevant and take into account the evolving nature of the industry. The Government of Yukon will act as a convener and bring together partners to advance priority actions that support the vision. Reviewing data collected throughout the engagement process, the partners will work together to establish the objectives, deliverables, funding contributions and performance metrics to achieve the goals of the action plans. Tables 3.0 through 3.2 provide further details and context for each of the goals, values and action plans.

The *YTDS* Steering Committee identified seven priority action plans in the short term, including:

- establish a task force to recommend a governance model for tourism;
- one government approach to tourism;
- establish a framework that measures the sustainability of tourism development;
- establish the Yukon as a premier destination for Indigenous tourism experiences;
- improve signage;
- market the Yukon as a year-round destination; and
- recruitment, retention and training.

Table 3.0 *YTDS* goals

Goal	Measurement Tool	Context	Partners
Thriving Tourism Economy Double revenue to Yukon businesses attributable to tourism from $262.9 million in 2016 to $525 million in 2028.	The Yukon Business Survey	Every 2 years the Yukon Business Survey collects information about businesses that includes an estimate of revenue and GDP attributable to tourism. The results of the survey are available two years after the reference year (for example the revenues and GDP reported for 2018 will be available in 2020). Surveys began in 2016.	YG (Yukon Bureau of Statistics)
Sustainable Tourism Development Establish a framework within two years that measures the sustainability of tourism development.	The Yukon Sustainable Tourism Framework	Every year beginning in 2022, the framework will be measured and reported on. 2019 and 2020 will constitute the first reference years.	YG (T&C)
Resident Support for Tourism Ensure at least 80% of Yukoners have a positive attitude about tourism.	Resident Perceptions of Tourism Survey	Every 2 years the Resident Perceptions of Tourism Survey collects information about local perceptions of tourism to ensure that tourism development aligns with Yukoners' core values. Surveys have been done for the years 2019 and 2021 to-date.	YG (T&C, Yukon Bureau of Statistics)

Table 3.1 *YTDS* core values

Core Value	Details
Love our Yukon	Yukoners are proud to call the territory home. We are proud of what makes us unique and eager to share it with the world. We value the wilderness, our vibrant communities and northern way of life, and want to ensure that they are preserved for generations to come.
Encourage a Thriving Tourism Sector	Yukoners recognize that tourism plays an important role in growing and strengthening our economy. Businesses and organizations of all sizes support our communities, and provide benefits that extend well beyond employment.
Preserve and Enjoy Our Natural Environment	Yukoners love being in the outdoors and value vast expanses of pristine wilderness and abundant wildlife. Our natural environment must be effectively managed so that visitors and residents can explore our wild and dynamic landscapes without detracting from them or impacting wildlife habitat. Our wilderness is our strength and a fundamental part of who we are.
Honour Our Heritage	Our heritage forms a part of who we are and what draws visitors to the territory. Yukoners are proud of our living heritage that celebrates the natural environment, honours Indigenous knowledge and traditions, preserves and shares our past through heritage experiences and attractions, and commemorates significant historical events such as the Klondike Gold Rush. We must work together to respectfully share the stories of the Yukon's past and bring them to life in the present.
Celebrate Our Cultures	The Yukon inspires creative expression which enhances our lives and interprets our unique northern point of view. Living and sharing our cultures strengthens communities, reflects our ties to the land, and provides platforms to tell our stories. Diverse cultural perspective contribute to the fabric of our society, and make the territory a warm, welcoming and engaging place to live and visit.
Build Healthy Communities	Yukoners appreciate that our communities are truly unique and believe they should be celebrated. Tourism can play an important role in developing our communities through job creation, strengthening community services and supporting infrastructure that benefits everyone. We want to ensure this is done in a way that allows our communities to retain their authentic identity and character while benefiting from tourism development.
Develop Partnerships	Tourism touches us all, so we must work together to harness the opportunities and benefits that tourism provides. Every tourism operator, stakeholder, government, community, and resident brings their own unique viewpoint to the discussion and that must be encouraged and valued for our mutual success.
Foster Innovation	Yukoners value creative solutions and action. There is excitement in the industry and across the territory about the diverse opportunities tourism can provide, and Yukoners want to see a bold vision for the future supported by the innovative and creative solutions that can help get us there.
Promote and Protect Health and Safety	The health and safety of Yukoners and visitors has never been more important. Yukoners value a future where travel is safe, secure and comfortable/convenient without taking away from the enriching experiences for residents and visitors alike.

Table 3.2 *YTDS* action plans

Pillar 1.0: Creating the Foundation for Generational Change

For the Yukon to realize its true potential as a sustainable year-round tourism destination, a number of actions must be taken. With a stronger governance model, infrastructure to improve access to and around the territory, and effective decision making, the Yukon can create a foundation for success that will be felt for generations to come.

1.1 Governance
Establish a task force to recommend a governance model for tourism. Through research and engagement, the task force is charged with exploring tourism governance models (for example government corporation, special operating agency, private/public sector partnership, etc.) and recommending an improved model to the Government of Yukon. Improving governance would align the efforts of government and industry in a manner that maximizes the efficiency of destination management and supports tourism industry growth.
One government approach to tourism. The Government of Yukon should develop a whole-of-government approach to tourism and create one window for the tourism industry to access government programs and services in a coordinated, streamlined and efficient manner. This client-focused model enhances a thriving tourism industry and makes it easier to do business in the Yukon.
1.2 Infrastructure
Roads and communities. Safe, reliable roads and community infrastructure are important to the Yukon's residents and visitors. Maintaining current assets, while exploring opportunities for new and improved infrastructure such as pull outs, viewpoints, waste management, wireless technology and connectivity, supports the sustainable growth of the destination.
Signage. Improve signage to better support businesses, communities and visitor experiences across the territory. Work in partnership to incorporate Traditional Territories, languages and local artistry into signage.
Airport facilities. Airports play an important role in welcoming visitors. Modern airport facilities can leverage the competitive advantage of Air North, Yukon's Airline, while also fostering partnerships with other carriers, to ensure convenient and affordable air access to and around the Yukon.
Wilderness and heritage assets. Better manage access to the Yukon's trails, lakes, rivers, historic sites and heritage resources, including infrastructure, in a way that is respectful, sustainable, and safe.
1.3 Effective Decision Making
Establish a framework that measures the sustainability of tourism development. Through research and engagement, identify metrics that measure the link between tourism growth and healthy communities. This better quantifies the impact tourism has on the Yukon and identifies opportunities to strengthen its benefits to Yukoners.
Improve regulatory framework. Ensure clarity and fairness within the regulatory framework, and provide better tools to enable the sustainable growth and development of the industry (for example availability of land for development).
Evidence-based data for decision making. Establish an accessible and efficient foundation of research and data to support the implementation of the strategy, measure the success of the action plans and inform decision making to support tourism development.

Pillar 2.0: Outstanding Visitor Experiences

The development of outstanding visitor experiences, coupled with leveraging and expanding existing seasonal and community capacity, helps create conditions for the Yukon to become a premier year-round destination. These customer-centric experiences attract tomorrow's visitor, while maintaining and celebrating the Yukon's authentic cultures, identity and communities.

2.1 Ensure a Business-Friendly Environment
Align and leverage financing opportunities to support tourism development. Ensure financial programs, incentives and supports for tourism development are in place, align with the goals of the strategy and support outstanding visitor experiences.
Recruitment, retention and training. Support industry access to a skilled and experienced workforce through programs for training, development, attraction and retention, while also considering labour market supports such as transportation and housing.
Develop and implement industry standards. Create industry-led service and accommodation sector standards that improve the quality of visitor experiences.
2.2 Experience Development
Wilderness tourism. Pursue opportunities for wilderness experiences that help residents and visitors explore the Yukon's wild and dynamic landscapes.
Arts, culture and heritage experiences. Support authentic arts, culture and heritage experiences and attractions that deepen visitor experience and showcase the Yukon's unique northern identity.
Sports tourism. Encourage hosting more sporting events in the Yukon, focusing on the shoulder and winter seasons, and communities where capacity exists or can be developed.
Meetings and conferences. Promote the Yukon as a destination for meetings and conferences, focusing on the shoulder and winter seasons, and communities where capacity exists or can be developed.
Events and festivals. Support the development of shoulder and winter season festivals and events that enhance visitor experience.
Culinary tourism. Pursue opportunities for culinary tourism to support outstanding visitor experiences.
Niche and emerging experiences. Support the development of niche and emerging experiences to strengthen the role they play in bolstering the shoulder and winter seasons.
Community visitor experiences. Support the development of visitor experiences in communities that want to sustainably grow tourism in their region.

Pillar 3.0: Vibrant First Nations History and Culture

The Yukon is home to fourteen First Nations, each with their own rich history, culture and traditions. Supporting the development of Indigenous tourism can provide opportunities for Yukon First nations to share and celebrate their stories in a meaningful and authentic way.

3.1 Yukon First Nations' Tourism Summit

Host an event to bring together Yukon First Nations, development corporations, the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association and the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada to discuss how to work together to support First nations tourism development in the Yukon.

3.2 Establish the Yukon as a Premier Destination for Indigenous Tourism Experiences

Support new and enhanced visitor experiences and awareness for Yukon First nations tourism, including the opportunity for better alignment of cultural and visitor information centres.

Pillar 4.0: Sharing the Yukon's Story

Promote authentic experiences in a market-driven, consumer-centric manner that aligns with the values of Yukoners.

4.1 Market the Yukon as a Year-Round Tourism Destination

Promote the Yukon as a year-round tourism destination by highlighting the unique assets that differentiate the destination from others and maximizes available capacity in the shoulder and winter seasons.

4.2 Explore Opportunities for In-Destination Marketing

Develop and leverage opportunities toencourage resident travel within the territory.

A Parks Canada interpreter in one of the many historical buildings in and around Dawson City. *Enviro Photo*

APPENDIX 2

Organizations, governments and others with whom engagements about the framework and possible indicators/data sources have been held to-date

- Association franco-yukonaise
- Association of Yukon Communities
- ATCO Electric Yukon
- Carcross/Tagish First Nation
- City of Whitehorse
- Council of Yukon First Nations
- Destination Canada
- Energy Solutions Centre
- Eurac Research Center for Advanced Studies (INSTO Member; South Tyrol, Italy)
- Global Sustainable Tourism Council
- Kayli Anderson, Synergy Enterprises (Impact Sustainable Tourism Conference)
- Klondike Visitors Association
- Megan Epler-Wood (Harvard International Sustainable Tourism Initiative)
- Parks Canada
- Raven Recycling
- Sport Yukon
- Ta'an Kwach'an Council
- Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (INSTO Member)
- Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon
- United Nations' INSTO Team
- Various commercial data suppliers
- Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon
- WildWise Yukon
- YG's Assistant Deputy Ministers Committee
- YG's Climate Change Secretariat
- YG's Cumulative Effects Working Group
- YG's Department of Community Services
- YG's Department of Economic Development
- YG's Department of Education
- YG's Department of Highways and Public Works
- YG's Department of Tourism and Culture
- YG's Deputy Ministers Review Committee
- Yukon Tourism Advisory Board
- *YTDS* Steering Committee
- Yukon Arts Centre
- Yukon Chamber of Commerce
- Yukon Convention Bureau
- Yukon First Nations Chamber of Commerce
- Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association
- Yukon Historical and Museums Association

APPENDIX 3

YTDS Steering Committee Members

- Association franco-yukonnaise
- Association of Yukon Communities
- Carcross/Tagish First Nation
- Council of Yukon First Nations
- Department of Economic Development (Government of Yukon)
- Department of Tourism and Culture (Government of Yukon)
- Klondike Visitors Association
- Sport Yukon
- Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon
- Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon
- Yukon Arts Centre
- Yukon Chamber of Commerce
- Yukon Convention Bureau
- Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association
- Yukon First Nations Chamber of Commerce
- Yukon Historical and Museums Association

APPENDIX 4

Organizations, governments and others involved in tourism management in the Yukon

Industry associations & DMOs (territorial and federal) including:

- Destination Canada
- Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada
- Klondike Visitor's Association
- Sport Yukon
- Tourism Industry Association of Canada
- Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon
- Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon
- Yukon Convention Bureau
- Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association
- Yukon Historical and Museums Association

Municipalities and communities (territorial) including:

- Beaver Creek
- Carmacks
- Carcross
- Dawson City
- Destruction Bay/Silver City
- Haines Junction
- Keno
- Mayo
- Old Crow
- Pelly Crossing
- Teslin
- Watson Lake
- Whitehorse

Yukon First Nations and other Indigenous groups:

- Carcross/Tagish First Nation
- Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
- Council of Yukon First Nations
- First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun
- Kluane First Nation
- Kwanlin Dün First Nation
- Liard First Nation
- Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation
- Ross River Dena Council
- Selkirk First Nation
- Teslin Tlingit Council
- Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in
- Vuntut Gwich'in First Nation
- White River First Nation
- Yukon First Nations Chamber of Commerce

Other organizations including:

- Association franco-Yukonnaise Tourism operators
- Association franco-Yukonnaise
- Yukon Chamber of Commerce

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The Porcupine Caribou Herd crossing Sheep Creek, Ivvavik National Park. *Robert Postma*

Yukon