



**Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council**  
*To Be Able to Drink Water from the Yukon River*

# Summit 2009

## *Special Edition!*

AUGUST  
6<sup>TH</sup>-8<sup>TH</sup>

**HELEN'S FISH  
CAMP**

YUKON  
TERRITORY  
~  
CANADA



# STATE of the WATERSHED

## ALASKA REGION

BY JON WATERHOUSE, ALASKA REGION DIRECTOR

In the years since the creation of the Watershed Council, many events have occurred. The challenges faced and progress made has been possible with guidance of the Elders, the direction of the Leadership and the hard work of the YRITWC staff and the People of the Yukon River and its tributaries.

A brief look at some of the recent successes:

Science - The Science Department is nurturing a real integration of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and western science, making it one of the few research entities that develops its research questions directly from community input and TEK. Now in the ninth year of a baseline study and successfully collaborating with many world renowned organizations they have created one of the largest Indigenous data collection networks in the world.

Sustainable Lands – Now in its fourth year, the Sustainable Lands Department has completed inventories of effected sites in 39 communities, resulting in a database of over 250 potential brownfield sites along with many Environmental Site Assessments. The annual capacity trainings held and the outreach to the communities has

been enhanced by the production of the highly successful and entertaining DVD, “Yookkene: An Introduction to Brownfields in the Yukon River Watershed”.

BackHaul/Solid and Hazardous Waste – These programs have experienced a huge and continued success with the removal of over 10 million pounds of recyclables and hazardous waste from the Watershed. The Backhaul staff has developed an intense training program that is now responsible for the education of several hundred people in a wide variety of disciplines including: Freon removal, hazardous waste handling and removal, waste product energy production, anti-freeze recycling, emergency spill response and first aid.

Energy – The Energy Department is responsible for the installation of the “very first of its kind” Hydro-Kinetic project of its type in the country. As this project is developed and expanded it will help to solve energy challenges in many areas. Not sitting idle, the Group is pushing ahead with wind and solar technologies to address the energy needs throughout the region. Their renewable energy training program is another “first of its kind”

Capacity/Advocacy - The efforts of the Circuit Riders and Advocates have increased the knowledge of issues and capacity to address them to an extraordinary level.

Healing Journey – The Journey has continued, added new facets and grown. The Journey has inspired People throughout the Watershed and now the world.

Looking to the future, in light of all the successes, we must be honest with ourselves; there is much that is unaddressed and remains to be done. Some of these needs are for a time when the funding, capacity and technology have grown to a level where they can be answered.

On the near horizon though, is the responsibility for all people to be engaged in this work and to involve the youth. The youth are the future and our most valuable ally. Inspiring them is our duty.

Let us, accept this responsibility and duty, and inspire the youth to lead the way to the future.

Let us, as a community, come together for that future.

## YUKON REGION

BY ROB ROSENFELD, YUKON REGION DIRECTOR

The Yukon Region (Whitehorse) is thriving with a top notch staff. The Yukon Region has grown by leaps and bounds in the past two years. We have received funds from the Canadian International Development Association, the Northern Strategy Trust, and the Royal Bank of Canada.

I am honored to be working with Albert Genier of the Nacho Nyak Dun First Nation as he has taken the lead in our Water Sampling Program. Albert has been travelling all over the Yukon and has ensured that more than 50 samples have already been taken. I would like to commend Bob Truelson and Heather Jirousek of The Yukon Territory / Water Resources for their commitment to a unique partnership and for having confidence in the First Nations Science capacity. The First Nations Technicians have been very reliable in ensuring that all samples are taken and sent in time and in temperature.

I am also thankful that 3 very dedicated interns have joined our team. Maya Stano and Carmen Gustafson have come to work with us through the Canadian Lawyers Abroad Program for 3 months and Jessica Kayser has joined us from the School for International

Training in Vermont for 10 months. Maya and Carmen have taken on multiple projects, while working with the Youth and the Lands Department workers during the summit. Jessica will be working in the schools in the Yukon Region assisting teachers in identifying environmental and watershed education curriculums, while helping to build our Environmental Education and Youth Programs.

We now own a van and have an office located at the corner of 5th and Stickland, downtown, Whitehorse. Thank you very much to Bryan Maracle for playing a lead role in the office move and for setting up a solid Water Quality Program. Most importantly, I would like to acknowledge our friends at the United States Geological Survey for providing training and for over \$100,000 of free lab fees. I am also pleased to report a strong relationship with Environment Canada and would like to thank Lisa Fairweather for her commitment to the YRITWC and the in-kind contributions.

This summer the vision and mission has reached even more First Nations and municipalities in British Colombia and the Yukon Territory. I am happy to report that the following First Nations

have signed the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Accord: Kaska Tribal Council and the Ross River First Nation in the Yukon Territory, the Daylu Dena First Nation, and the Deese River First Nation in British Colombia. Seventy (70) First Nations have now signed the Accord. This is the biggest Inter-Tribal treaty / accord in history among Aboriginal governments!

As the Tribal Environmental movement on the Yukon continues to take root, unique partnerships continue to take shape, as the Carmacks City and the City of Whitehorse have signed the Affiliated Government Agreement!

Best wishes and thank you for allowing me to be part of this strong movement with a clear vision with visible momentum, bringing about real change for a healthy future.

Thank you to all YRITWC Staff:	Albert Genier	Carmen Gustafson	Jessica Kayser	Maya Stano	Tillila Beetus
	Alanna Purdy	Christopher Kolerok	Leah Anderson	Monty Worthington	Teresa Sidney
	Bryan Maracle	Carol Thomas	Loni Jack	Rose Hewitt	Xuefeng Peng
	Brad Zollner	Dave Pelunis-Messier	Mike Grundberg	Rachael Peltola	
	Caleb Aronson	Faon O’Connor	Martin Leonard	Stephen Price	

## Inter-Tribal Accord Signatories

Alakanuk Traditional Council  
 Alatna Village Council  
 Algaaciq Tribal Government  
 Allakaket Traditional Council  
 Anvik Tribal Council  
 Arctic Village Council  
 Asa'carsarmiut Tribal Council  
 Beaver Tribal Council  
 Birch Creek Tribal Council  
 Canyon Village Council  
 Carcross/Tagish First Nation  
 Chalkyitsik Village Council  
 Chevak Native Village  
 Chuloonawick Native Village  
 Circle Village Council  
 Daylu Dena Council  
 Dease River First Nation  
 Eagle Traditional Council  
 Emmonak Traditional Council  
 Evansville Tribal Council  
 Grayling IRA Council  
 Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government  
 Hamilton Tribal Council

Holy Cross Traditional Council  
 Hooper Bay Native Village  
 Hughes Village Council  
 Huslia Tribal Council  
 Iqurmiut Tribal Council  
 Kaltag Tribal Council  
 Kaska Tribal Council  
 Kluane First Nation  
 Kotlik Traditional Council  
 Koyukuk Tribal Council  
 Kwanlin Dun First Nation  
 Liard First Nation  
 Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation  
 Loudon Tribal Council  
 Manley Village Council  
 Marshall Traditional Council  
 Mentasta Village Council  
 Na-cho Nyak Dun First Nation  
 Naqsrarmiut Tribal Council  
 Native Village of Bill Moore's Slough  
 Native Village of Minto  
 Native Village of Shaktoolik  
 Native Village of St. Michael  
 Native Village of Tanacross  
 Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government  
 Nenana Native Council  
 Nulato Tribal Council

Ohogamiut Traditional Council  
 Paimiut Traditional Council  
 Pilot Station Tribal Council  
 Pitka's Point Traditional Council  
 Ross River Dena Council  
 Ruby Tribal Council  
 Scammon Bay Traditional Council  
 Selkirk First Nation  
 Shageluk IRA Council  
 Stebbins Community Association  
 Stevens Village Council  
 Ta'an Kwach'an First Nation  
 Taku River Tlingit First Nation  
 Tanana Tribal Council  
 Teslin Tlingit First Nation  
 Tr'ondek Hwech'in First Nation  
 Venetie Village Council  
 Vuntut Gwichin First Nation  
 White River First Nation  
 Yupit of Andreafski

## Affiliated Organizations

Carmacks City  
 City of Whitehorse  
 Kotlik City Council  
 Pitka's Point City Council

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