

An Environmental Work Practice is a set of positive guidelines or "Do's and Don'ts" on how to control an aspect of the services, activities, or products of Yukon Energy that may have a negative effect on the environment.

HERITAGE AND CULTURE

EMS-EWP-009

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the **Environmental Work Practice for Heritage and Culture** is to provide the steps required to conduct YEC operations while protecting heritage and cultural resources in the Yukon.

1.2 Definitions

Archaeological sites may be historic or may date to before European contact.

Ethnographic Objects are directly related to the culture and history of Yukon Indian People. These are objects that were known to have been owned or used by First Nations individuals or families within living memory.

Heritage Resources include ethnographic objects directly related to the culture and history of Yukon Indian People, paleontological objects and archaeological objects.

Historic Resources: Historic resources are abandoned sites and objects of greater than 45 years old.

Paleontological resources are fossil and other remains of extinct or prehistoric plants and animals. These include bones of mammoth, horse, bison and other ice age fauna as well as fossil remains and traces of plants, vertebrate and invertebrate animals.

Prehistoric archaeological resources may be found on or under the ground surface, and generally consist of the remains of ancient camps, hearths, stone tools and debris.

2.0 Requirements

If an item described in the "Definitions" section above is found on or near a work site;

- Stop work
- Protect the site from any (further) disturbance and contact the YEC Manager of Environment.

If there are people encountered while on site, advise them of the find and to keep out of the area and extend them courtesy. They may be recreating, hunting/fishing, or conducting other activities on the land.

2.1 General and Planned Work

- As part of planning and prior to work commencing, discuss location of proposed activity that involves the potential disturbance of new areas or existing areas with known heritage resources with the YEC Department of Environment. They can identify/locate potential heritage resources in the proposed work area.
- The YEC Environment Department will work with staff/contractors to discuss any known heritage sites with the First Nation Government and the Yukon Government. It is important to establish communication early and frequently.
- Any known heritage sites are to be avoided and buffered from any disturbance. A minimum 30 m buffer is required, unless a special concession is made with the appropriate authorities.
 - For example there is only a 5m buffer around some heritage resources sites at Minto Landing and the Minto Landing substation. The heritage resources at the Minto Landing substation are demarked by a snow fence and vehicle access prohibition signage.
- No disturbance is permitted of heritage sites and objects may not be removed from heritage sites.
- Human remains found outside of a recognized burial site must be reported first to the RCMP.
- Use existing access roads and trails whenever possible.
- If possible, utilize winter access that will have a lower likelihood of impacting buried heritage resources.
- When possible, situate roads and trails 100 m away from streams, rivers and other water bodies, and 30 – 60 m back from the edge of terraces, ridges and other elevated land forms as these are areas of high heritage potential. If work is necessary in closer proximity to such features a detailed **Heritage Resources Impact Assessment** can be conducted to rule out the presence of any sensitive areas. Contact YEC Department of Environment for guidance and assistance.



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2.2 Reporting

Generally, for newly discovered sites and resources, the following information should be recorded by the person who discovered the site:

- GPS location: latitude/longitude or UTM coordinates and NAD (27 or 83).
- Estimate of site or feature extent (area).
- Brief description of setting and access to assist others in locating the site.
- Brief description of site features (e.g., cabin with collapsed cache and scatter of household goods).
- Photographs.

2.3 Confidentiality Regarding Known Heritage Resource Sites

Not all known heritage sites on Yukon Energy owned/leased lands are explicitly labeled in the field as the information regarding the locations of many of these sites is confidential. In general, any new recent construction has undergone heritage resource impact assessments and known sites were recovered or protected during construction (i.e., for sites disturbed since 2007). **Any new clearing or subsurface land disturbance beyond the footprint of existing infrastructure must be reviewed with the Manager of Environment to ensure protection of known heritage resources.**

3.0 Applicable Legislation

- *Yukon Historic Resources Act*
- *Yukon Archaeological Sites Regulation.*

4.0 Additional Information

Government of Yukon publication “Handbook for the Identification of Heritage Sites and Features” can assist in identifying heritage features and sites on the land, contributing to their preservation and protection. This publication can be found at science.gov.yk.ca.

Guidelines Respecting the Discovery of Human Remains and First Nation Burial Sites in the Yukon for additional information. This publication can be found on the Government of Yukon website.

YEC Safe Work Practices

The following SWP’s can be found on the Health and Safety Departments SharePoint site

YEC Spill Contingency Plans

Can be found on the EMS SharePoint site under Spill Contingency Plans