

Asi Keyi

Natural Environment Park

PARK MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS



We're Back!

Hello / Dànch'e / Dintí / Nts'adiit'eh from the Asi Keyi Steering Committee. We have been hard at work behind the scenes since our first round of community and public engagement in 2016. Management planning takes time and unfortunately the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted our public gathering plans for several years. Now that we're able to gather in-person again, the Steering Committee is planning for engagement this fall or winter. Given the length of time since our last engagement in 2016, we want to remind everyone about the natural environment park, the steering committee, and where we are in the planning process.

The Park

Asi Keyi Natural Environment Park includes 2,984 km² of protected area. The park stretches from the Dan Zhur Chù (Donjek River) west to the Alaska border and from Kluane National Park and reserve north to the Kluane Range. Asi Keyi Natural Environment Park is part of the homeland of both Kluane and White River First Nations. This means that the traditional use, family ties and cultural stories of two First Nations are inherent in the land, waters, and ice. The park was first identified in the Kluane First Nation Final Agreement. It is a remote wilderness that is difficult to access.



The Steering Committee

Kluane First Nation, White River First Nation and Government of Yukon established a Steering Committee to develop and recommend a park management plan for Asi Keyi Natural Environment Park. The Steering Committee includes a delegate from each First Nation and a delegate from the Government of Yukon, as well as a resident of the Yukon who contributes an objective perspective in the public interest. A park planner from Yukon Parks provides technical and secretarial support to the Steering Committee.



Members of the steering committee hard at work in 2016 reviewing feedback from the communities and general public.

Park Objectives

Kluane First Nation, White River First Nation and Government of Yukon are working together to ensure that Asi Keyi Natural Environment Park meets these objectives:

1. to protect, for all time, a natural area of territorial significance, which includes a portion of the Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary, containing physical and biological features of international significance as well as sites of archaeological, historical and cultural value;
2. to recognize and protect the traditional and current use of the area by Kluane First Nation, White River First Nation, Kluane People and White River People in the development and management of the Park;
3. to provide economic opportunities to Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation in the manner set out in Ch. 10, Sch B of the Kluane Final Agreement;
4. to protect the full diversity of Fish and Wildlife and their habitats in the Park from activities that could reduce the capability of the Park to support Fish and Wildlife; and
5. to encourage public awareness, appreciation and enjoyment of the natural, historical and cultural resources of the Park in a manner that will ensure it is protected for the benefit of future generations.

Results of the 2016 Engagement Process

In 2016 the Steering Committee undertook community and public engagement on the proposed park vision and guiding principles and asked if people had any management concerns related to the park. Based upon the feedback received, the committee finalized the vision and guiding principles which will guide management and decision-making in achieving the objectives of the park. The issues identified were the starting point for the development of the management goals and options.

The Park Vision

Asi Keyi (“my grandfather’s country”) Natural Environment Park is the homeland to past, present and future generations of people, plants and animals. The footprints of our grandparents are on the land. Asi Keyi Natural Environment Park is a place to explore and connect with the natural and cultural landscape in ways that leave it unimpaired allowing it to evolve naturally.

The Guiding Principles

- Protection of Park Values
- Collaborative Management
- Adapting to Change
- Three ways of Knowing
- Transboundary Management
- Economic Benefits and Opportunities

Park Management Issues Identified During Engagement in 2016

- access
- historical resources
- education
- park infrastructure
- water quality
- visitor use
- ecological integrity
- wildlife populations and health
- visitor safety
- species at risk
- economic development
- special or significant values
- invasive species
- resource extraction
- traditional use and First Nation rights



Participants at the 2016 community meeting in Beaver Creek.



Participants at the 2016 community meeting in Beaver Creek.



Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation Elders sharing their stories on the shores of Teepee Lake during the 2015 Elders trip into the park.

Next Steps

Since the 2016 engagement, the Steering Committee has been working to identify management issues for the park, and develop management goals and management approaches to help reach these goals. This work was done using feedback and input from the communities, knowledge holders, Elders, interested citizens, environmental organizations, Kluane First Nation, White River First Nation, Government of Yukon, and stakeholders.

The next step in the planning process is for the Steering Committee to undertake community and public engagement on the full suite of management issues and our proposed goals and possible management approaches. We also want to hear directly from you on a few key issues related to park use and special management consideration. Dates of community engagement for the fall/winter have not been finalized yet. We will be having in-person sessions in Beaver Creek, Burwash Landing, Destruction Bay, Haines Junction and Whitehorse.

Before we come back for another round of community meetings on management issues and approaches we want to remind everyone of the park and the work being done to develop a park management plan. Keep your eye out for presentations or booths at Kluane First Nation and White River First Nation community events this summer. Stop by and ask questions or share your thoughts.

Visit our website below to watch the video of the Elders stories, get more information about the park and the planning process, and for future updates.

www.asikeyipark.ca

We look forward to seeing you at a community event soon!

