

Upper Hess Watershed

Has one of the densest woodland caribou populations in FNNND's Traditional Territory

Re

Proposed quartz / placer exploration – FNNND Traditional Territory

Position

The project should not proceed until a land use plan is implemented and effective mitigations are in place

FNNND demands Honour the Treaty

Over 30 years after the Final Agreement, no Chapter 11 regional land use plan exists for this watershed. The Yukon Court of Appeal has affirmed FNNND's Treaty right to co-manage its lands. Authorizing development before planning is complete irreparably reduces what a future plan can protect — an impact that cannot be mitigated.

01

Systemic & Structural Concerns

- **No land use plan:** Chapter 11 co-management never delivered, despite decades of requests.
- **Regional Level Development Interest:** Multiple, large-scale mining and infrastructure projects are proposed in the region with no regional scale planning.
- **Cumulative Effects:** The combined impact of multiple industrial developments will alter this region significantly — these cumulative impacts are currently unassessed and unmitigated.
- FNNND seeks a regional watershed health study using Traditional Knowledge indicators.

04

Water Quality and Quantity

- **Water is sacred** — not a resource. FNNND lives in relationship with water.
- **Future development** of mine sites, mine infrastructure, and access roads will dramatically impact water quality and quantity.
- The Upper Hess/Rogue watershed includes **important freshwater fish habitat** and systems that support FNNND and its citizens.

02

Fish & Wildlife

- **Caribou:** Home to prime, relatively intact caribou habitat and three caribou herds — Tay River, Redstone and Moose Lake.
- **Salmon:** Historic salmon spawning sites present in the watershed - the current status of populations is unknown.
- **No new roads or trails:** Proposed new roads and road upgrades will increase public access into the region significantly.
- **Aerial Activity:** Impacts of substantial aerial traffic on wildlife are currently unassessed and unmitigated.

05

Socio-economic Considerations

- **MMIWG2S+:** transient work camps raise documented risks to women, girls, and 2SLGBTQ+ people.
- Multiple, large-scale camps in the region means **hundreds of non-local workers** will be present in the region. The impacts of these must be assessed together.
- Cultural safety training, anti-violence policy, and proper camp siting required.
- **Wellness:** health is inseparable from access to healthy land and water.

03

Heritage

- **Historic Use:** Long history of presence of FNNND citizens.
- **Heritage Finds:** Significant documented finds of heritage resources have already occurred.
- **Heritage Loss:** Proposed developments will necessarily remove or destroy heritage resources.

What FNNND asks:

PAUSE, PLAN, & CO-MANAGE

1. Do not authorize the project until a **regional land use plan** is in effect.
2. **Adopt a precautionary approach** given the absence of robust cumulative-effects assessment and management tools.
3. **Uphold recommended terms in full** — do not weaken, remove, or otherwise them.
4. **Honour the FNNND Mining Policy** and implement meaningful consultation timelines.
5. **Fulfill the obligations** of Final Agreements and YESAA — where project effects are, or are likely to be, significant DO NOT approve.

This is where Snowline Gold (the mine FNNND has an MOU with) and Fireweed, two large quartz mines are going to be. To help grow these mines, a lot of money is being put also toward improving the North Canol Road. Ross River Dene Council has an agreement with Fireweed.

EXTENT OF MINING DEVELOPMENT, CLAIMS, & PERMITS IN UPPER HESS

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Placer and Quartz Activity in the Rogue-Upper Hess River Watershed,
June 2026

