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Two First Nations support Peel Plan

By [Whitehorse Star](#) on July 28, 2011 at 4:49 pm

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Na-Cho Nyak Dun Chief Simon Mervyn

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Na-Cho Nyak Dun issued a joint release this week, thanking the Peel Planning Commission for its work and indicating their desire to maintain a cooperative relationship with the Yukon as the plan is turned into reality.

"This has not been an easy task," the two First Nations said in a press release. "But the Commission honoured the principles in our agreements, listened to the people in Yukon, and in the end brought forward a balanced recommendation for the parties' consideration.

"Thanks for your perseverance."

The two government said they believe that 100 per cent of the watershed deserves protection.

"This area has unparalleled natural and cultural values for our peoples," they said. "And unlike most of the Yukon, the lands and waters in this ecosystem are still pristine. If push comes to shove, we are prepared to defend this position.

But this is not the time for entrenched positions and political grandstanding. As an avenue to find consensus with the Government of Yukon we are prepared to support this recommendation. We would like to see the mining industry support this consensus as well. We believe this recommendation provides all of the diverse interests in Yukon the opportunity to close ranks in the public interest."

"It's time to set aside our differences and work together," said Na-Cho Nyak Dun Chief Simon Mervyn.

"We're willing to support the final recommendation in order to protect the core values of the Peel."

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Chief Eddie Taylor reflected: "We hoped for more protection, but are prepared to support this recommendation if the other Parties do the same. "We look forward to engaging with the public and the Government of Yukon to complete this process."