3 The Tagish River Habitat Protection Area

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE USE

Background: The Steering Committee has heard numerous concerns from Tagish residents regarding ATV use along the shore, particularly in the low water period, contributing to erosion and disturbing fish, waterfowl and other wildlife.

Interests: Those concerned with the current activities of ORVs in the river bed area and along the banks include those that live there, and those that witness wildlife disturbance, particularly waterbirds in the spring.

The Issue: Use of ORVs in the river bed area during the low water period, and while migrating birds are present.

Why this is an issue: ORVs are frequently used in the Tagish area along roads, trails and along the shoreline of the Tagish River. Their use in sensitive wildlife areas can damage vegetation used by wildlife for food and shelter, as well as disturb wildlife by disrupting nesting or staging waterbirds, and cause and contribute to erosion. ORV use along the shoreline can also disturb the wildlife use of the corridor along the shoreline that is an important movement area between patches of habitat.

Opportunities to move forward:

- Create a designated trail for ORV use in a location that reduces the impacts on wildlife and wildlife habitat and prevents erosion.
- Develop an education campaign directed at ORV users on how they can reduce their impact on wildlife and wildlife habitat while riding in the area of the river.
- Recommend ORV owners register their vehicles, to create a better environment for regulators to enforce compliance with existing regulations.
- Restrict ORV use below the ordinary high water mark of the river.
- Other (please include opportunities you think would mitigate the issue):