

A Wetlands Evening Presentation & Panel Discussion

February 29th, 6-8pm

Hellaby Hall, 4th and Elliot, Whitehorse

FREE! • Light Refreshments provided!

Come learn
about the state
of wetlands in
the Yukon

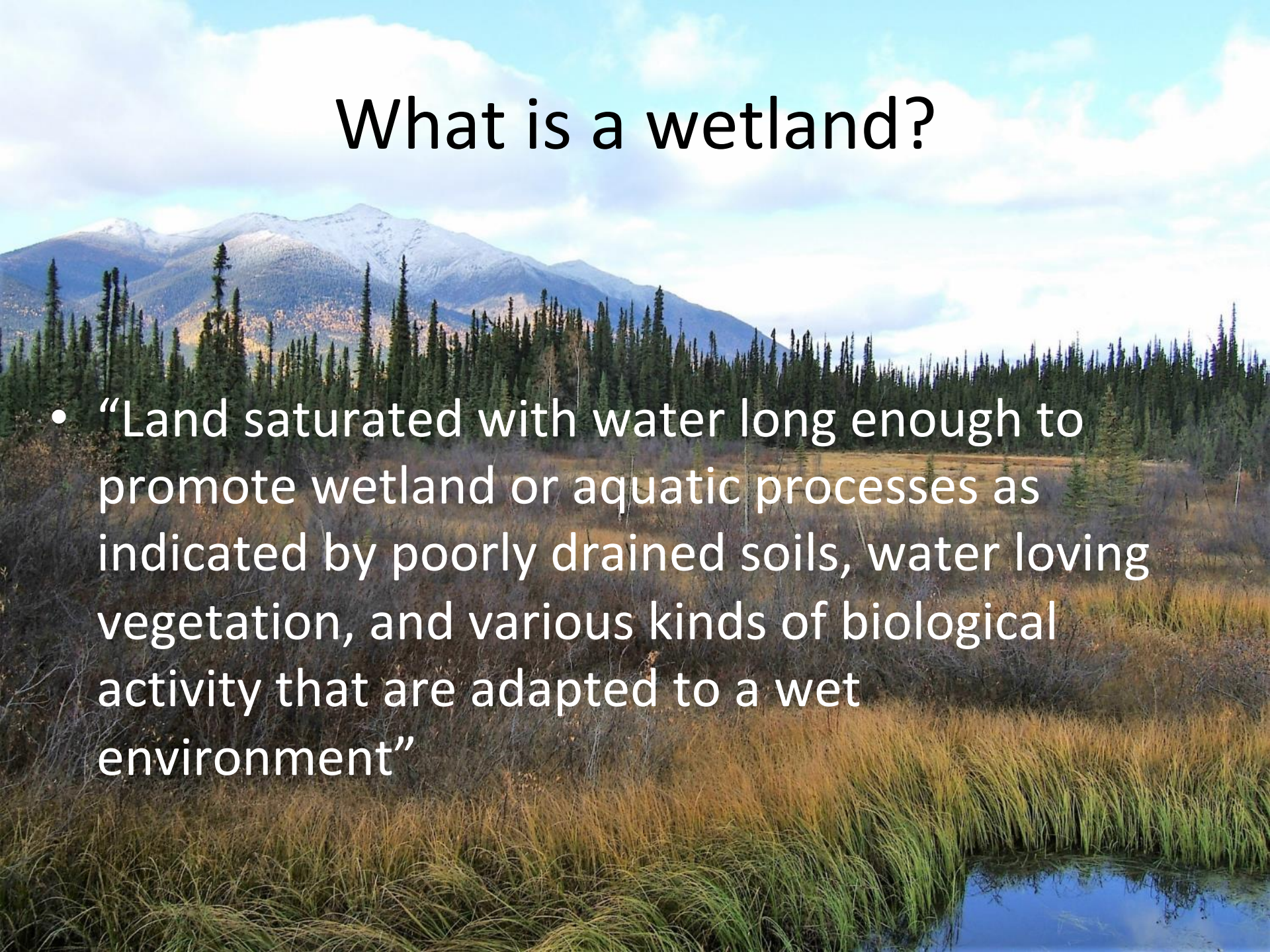
- Speakers from
- Yukon Conservation Society
 - Ducks Unlimited
 - Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in
 - Yukon Environment
 - Kwanlin Dun



Yukon Conservation Society

What is a wetland?

- “Land saturated with water long enough to promote wetland or aquatic processes as indicated by poorly drained soils, water loving vegetation, and various kinds of biological activity that are adapted to a wet environment”



Two main groups of wetlands

- Ones based on mineral soils
- Ponds



Marshes



Two main groups of wetlands

- Ones based on organics- decayed or partly decayed plants- peatlands
- Bogs



Fens



Why care about wetlands?

- Really High biodiversity
- Climate helpers
- Huge role in smoothing out water flows (floods)
- Good place to find moose and berries
- Really good at cleaning water
- Good for our souls.....

Why are wetlands threatened?

- Most wetlands in settled parts of Canada are gone- drained, ploughed or paved.
- In the Yukon most wetlands remain intact
- BUT....wetlands are often exactly where we want to live.



What about in the Yukon?

- Farms



Roads



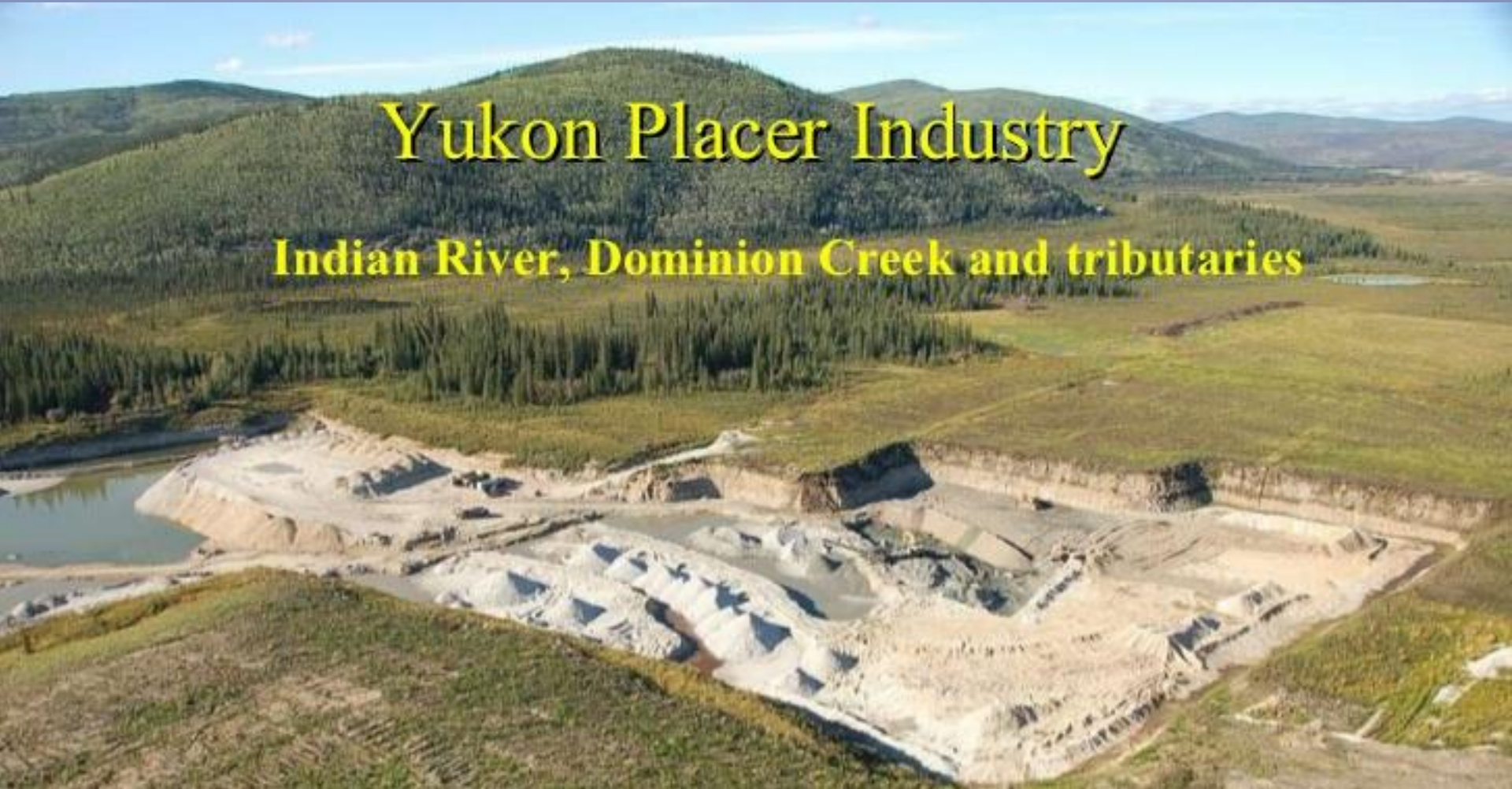
- Buildings and communities



What about in the Yukon?

Yukon Placer Industry

Indian River, Dominion Creek and tributaries



Hydro

Spring water drawdowns dry out critical shallow water habitats and traditional key harvest areas for CAFN people. Fish and muskrat death and displacement occurs, in addition to erosion and damage to heritage sites.



So what can we do to conserve wetlands?

- Assign \$ value to wetlands-
 - Ecosystem services
- Is function a useful tool in the Yukon with few towns or farms that depend on intact wetlands?
- Plan activities so as to **avoid** wetlands
- Map and inventory wetlands

So what can we do?

- Basic principles agreed upon:
 - AVOID disturbance
 - MINIMIZE disturbance
 - OFFSET (compensate for) disturbance

So what else can we do?

Restore wetlands after they have been disturbed

- Some disturbances are permanent (farms, Walmart)
- Organic (peat) wetlands effectively cannot be restored (think old growth trees)
- Some wetlands can be restored (ponds e.g.)
- Much restoration changes wetland class

What's the Yukon plan?

- Short answer: We are working on one.
 - Wetlands policy
 - Placer reclamation guidelines
 - Both are under development



Thank you

- Questions after the Panel Discussion