

What we heard in Old Crow

Community	Old Crow
Date	Tuesday, March 20, 2018
Time	5 p.m.
Location	Community Hall
Facilitator	John Glynn Morris
Note taker	Ewa Dembek Denise McCann
Participants	24 participants

Thinking Ahead: Round 1

In regards to sustainably growing tourism in Yukon, and regardless of whose responsibility it is:

What is already working well?

- Air North airline.
- Culture camp.
- Caribou days.

What can tourism partners build on/do more of?

- Tourism is coming to Old Crow. It's always been here but there's nothing really here for the outdoor enthusiasts that we can gain from them.
- There is more interest now, especially in wildlife, remoteness, and general intrigue.
- We've been talking tourism since way back. It's time to start planning and get together and see what we have surrounding the community for tourism.
- We have young people and their future to consider. Development corporations tried tourism but failed due to a lack of planning.
- A lot of tourism went under because too fast. Start slowly. Provide help with planning. Northern lights and Air north are great and the opportunities are many.
- There are lots of people in Old Crow who want to start something- on land, hiking, etc.
- For example, a trip to Ft. Macpherson by dog team (as another option). Lots out there to plan for.
- We also have a trapping (tourism) opportunity following the success of the Unfurled event. Could be taking interested tourists out on the land trapping.

What opportunities do you see?

- Put a place in Dawson to get people to Old Crow (like the Inuvik pavilion).
- A hub, or campground is needed.

- It's hard to sit at desk so people from here are suited to being out on the land and could be out there explaining what they know and sharing.
- A chance to get out on the land- it's healthy, lots of fresh air, wildlife
- Wildlife viewing opportunities with the Porcupine caribou and migrating birds, and grizzly bears.
- Intrigue and curiosity for the spell of the Yukon and north. Inside arctic circle, boreal forest, but we don't want it commercialized like Dawson.
- Lots of people come to see the caribou. Sometimes we have to deny it because not time to disturb them on migration. There is the traditional aspect and the line of what we can and cannot do.
- Archaeology is another touchy issue. Traditional law and guidelines also need to be respected.
- We want people to experience the industry and grow, but we don't want things to change too much.
- Business is booming and visitors (e.g. workers coming to Old Crow) come to the ice cream and slushie shop- it's very successful. Customers are asking for who can take them out on trails.
- No craft shop, no set up of tourism place in Dawson to promote Old Crow. E.g. Unfurled event very successful.
- Need equipment- snow mobile, dog teams, food, planning, gear. Good idea to build a 'hub' where equipment and knowledge can be shared by the community.
- Missing out on forums like this to see how accessible it is to start a business and get involved in tourism. Seems like a big deal with lots of hoops to jump through, but there is so much that could be done- tour guiding, outfitting, wilderness viewing, etc.
- Need a campground or something more welcoming. Offer visitors a designated base with cut wood and services. Could canoe up there and a few cabins, fireplaces, etc.
- How big do they want it? If too big will affect the community. Also don't want 'undesireables' coming in.
- Don't want superficial tourism. What if we pair it up with education? Opportunity to go to Old Crow and learn about Old Crow, hunting, archaeology, plants, etc. and they will be educated while you catch their heart to return.

Thinking Ahead: Round 2

In regards to sustainably growing tourism in Yukon, and regardless of whose responsibility it is:

What could be improved?

- Wilderness tourism- need to open up more opportunities.
- We need a plan.
- We need support to start a business and learn (how to operate the business).
- Is Old Crow benefitting from tourism? No, we don't have the hub'.

- Nothing here to plan to help. People come and don't see anything.
- Need a hub and a campground.
- Even finding a bathroom here is challenging. If you are a tourist off the Air North flight you have no idea where to start even for basic things that you would need. Basic infrastructure- where to get water and use a toilet.
- Not prepared if you don't know someone from here.
- Need to communicate with community more to try and understand what we're trying to do.
- National park- on airstrip to get people into the park but it is a fragile area so need to understand the trail. Educate our people.

What are the roadblocks and barriers of sustainably developing tourism?

- Need to identify who is going to do it? Is it government? Or Development corporation? With community approval. Who is lead and coordinating?
- Bear Cave- first time we started it was difficult. It was costly, and the message was not getting out. \$10-15K/trip. Now things are very different.
- John Tizya Centre- acts as VIC. Things could be improved- researchers and tour group. JTC pays for everything (guide) but has to get liability insurance through VG. Ideally Old Crow Dev't Corp could take over the insurance.
- Wilderness tourism- trying pilot projects with youth for developing skills and experience in business.
- Haven't had the conversation with the community on this yet. Caribou days would be a very different event if it was for tourists.
- Need someone to take this on- become a champion- and bring to community conversation.

Thinking Ahead: Round 3

Think about yourself as well as your neighbours, colleagues or industry partners. With those perspectives in mind:

What do you think are the 5 most important things that need to be considered to sustainably grow tourism?

- Planning and having a champion, and let's talk with community. Maybe the new community Development corporation.
- Educate people/community about tourism and play a role.
- Overcoming government red tape (all governments). Eg. How many First Nations have a business and why not? What's wrong? Liability and red tape. To do something on crown land need 3 party agreement. Lots of education needed.
- Learn from each other and especially other FNs eg. Carcross. How did they get there? Share the knowledge. Also learn what not to do- the mistakes made.

- Maybe instead of inviting the whole world, make it high end, charge a lot and maybe there is more respect there (for the land, culture, community, etc.). People are willing to pay for these exclusive opportunities.
- Need to learn and educate- e.g caribou horns and use and respect of it. Young people need to do own research around it.
- If we want to do our cooking we can't sell our food. If want to set up wilderness tourism have to be careful -with game & health regulations.
- Most Yukoners have never been to Old Crow. Maybe we don't target Germans- maybe we target Yukoners? It's a simple thing to do.
- It's easy to go down Eagle River in canoes. The challenge is taking them back.
- If want to go to the national park you need a helicopter base here in Old Crow.

What advice would you give to decision-makers (Yukon Government, Yukon First Nation Governments, municipalities, organizations, individual businesses etc.) to consider as we collectively develop the strategy for growing tourism sustainably in Yukon?

- Come back and give us some advice on how to move forward with a plan. We need help. (Also bring the draft YTDS plan back.)
- Let us know what other FNs are doing- and see how best to move forward. That's how we settled our land claim together and came up with agreement.
- Important to keep communication lines open between the committee and communities.
- In different countries- spread out the Yukon tourists and go here in spring, over here in winter etc. to maximize coverage and not fight over tourists.
- Target who you market to- for money, revenue and respect for the land. Don't want thousands up here chasing caribou. Refine who we want here and what we want it to look like.
- A visitor centre for Old Crow in Dawson City would be helpful (similar to Inuvik pavilion).