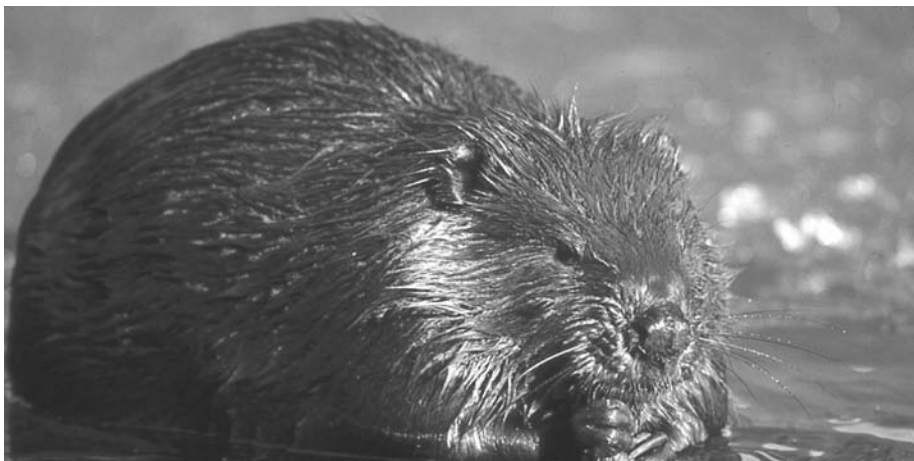


top: Although rarely observed except for their tracks, the wolverine is commonly associated with wilderness habitats. [JS]
bottom: Lynx are among the furbearers trapped in the Peel watershed. [JS]

trapping concessions

top: Beaver are common throughout the Peel River watershed. [JS]
bottom: Pine marten are likely abundant throughout the Peel River watershed, especially in areas where its chief food, the redbacked vole, is abundant. [JS]



Trapping has always been an important part of the way of life in the Peel River watershed. First Nations people have trapped here for many generations. When a trading post was set up at Fort McPherson, it changed the traditional life cycle of the Gwich'in people tremendously. Prior to the trading post, the Gwich'in spent most of their time hunting in the mountains of the upper Peel watershed during winter and fishing in the Peel and its tributaries in the summer. They seldom traveled as far as Fort McPherson. Once the trading post was established trapping became a much more dominant activity and trips to the trading post more frequent. Eventually many Gwich'in people settled near Fort McPherson. Permanent cabins were built and they started using canvas tents instead of skin houses, wooden boats instead of moosehide boats. The entire economic system changed (Slobodin, 1962).

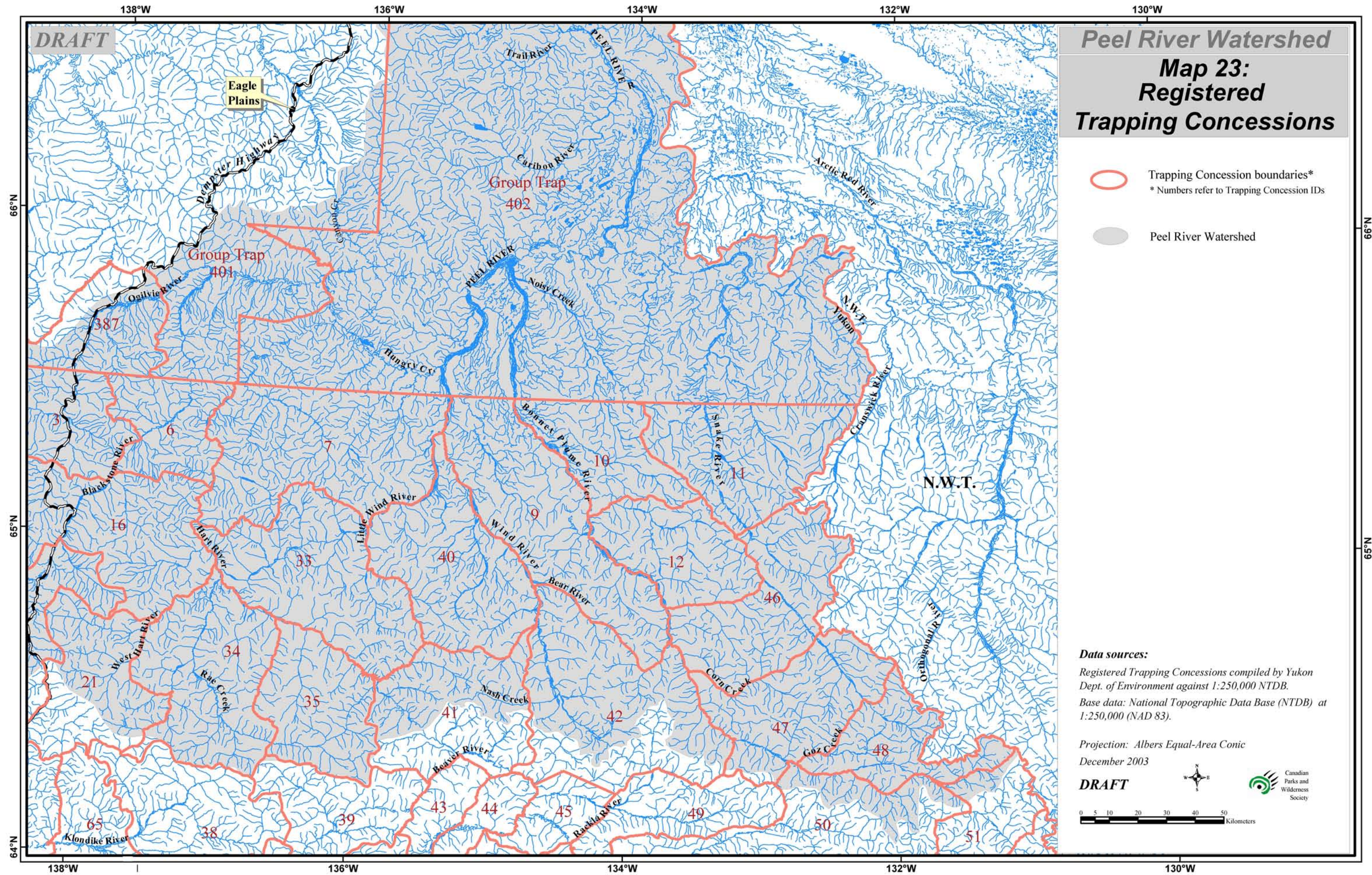
Even though it became commercialized,

Gwich'in trappers used the local furbearer resources sustainably. They followed conservation practices such as dispersing themselves across the land, resting and rotating trapping areas, and continuous harvesting of density-dependent species. They followed a code of ethics (Sherry, 1999).

Nowadays there is a system of registered trapping concessions in the Yukon. A registered trapping concession is a parcel of land on which the holder is given exclusive rights to harvest furbearing animals. In the Yukon there are a total of 352 registered trapping concessions. There are also 7 group areas, which are larger areas held by a collective group of members of the local First Nations community. This system was set up to encourage trappers to manage an area sustainably and to allow for monitoring of furbearer populations (Yukon Department of Environment website).





Due to the remoteness of the Peel River watershed, there has been no trapping activity in many of the trapping concession in this region for over 20 years (Helen Slama, YTG Fur Harvest Technician, pers. comm. 2002). However, if access into the region changed or if the price of furs increased, the extent to which these concessions are used could also change. Area #402 is the McPherson Group Trap area and within this concession most of the trapping takes place on the Peel River downstream from the Snake River and also west in the Hungry Lake area. The other group trap area shown on the map (#401) belongs to the people of Old Crow.



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Peel River Watershed

Map 23: Registered Trapping Concessions

-  Trapping Concession boundaries*
* Numbers refer to Trapping Concession IDs
-  Peel River Watershed

Data sources:
 Registered Trapping Concessions compiled by Yukon Dept. of Environment against 1:250,000 NTDB.
 Base data: National Topographic Data Base (NTDB) at 1:250,000 (NAD 83).

Projection: Albers Equal-Area Conic
 December 2003

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