



# **YUKON CANOE & KAYAK CLUB**

**2021 - 2026 Strategic Plan**

**We gratefully acknowledge that all YCKC events and programming occur on the  
Traditional Territories of Yukon First Nations.**

## Message from the Board



### ***Our Club***

The Yukon Canoe & Kayak Club (YCKC) has been a part of the Yukon paddling community since 1961. Over the last six decades, YCKC has introduced generations of Yukoners to various disciplines of paddling, contributed to the social fabric of the Yukon paddling community, and improved paddling infrastructure and opportunities along the Yukon River in Whitehorse. Even in this unprecedented time of a global pandemic, we have been able to continue to offer year-round programming with our beginner kayak programs in the summer and kayak polo in the winter. Although cancelled in 2020, the annual Whitehorse Whitewater Rodeo has been a staple social event within the Yukon paddling community. This friendly competition has been the training ground for multiple YCKC athletes who have gone on to represent Canada at national and international competitions. The successful development of the Intake Wave along the

Millennium Trail was the origin of Rock the River, YCKC's ongoing initiative to develop an urban whitewater park along the Yukon River.

As we look to grow and thrive as an organization, we need to address the challenges facing YCKC. While summer programming has been popular, the narrow focus on whitewater kayaking has limited opportunities for YCKC members interested in other disciplines of paddling. The limited amount and variety of programming can be contributed to YCKC's continuing difficulty in recruiting and retaining volunteers. We have also struggled to connect with Yukoners because of our small communication presence, lack of a permanent clubhouse in Whitehorse, and minimal collaboration with local businesses, non-profit groups, and Yukon First Nations.



As a result, YCKC membership has been on the decline over the last couple of years. However, with hiring the first Executive Director in club history and as more Yukoners turn to paddling for recreation, opportunities exist for YCKC to overcome these challenges and further develop as a club.

### ***The Strategic Planning Process***

The planning process began in January 2021 with the Strategic Planning Committee and our Executive Director producing a public survey and engaging with Whitehorse-based private sector and non-profit stakeholders. Through these conversations and the 46 responses to the public survey, ideas and opportunities were identified on a variety of issues such as the role of YCKC within the Yukon paddling community, the limited opportunity for club members to advance their paddling abilities, how to provide

programming as a non-profit organization without competing with local businesses, and how do we ensure that our children and future generations are able to enjoy Yukon's rivers? These were refined into themes and reviewed at the Board of Directors Planning Session. Through these discussions, we defined our Mission, Vision, and Values while identifying four inter-connected priorities;

- Program Development
- Fostering Community
- River Stewardship
- Club Governance.

For each priority, we have developed key strategies and defined what success will look like. We appreciate you taking the time to read our strategic vision and our plan to achieve it. We look forward to seeing you on the water!

## ***Our Mission***

To inspire and support Yukoners to safely paddle and responsibly explore Yukon's river systems.

## ***Our Vision***

To be a leader in fostering an inclusive Yukon paddling culture that is guided by education, collaboration, and river stewardship.

## ***Our Values***

- Safety
- Responsibility
- Respect
- Enjoyment

## Program Development



### ***What this priority is about***

Through our public engagement it is evident that there is a growing demand for instructional paddling programs in Yukon. As a non-profit organization, YCKC has the flexibility to help fill this need and support a growing paddling community by strategically expanding the programming we offer. Expanding the variety of our programs to include multiple paddling disciplines, interests and skill levels, will engage and support a diverse membership. As paddling is a lifelong pursuit, we will ensure our programming creates paddling opportunities for Yukoners of all ages. It is important to acknowledge that our

programs exist because of our volunteers. Growing our volunteer base through training incentives and supporting these motivated club members is essential for expanding the programming capacity of YCKC.

### ***What success looks like***

- Have a diverse, motivated and robust roster of volunteers.
- Expanded summer programming to include a variety of paddling disciplines, interests and abilities
- Continue to have a successful polo program in the winter.



### ***Key Strategies***

- Work with partners in the private sector and other non-profit paddling groups to understand gaps in paddling programming offered in Yukon.
- Develop volunteer recruitment, retention, and training programs.
- Incorporate Long Term Development strategies when developing paddling programming.
- Ensure our equipment is up to date and meets the needs of YCKC's programming and membership.

## Fostering Community



### ***What this priority is about***

As we grow as an organization, so does YCKC's ability to positively impact the greater Yukon paddling community. Through collaborative efforts, YCKC can foster a safe, responsible, inclusive, and diverse paddling community. Working with community partners and Yukon First Nations, we will strive to understand and overcome obstacles which prevent Yukoners from participating in paddling. We will continue to inspire Yukoners to get involved with paddling by showcasing the different disciplines of the sport through hosting competitive events. We will enable our members to develop lifelong friends and relationships by hosting more social and recreational events where people can share their passion for paddling. We will

continue efforts to educate Yukoners about river safety and how to enjoy the physical, mental, and emotional benefits that paddling has to offer. Creating a permanent clubhouse in Whitehorse will be the physical foundation that will enable YCKC to be a leader in Yukon's paddling community and beyond.

### ***What success looks like***

- An inclusive, vibrant, and welcoming paddling community.
- Expansion of the number of annual events hosted by YCKC.
- Development of a permanent clubhouse along the Yukon River in Whitehorse



### ***Key Strategies***

- Collaborate with territorial, municipal, and First Nation governments to create river safety campaigns and programs.
- Collaborate with local businesses and non-profit organizations to host a variety of social, recreational, and competitive events throughout the calendar year.
- Finish upgrades to cold storage along Selkirk Street and work with the City of Whitehorse to develop a permanent clubhouse in Whitehorse.

## River Stewardship



### ***What this priority is about***

Through river stewardship initiatives, YCKC will contribute to the health of Yukon's rivers and ensure that future generations are able to enjoy the many benefits of paddling. YCKC programming will include educational instruction on leave no trace practices and river stewardship principals. We will collaborate with other organizations and governments on river stewardship awareness projects throughout Yukon. Through Rock the River, YCKC will work to remediate environmental impacts of the Whitehorse dam while creating recreational

opportunities that will inspire future river stewards. YCKC will also advocate for access and management of Yukon river systems that is based on scientific, traditional and local knowledge.

### ***What success looks like***

- A membership and community that embraces and promotes river stewardship.
- Healthy Yukon river systems that are responsibly managed and accessible to Yukoners.
- Further Development of Rock the River in Whitehorse.



### ***Key Strategies***

- Foster collaboration with local businesses, non-profit organizations, First Nations, and governments to educate our membership and the public on the value, need, and practice of river stewardship.
- Establish working relationships with key stakeholders to create and implement a project plan for Rock the River.
- Continued support and be involved with collaborative river stewardship projects.

## Club Governance



### ***What this priority is about***

For YCKC to meet the needs of our members and contribute to the Yukon paddling community, this club needs effective governance. This means that short-term Board decisions are consistent with the long-term goals of YCKC. Being an inclusive and diverse club starts with our Board. This is why we are committed to creating a transparent environment that welcomes new ideas, encourages members to participate in decision-making, and actively seeks out collaborative opportunities with partners. During this time of growth, it is also important that the roles and responsibilities of Board

members, the Executive Director, and volunteers are clearly defined. We will also seek out and engage with new funding and revenue streams to ensure YCKC is financially sustainable into the future.

### ***What success looks like***

- YCKC is a financial and operationally sustainable organization.
- YCKC is a transparent and accountable organization with and engaged membership.
- Collaborative partnerships with multiple local businesses, non-profits, First Nations and all levels of government.



### ***Key Strategies***

- Work with Societies Yukon, Sport Yukon and Canoe Kayak Canada to ensure policies, protocols, bylaws and constitution are current, relevant, and robust.
- Develop a Board succession plan to ensure Board continuity and that it is representative of the membership and the general population.
- Create yearly operational plans that work towards the priorities outlined in this Strategic Plan.
- Develop a comprehensive communication strategy that incorporates YCKC's presence in the community and online.



# **YUKON CANOE & KAYAK CLUB**

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