Previous Development Designation

In the fish habitat classification system, the suitability of fish habitat is determined by considering watercourse gradient, the proximity of streams to the routes used by Chinook salmon for spawning and migration, and water quality. This approach has proven to be effective when assessing habitat in streams not affected by human activity, but the predicted habitat features and conditions may not be present in streams already affected by placer mining.

For this reason, the Fish Habitat Management System for Yukon Placer Mining includes a "Previous Development" designation. It will adjust the classification of streams that are currently mined, or were mined in the past.

On this map a grey, black or mauve buffer surrounding a stream represents reaches that have been affected by placer mining. A grey buffer indicates current activity, a black buffer shows where placer mining occurred in the past, and a mauve buffer indicates that mining likely occurred within the buffer. A buffer depicts the habitat suitability that would be predicted if mining had never occurred on this stream. The coloured line in the very centre reveals the habitat suitability ranking that will be assigned to the reach, taking the Previous Development designation into account.

It should be noted that while the Previous Development designation applies to placer mining activity, it is possible that the degradation may not have been properly remediated, and all future restoration work must meet the standard required for the predicted (or higher) habitat suitability classification.

Areas of Special Consideration

Areas within watercourses that contain ecologically or culturally important fisheries or aquatic resources or provide significant, critical linkages to upstream habitats for fish have been designated as "Areas of Special Consideration". Reaches assigned this designation may include habitats for rare or locally significant species and/or areas which directly support subsistence, traditional, commercial or sport fisheries. Areas of Special Consideration may be established for anadromous or non-anadromous species of fish. At a minimum, Areas of Special Consideration include spawning areas and migration routes for chinook, sockeye or coho salmon, as well as spawning areas for northern trout, bull trout and Dolly Varden.