Turn In Poachers/Turn in Polluters
Overview

The Turn in Poachers/Turn in Polluters (TIP) program has been in effect in the Yukon since 1991. It was established as a joint effort of the Department of Environment and the Yukon Fish and Game Association to provide Yukoners with the opportunity to report resource violations to Conservation Officers using a toll free number.

This program is intended to serve as a compliance promotion initiative by raising public awareness concerning the illegal harvest of fish and wildlife and illegal environmental activities such as littering. The knowledge that such a program exists and is well advertised not only educates and informs the public about potential areas of concern, but may act as a deterrent to those who would commit violations. While the reporting of matters that may otherwise be undetected is a direct benefit of this program, the most significant value of this program is in the promotion of compliance with resource legislation through education and awareness.

The TIP line is in operation 24 hrs/day to receive information about fisheries, wildlife and environmental violations. A local answering service passes information received to the appropriate Conservation Officer. If the information provided results in the laying of a charge, the caller is eligible for a cash reward. The program also provides reward payments to individuals who provide information directly to a Conservation Officer.

The Yukon Fish and Game Association has a Rewards Committee to oversee the handling of reward payments. This committee has reviewed submitted cases, and recommended reward payments based on the information provided.
Most persons who report matters do not request reward payment, and report matters out of genuine concern for our natural resources. Others however, would not report without the incentive of reward payment. Several significant poaching cases have been resolved through information received from persons who were seeking a reward. These are matters that would almost certainly never have been solved had it not been for the existence of the TIP program. This has included cases involving the wasting of meat, use of poisons, hunting of elk and deer and dangerous hunting. To date, the Fish and Game Association has reviewed 31 cases where rewards were requested and paid a total of $19,500 to persons for reporting

resource violations. The money is paid directly to persons who provided the information, by the Conservation Officers who investigated the matter.

The Department of Environment and the Fish and Game Association promote the program through various media, including TV, Radio, road signs, telephone book highlighting and through dispensing promotional material such as mugs, ball caps, key chains etc. These promotional materials are distributed by Conservation Officers during field patrols, when conducting public educational programs such as school talks, or given to various groups and organizations such as Scouts. To reduce costs, this material is often cost shared with agencies promoting conservation messages such as Fisheries Branch promoting Live Release Angling, or First Nations promoting a Harvest Reporting program. Other agencies such as Parks Canada and DFO have also contributed financially to the promotion of the program.
The TIP logo also appears on most departmental licences, many brochures, and on Conservation Officer vehicles.

The Department of Environment contributes approximately $6,000 annually towards promoting the TIP program, as well as pays for administration of the answering service and telephone book listings. The Fish and Game Association usually contributes $1,000 annually towards the purchase of promotional material, and when required, provides reward payments.
Recent amendments to the Wildlife Act have provided authority for courts to order monies paid into the Conservation Fund (established but not yet operational) to be directed to “a violation reporting system”. In the future, this may provide revenue towards the TIP program.

The TIP line normally receives about 75-100 calls annually that require a response from a Conservation Officer. The same phone number is also used to record information for the Southern Lakes Caribou Recovery program, and occasionally to receive information about problem bears. The line is also used for seasonal campground workers to report campground complaints such as loud parties, theft of firewood or vandalism so Officers can respond.
In the 2006/2007 licencing year, 98 calls were received on the TIP line, of which 33 were of an enforcement nature that required a response by an officer.

The Turn In Poachers/Turn In Polluters program has proven successful numerous times since it’s inception. It’s difficult to measure the deterrent value of such a program, however it is clearly a positive, proactive way of informing and

educating the public about concerns many Yukoners share about protecting our natural resources.

Summary of 2006/07 TIP calls

Problem Wildlife	31	(up 5 from 2005/06)
Enforcement	33	(up 7 from 2005/06)
Road Kill	13	(down 1 from 2005/06)
Wildlife Management	10	(up 4 from 2005/06)
Other	11	(down 2 from 2005/2006)