
News Release Communiqué

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GOVERNMENT OF CANADA AND THE YUKON FUND MUNICIPAL AND FIRST NATION INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

WHITEHORSE, YUKON (July 18, 2006) – The Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon have approved more than \$4.7 million towards \$7.2 million in Yukon community water and sewer infrastructure projects under the Canada-Yukon Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF).

Selkirk First Nation, Watson Lake, the Liard First Nation, the Town of Faro and the City of Whitehorse will receive a total of \$4,778,645 for community-based water, sewer and road projects. The total value of these projects, including other sources of funding, is \$7,276,769.

“All Canadians must have access to clean, safe and affordable drinking water,” said the Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians. “The need for clean drinking water in the North is important. The MRIF program shows that we can work cooperatively so that all Canadians are provided with equal access to vital road and water public infrastructure to support long-term economic growth..”

“These community infrastructure projects will be positive additions to enhancing community health,” said the Honourable Glenn Hart, Minister of Community Services, for the Yukon Government. “Clean drinking water and up-to-date sewage systems are vital to the health of Yukon communities and ensuring environmental safety. The MRIF program helps us achieve these important goals.”

Over the five years of the MRIF agreement, the governments of Canada and Yukon will each invest \$16 million under this program. Including contributions from local governments, MRIF has the potential to support up to \$48 million for improvements to Yukon's public community infrastructure. ...2



For more information about the Government of Canada and Government of Yukon infrastructure programs, visit www.infrastructure.gc.ca or www.gov.yk.ca.

Attachment: Backgrounder

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BACKGROUND:

Canada-Yukon Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund Announcement

The Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF) program is a partnership between the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon. The program enables Yukon municipalities, unincorporated communities and First Nations alike to plan, finance and deliver on their infrastructure priorities. Under the MRIF program, the Government of Yukon and the Government of Canada take on up to two-thirds of the funding for local infrastructure projects, with the municipality contributing the remaining third.

The projects that are receiving funding were recommended through a Joint Management Committee comprised of representatives from Infrastructure Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the Yukon Government. The Joint MRIF Secretariat provided support throughout the technical review and will continue to assist in the administration of the program.

The MRIF program has been running since 2005 in recognition of the fact that small and remote Northern communities have not had the same opportunities as larger centers to improve or expand their local public infrastructure. The program is designed to ensure that all Canadians are provided with equal access to vital public infrastructure, and aims to support projects that create a strong foundation for long-term economic growth in the territory and ultimately, improve our quality of life.

The next deadline for MRIF applications is August 1, 2006.

Approved MRIF Projects for May 2006 include:

- 1. Selkirk First Nation**
Small Diameter Piped Water System
Total project cost: \$2,686,411

Selkirk First Nation will receive an MRIF contribution of up to \$1,718,407 toward a piped water system for the main village area of Pelly Crossing. The project also involves confirming funding for service connections, making considerations for future options of residential expansion and wastewater collection, and includes a water conservation and education program.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada will contribute an additional \$484,002 to this project from the First Nations Water Strategy.

Pelly Crossing is located 282 km northwest of Whitehorse and has a population of approximately 290.

2. Town of Watson Lake
Piped Water and Sewer System
Total project cost: \$427,375

The MRIF project in Watson Lake is a piped water and sewer system on Lakeview Avenue, to which the MRIF program will contribute up to \$284,917.

The town of Watson Lake lies 459 km east of Whitehorse and has a population of approximately 1600 people.

3. Town of Faro
Ladue Drive Water Line Replacement
Total project cost: \$210,117

The MRIF program is funding up to \$140,078 of the total eligible cost of the Ladue Drive water line replacement project in Faro.

The Town of Faro is about 356 km northeast of Whitehorse, with a population of approximately 380.

4. City of Whitehorse
Takhini North Reconstruction
Total project cost: \$3,535,266

The Takhini North reconstruction project will replace and upgrade water, sewer and road infrastructure. The MRIF program is funding up to \$2,356,844 toward a total project cost of \$3,535,266.

Whitehorse is the capital of the Yukon and has a population of 23,000.

5. Liard First Nation
Road surfacing
Total project cost: \$417,600

The Yukon Government and the Government of Canada are contributing up to \$278,400 toward the total eligible project cost of \$417,600. The project will chipseal (BST) the community roads of Two Mile, just north of Watson Lake.

All projects will undergo an environmental assessment under the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* (YESAA).