



CARCROSS /TAGISH FIRST NATION



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CARCROSS/TAGISH FIRST NATION RATIFIES AGREEMENTS

WHITEHORSE – The Carcross/Tagish First Nation members and beneficiaries have ratified their Final and Self-Government Agreements in a vote held May 26 to 28.

“We now have received clear direction that our Nation wants to move ahead with the Final and Self Government Agreements,” said Mark Wedge, Khâ Shâde Héni (Chief) of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. “A special Gunalchise (thank you) to the Ratification Committee and the Community Information Team for their hard and tireless work on informing our citizens in order to achieve the huge voter turn out. We are confident that the Elders and our citizens will rise to the challenge of implementing the agreements for our future generations.”

“The Government of Canada is pleased the members of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation have decided to ratify their land claim and self-government agreements,” said Andy Scott, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians. “Years of hard work by all parties have led to this positive step forward in the governance of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. These agreements provide a basis for new government-to-government relationships and forward-looking partnerships.”

“I wish to congratulate the Carcross/Tagish First Nation for its hard work and dedication in achieving a successful ratification,” Yukon Premier Dennis Fentie said. “This is a tremendous step towards creating a positive and stable climate for economic and social development within the traditional territory and in the communities of Carcross and Tagish, and providing the First Nation with the capacity to build a better future for themselves that in turn will benefit all the people of the Yukon.”

“This is a very exciting day for the Carcross/Tagish First Nation people and especially for the youth, who will be governing themselves, and, in this new partnership with the other governments, building a prosperous future for themselves and other Yukoners,” added Larry Bagnell, Member of Parliament for Yukon.

Under its land claim agreement, the Carcross/Tagish First Nation will receive approximately 603 square miles (1500 square kilometres) of settlement land along with approximately \$23 million in financial compensation. It will also receive a one-time payment of \$5.596 million for economic development, training and education projects.

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In a report filed on June 3 with the Carcross/Tagish First Nation and the governments of Yukon and Canada, the Ratification Committee confirmed the official results that 78 per cent of eligible voters have cast ballots, with 55 per cent of all eligible voters casting ballots in favour of the agreements. In addition, of those eligible voters who voted, 69 per cent supported the agreements. To be ratified, the agreements had to be approved by both 50% plus one of all eligible voters and 60% of those who actually voted.

The ratification results are subject to the parties' approval of the Ratification Committee's Final Report, which is expected to be filed within fourteen days of the publication of the results in the communities where the vote took place.

This news release is also available on the Internet at Indian and Northern Affairs Canada:
<http://www.inac-ainc.gc.ca> or Government of Yukon: <http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/>.

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