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PRIVATE SECTOR FIRST NATION PARTNERSHIPS TO CONSTRUCT LINE

WHITEHORSE – Premier Dennis Fentie welcomes the news that Northern Tutchone First Nations will be active players in the construction of the Carmacks to Pelly Crossing transmission line.

Yukon Energy’s board of directors announced today that it will be awarding the \$17.3 million contract to construct the transmission line to a joint venture partnership between the Northern Tutchone First Nations, Valard Construction and Arctic Power. In addition, Yukon Energy’s board of directors also approved awarding the \$3.4 million right-of-way clearing contract to the Northern Tutchone First Nations, jointly with J.V. Partners.

“Premiers across the country support closing the gap in the quality of life that now exists between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians. Premiers have agreed that enhancing economic opportunities is a key priority area where dedicated efforts must be made across the nation,” Fentie said. “This project is an excellent example of how this can be done.”

“These contracts will mean significant job and business opportunities for the Northern Tutchone people,” Chief Darin Isaac of Selkirk First Nation said.

“Proponents of major projects in our traditional territories should be seeking partnerships with our First Nations,” Isaac added. “This is the approach we are taking with the Minto mine and other mines, and now also with Yukon Energy and our joint venture partners. We want to move on from the signing of our Final Agreements to building new relationships.”

“I’m pleased to see this major project move forward, while building relationships with Yukon First Nation governments in ways that provide long-term benefits for all Yukoners,” Fentie added.

“Completing the transmission line to Pelly Crossing, with a spur line to the Minto mine, will provide economic benefits and allow the Minto mine and the community of Pelly Crossing to switch from diesel to hydroelectricity - reducing greenhouse gas emissions by up to 24,100 tonnes per year,” Energy, Mines and Resources Minister Archie Lang said.

The Yukon government is investing up to \$10 million towards the infrastructure cost of building stage one of the transmission line from Carmacks to Pelly Crossing. This is the first of two stages of the plan to connect Yukon’s northern and southern grids.

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