



FOR RELEASE #05-126
May 12, 2005

CONSULTATIONS WILL HELP SET HARVEST LEVELS IN SOUTHWEST YUKON

WHITEHORSE – The Yukon government and the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations have launched a series of public consultation meetings in southwest Yukon aimed at identifying harvest levels in the beetle killed forest in the Champagne and Aishihik traditional territory.

The public meetings planned for Mendenhall, Haines Junction, Champagne and Whitehorse will provide an opportunity for people to offer local knowledge and suggestions that will help determine volumes that could be released for commercial purposes.

“We are proud of the participation and the productive working relationship of so many talented people and organizations in the implementation working groups,” Archie Lang, minister of Energy, Mines and Resources said.

“Representatives from the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Alsek Renewable Resources Council, Village of Haines Junction, Parks Canada, Canadian Forest Service, Canadian Wildlife Service, NEI Climate Change Project, Yukon Conservation Society, and Yukon government are working together to set the benchmark for forest management in the Yukon.”

“Implementation of the Strategic Forest Management Plan and the agreements with our partners is a long-term process that will benefit our people today and for generations to come,” Chief James Allen of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations said.

“The communities of Haines Junction, Canyon Creek and Champagne saw 26 people employed this winter as a result of the fuel abatement element of the planning process. We are continuing to explore potential long-term economic projects that will provide employment and economic benefits to our communities.”

The Strategic Forest Management Plan for both First Nations and public lands in the Champagne and Aishihik traditional territory was officially adopted at a signing ceremony in Haines Junction in December 2004.

Key implementation elements that will lead to a healthy, vigorous forest for future generations are: assessing ecological and social factors; exploring economic opportunities; and providing communities with fuel abatement plans.

The first public meeting is scheduled to take place at the Mendenhall fire hall at 7:30 p.m. on May 17. Subsequent meetings will be announced in the local media.

The public is invited to visit the Champagne Aishihik traditional territory forestry management website at caforestry.ca.

-30-

Contact:

Peter Carr
Cabinet Communications Advisor
(867) 667-8688
peter.carr@gov.yk.ca

Ron Billingham
Communications Analyst
(867) 667-8786
ron.billingham@gov.yk.ca

Rose Kushniruk
Communications
CAFN
(867) 634-4233
rkushniruk@cafn.ca