

FOR RELEASE #06-212
September 7, 2006

FIRESMART PROJECTS HELP KEEP COMMUNITIES SAFE

WHITEHORSE – Community Services Minister Glenn Hart, and Energy, Mines and Resources Minister Archie Lang recently approved 24 FireSmart projects valued at \$851,156.

“The Yukon FireSmart program has a strong record of enhancing community safety,” Hart said. “FireSmart treated areas become more useable for recreational purposes, waste wood fuels are removed, there are the associated employment opportunities, and the bottom line is – by managing vegetation surrounding our communities, we can reduce the threat of wildland urban interface fires.”

“The benefits of the FireSmart program are becoming better understood,” Lang said. “The reduction of forest fuels in and around our communities not only improves our opportunity to control wildland urban interface fire, but it also contributes towards healthier forest areas.”

A new pilot program designed to assist non-profit organizations to raise funds has been introduced on a trial basis to measure its effectiveness. “It is much the same as the spring highway clean-up program,” Hart said. “Eligible organizations can assist in the clean-up of a FireSmart treated area and generate funds for their organization. We’re still working out the details and hope to make a formal announcement on this soon.”

The FireSmart program offers technical support and funds community projects that help to treat vegetation based on the three R’s: removal, reduction and replacement. There are various treatments available, including removal of deadfall and forest fuels, the spacing and thinning of trees, and re-planting with less flammable tree species.

FireSmart also supports communities to develop long-term wildland urban interface fire safety plans, and make roadways more accessible to fire-fighting equipment. The program creates local employment and skills development with the goal of enhancing the protection of Yukon communities and reducing the potential for significant losses from wildfire.

Copies of the FireSmart program handbook are available at Yukon public libraries, the Inquiry Desk at the Yukon government’s main administration building in Whitehorse, the Territorial Agent offices in the rural communities, or by visiting the Yukon government website: www.gov.yk.ca.

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Attachment: FireSmart Project Awards

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Approved FireSmart Projects

FireSmart Projects Announced September 2006

Mendenhall Recycling Society	\$38,000
Village of Mayo	\$38,038
Kluane Lake Athletic Association	\$37,038
Village of Teslin	\$37,038
Town of Faro	\$37,038
Tagish Volunteer Fire Department	\$38,038
White River First Nation	\$40,000
Carcross Tagish First Nation	\$37,038
Yukon Electric Company Ltd.	\$10,000
Marsh Lake Fire Rescue	\$38,038
Tr'ondek Hwëch'in First Nation	\$37,038
Champagne Aishihik First Nation	\$38,038
Liard First Nation	\$37,038
Non-Profit Society Pilot Project	\$30,000
Lorne Mountain Community Association	\$38,038
Town of Watson Lake	\$38,038
Selkirk First Nation	\$37,038
Porter Creek Community Association	\$37,038
Kwanlin Dun First Nation	\$38,038
Wolf Creek Community Association	\$38,038
Ta-an Kwach'an Council	\$38,000
Old Crow	\$32,316
Village of Haines Junction	\$32,000
Nacho Nyak Dun	\$30,232
Total	\$851,156