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Recommended response:

- The Executive Council Office leads initiatives that contribute to the following six goals:
 - prioritizing efforts to advance reconciliation;
 - improving health care;
 - fostering collaboration with other jurisdictions for the benefit of Yukoners;
 - advancing Arctic security;
 - supporting Yukoners and Yukon youth; and
 - supporting recovery from COVID-19.

Prioritizing efforts to see reconciliation upheld

- In September 2023, the government released the second edition of Pathways magazine.
 - Pathways shares stories of collaboration, partnership and reconciliation.
 - It also reflects on the collaborative work done to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.
- The Premier travelled to communities to meet with many Yukon First Nations governments' Chief and Councils to discuss community priorities and reaffirm government-to-government relationships.
- 2023 was the 50th Anniversary of *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*.
 - The Government of Yukon supported the Council of Yukon First Nations to host celebrations to commemorate the occasion.

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

- The 50th anniversary was acknowledged as parties convened an Intergovernmental Forum in Ottawa to develop a strong foundation of collaboration and open communication.
- While in Ottawa, the Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations leadership also held a Yukon Forum meeting.
 - Since January 2017, there have been 28 Yukon Forum meetings to discuss and support the advancement of work on shared priorities.
- We are supporting the implementation of accords with the Teslin Tlingit Council, White River First Nation and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation.
 - Discussions are underway on the establishment of new accords with other interested Yukon First Nations.
- The Government of Yukon completed several significant agreements with First Nations and is in negotiations with others on issues related to government-to-government relationships, capacity development and First Nations interests in land planning, resource development and fish and wildlife management.
 - On July 27, 2024, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and the Government of Yukon signed a government-to-government accord on shared priorities.
 - On March 8, 2023, Liard First Nation and the Government of Yukon signed an agreement on the development of 43 new residential lots on Frances Avenue in Watson Lake. Under this agreement, the Government of Yukon will make 25 lots available to the public, while Liard First Nation will hold title to 18 lots.

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

- On July 21, 2022, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, the Government of Yukon and Yukon Energy Corporation reached historic agreements on a collaborative approach for operating the Aishihik Generating Station.
- On May 3, 2022, Teslin Tlingit Council and the Yukon government signed a project charter and finalized the Nisutlin Bay Bridge Project Agreement.
- We supported the negotiation of the agreement that established the Yukon First Nation School Board. Eight schools voted to join the First Nation School Board in 2022, and another three schools joined in 2023.
- Negotiations are underway with Carcross/Tagish First Nation, Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, related to the relicensing of the Whitehorse Rapids Generating Station, and with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun for the relicensing of the Mayo Generating Station.
- Since early 2021, this government through the Yukon *Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act Oversight Group* has been actively developing a targeted amendment to YESAA that would allow, with Yukon First Nations' consent, an exemption from assessment for projects that involve a renewal or amendment to an existing authorization.

Continuing to identify ways to support a broad range of reconciliation initiatives and projects

- In April 2024, we provided funding in support of a Chiefs and Mayors Forum where representatives from First Nations and municipalities

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

can engage in meaningful conversation and identify opportunities for collaboration. This advances reconciliation and allows for cooperative initiatives that create a better future for Yukon communities.

- In 2022–23, we provided funding support for the Council of Yukon First Nations celebration of the 50th anniversary of *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*.
- In 2022, we provided funding to reimburse Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups to attend the papal visit to Canada.
- Since 2021, we have provided funding and administrative support to the Yukon Residential Schools and Missing Children Project.
- The Government of Yukon provides funding and administrative support to the Mapping the Way joint public education campaign on Final and Self-Government Agreements.
- We continue to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and work collaboratively with Yukon First Nations on these and other reconciliation initiatives.
- A trilateral process to amend the education provisions in five Yukon First Nation Self-Government Agreements was completed.
 - These amendments ensure that the Self-Government Agreements are consistent and support First Nations' involvement in the education system.
- In 2021 and 2022, amendments to the provisions in all 11 Yukon First Nation Self-Government Agreements relating to the Goods and Services Tax rebate and the taxation of interest earned in Registered Pension Plans were approved.

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

- The GST amendments ensure that First Nations governments are eligible for the same GST rebates as municipal governments.
- The Registered Pension Plan amendments ensure that Citizens of Yukon First Nations with Self-Government Agreements who earn investment interest are subject to the same tax treatment as Citizens of Yukon First Nations without Self-Government Agreements.
- Since 2020, we have been working on a Consultation and Engagement Improvement Initiative.
 - This includes developing a web-based consultation and engagement management system and training and support materials to help Yukon government staff carry out meaningful consultation and engagement processes with Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments.
 - Many of the tools are already in use and we anticipate launching the web-based system in fall 2024.
- Since 2017, the Office of the Science Advisor has been working toward policy and internal guidance on how to respectfully reflect Indigenous ways of knowing, doing and being in Government of Yukon actions and decisions.
 - Foundational documents shared at the December 2019 Yukon Forum reflected two years of pre-engagement with Yukon First Nations and Transboundary Indigenous Groups and with Yukon government employees and are guiding ongoing work with the Intergovernmental Working Group that was launched in 2022. This includes work towards a confirmed set of guiding

principles that will offer a framework for subsequent policy and implementation initiatives.

- The team is concurrently working with Yukon First Nations and Transboundary Indigenous representatives, as well as with Government of Yukon colleagues, in developing a policy directive, resources and technical solution that will enhance our practice in receiving, managing, protecting, tracking and applying Indigenous knowledge that is shared with the Yukon government. While we are committed to ongoing improvement and learning, and to reflecting this continued learning in the policy and system, we anticipate that the policy directive will be launched in 2024–25 and that a request for proposals for the technical solution will also be issued in this fiscal year.

Improving health care

- On November 6, 2023, Premier met with Canada's Premiers in Nova Scotia for a Council of the Federation meeting.
 - At the meeting, Premier Pillai raised the Government of Yukon's perspectives and interests on common priorities including housing, infrastructure and health care.
- On July 26, 2023, the Premier signed a letter of intent with Nova Scotia to work together to enhance training, recruitment, retention and labour mobility for health human resources.
- On July 6, 2023, following two years of advocacy by Premiers through the Council of the Federation, the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon concluded an agreement in principle

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

for a shared plan that will invest \$380 million in federal funding over 10 years in the Yukon.

Fostering collaboration with other jurisdictions

- In September, the Premier met with federal Ministers in Ottawa to discuss Yukon priorities including the Eagle Mine response and infrastructure that supports our communities and economy.
- The Premier participated in the Council of the Federation summer meeting in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in July 2024, where he discussed Yukon priorities including affordable housing and the cost of living; Arctic sovereignty and security; building infrastructure that supports vibrant communities and promotes economic growth; and recruiting and retaining health professionals.
- The Premier met with federal Ministers in Ottawa in June 2024 to discuss Yukon priorities including long-term economic growth, Arctic security, immigration and tourism.
- In June 2024, a delegation including the Deputy Premier and Yukon First Nations leaders travelled to London, England, on a mission of cultural diplomacy, reconciliation, and industry engagement.
- The Premier chaired the Western Premiers' Conference in Whitehorse in June 2024. Premiers discussed shared priorities and collaborative action on regional economic growth and improving the quality of life for western Canadians.
- The Premier took part in the June 6, 2024, commemoration of the 80th anniversary of D-Day in France, honouring the bravery and sacrifice of those who fought for freedom.
- On May 31, 2024, the Premier met with the U.S. Ambassador, U.S. Consul General, French Ambassador, French Consul General and

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

German Ambassador – marking the first visit for the current U.S. and French ambassadors and the second visit for the German ambassador to the Yukon.

- The Premier met the NWT and Nunavut Premiers in Mittimatalik – Pond Inlet – in Nunavut for their annual Northern Premiers' Forum meeting in May 2024. They continued their discussions on Arctic security and sovereignty, disaster preparedness and response, infrastructure, housing needs, and the health and wellbeing of northerners.
 - Before the forum, northern Premiers met with the federal Minister of National Defence, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of Northern Affairs in Iqaluit.
- On April 24, 2024, the Premier met the U.S. Consul in Whitehorse to discuss Canada-U.S. border matters, critical minerals opportunities, mining sector infrastructure, Arctic security and cross-border training initiatives on community safety and MMIWG2S+ issues.
- On April 22, 2024, the Premier met the UK Consul General in Whitehorse, highlighting Government of Yukon priorities including mining sector infrastructure, clean and secure energy, and partnerships with Yukon First Nations governments.
- The Premier participated in the Arctic Encounter Symposium in Anchorage on April 12, 2024, as part of the Government of Yukon's commitment to working closely with Alaska on matters of joint concern and interest.
- The Premier met with the Japanese Consul General on March 27, 2024, discussing topics including the Yukon's strategic significance

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

in the Asia-Pacific and Arctic regions, economic collaboration, critical minerals, tourism, immigration and cultural exchange.

- From February 8 to 9, 2024, the Governor of Alaska and members of his Cabinet visited Whitehorse to discuss renewed cooperation on regional issues, including highways, fish and wildlife, community safety, wildfire management, regional security and economic development.
 - In April 2024, the Government of Yukon was pleased to see the impact of the territory's closer relationship with the Government of Alaska. – U.S. investment will now see much-needed upgrades on the north Alaska Highway beginning in 2025 and continuing until the end of the project in 2027.
- On January 5, 2024, the Premier and Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources met with Minister Wilkinson, of Energy and Natural Resources, and members of the mining industry to discuss infrastructure that can support critical minerals development.
- On November 30, 2023, the Premier and a Yukon government delegation completed a mission to Europe to promote opportunities in the territory, namely in terms of accessing the critical minerals needed to shift to sustainable energy.
- On October 30, 2023, the Premier met with the B.C. Premier to discuss priorities including renewable energy and the potential of connecting the Yukon to B.C.'s electrical grid.
- On September 25, 2023, the Premier met virtually with the Alaska Governor to discuss Arctic security, key infrastructure such as Shakwak and the Port of Skagway and much else.

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

- On September 22, 2023, the Premier met with federal Ministers in Ottawa on a range of topics, including affordable housing, infrastructure development, immigration and reconciliation.
- On September 20, 2023, the Premier and a business delegation concluded the Asia mission.
 - The mission focused on developing partnerships, promoting innovation and collaboration in critical minerals and technology, and increasing business investment in the Yukon and tourism to the territory.
- On July 12, 2023, the Premier met with his counterparts from across the country at the Council of the Federation summer meeting and discussed topics including health human resources, infrastructure, economic growth, Arctic security.
- On June 27, 2023, at the Western Premiers' Conference, the Premier discussed strategic infrastructure and trade corridors, energy security, climate action, Arctic security, mental health and more with his counterparts.
- On June 8, 2023, the Premier met with 25 Ambassadors and High Commissioners to Canada as part of Global Affairs Canada's northern diplomatic tour.
 - They discussed the economy, clean energy, health and more.
- On May 17, 2023, the three territorial Premiers met for the Northern Premiers' Forum and discussed shared priorities including Arctic security, infrastructure, critical minerals and housing.
- On May 8, 2023, the Premier met with the Consuls General of the Philippines, Indonesia and Japan to discuss issues of shared importance.

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

- On May 2, 2023, the Premier met with Ontario Premier of Ontario Doug Ford and signed a memorandum of understanding on collaboration in the housing development and investment sectors.
- On December 6, 2022, the Government of Yukon, Yukon First Nations Chiefs and federal Ministers met in Ottawa. They discussed support for Indigenous languages, the Substance Use Health Emergency, land use planning and more.
- On July 12, 2022, the then Premier attended the Council of the Federation and discussed health care, affordability, labour supply, climate change and more.
- On March 1, 2022, the Government of Yukon donated \$50,000 to support humanitarian efforts in Ukraine following the illegal Russian invasion.
- On October 19, 2021, the Government of Yukon donated \$25,000 to help with relief efforts in response to the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.

Advancing Arctic security

- On January 4, 2024, the Government of Yukon announced the establishment of the Yukon Arctic Security Advisory Council to ensure the Yukon's distinct context and needs are considered in federal decision making about Arctic security.
 - The council provides independent, expert advice to the territorial government on future risks and opportunities.
- On October 23, 2023, the Premier met with the U.S. Consul General about opportunities for the U.S. and the Yukon to work together on key priorities such as Arctic security.

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

- On December 5, 2022, the then Premier appeared before the Standing Senate Committee on National Security, Defence and Veterans Affairs to share the Yukon government's perspectives on Arctic security and defence issues, including opportunities to strengthen dual-use infrastructure in the Yukon.
- On August 29, 2022, the then Premier advanced key northern discussions at the Arctic Circle Forum including Arctic sovereignty, housing and health care.

Supporting recovery from COVID-19

- On June 16, 2023, the COVID-19 Recovery Research Program concluded with a public Research Results Summit held in Whitehorse.
 - The program supported 10 project teams in successfully completing research that addresses Yukon-specific research questions.
 - In addition to the researchers' direct efforts to share the results with partners and stakeholders, internal briefing materials for Government of Yukon leadership were prepared and shared by the Science Advisor's office as results were released, supporting departments in the application of relevant evidence to current and future program and policy decisions.

Supporting Yukon youth

- The Government of Yukon provides over \$1.2 million of annual operational funding to five key youth serving organizations:
 - Association franco-yukonnaise \$31,000

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

- BYTE-Empowering Youth Society \$304,000
- BGC Yukon \$297,000
- Heart of Riverdale Community Centre \$298,000
- Youth of Today Society \$291,000
- Commencing in 2022–23, BYTE – Empowering Youth Society, BGC Yukon, Heart of Riverdale Community Centre and the Youth of Today Society received an annual operational funding increase of \$20,000. Association franco-yukonnaise received a \$6,000 annual increase.
- The Government of Yukon allocated \$424,000 of Confidence and Supply Agreement funding for each of the fiscal years 2023–24, 2024–25 and 2025–26 to the following five key youth organizations to support youth mental health and wellness.
 - Association franco-yukonnaise –are receiving \$1,860 annually
 - BGC Yukon are receiving \$182,140 annually, with additional funding being to support a seven-day per week drop-in service.
 - BYTE, Heart of Riverdale Community Centre and the Youth of Today Society are receiving \$80,000 each annually.
- In 2022–23, the Government of Yukon implemented a youth mental wellness grant with \$400,000 of available funding.
 - \$272,000 of funding was shared between the BGC Yukon, BYTE, Heart of Riverdale Community Centre and the Youth of Today Society.
 - \$128,000 of funding was distributed to nine organizations for smaller projects valued between \$10,000 and \$20,000.
- The Government of Yukon provides up to \$320,000 of annual project funding to support the Youth Developmental Asset Program for

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

youth activities, training and employment for Kwanlin Dün First Nation and 16 Yukon communities.

- On August 20, 2024, we announced that four Yukon youths have received the annual Outstanding Youth Achievement Award for their contributions throughout the territory.
- On January 3, 2024, the Government of Yukon announced funding of over \$77,000 for 18 community groups through the Youth Investment Fund to support the important role that young people play in shaping the future of the territory.
- On August 25, 2023, four youth were awarded the Outstanding Youth Achievement Award for their devotion and contribution to their communities.
- On May 24, 2023, we announced the award of 12 community groups from across the Yukon with over \$59,000 through the Youth Investment Fund for a range of artistic and recreational activities, such as therapeutic horseback riding, piano lessons, a rugby club and a theatrical presentation.
- On December 20, 2022, 13 community groups were awarded \$53,000 through the Youth Investment Fund. Recipients include Kidsfest 2023, a rock-climbing program and a youth café.
- On October 24, 2022, 13 Yukon organizations received \$400,000 in funding from the Youth Mental Wellness Grant for programs that promote youth mental wellness.
- On August 11, 2022, four youth were awarded the Outstanding Youth Achievement Award for their devotion and contribution to their communities.

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

- On May 31, 2022, 18 community groups were awarded over \$77,000 through the Youth Investment Fund for a variety of arts and recreation programming aimed to provide youth with valuable experiences and learning opportunities.
- On December 13, 2021, the Youth Investment Fund contributed \$45,000 to 11 community groups to support a variety of arts, recreation and educational programming including an art camp, music camp and snowboard program.
- On September 21, 2021, four youth received the Outstanding Youth Achievement Award for their remarkable service and contribution to their communities.

Supporting Yukoners

Downtown Whitehorse Safety Response Action Plan:

- The Government of Yukon released the Downtown Whitehorse Safety Response Action Plan in December 2023.
 - This living document was developed in collaboration with community partners and summarizes the actions taken to date and future actions to help shape a safe, supportive and thriving downtown Whitehorse.
- On September 25, 2024, the government announced new initiatives to the Downtown Whitehorse Safety Response Action Plan, as well as the recommendations from the April 2024 Coroner's Inquest into the deaths of four Yukon First Nations women occurring at or around 405 Alexander Street.
- Subject to legislative approval, the new initiatives include:

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

- increases in the 2024–25 Supplementary Estimates No. 1 to funding for the RCMP and SCAN Unit which will result in the hiring of two new RCMP officers for the Whitehorse Detachment and one new SCAN investigator;
- the launch of a new Crime Prevention Grant Program which will provide financial support to businesses and organizations that are taking steps to improve their security;
- working with the Aboriginal Community Safety Planning Initiative of the Government of Canada and the Canadian Centre for Safer Communities to establish a partnership with the City of Whitehorse, which will continue engagement with downtown businesses and residents and provide a clear path to bringing multiple perspectives together to identify clear and actionable priorities improve safety and wellbeing in Whitehorse;
- hiring House of Wolf & Associates and working with President and Community Safety Specialist Gina Nagano, who will play a critical role in coordinating downtown Whitehorse safety and wellbeing efforts;
- re-opening the warming centre and community space in the Jim Smith Building this winter, noting that in approximately six weeks, last year's pilot project saw more than 1,200 visits from Yukoners who were able to use the space to connect with support workers, use computers and print, make phone calls, access the internet, get warm, have snacks and beverages, and access harm reduction supplies, period products, bus tickets and washroom facilities;

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

- renovating the Yukon Housing Corporation building at 408 Alexander Street so that the Safe at Home Society can operate a supportive housing program that will offer secure, supervised housing to Yukoners who require wrap-around supports;
- investing \$1.8 million through the National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence to provide funding to community-run violence prevention and victim support services;
- supporting the continued implementation of Yukon's MMIWG2S+ Strategy by working with the Yukon Advisory Committee to plan the third Accountability Forum in October 2024;
- continuing to partner with Safe at Home Society to develop The Hearth, a permanent supportive housing project at the former High Country Inn – to date, Yukon Housing Corporation has committed \$12.9 million in funding to this project and the Department of Health and Social Services will be contributing \$777,000 for the Safe at Home Society to administer supportive housing at 408 Alexander in funding through the 2024–25 Supplementary Budget;
- addressing community concerns along Alexander Street by removing fencing, tree branches and benches and increasing private security presence and the frequency of outdoor maintenance at Yukon government-owned facilities to reduce loitering, anti-social behaviour and the setup of temporary structures;
- supporting people experiencing gender-based violence by offering a rent subsidy through the Canada-Yukon Housing

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

Benefit so they can obtain and maintain safe housing – this program will provide individuals who need to access safe housing with up to \$2,000 per month for 12 months, followed by a gradually reduced benefit for an additional six months, so they can leave unsafe situations at home – and more than \$2 million annually will be available to help survivors of gender-based violence obtain and maintain safe housing; and

- encouraging the City of Whitehorse to sign a letter of intent to clarify the municipality's roles and responsibilities with respect to community safety in Whitehorse and continuing to work with all partners to do their part to make downtown Whitehorse safer for everyone.

Canadian Index of Wellbeing:

- On March 28, 2022, the Government of Yukon released the final report by the Canadian Index of Wellbeing that highlighted the quality of life in the Yukon following a major survey completed in summer 2020.
 - The survey received close to 5,000 responses and provided Yukoners with an opportunity to share feedback about community vitality, democratic engagement, education and more.

Other accomplishments to note

- In January 2024, the Government of Yukon commemorated the territory's 125th anniversary with the release of medals featuring original artwork by Violet Gatensby.

ECO accomplishments

Executive Council Office

- The medals are being awarded to outstanding Yukoners who demonstrate values of leadership and reconciliation.
- On June 13, 2023, members held a special sitting of the Yukon Legislative Assembly in its historic home in Dawson to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Yukon becoming a territory of Canada.
- On October 26, 2023, amendments to the *Elections Act* received assent, enabling the establishment of an Electoral District Boundaries Commission to propose changes to electoral areas for the upcoming election.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey
Deputy Minister
Executive Council Office

2024 10 01
Date approved

Eagle Gold Mine - Impacts

ECO-FIN-EMR

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon recognizes the seriousness of the heap leach failure that occurred at the Eagle Gold mine on June 24 and is treating the response as a government priority that reflects the urgency of the situation.
- Our priorities are to ensure the health and wellbeing of Yukoners and to protect the environment.
- An Independent Review Board has been established to investigate the heap leach failure that occurred at the Eagle Gold mine. Three highly qualified experts are on the Independent Review Board. The objective of the investigation is to determine the causes of the heap leach facility failure.
- We are committed to working with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun to develop remediation strategies for the failure. A joint team of technical experts hired by the Government of Yukon and the First Nation meet on a regular basis to inform our actions.
- For the most up to date information on the situation at Eagle Gold Mine and actions we are taking, you can visit Yukon.ca/victoria-gold-updates.

Additional responses:

- On August 14, 2024, PricewaterhouseCoopers Inc. was appointed by the court as Receiver of the assets and property of Victoria Gold Corp.

Eagle Gold Mine -

ECO-FIN-EMR

Impacts

The Receiver is responsible for overseeing remediation of the heap leach failure and its environmental impacts, including compliance with territorial and federal orders.

- The Government of Yukon is committed to a thorough accounting of events leading up to the failure and the development of recommendations so that a similar event does not happen again in the Yukon.
- Once the causes of the failure are determined by the Independent Review Board, this information will inform the most appropriate subsequent steps and potential investigations, including consideration of a public inquiry.
- As of September 4, 2024, there are 27 liens against Victoria Gold worth over \$58.7 million.

Environmental and health impacts:

- The Department of Health and Social Services is monitoring impacts on human health. This includes ongoing review of any technical information and water sampling results, as well as situational reports, as they become available. Results from surface water samples taken show that the regulated drinking water system serving the area continues to meet the guidelines for drinking water quality.
- Water is sampled both at the site and downstream of Victoria Gold's Eagle Gold Mine. Water samples are collected regularly at select sites to monitor water quality. The results of the testing will let us know the

Eagle Gold Mine - Impacts

ECO-FIN-EMR

impacts and inform next steps.

- Technical experts from the Government of Yukon, the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun and the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans are working closely together to monitor the fish and wildlife in the surrounding areas of the Eagle Gold Mine.

Economic and labour market impacts:

- Operations ceased at Eagle Gold Mine after the heap leach failure occurred. This situation has changed the outlook for mineral production in the Yukon and resulted in a notable downward revision in the medium-term outlook for the Yukon's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The 2024-25 Interim Fiscal and Economic Update released in early October includes the latest forecasts for real GDP.
- At the close of 2023, Victoria Gold had 471 direct hires and another 134 on contract.
- Of the more than 600 employed, the company reported that about 34 per cent were local, amounting to approximately 200 local workers. This represents about 0.8 per cent of the territorial labour force.
- Any possible negative impacts on the labour market are expected to be short-lived, as many displaced workers are likely to be reabsorbed into what is currently a tight labour market. The Yukon's unemployment rate is about half the national figure and the local job vacancy rate has been among the highest in the country throughout

Eagle Gold Mine - Impacts

ECO-FIN-EMR

2024.

- Monitoring of labour market data, such as the number of unemployed and the number of Employment Insurance claimants, for potential impacts of the mine closure is ongoing.
- As the Eagle Gold situation continues to unfold, we should have a better understanding if there may be longer-term impacts for the local economy.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The June 24, 2024 heap leach failure at the Eagle Gold Mine affects the environmental and socio-economic wellbeing of Yukoners – from an environmental and business perspective.

Background:

- On June 24, 2024, a failure occurred at the heap leach facility of the Eagle Gold Mine operated by Victoria Gold Corporation.
- On July 30, 2024, the Premier provided remarks to the Council of Yukon First Nations' General Assembly on a variety of topics including mining and the incident at Eagle Gold Mine
- On August 5, 2024, the Premier provided a statement on mining activity in the Traditional Territory of First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun.
- On August 14, 2024, the Government of Yukon with First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun, submitted an application for receivership of Eagle Gold Mine.
- On August 16, 2024, the receivership was granted. It was appointed to PricewaterhouseCoopers. Implementing a receiver is an established process under federal bankruptcy legislation. Decision making and responsibility has

Eagle Gold Mine - Impacts

ECO-FIN-EMR

shifted from Victoria Gold to PricewaterhouseCoopers, with direction from the Yukon government.

- As of September 20, 2024, the Government of Yukon has done 10 technical briefings to continue to keep Yukoners informed with up-to-date information.
- The Yukon.ca website is updated on a regular basis along with weekly information bulletins to inform the public on the Victoria Gold heap leach failure's current situation.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

October 9, 2024

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

[Date approved]

Lauren Haney

October 9, 2024

Deputy Minister, Energy, Mines and Resources

[Date approved]

Jessica Schultz

October 9, 2024

Deputy Minister, Finance

[Date approved]

Response to Ross River Dena Council Allegations

Executive Council Office

Recommended response:

- Ross River Dena Council has advised the Government of Yukon of complaints of inappropriate and harmful conduct toward women in the community by a Yukon government employee.
- The Government of Yukon takes allegations of this nature very seriously and immediately referred them to the RCMP.
- We engaged an independent contractor to conduct a human resources investigation into the allegations. As this is a confidential human resources matter, we will not be making further comments about this investigation.
- Support from Victim Services and Mental Health and Wellness is available for community members.

Additional response:

- We recognize that gender-based violence is under-reported and disproportionately impacts Indigenous women.
- In addition to the human resources investigation, the Yukon government is working with Ross River Dena Council to arrange for an independent review our internal processes for responding to complaints about the behaviour of government staff and officials to ensure they are clear, effective and efficient.
- In Yukon's *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit+ People Strategy*, we recognize that systemic injustices and an institutional lack of will to change is one of the four pathways to violence.
- As identified in that Strategy, our actions need to seek systemic change to the structures that enact and enable violence. The Yukon government is committed to doing so through this review.

Response to Ross River Dena Council Allegations

Executive Council Office

Context — this may be an issue because:

- In June 2024, Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) made statements in local media regarding the allegations and there was some related media coverage in September 2024. There may be interest in knowing what the Yukon government is doing in response.

Background:

- In April 2024, the Department of Highways and Public Works (HPW) received a letter dated January 2024 from several members of the Ross River Dena Council regarding the conduct of an employee.
- To address the concerns in the letter, a decision was made to engage a third-party investigator to conduct a human resources investigation into the allegations.
- On June 12, 2024, members of the HPW leadership team travelled to Ross River for public service week celebrations. Several RRDC citizens asked the HPW employees to leave the community.

Approved by:

Justin Ferby
Deputy Minister
Executive Council Office

2024 10 01
Date approved

**Kudz Ze Kayah Mine
Project (BMC Minerals)**

Recommended response:

- BMC Minerals' quartz mining licence and lease applications for the Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project are undergoing regulatory review.
- We are committed to continued consultation with the Kaska First Nations as we consider these applications to construct and bring the mine into production.
- The governments of Yukon and Canada jointly issued the March 8, 2024 Decision Document following full consideration of the potential impacts of the project on asserted Kaska rights, which approved the project to proceed to licensing and included a number of mitigations intended to limit impacts to those rights.
- The Government of Yukon remains committed to deep and meaningful consultation with the Kaska throughout the appeal process and once a decision is rendered by the Court of Appeal.
- Outside of these applications, we continue to consult with the Kaska First Nations throughout the project's lifetime, in line with our commitment to reconciliation and to building strong relationships with First Nations governments.

Additional response:

- We are committed to meaningful consultation and reconciliation with the Ross River Dena Council, Liard First Nation, Dease River First Nation, and Kwadacha Nation.

**Kudz Ze Kayah Mine
Project (BMC Minerals)**

ECO – EMR - ENV

- The Government of Yukon expects proponents to build relationships with and provide funding to First Nation governments and communities impacted by development projects.
- We look forward to the clarity that the Court of Appeal decision is expected to provide.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- During the project assessment and subsequent consultation, Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation identified impacts from the project to their asserted Aboriginal rights. The First Nations oppose the project being licensed.
- Ross River Dena Council filed an appeal to the January 2, 2024, Supreme Court of Yukon decision. The appeal was heard in September 2024. The judges reserved their judgment.

Background:

- On June 15, 2022, the Governments of Canada and Yukon issued a joint decision document to vary the Executive Committee's recommendations to allow the Project to proceed, subject to terms and conditions specified in the Final Screening Report.
- On July 20, 2022, the Ross River Dena Council, on its own behalf and on behalf of the Kaska First Nations, filed a petition for judicial review of the decision.
- In August of 2022, BMC Minerals submitted applications to the Yukon government for a quartz mining license and land leases. A Type-A water licence application was submitted to the Yukon Water Board.
- The Supreme Court of Yukon hearing for the petition was held in April of 2023.
- On January 2, 2024, the Supreme Court of Yukon issued its Reasons for Decision on the judicial review of the decision document for the Kudz Ze Kayah mine project.

**Kudz Ze Kayah Mine
Project (BMC Minerals)**ECO – EMR - ENV

- The Supreme Court of Yukon concluded that the governments of Yukon and Canada failed to consult Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation's concerns raised in the June 14, 2022 submission.
- The Yukon government's regulatory review of BMC's regulatory applications was paused as a result of the Court's Decision, which set aside the June 15, 2022 decision document until consultation obligations are fulfilled and a new decision document issued.
- As directed in the January 2, 2024 Supreme Court of Yukon's decision, the Government of Yukon and Government of Canada consulted on the Project with Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation on February 7 and 8, 2024 in Ross River.
- In February of 2024, Ross River Dena Council filed an appeal to the January 2, 2024 decision from the Supreme Court of Yukon.
- In their appeal of the Supreme Court's decision, the Kaska First Nations requested:
 - That both the January 2, 2024, Supreme Court decision and the June 15, 2022, decision document be set aside;
 - That decision bodies complete meaningful and deep consultation with the Kaska First Nations on the Project; and
 - That the court refers the project back to Decision Bodies for reconsideration or to a Panel review by YESAB (Yukon Environmental & Socio-economic Assessment Board).
- On March 8, 2024, decision bodies issued a Decision Document recommending the project proceed to the regulatory phase.
- The appeal was heard in September of 2024. The judges reserved their judgment.
- (See **ECO TAB 37** Ross River Dena Council – Issues and Initiatives).

Session Briefing Note

ECO #4/ EMR #90 / ENV #102
Fall 2024

Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project (BMC Minerals)

ECO – EMR - ENV

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

October 15, 2024

Deputy Minister of the Executive Council Office

Date approved

Lauren Haney

October 14, 2024

Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

Dennis Berry

October 9, 2024

A/Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved

Recommended response:

- The Yukon and Alaska share many common interests and challenges.
- We are working together to advance shared priorities that will improve the prosperity, stability and wellbeing of both jurisdictions.
- Our interests in Arctic security, a healthy environment, critical minerals, robust transportation infrastructure and access to tidewater serve both our jurisdictions as investment and geopolitical focus remain on the North.
- The US and Alaska recognize the Yukon's significance as part of their connectivity, regional security and economic partnerships.
- We were pleased to host Governor Dunleavy and members of the Alaska Cabinet in February.
- We continue to engage regularly with the US Consul General in Vancouver, Jim DeHart, and hosted a visit from Ambassador Cohen in spring 2024.

Additional response (Alaska):

- Over the course of the Governor's visit, we had productive conversations on highways and connectivity, fish and wildlife, community safety, wildfire response, regional security, MMIWG2S+ issues, and supporting the private sector's exposure to Alaskan officials.
- The Governor and I signed a new Intergovernmental Relations Accord which sets out a framework for how we will work together on matters of shared interest.

- I travelled to Anchorage in April to strengthen the relationship and develop more areas for collaboration, including partnerships of non-central governments in the North American Arctic.
- The Yukon and Alaska are stronger together as neighbours and friends because of what we've accomplished in the last year, and we will continue to foster this important regional relationship.
- We are maintaining contact with Commissioners in Alaska to keep them advised of any potential downstream impacts from the Eagle Gold Mine.

Additional response (Shakwak/Alcan Highway):

- During the Governor's visit, we concluded a memorandum of understanding on new funding opportunities for the Shakwak highway.
- This is an important development that will improve road connectivity and safety for both Alaska and the Yukon.
- With that agreement, Alaska was able to help fund reconstruction efforts on parts of the Shakwak that are heavily impacted by degrading permafrost through their Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.
- The Alaska /Yukon application for funding from the US government's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity grant program was successful this year.
- We are working closely with both the Alaska and US governments to ensure we can maximize the use of the funds, while remaining a good partner and friend to Alaska.

- The Alaska Highway is a critical component of highway infrastructure for life in the North and the tourism sector.
- The Shakwak project encompasses the Haines Road and the Alaska Highway north of Haines Junction.
- Supporting the repair and safety of this road advances Canadian and US priorities, including resilience to climate change, economic development, supporting communities and people in the Arctic and maintaining Indigenous connections that span borders.

Additional response (USA relations):

- It was a pleasure to host Ambassador David Cohen in May.
- His engagement with us built on the regular conversations that our government has with the US Consulate in Vancouver.
- We worked with US counterparts to deliver a trade mission in the Yukon in September.
- I'm happy to see this deep interest in the Yukon and look forward to this mission bearing fruit in the medium-term.
- Ambassador Cohen brought the trade mission of seven US companies to the Yukon. We were able to facilitate deep conversation and discussion on new economic partnerships between our respective businesses.
- The US is Canada's largest trading partner, and I hope to see more Yukon companies benefiting from that relationship.
- It is a credit to the efforts of Consul General DeHart in Vancouver that we were able to get the border crossing at Little Gold back to its pre-pandemic operating window.
- That change was a huge win for Dawson and cross-border travelers.

- We look forward to continuing increases in cross-border traffic and seeing more visitors from the US this year, as well as Yukoners visiting our neighbours in Skagway, Haines and beyond.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Governor Dunleavy visited Whitehorse on February 8 and 9, 2024.
 - Ambassador Cohen visited Whitehorse on May 30, 2024.
 - Premier visited Anchorage on April 12, 2024.
 - There may be confusion on the funding structures for the Shakwak highway, and how the two streams of funding will be used to improve the highway.
-

Background:

Alaska relations

- Governor Dunleavy and three Commissioners visited Whitehorse on February 8-9, 2024. Two agreements were signed at the conclusion of the visit.
- In addition to the intergovernmental relations accord and MOU on highways, YG and Alaska are working on a MOU to support closer collaboration and information sharing on public safety - particularly MMIWG and human trafficking concerns.
- Topics discussed during the visit included highways, the Port of Skagway, bison and elk, salmon, MMIWG2S+, regional security, energy, forestry, agriculture, wildland fire and airline connections.
- The Eagle Gold Mine heap leach pad failure has attracted media attention in Alaska, and Alaskan leaders and officials have been offered briefings regarding Eagle Gold.

Shakwak:

- The new MOU puts our highway in Alaska's Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which will give the State more latitude to disperse funds.

USA and Alaska Relations

Executive Council Office

- The project in the STIP mirrors the contents of the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) application.
- The RAISE award will be brought into the STIP and Alaska is shifting STIP funds to provide us with a budget that will surpass the \$25M USD RAISE award.
- This may mean we are able to add elements of construction that were not in the RAISE application that can now be covered by STIP money.
- Conversations between Yukon HPW, Alaska DOTPF and the US Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) are ongoing.
- FHWA has supplemental information requirements that they need to satisfy before delivering the funds to Alaska and HPW is working to get them all the information they need.
- The project funding is expected to be available for the 2025 construction season. Alaska works on a fiscal year of November to October.

USA relations:

- The Canada/US Roadmap announced by Prime Minister Trudeau and President Biden in February 2021 is guiding relationships across borders.
- We are seeing more engagement with US officials since the Roadmap was announced.
- Consul General Jim DeHart (Vancouver) has visited the Yukon on four occasions since taking the office.
- Ambassador Cohen made his first visit to the Yukon on May 30, 2024.

Skagway Port redevelopment: See Note # TAB 17 EcDev

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 09 25

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date Approved

Territorial firearms legislation

Executive Council Office

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon supports the rights of legal gun owners in the territory, while also supporting an approach to gun control that helps protect public safety.
- We are exploring the different mechanisms available to us to support law-abiding firearms owners.
- While no decisions have been made, it is helpful to understand what is happening in other parts of the country.
- Earlier this year, I wrote to Premier Smith in Alberta and Premier Moe in Saskatchewan, seeking to better understand the steps they have taken within their jurisdictions.
- We can learn from other jurisdictions as one part of gathering information to make evidence-based policy decisions.
- Ultimately, anything we do must reflect the Yukon's distinct context.
- To that end, our government is closely monitoring federal plans for the rollout of the buyback program, following the passage of Bill C-21.
- I have been clear with Canada that this program must be funded exclusively by the federal government and that no front-line officers in the territory be diverted from their regular duties to support it.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- On February 12, 2024, the Official Opposition issued a press release urging the Government of Yukon to develop and enact firearms legislation for the Yukon and to establish a territorially appointed Chief Firearms Officer.
- Law-abiding firearms owners in the Yukon remain concerned about the potential impacts of Bill C-21 and may wish to understand the steps contemplated by the Government of Yukon to support their concerns.

Territorial firearms legislation

Executive Council Office

Background:

- On March 28, 2023, the Government of Alberta passed the *Alberta Firearms Act*, giving more tools to protect areas of provincial jurisdiction over firearms while expanding the role of the Alberta Chief Firearms Office.
- On April 6, 2023, the Government of Saskatchewan passed the *Saskatchewan Firearms Act* to enhance public safety across the province and protect the rights of lawful firearms owners.
- Premier Pillai spoke to Premier Smith (AB) on February 29, where he shared his interest in learning about their firearms legislation to inform next steps, if any, in the territory.
- On March 12, 2024, Premier Pillai wrote to Premier Smith and Premier Moe (SK), expressing interest in learning more about their provincial measures to protect the rights of lawful firearms owners.
- The Yukon has the highest per capita number of prohibited and restricted firearms licenses in Canada.
- Lawful firearm owners in the territory include hunters, trappers and people performing remote wilderness work.

Federal Firearms Buyback Program

- At this time, businesses must ensure that firearms are made inoperable (e.g. trigger lock) and be in a locked display case or cabinet. They may not be displayed in a window.
- Public Safety Canada recently advised territorial officials that the first phase of the buyback program targeting industry and businesses holding now-prohibited firearms will rollout in Fall 2024.
- The buyback process is expected to involve four steps: notification; collection; transportation and storage; and destruction.
- The second phase of the program, aimed at individuals is possession of now-prohibited firearms is slated to rollout in Spring 2025.

Territorial firearms legislation

Executive Council Office

- In keeping with its core policing mandate, the RCMP will be the agency responsible for leading the collection of these assault-style firearms in the Yukon.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

2024 09 25

Date Approved

Recommended response:

- We are working towards finalizing the Export Cooperation Agreement, under which Yukon would fund the construction of a marine services platform in exchange for preferential access and fee discounts for Yukon mining companies using a future ore terminal.
- Government of Yukon officials last met with their counterparts in Skagway on November 1, 2024, to share Yukon's draft for the Export Cooperation Agreement. Skagway is reviewing the proposed text.
- We have regularly engaged industry, including both specific companies and the Joint Transportation and Infrastructure Committee throughout the process. Industry stakeholders view access to the port as critical to the future of Yukon's mining industry.
- Reliable access to Skagway's port helps attract investment, supports mine development and encourages mineral exploration in the Yukon.
- We are continuing to negotiate with the Municipality of Skagway to determine the best pathway forward for a marine services platform.
- Port redevelopment in Skagway eliminated its ore export capability.
- Our objective is to secure waterfront space to ensure that Skagway remains an export option for Yukon industry in the future.
- Yukon is proposing that Yukon and Skagway collaborate to build a 227-foot, T-shaped concrete marine services platform able to support multiple methods of ore export.
- Yukon has funded the platform design, totaling \$739,266 (CDN).
- A non-binding terms sheet was signed on September 7, 2023.
- Negotiations toward the binding agreement have not yet concluded.
- The Government of Yukon remains committed to securing tidewater access to support the territory's mining industry.

Additional response:

- The department considered bundling Skagway's port redevelopment with the marine services platform. This option would have required that a binding agreement be finalized in fall 2023.
- That pathway would have incurred significant mobilization and procurement costs in 2023-24. A \$21 million (CDN) appropriation was sought in fall 2023 to support this pathway.
- As an agreement was not finalized, Skagway's main redevelopment project proceeded without the MSP.
- Yukon and Skagway continue to work to identify the best path forward.
- \$44.7 million (CDN) is included in the Capital Plan between 2025-26 and 2027-28 for the project.
- We recognize Skagway will need more information on this project, including with regard to loading method and traffic:
 - The selection of loading method will be best determined by future conversations between Skagway and specific users; and
 - We welcome recent engagement by industry representatives with Skagway, including Western Copper and Gold.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Skagway's port redevelopment eliminated its ore export capability in fall 2023.
- Skagway was a major issue of discussion during the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 Sessions, in part due to the appropriation of \$21.36 million in anticipation of a bundling pathway that did not materialize.

Background:

- The Port of Skagway is the closest ice-free, deep-water port to most of the Yukon. Skagway demolished its existing ore loader as part of a port redevelopment project in fall 2023, eliminating its ore export capability.

Session Briefing Note

Port of Skagway

ECO TAB 7

TAB 1
Fall 2024
Economic Development

- A non-binding terms sheet was signed by Yukon and Skagway on September 7, 2023, but the binding Export Cooperation Agreement has not yet been finalized. Consequently, funding for the project has moved to the capital plan over three years between 2024-25 and 2027-28.
- On November 1, 2024, Yukon officials visited Skagway to share draft text for the Export Cooperation Agreement. Skagway is conducting its legal and policy review for the document.
- Skagway has expressed that it will need to better understand the project's potential impacts on the community, particularly of loading method and traffic.
 - In October 2023 Skagway passed an ordinance requiring ore travelling through the port to be containerized and is interested in limiting the impact of ore shipment traffic during the summer cruise season;
 - Skagway has been in touch with DP World to learn more about its retainer system and other shipment methods; and
 - Western Copper & Gold has proposed and is in discussion with the Municipality of Skagway about a joint concentrate handling and shipping study for the Casino mine as part of its community engagement.
- **Hecla Yukon Exports.** Hecla's Keno Hill project exports containerized silver-lead and zinc concentrate through the Port of Skagway, with the former shipped to Washington state for re-export to smelters in Asia, and the latter to Hecla's Greens Creek to be combined with the zinc concentrate produced at that mine.
- According to Hecla Yukon's January 2023 Operations Plan, it ships 690 dry metric tonnes (DMT) of silver-lead concentrate and 220 DMT of zinc concentrate through Skagway each month.
- Yukon's exports of lead concentrate to the US totaled \$39.7 million, and its exports of zinc concentrate totaled \$7.4 million in 2023.
- Hecla's exports through Skagway are containerized and use existing container export infrastructure. To the Department's knowledge, Hecla's future operations would be unlikely to require the marine services platform.

Approved by:

Samantha Paterson
Deputy Minister, Economic Development

November 5, 2024
Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Minto Mine Status and Update

ECO TAB 8 #21
Fall 2024
Energy, Mines and
Resources

Recommended response:

- Since the abandonment of the Minto site in May 2023, Yukon-based companies have played a key role in safe and efficient progress on Minto Mine's Reclamation and Closure Plan.
- As of the end of September, approximately \$37 million has been spent on work to date, with nearly 80 per cent of payments directed to Yukon companies.
- Activities have focused on treating water, relocating mine waste, recontouring and covering waste dumps, removing debris and hazardous materials, and monitoring environmental performance.

Additional response:

- Planned earthworks activities for 2024 were completed on schedule and on budget. We are delighted to say visitors to the site who are familiar with the project's history of disturbance are truly impressed and appreciate the post-mining landscape being created to blend with the surrounding environment.
- We congratulate Selkirk First Nation on the court approval for its new, Selkirk First Nation-owned company to purchase assets at the Minto mine.
- The Government of Yukon spent approximately \$24 million in 2023-24 to protect the environment and begin remediating the site.
- Subject to approval of the *Second Appropriation Act*, in 2024-25 we anticipate spending up to an additional \$25 million as we continue to

Session Briefing Note

Minto Mine Status and Update

ECO TAB 8 #21
Fall 2024
Energy, Mines and
Resources

reclaim and close the site. This will be recovered from the security we currently hold.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- There has been significant attention on the recent abandonment of the Minto Mine.

Background:

- The Minto Mine was an underground copper mine with gold and silver byproducts located on Selkirk First Nation's Category A Settlement Land.
- On May 13, 2023, Minto Metals abandoned the site and the Government of Yukon took over short-term environmental management responsibilities.
- The Government of Yukon contracted JDS to immediately mobilize to the site under a short-term contract to secure critical resources and subcontractors and initiate required activities. This contract ended on July 27, 2023, when Boreal Engineering took over as the site operator.
- On July 24, 2023, the B.C. Supreme Court appointed PricewaterhouseCoopers as the receiver of the Minto Mine site. The receiver is responsible for all of Minto's assets, undertakings and property, and has the authority, among other things, to put the mine up for sale.
- The sales process initiated by the receiver in 2023 was not successful, resulting in the receiver initiating asset liquidation in May 2024.
- As Minto Mine is on Category A Settlement Land, Selkirk First Nation holds surface and subsurface rights and the Government of Yukon collected royalty payments on behalf of Selkirk First Nation under the Quartz Mining Act.
- Through a court Settlement Order, royalties owed to Selkirk First Nation were resolved by a payment of \$1.3 million USD and the retention of \$700,000 CAD previously paid to Selkirk directly by Minto Metals Corporation.

Session Briefing Note

Minto Mine Status and Update

ECO TAB 8 #21
Fall 2024
Energy, Mines and
Resources

- Selkirk First Nation also received additional financial benefits under its net smelter royalty arrangement with Minto Mine’s owner, Minto Metals Corp. There are still monies owed to Selkirk First Nation from this arrangement.
- Once the site went into receivership, former employees became able to access the federal government’s Wage Earner Protection Program.
- The Government of Yukon holds \$75.2 million in security through a combination of cash and a surety bond for the Minto mine, and we are using this funding to protect the environment and for remediation activities.
- Our initial estimates suggest that the costs for reclamation and closure of the mine are likely to be close to the \$93.2 million in financial security we sought from the mine operator. These estimates will be updated as work progresses.
- We are using a range of approaches to ensure work progresses effectively and efficiently, including open tenders where possible and direct award contracts where work must be delivered in shorter timeframes.
- Contracts to support this work in Fiscal Year 2024-25 include:
 - Selkirk Development Corporation for reclamation activities – \$7.45 million
 - Boreal Engineering Ltd. for site operations - \$2.0 million (contract complete)
 - Cobalt Construction for site operations - \$4.6 million
 - Ensero Solutions for water monitoring – \$2.2 million
 - BQE Water for water treatment - \$1.45 million
 - SRK Consultants for engineering support - \$1 million (contract pending)
 - Selkirk Development Corporation for the supply of fuels - \$2.5 million

Approved by

Lauren Haney

October 07, 2024

Deputy Minister

Date approved

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

Prepared for Minister Streicker
Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

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Date prepared: September 16, 2024
Last Updated: October 2, 2024
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Session Briefing Note

Fall 2024

BC Grid Intertie

Yukon Development
Corporation and Energy,
Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- In Our Clean Future, we committed to a target of 97 per cent of electricity on the Yukon's main grid being generated from renewable sources; up from the 92 per cent it is today.
- The Yukon – British Columbia Grid Intertie project could allow the Yukon to maintain high levels of renewable energy over the long term. The project is large and complex with infrastructure that crosses multiple traditional territories and provincial/territorial borders.
- By increasing the Yukon's renewable electricity supply we are supporting our ambitious electrification goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the Yukon's largest emission sources: transportation, heating and mining.

Additional response:

- We are thankful to Natural Resource Canada, who has committed to providing \$40 million that will support investigations into the project.
- This funding will support us looking at technical feasibility and options, potential cost and funding opportunities.
- Connecting the Yukon to British Columbia's electrical grid reduces greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel use and provides a nation-building opportunity that will advance arctic security, and foster shared growth, prosperity, and reconciliation.

Session Briefing Note

BC Grid Intertie

Yukon Development
Corporation and Energy,
Mines and Resources

-
- Increasing our power supply supports sustainable critical mineral development in the Yukon. Critical minerals are important for the global transition away from fossil fuels.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon's growing population and increased electrification put more demand on the electrical grid. There may be questions about the government's renewable energy plans and ability to meet increasing energy demands.

Background:

- In 2019, Midgard Consulting produced the Yukon-British Columbia Interconnection Development Plan. The report identified the project's objectives, a proposed development approach and a very preliminary cost estimate.
- In 2022, approximately 92 per cent of the electricity on the main grid was obtained from renewable energy sources.
- Renewable electricity, especially hydroelectricity, accounted for approximately 80 per cent of the Yukon's total electricity generation in 2022. Over 98% of the electricity generated in BC is from renewable sources.
- At the March and September 2023 Yukon Forum meetings, leadership discussed the potential to connect the Yukon and British Columbia grids. This discussion represents the beginning of the governments' collaboration on the project.
- The grid intertie project was also presented at the Yukon First Nations' Energy Summit in October 2023 and was discussed at the Regional Energy and Resource Table meetings in January and April 2024.
- In February, an application was made to the Critical Mineral Infrastructure Fund requesting up to \$40 million over the next four years to support pre-feasibility and engagement for this project. Natural Resources Canada announced that the funding had been approved on September 19, 2024.

Session Briefing Note

BC Grid Intertie

Yukon Development
Corporation and Energy,
Mines and Resources

- Work on the feasibility of the grid intertie project will require the completion of a new conceptual design with updated costing.
- One of the new actions added to Our Clean Future includes a commitment to complete an updated conceptual design and alternative route analysis for the Yukon-British Columbia grid intertie project by the end of 2025.
- The Government of Yukon plans to release a request for proposals for the purpose of completing the pre-conceptual design and revised cost estimates for the project. Results of this work are scheduled to be completed in 2025.

Approved by:

Paul Moore

September 26, 2024

Deputy Minister
Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

Gary Gazankas

September 24, 2024

President and CEO
Yukon Development Corporation

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Outfitting in the Yukon

#38
Fall 2024
Environment

Recommended response:

- Our government continues to work with the Yukon Outfitters Association to support the industry while ensuring the sustainability of Yukon wildlife.
- Despite the COVID-19-related setbacks, the Yukon's outfitting industry has flourished in recent years. The seven highest annual number of licenses sold to non-residents occurred over the past 10 years.
- Annual harvest by non-residents has been increasing since the 2020-21 hunting season. Non-resident annual harvest numbers in the Yukon are now at a level seen prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Department of Environment reports the annual harvest of big game species by resident and non-resident hunters in the Yukon Hunting regulations summary. Sheep, moose and caribou remain the most popular big game species harvested by non-residents.
- When making decisions on the allocation of hunting opportunities, we prioritize subsistence harvest per the First Nation Final Agreements, then resident hunters, and then non-resident hunters including outfitter clients.
- The principles of sustainability and conservation guide the department's management of all wildlife species. For public transparency, our core principles are posted on yukon.ca.
- We recognize that there continue to be several outstanding issues of concern, and we are committed to resolving them collaboratively with the outfitting industry.

Session Briefing Note Outfitting in the Yukon

Fall 2024
Environment

- Our wildlife harvest program staff meet frequently with Yukon outfitters and the Yukon Outfitter Association to answer questions, address specific issues of concern, and identify potential solutions.
- This includes questions about the quota process, individual quotas and other conditions of annual operating certificates, appeal processes, harvest information, general information to new outfitters, and the status of wildlife populations.

Additional Response (Review of the Outfitter Quota Guidelines):

- Last year, the Department of Environment received a recommendation from the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board to modernize the *Guidelines to Establish Outfitter Quotas*.
- We agree that modernization of these guidelines is necessary for various reasons, including ensuring they conform with the Yukon *Wildlife Act*, addressing the Yukon's legal obligations to consult First Nations, and ensuring better alignment with how wildlife management is conducted in the Yukon.
- The Government of Yukon invited the Board to initiate the review and engagement on the guidelines, given its mandate to make recommendations on all matters related to Yukon fish and wildlife management, legislation, research, policies, and programs.
- We are supporting the Board with their development of a work plan and budget for a potential review and engagement on the guidelines, which will enable the Board to evaluate their capacity and resource needs, and to determine if it is practicable to undertake this effort at this time.

Session Briefing Note Outfitting in the Yukon

Fall 2024
Environment

Third Response: (Multi-Year Quotas):

- We recognize the certainty and flexibility that multi-year quotas provide to Yukon outfitters. However, the issuance of multi-year quotas does not comply with the *Wildlife Act*.
- The Department of Environment has implemented an interim solution to provide outfitters with certainty, flexibility, and predictability.
- This interim process states that unless a legal, environmental, or socio-economic factor necessitates a change in the non-resident harvest allocation, quotas will remain unchanged until we establish a new quota process.
- The interim process also allows outfitters who had quota agreements before 2022 to access unused moose and caribou quotas from the previous four years, up to a maximum value, as per their most recent agreement.
- We remain committed to working with the outfitting industry, Renewable Resources Councils, Yukon First Nations, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and licensed hunters to ensure that a fair, transparent, and sustainable approach to harvest is applied.

Fourth Response (Outfitter Quota Appeals):

- In 2021, the Department of Environment was made aware that issuing multi-year quotas and roll-over provisions does not comply with the *Wildlife Act*. As a result, the Department worked with outfitters to place them on annual quotas. Since 2022, the Department has been issuing annual quotas.

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Environment

- Given the changes made to the quota process and the fact that some outfitters were assigned quotas for the first time, the Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee and the Concession and Compensation Review Board received an unprecedented number of appeals in 2022 and 2023.
- Our government responded to all timelines and information requests from the Secretariat coordinating the scheduling of appeal hearings, but the number of appeals created significant delays in the scheduling of hearings.
- The Department of Environment is aware of one outfitter who has filed a quota appeal in 2024.
- The Government of Yukon recognizes and supports outfitters' right to appeal.
- At present, the Government of Yukon remains committed to supporting quota appeals and decisions under the Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee and the Concession and Compensation Review Board processes.
- However, the Government of Yukon will not be attending Outfitter Quota Appeal Committee hearings when the same matter has previously been addressed through the legislated Concession and Compensation Review Board process and a decision has been made and communicated to the outfitter.

Fifth Response (Hunting in the Peel):

- There are no outfitting concessions in the two Land Management Units included in the Peel Watershed feasibility assessment for the proposed national park; this would be the areas including Turner Lake Wetlands, Caribou River, and Peel River.

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- The area is remote and therefore has limited licensed hunting opportunities.
- Parts of the territory that have Special Management Area designations, such as the Peel region, are designed to be compatible with recreational and economic activities including wilderness eco-tourism, big game outfitting and trapping.
- Any future designation recommendations made in the Special Management Areas would respect the objectives of the protected area and the intentions of the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Ongoing questions have been raised in the Legislative Assembly and in the media regarding outfitter guidelines, outfitter harvest quotas, and the quota appeal processes.
- In April 2024, the department received a request from the Secretariat to meet regarding the government's participation, or lack thereof, in the appeal process.

Background:

- The Department of Environment meets frequently with the Yukon Outfitter Association and Yukon outfitters.
 - In 2023, the Yukon Outfitter Liaison Committee, comprised of representatives from Department of Environment and Yukon Outfitters Association, met twice to discuss issues important to the industry.
 - The most recent Yukon Outfitter Liaison Committee occurred on June 13, 2024.
- The Wildlife Harvest Biologist and other Fish and Wildlife Branch staff also meet regularly with individual Yukon outfitters, as needed.

Approved by:

Dennis Berry

October 16, 2024

Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

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Reducing Government of Yukon Emissions

Environment / HPW

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon continues to work towards reducing the territory's greenhouse gas emissions and building a more climate resilient Yukon now and for generations to come.
- We know that this work needs to happen in partnership with Yukoners but that it also requires a shift in Government of Yukon operations to address our impact to the Yukon's environment.
- The Government of Yukon tracks greenhouse gas emissions from our internal operations and evaluates how climate change may be impacting government-owned infrastructure.
- In December 2023, we released a report detailing the Government of Yukon's total greenhouse gas emissions. The report showed that in 2021, the government generated 49.9 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Appendix A).
- Of this total, the Government of Yukon's departments emitted about three quarters of this, at about 34.6 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, with government corporations and Yukon University making up the other portion.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon's emissions are largely the result of heating and powering buildings, operating road maintenance equipment and fleet vehicle use.
- Given this, the Department of Highways and Public Works represents the largest share of emissions, due to the significant role they play in maintaining our buildings, roads, airports, and fleet vehicles.

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Reducing Government of Yukon Emissions

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Environment / HPW

- The Department of Highways and Public Works is also the Department who is leading a one-government approach to reduce emissions from Government of Yukon buildings by improving energy efficiency and installing renewable energy systems.
- Building improvements are not tied to any one department and are prioritized where they will make the most impact in reducing emissions.
- The Government of Yukon also provides homes, healthcare, and electricity for Yukoners. These areas also represent a high portion of the Government of Yukon's emissions.

Third response (actions):

- Many actions in Our Clean Future empower Yukoners in taking climate action, while other actions support the Government of Yukon in reducing our own emissions and building climate resilience.
- To reduce emissions from our operations, we have:
 - Installed a new biomass heating system at Elijah Smith Elementary School;
 - Installed solar panels and battery energy storage systems at two highway maintenance camps;
 - Completed 31 retrofits to Government of Yukon buildings to improve efficiency and reduce emissions; and
 - Completed 81 certified energy assessments on our high-emission Government of Yukon buildings and will complete assessments for the remaining 36 high-emitting sites this year.
- To support emissions reductions in other Government of Yukon operations, we have actions that are designed to track emissions from

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Environment / HPW

health and social services, reduce travel emissions related to healthcare through provision of virtual health care services and retrofitting community housing buildings.

- To ensure that our operations are resilient to the impacts of climate change, we have:
 - Collaborated with Yukon University to identify the type and severity of climate hazards that public buildings face;
 - Developed a monitoring program for public buildings impacted by permafrost; and
 - Begun developing guidelines on incorporating climate risks into public infrastructure projects.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- During budget Opposition briefings, MLA Tredger has asked several departments what their overall carbon footprint is. MLA Tredger has also stated that they intend to ask about the Government of Yukon's carbon footprint in the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Background:

- Every year, the Department of Environment publishes a report on the Government of Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions alongside the Our Clean Future annual report and the Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the Yukon report.
- Emissions from the Government of Yukon have increased since 2010 as the Yukon's population grows.

Approved by:

Briar Young

September 5, 2024

 A/Deputy Minister of Environment

 Date approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2024****Carbon Pricing
(Corporate Note)**Environment & Finance

Recommended response:

- Since its introduction in 2019, the Government of Yukon has been supportive of carbon pricing as a policy to help us reduce emissions and move toward our ambitious climate targets.
- We take a balanced approach to carbon pricing in the territory, one which considers the need to reduce emissions as well as the fair return of carbon pricing revenues to Yukoners.
- The Yukon's carbon rebate is revenue neutral. We are committed to both reducing carbon emissions in the territory and to returning all the federal government's revenues to Yukoners.
- Returning proceeds to individuals, municipal governments, Yukon First Nations, businesses, and mining operations is a critical part of our approach to carbon pricing in the Yukon.
- We are returning 100 per cent of the federal carbon levy to these five rebate groups who receive more, on average, than they pay in carbon pricing levies.

Additional response:

- The departments of Environment and Finance work together to coordinate with our federal counterparts to assess the implications of carbon pricing in the territory and to ensure the needs of the territory are recognized in national policy.
- This includes retaining control over how revenues are distributed back to Yukon individuals, municipal governments, Yukon First Nations and businesses.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2024****Carbon Pricing
(Corporate Note)**Environment & Finance

- It also includes excluding the carbon price from electricity generation and aviation, in recognition of the unique constraints of our northern jurisdiction.

Third response:

- Carbon pricing is just one tool in our toolkit to address the climate emergency.
 - We continue to implement Our Clean Future to reduce the Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions and, more broadly, to reduce the impact of the carbon levy on Yukoners.
 - In December of last year, we announced 42 new actions under Our Clean Future as part of the third Our Clean Future annual report outlining the progress we have made on the strategy.
 - Although we have made progress on many of our commitments, there is still significant work required to meet our target of reducing our emissions by 45 per cent by 2030.
 - Ensuring that we utilize every policy lever at our disposal, including carbon pricing, is essential to meet our goals.
 - Together, we are finding solutions to reduce our emissions while strengthening our economy and supporting our industry partners.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Carbon pricing remains a highly sensitive topic across the country with many provinces and territories voicing their own perspective on how they would like to see this pricing mechanism handled moving forward.

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Carbon Pricing (Corporate Note)

Environment & Finance

- In October 2023, the federal government announced a temporary 3-year exemption for home-heating oil from the federal carbon price, with the intention of helping Atlantic Canada in particular.
- While Atlantic Canada welcomed this change, the exemption has received considerable backlash. Most provincial governments (except for British Columbia) have called for extending the carbon price exemption to all home-heating fuels (including natural gas).
- Critics also argued that the exemption undermines the credibility of the carbon tax and may weaken the incentives to switch to lower carbon heating options.

Background:

- The federal Draft Regulations Amending the Fuel Charge Regulations stipulate that all heating oil will be exempt from the fuel charge starting November 8, 2023, until April 2027.
- This means that light fuel oil consumption in all buildings, including residential, commercial, and institutional, will be exempt from the fuel charge.
- Nearly half (49.2% in 2022) of Yukon homes use oil-based heating.
- In Yukon, individuals, businesses, placer/quartz mining operations, Yukon First Nations governments and municipal governments are all eligible for a rebate for carbon pricing.
- Individuals who live outside of Whitehorse receive a remote supplement, which was recently increased from 10 to 20% (and is now in line with the federal remote supplement for backstop jurisdictions including Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, and Saskatchewan).
- On September 12, 2024, British Columbia's Premier David Eby announced that if the federal government were to remove the carbon pricing backstop, then British Columbia would end the carbon levy in the province.
- British Columbia has had its own carbon pricing system in place since 2008.

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(Corporate Note)**

Environment & Finance

- British Columbia and the Yukon were the remaining supporters of carbon pricing as a climate change policy, with all other provinces publicly opposing the federal system. In late 2023, the newly elected Premier of the Northwest Territories also called for an exemption from the federal carbon levy for the territory.
- To date, Canada has been firm on granting no exception to the backstop.

Approved by:

Dennis Berry

October 2, 2024

A/Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved

Jessica Schultz

October 1, 2024

Deputy Minister of Finance

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

Fall 2024

Finance

Recommended response:

- Inflation has continued to improve in recent months, but Yukon households continue to see their budgets stretched by elevated prices, with lower-income households often feeling the worst effects.
- The Government of Yukon continues to monitor inflation and its impact on Yukoners, so that we can take steps to ease the burden.
- As inflationary pressures continue to lessen, efforts to make life more affordable for Yukoners and to help industry are shifting from short-term assistance to measures with the potential to provide longer-term benefits, such as actions to improve home affordability.

Additional response:

- The Main Estimates for this year has continued to build on existing supports for Yukoners by making sure they can access essential services at prices they can afford.
- Budget 2024-25 included investments to advance affordable housing projects across the territory. From the Housing First Project in Watson Lake to the recently awarded replacement of the Ryder Apartments in Whitehorse, the Yukon government is taking action to build more affordable homes for Yukoners, especially those in vulnerable situations.

Session Briefing Note

Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

- There is also over \$42 million in continued funding for early learning and childcare. This includes funding for the universal childcare program, which has reduced childcare fees to less than \$10 per day, on average.
- We are also making life more affordable and leading the nation with our Yukon-wide dental program, which has \$5.4 million in continued funding for 2024-25.
- To make sure that more people have the option of staying home when they are sick, the Temporary Paid Sick Leave was extended.
- We also extended the Interim Electrical Rebate, which provides welcome relief from power bills to Yukoners across the territory.
- In addition to items included in the 2024-25 Main Estimates, additional initiatives in many departments are continuing to assist Yukoners with the cost of living.
- The Department of Community Services, for example, is developing a program that will see free transit passes provided to non-governmental organizations, vulnerable populations and youth.
- The Department of Health and Social Services will also provide additional funding of \$777,000 for Safe at Home to provide temporary supportive housing at 408 Alexander Street.

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Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

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- These are just a few examples of the many programs and initiatives that continue to support Yukoners.

Third response

- The Government of Yukon has also remained responsive to higher inflation in recent years through its various grants and subsidies, which are indexed to inflation. These include:
 - Subsidies for medical travel
 - The Yukon Child Benefit
 - Social Assistance Payments
 - Student Financial Assistance
 - Seniors' benefits
 - The Pioneer Utility grant
 - The Comprehensive Municipal Grant Regulation
 - Residential rent caps
- The Yukon's minimum wage is also responsive to price changes, as its annual change is tied to inflation in the previous year.
- After growing 6.8 per cent in 2023, the minimum wage increased a further 4.9 per cent to \$17.59 per hour on April 1, 2024.
- The Yukon's minimum wage is the second highest wage in Canada, behind only Nunavut's minimum wage of \$19.00 per hour.

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Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

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- These increases also contribute towards the strong earnings growth we continue to see in the territory, where average weekly earnings grew 6.1 per cent over the first half of 2024. This is the strongest growth in the country.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Inflation has fallen from historical highs, but Yukoners are still dealing with higher prices for a variety of goods and services following a lengthy period of elevated inflation.
- The moderation of inflationary pressures that began to take hold late last year has continued into 2024. Growth in the Whitehorse Consumer Price Index (CPI) has been much lower in every month in 2024, and inflation in recent months has been near or below the historic average of 2 per cent.

Background:

Inflation – Recent performance and outlook

- Following ten increases in the overnight rate since March 2022, the Bank of Canada has made three 25 basis point cuts in 2024, with the overnight rate dropping from 5.0 per cent to 4.25 per cent. Expectations of further rate cuts this year and in 2025, could further reduce pressure on shelter prices as mortgage rates decline.

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Inflation and Affordability (Corporate Note)

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- Both locally and nationally, price pressures have lessened, and inflation continues to trend towards historic norms. The current outlook for the Whitehorse CPI reflects expectations of a return to 'normal' levels of inflation, with the inflation forecast of 2 per cent in 2024, much improved from 4.9 per cent in 2023 and 6.8 per cent in 2022. Beyond 2024, annual inflation is expected to remain at 2 per cent over the remainder of the five-year forecast.

PROGRAMS AND OTHER MEASURES THAT SUPPORT AFFORDABILITY

Five-Year Capital Plan projects supporting housing affordability (Yukon Housing Corporation)

- The **Old Crow 10-Plex Mixed-Use Housing** facility is complete and opened in April 2024.
- Construction of the **10-plex Housing First Project in Watson Lake** began in the summer of 2023. It is scheduled to be completed in the fall 2024.
- Construction of the **Faro and Dawson Duplex** projects started in summer 2023 and is now complete.
- Groundwork began at the old **Ryder Apartments in Whitehorse** in September 2024 and we are aiming for completion in spring 2026. When completed, the new complex is anticipated to deliver over 45 new units.

Universal Child Care Program (Education)

- Universal child care is available to all Yukon families using licensed child care spaces. The universal child care program has reduced fees to less than \$10 per day, on average, for families across the Yukon.

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Dental Care program (Health and Social Services)

- The Yukon's Dental Program was launched in 2023 and provides \$1,300 per year in dental benefits to Yukoners without dental coverage. The program will cover dental treatments necessary to relieve pain and infection, prevent disease, treat cavities, and restore chewing and social function. It will also offer full coverage for preventive care, such as routine dental cleaning.

Paid sick leave program (Economic Development)

- On April 1, 2023, the Department of Economic Development launched the Paid Sick Leave Rebate. The program runs for two 12-month blocks:
 - April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024; and
 - April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025
- The Paid Sick Leave Rebate is a temporary program that offers up to 40 hours of paid sick leave to employees and self-employed Yukoners that earn less than the average private-sector wage of \$33.94/hour. The program includes all illnesses (and injuries not covered by any other Act, benefit, or program). The program is available to employees regardless of whether their employer offers paid sick leave, though employees must use all paid sick leave available to them through their employer before they are eligible for the Paid Sick Leave Rebate. The program is still in effect and will run until March 31, 2025.

Yukon Child Benefit (Health and Social Services and Finance)

- The Yukon Child Benefit provides monthly payments to modest and low-income households who have children under 18. The maximum benefit per child is now tied to inflation, effective the 2023–24 benefit year.

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Yukon Seniors' Income Supplement (Health and Social Services)

- The Yukon Seniors' Income Supplement provides a monthly income supplement for eligible Yukoner senior's receiving Old Age Security (OAS) and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) from the federal government. This amount is adjusted for inflation in October, each year.

Inflation Relief Rebate and Interim Electrical Rebate (Yukon Development Corporation)

- The Inflation Relief Rebate, a \$50 rebate that was automatically applied to electrical customers' bills, was a temporary measure to address inflation. The Inflation Relief Rebate was most recently applied to all ATCO Electric Yukon and Yukon Energy bills for November and December 2023 and January 2024.
- The Interim Electrical Rebate continues to provide residential electrical customers with a maximum rebate of \$22.62 per month based on the electricity they consume, up to 1,000 kilowatt hours (up to \$271.44 per year). This affordability measure will continue until March 2025.

Social Assistance Review (Health and Social Services)

- Health and Social Services is undertaking a review of the Yukon's Social Assistance rates to inform options to improve the delivery of the program and ensure it is meeting the needs of program clients.
- While the review is underway, the department is providing a \$100 monthly increase to eligible Social Assistance recipients.

Out of Home Childcare Increases (Health and Social Services)

- To offset inflationary cost of living increases and provide sufficient financial resources to meet the needs of children placed in their care, Health and Social Services provided an ongoing 10 per cent increase to monthly payments to caregivers of children in out of home care in 2023-24, on top of the annual indexed increase.

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- Combined, this amounted to a 16.46 per cent rate increase for community and extended family caregivers. The new rates are as follows:
 - Whitehorse: \$46.86 per day
 - Rural Communities: \$50.16 per day
 - Old Crow: \$86.40 per day
- Rates are indexed annually to the Whitehorse Consumer Price Index, with an increase of 2.4% scheduled to take effect in October 2024.

Supportive Housing (Health and Social Services)

- \$777,000 for Safe at Home will go towards establishing temporary supportive housing at 408 Alexander Street.

Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit Rental Subsidy (Yukon Housing Corporation)

- The Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit offers a rental subsidy for low-to-moderate income renters.

Comprehensive Municipal Grant (Community Services)

- The Comprehensive Municipal Grant is how the Government of Yukon directly funds municipal governments. This core funding supplements municipal resources and pays for vital services, like the provision of fresh drinking water, the collection of solid waste and recycling, recreation programming and other services as required under the Municipal Act and other legislation.
- The high inflation seen in 2022 (6.8 per cent) increased the grant payments provided in April 2024. This resulted in a \$2.3 million increase for Yukon municipalities with overall contributions of over \$24.5 million for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

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Energy retrofits and funding to improve efficiency and offset costs (Energy, Mines and Resources)

- Energy efficiency rebate programs are available for the transportation sector, renewable heating sector, and the construction sector focusing on high efficiency buildings.
- For existing homes, the Energy Branch offers the Good Energy rebate program for high performance heating systems and upgrades to thermal enclosures including insulation and windows, and high-performance new homes. Taking these measures will save homeowners money on their energy costs.
- Between January 1, 2018, and June 30, 2024, 286 high-performance retrofits to residential, commercial and institutional buildings have been completed across the territory.
- Innovative programs like the Better Buildings Program that offer up-front funding, combined with our Good Energy rebates, make energy retrofits more accessible and affordable for Yukoners.

Approved by:

Jessica Schultz

September 25, 2024

Deputy Minister
Department of Finance

Date Approved

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2024****405 Alexander**Health and Social
Services

Government priority:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to working with Connective Support Society, the Council of Yukon First Nations, Yukon First Nations and our community partners to take action to improve health and safety and enhance supports for Yukoners.

Key messages:

- We are committed to working in partnership with Connective, the Council of Yukon First Nations, Yukon First Nations and our community partners to meet the needs of the community and 405 Alexander guests.
- 405 Alexander, previously referred to as the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter, offers a low-barrier, 24/7 shelter and supportive living units, and a range of drop-in services for unhoused and street-involved adults.
- 405 Alexander is operated by Connective Support Society in partnership with the Council of Yukon First Nations.
- Our government provides Emergency Medical Services, Home Care, and Mental Wellness and Substance Use outreach services including the Referred Care Clinic's Opioid Treatment Services, at 405 Alexander.

Key facts:

- 405 Alexander has capacity for 54 emergency shelter guests per night and has 20 permanent supportive housing units operating under Housing First principles.

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- From April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023, there was an average of 45.5 emergency shelter guests staying at 405 Alexander per night and 19.4 people per month living in the Housing First units.
 - From April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024, there was an average of 40.4 emergency shelter guests staying at 405 Alexander per night and 19.3 people per month living in the Housing First units.
 - From April 1 to June 30, 2024, there was an average of 43.3 emergency shelter guests per night.
 - From April 1 to August 31, 2024, there have consistently been 20 people living in the Housing First units per month.

405 Alexander operation renewal:

Key facts:

- The Government of Yukon remains focused on addressing the complex challenges of homelessness, substance use, and public safety in Whitehorse through continued collaboration with partners, including Connective and the Council of Yukon First Nations.
- As part of our work on the Downtown Whitehorse Safety Response Action Plan, the Government of Yukon will be working with community groups, neighbours, and NGOs to develop a shelter system model that reflects the changing needs of the Downtown community.
- The Department of Health and Social Services is looking at options around the shelter model that will ensure our shelter system remains adaptive, transparent, and open to innovation.

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Available supports:**Key facts:**

- We provide a range of on-site supports at 405 Alexander, including Emergency Medical Services, Home Care, social supports outreach, and Mental Wellness and Substance Use outreach services.
- Opioid Treatment Services from the Referred Care Clinic for guests of 405 Alexander have expanded to offer prescriber coverage two days a week. This approach has been very successful in increasing engagement in Opioid Treatment Services.
- We are working with Blood Ties Four Directions to increase awareness of the Supervised Consumption Site among guests of 405 Alexander and have expanded the services and hours of operation onsite and at the outreach van.
- Guests have access to harm reduction education and supplies, including Naloxone kits, and connection to appropriate supports and services.
- Guests have access to social workers and nursing support.
- Shelter guests have access to cultural support and programming, through the Council of Yukon First Nations.

Connective program review (motion response):**Key facts:**

- We are working to finalize the review of all of Connective's programming in response to Motion 982 from the spring session. The scope includes a full review of the Housing First program at Wood

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405 Alexander

ECO TAB 14

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Services

Street and 405 Alexander, and a review of the Emergency Shelter Program and delivery outcomes. It will also include a review of the Department of Justice's SHARP program for Men and Women.

- A final report will be made available and tabled in the Legislature summarizing the results of the evaluations of Health and Social Services Connective-operated programs once they are complete.
- The Department of Health and Social Services has agreements in place with Connective to run:
 - The Whitehorse Emergency Shelter at 405 Alexander;
 - a Housing First program; and
 - the Whitehorse Residential Services program for Yukon Review Board clients.
- The Department of Justice has agreements in place with Connective to run the Supervised Housing and Reintegration Program (SHARP) at two separate facilities for men and women.
- Each program is being evaluated separately.
- Evaluation is an objective assessment of whether a program is effectively and efficiently meeting desired outcomes. The results of the evaluations will help the Government of Yukon to make evidence-based decisions to continuously improve our programming.
- Connective works closely with the Council of Yukon First Nations to inform and deliver culturally appropriate programs and services throughout 405 Alexander.
- The TPA includes a framework for performance monitoring and evaluation:

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- D3.1 YG will provide the Recipient with the existing Logic Model and Performance Measurement Framework reflecting the program outputs and immediate, intermediate, and long-term outcomes and the indicators by which those outputs and outcomes will be monitored on an on-going basis.
- Health and Social Services officials meet with Connective weekly to review progress on the Coroner's Inquest recommendations. During these meetings, we discuss all the recommendations and ensure both parties are aware of what the other is doing in this area. This includes discussing how we will be respectively responding to the Coroner's office.
 - There is a SharePoint site hosted by Connective that Government of Yukon staff have access to that includes all progress updates since May.
- The Department of Health and Social Services implemented all recommendations by the end of October and formally responded to the Coroner on November 1.
- Connective releases their regular public newsletter which includes, updates for the community on the response to the jury recommendations following the Coroner's Inquest in April 2024.
- Over the summer and fall months, Connective and CYFN have been co-hosting monthly, hour-long, culturally safe Connection Meetings.
 - The meetings are held on the ground floor of the shelter, open to everyone and offer a "space for service users to come together

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in a more formal way and speak about their experience accessing services.”

- The Council of Yukon First Nations ensures an Elder is present at each Circle.

Response to the Coroner's inquest jury recommendations:

- In collaboration with Connective, we have responded to the jury's recommendations made following the inquest into the deaths of Cassandra Warville, Myranda Aleisha Dawn Tizya-Charlie, Josephine Elizabeth Hager and Darla Skookum at 405 Alexander.
- All recommendations were completed by the end of October 2024.
- A formal response was sent to the Coroner on November 1, 2024.
- To ensure the work initiated in response to the recommendation of the coroner's jury is sustained in an effective and systematic way, the Department of Health and Social Services has been working to establish a third-party committee to review the work completed by Connective and Government of Yukon to date.
- We have implemented all eight recommendations:
 1. A comprehensive review of 104 policies and related procedures for 405 Alexander has been completed.
 - The review identified gaps and options to address them, informed by best practices.
 - Staff orientation to the updated policy and procedures is currently taking place.

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- Connective is committed to an annual review and ongoing monitoring of the revised policies and procedures to ensure they are meeting the needs of those accessing services.
2. In collaboration with the Council of Yukon First Nations, 405 Alexander staff, shelter guests and community partner organizations, Connective's leadership reviewed and revised the list of key staff training and training models used and adopted an annual training plan.
 - Connective will monitor implementation of the adopted training plan and will complete its review to ensure continued effectiveness.
 3. Connective established a working group comprised of the organization's staff and Council of Yukon First Nations representatives to revise the process of recruiting and hiring Indigenous employees to reduce barriers for Indigenous candidates.
 - Connective will continue working with First Nations partners to assess the impact of these changes.
 4. The Government of Yukon reviewed results of two audits completed by Connective over the past ten months evaluating compliance with the provisions of the 405 Alexander TPA.

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- Connective has made significant progress in addressing the gaps and issues identified from the January 2024 and October 2024 audits.
5. Connective developed a critical incident reporting framework which informed the policies and procedure revisions.
- The Government of Yukon has the responsibility to ensure an independent external review will take place if future deaths may occur at 405 Alexander.
6. In June 2024, Government of Yukon officials met with Chiefs of the Yukon First Nations to discuss the best approach for connecting with the families and affected First Nations communities. Where requested by a First Nation, Connective's leadership met directly with the administrative team to hear community concerns and recommendations on how to improve operations at 405 Alexander.
- In September 2024, Connective implemented additional in-person access to counselling services for the staff working across its programs in Whitehorse.
7. To establish relationships of trust while providing services to shelter guests, Connective engaged Council of Yukon First Nations to support sharing circles at 405 Alexander and improve communication among staff.
- The first Connection Circle was held on June 28, 2024. As well as providing valuable support, and beyond discussing

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how to meet the inquest recommendations, these meetings continue to help Connective's leadership engage the shelter guests in discussions related to food services, safety and expectations.

- Managers now attend every shift exchange to ensure consistency in briefings.

8. Connective's leadership has engaged with the Council of Yukon First Nations, Betty's Haven, Blood Ties Four Directions, Kaushee's Place, Queer Yukon, Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre and Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle on issues of safe space for 2SLGBTQ+ and female identifying shelter guests.

- This includes establishing a more welcoming environment at the shelter by repainting the main floor areas and adding new signage on the rights and responsibilities of shelter guests.

Coroner's inquest recommendations:

Key facts:

- A coroner's inquest into the deaths of Cassandra Warville, Myranda Aleisha Dawn Tizya-Charlie, Josephine Elizabeth Vanessa Hager and Darla Skookum at 405 Alexander began April 8, 2024 and concluded April 25, 2024 with the jury issuing eight recommendations.
- Some of the recommendations include reviewing policy, procedures and training guides within six months, prioritizing hiring Indigenous people and people with lived experience, develop an improved

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complaint and community process, provide 405 Alexander staff counselling, and create safe spaces for women and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals within the shelter.

- Our government is committed to implementing the jury's recommendations by the end of October 2024.
 - Once completed, we will develop a public report with the outcome of these actions.
- We are working in close collaboration with community partners, Connective, the Council of Yukon First Nations, Yukon First Nations governments, non-governmental organizations and people with living and lived experience.
- The goal is to ensure a safe, supportive and responsive environment for all guests of 405 Alexander while honouring the memory of those who have been lost and upholding the government's commitment to community wellbeing.
- We are establishing a committee, under the existing Substance Use Health Emergency Oversight group, who will be tasked with a review of all Government of Yukon and Connectives responses to the Coroner's Inquest recommendations, as well as support work to review any serious incidents at 405 Alexander in the future as recommended through the inquest.
- As of October 3, 2024, the jury's eight recommendations include the following completed or in-progress actions:

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1. A policy review for the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter will be undertaken by Connective Support Society within six months.

- A contractor, hired by Connective, reviewed and updated policies and procedures in preparation for October implementation.
 - The Council of Yukon First Nations provided input and direction on some policies.
 - Policy work included developing operational health and safety policies.
- Reviewed Canadian shelter standards, design, and procedures.
- Engaged local organizations with harm reduction and health services expertise.
- Held focus group and independent feedback sessions with all levels of staff.
- Conducted a service user experience and safety feedback survey.

2. Within six months, Connective Support Society in conjunction with interested Yukon First Nations, shelter guests, staff and other supports services, will research and adopt a training plan assessing current training need, based on best practices, that address both onboarding, orientation and ongoing professional development following a priority list.

- Reviewed and revised training models to support staff in delivering culturally safe, trauma informed, and harm reduction-focused supports.
 - This includes specific training related to alcohol intoxication.

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- Developing a customized Cultural Awareness Training, in partnership with the Council of Yukon First Nations, to supplement *Yukon First Nations 101*.

3. Immediately, Connective Support Society will give priority to hiring Indigenous employees and persons with lived experience when posting positions. Additionally, they will work with Interested First Nations to identify ways to attract, support and retain Indigenous employees.

- Established a working group, in partnership with the Council of Yukon First Nations, to monitor and refine previous improvements.
- Published an [Indigenous Recruitment](#) information sheet to reduce barriers for Yukon First Nations candidates.
- Implemented a range of metrics, including tracking Yukon First Nations and Indigenous applicants, to monitor and improve progress over time.

4. In six months, the Yukon Government, through its Transfer Payment Agreement provision, will evaluate Connective Support Society for compliance with recommendations 1, 2, and 3.

- Department of Health and Social Services and Connective have been completing a line-by-line review of the 405 Alexander TPA to ensure all aspects of the agreement are being met.
 - The review is expected to be completed by mid-October.

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5. If future deaths should occur at the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter, the Yukon Government will work with Connective to ensure an independent review. (Critical Incident Review)

- Proposed a revised and standardized incident reporting approach to the Department of Health and Social Services for feedback and review, prior to October implementation.

6. Within two months, leadership from the Yukon Government and Connective will meet with the communities affected by the deaths to hear concerns arising from the inquest. Within six months, Connective will provide access to in-person counselling for all staff as needed.

- Continued to follow Yukon Government's lead in engagement with Yukon First Nations. Where requested, we have met directly with Yukon First Nation's administrative teams to gather feedback and input.
- Implemented additional access to in-person counselling services for all staff.

7. Immediately, Connective will begin a monthly talking circle and a structured complaint process. Connective will improve communication among staff by formalizing the pre and post briefing of all shift exchanges.

- Reviewed and revised shift exchange practices, based on staff feedback.
- Implemented Monthly Connection Circles for all service users at 405 Alexander (four to date).

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8. In recognition of safety concerns of LGBTQ2S+ and female identifying service users Connective will, within the next six months, identify and create a safe space for their use.

- Enhanced the physical space with fresh painting, new signage, and a compliments, suggestions and complaints box.
- Began ongoing engagements with community organizations and service users around increasing gender-based safety.
- Drawing on the newly released [Human Rights-Based, Gender-Sensitive National Standards for Emergency Shelters Across Canada](#) (July 2024) to inform best practices and knowledge in policies.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon assumed operations of 405 Alexander in 2019 with the explicit goal of stabilizing operations, and then transferring oversight to a qualified third party.
- Connective Support Society resumed operations of 405 Alexander in October 2022. The Transfer Payment Agreement between Connective and the Government of Yukon expires March 31, 2025.
- The Government of Yukon worked with Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation and Selkirk First Nation to support community members who attended.
- Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services worked with Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation and Selkirk First Nation to provide support in their communities and in Whitehorse that was responsive and respectful to community members' needs.

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Death at 405 Alexander:

Key facts:

- A visitor at the Housing First units died by suspected overdose on September 30, 2024.
- The person was not a resident or regular guest at 405 Alexander.
- Shelter staff were alerted to the incident at approximately 8:40 am on Monday, September 30.
- Emergency Medical Services and RCMP responded immediately. Attempts to resuscitate the individual were unsuccessful.
- First aid overdose response was administered on site.
- Video footage from the hallway of events surrounding the incident and response will be shared with RCMP.
- Further details about the death, including confirmation of the cause of death, may become available following investigation by the Coroner's office.
- Connective is providing supports to individuals known to use substances in units and discussing safety planning and additional harm reduction steps to prevent or respond to overdoses.
- In the past year incident reporting policies for 405 Alexander have been updated to include a timely and fulsome review of any incidents by staff and supervisors, immediate review and all relevant video footage, collecting and documenting necessary and relevant information and including additional senior management review of all incidents. This new policy and process was applied to the event on

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Monday and all necessary information was turned over to the RCMP and Coroner's Office for their review and investigations.

- In response to the Coroner's inquest completed this spring, the department of Health and Social Services has been working with a range of NGOs, First Nations, RCMP and other community groups to respond to all recommendations, including independent review of any death at 405 Alexander.

EMS presence:**Key facts:**

- Emergency Medical Services has expanded their Paramedic Specialist Clinic hours at 405 Alexander to 20 hours a day.
 - The clinic ensures a Paramedic is on site 20 hours a day and we are working towards expanding this to 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
 - The clinic has a spectrometer to test samples of drugs on site. The spectrometer provides a more accurate detection of benzodiazepines, fentanyl and other contaminants.
- Emergency Medical Services supports the Mobile Paramedic Response Unit at 405 Alexander Street, which is equipped to provide mobile drug testing services, harm reduction supplies and other health care services.
- The Paramedic Response Unit began in October 2022 and operates 10.75 hours a day, seven days a week.

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- The Unit is designed to mitigate land ambulance calls and decrease transport to the Emergency Department at the Whitehorse General Hospital.
- The Unit addresses the needs of complex clients, who frequently utilize the 911 system, as well as those requiring social services or other health care instead of emergency care. In such cases, the Paramedics collaborate with the client's care team.
- Although the Paramedic Response Unit attends to a wide range of calls, only 42 per cent of these result in patient transport to the Emergency Department. This highlights the Unit's effectiveness in reducing 911 calls and diverting clients from the high costs associated with primary care in the Emergency Department.
- In 2023, the Unit:
 - responded to 267 calls;
 - transported patients 112 times;
 - transported patients 42 per cent of the time;
 - responded to 3.2 per cent of the total calls; and
 - visited 78 unique addresses.
- The Unit collaborates with Blood Ties Four Directions and the Council of Yukon First Nations to address the Opioid Emergency. They distribute Fentanyl Testing Kits and offer follow-up care to clients who have received Naloxone.

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Low barrier approach:

Key facts:

- The Government of Yukon and our partners at 405 Alexander are dedicated to offering person-centered, culturally appropriate, and trauma-informed care and services to build and support the resilience of all Yukoners.
- 405 Alexander is a low barrier facility that is non-punitive, non-judgmental and meets people where they are at with dignity, respect and compassion.
- Guests of 405 Alexander are not required to be sober or fall into a certain demographic to receive essentials services and support.
- The intention of a low barrier approach is to remove systemic barriers that may inhibit people from accessing food, medical and mental health services, social support and a safe space for overnight shelter.
- Harm reduction is a vital part of a low barrier facility. Harm reduction measures provide opportunities for guests to access life-saving Opioid Agonist Therapies, medications for alcohol use disorder, support for safe substance use, and other health care measures that can treat the implications of substance use.
- A low barrier approach does not mean a no barrier approach. Effective barriers encourage a culture of communication that protects the physical, emotional, and cultural safety of all shelter guests and staff.

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Reports:

Key facts:

- In May 2023, two independent reports were released evaluating the shelter's effectiveness, its impact on the community and the clients it serves. Both were completed with our involvement and support.
 - Whitehorse Emergency Shelter Evaluation, commissioned by the department of Health and Social Services and prepared by Vink Consulting; and
 - A Path Forward, prepared by House of Wolf & Associates at the request of the Council of Yukon First Nations.
- Findings within the two reports were informed by discussions with clients, shelter staff and community partners.
- We are committed to ensuring the safety of Yukoners and continue to meet with the Council of Yukon First Nations, City of Whitehorse, First Nations governments, Yukon businesses, Connective, the RCMP and the federal government to discuss next steps.
- Whitehorse Emergency Shelter Evaluation by Vink Consulting determined that 405 Alexander is reaching people who are unhoused and street-involved, outlines key outcomes for guests and finds that it is providing benefits to shelter guests, supportive housing unit residents and the government that outweigh its costs. The report found that:
 - Most guests are satisfied with the services provided and the shelter is meeting needs of clients, though some unhoused

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women are choosing other emergency accommodation options, such as couch surfing.

- Clients should be more supported to find permanent housing and more could be done on culturally appropriate approaches.
- For every dollar spent on this shelter, the social return on investment amounted to \$2.11. The analysis found that for every dollar invested in a Housing First program, the estimated social return would be higher, at \$2.90.
- Despite 38 per cent of shelter guests reporting that their substance use has increased as a result of accessing the shelter, the report also states that this is more likely a result of homelessness and an overall nation-wide increase in substance use and negative impacts on mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A Path Forward assessed the safety and perspectives of community wellness. The report recommended:
 - The purpose of 405 Alexander Street should be determined and communicated.
 - Decentralizing some aspects of service delivery.
 - Safe gathering spaces inclusive of women, LGBTQ2S+ people and sober clients should be considered.
 - Education and engagement events such as town-halls, community walkthroughs and social media campaigns would increase a cross-demographic sense of community, understanding and empathy.

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- Increasing opportunities for cultural connection with land-based components that are within and outside of 405 Alexander is vital for First Nations guests.
- Harm reduction initiatives such as a Managed Alcohol Program should be considered for substitute therapy programs.
- Implementing a downtown-Whitehorse Community Safety Officer program via partnerships with Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council would increase visibility and access to justice and safety services.
- Mitigating opportunities for unsafe gatherings and intimidating behaviour through the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design approach can lead to a reduction in fear and improve quality of life for the community. The approach includes three principles: Natural Surveillance or high levels of observation, Natural Access Control or decreasing the opportunity of crime, and Territorial Reinforcement by creating a sense of pride in a space.
- Implementing a case management approach and data management system between key partners may reduce gaps within overlapping systems and increase efficiency and access to intervention programs.
- Recommendations from A Path Forward that we have completed or are working on include:

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- Along with Connective and the Council of Yukon First Nations, we are working on a plan to enhance the area outside 405 Alexander using an environmental design approach.
- In September 2023, in partnership with Connective, we removed the high back benches from outside 405 Alexander as part of a broader environmental redesign intended to support our work to enhance the area.
- Further assessment in responding to concerns about garbage and area cleanliness is underway. Currently, staff perform sweeps for sharps several times a day around the 405 Alexander building.
- In August 2023, Connective undertook a public awareness campaign: Facing Forward: Portraits of Resilience in Whitehorse to draw attention to the stories of guests and staff working for Connective and showcase the role of 405 Alexander.

Background:

- The engagement process that helped inform the reports took place between April and September 2022 when the Government of Yukon operated 405 Alexander.

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- On September 14, 2023, the Department of Health and Social Services was informed that there was an allegation of sexual assault against an employee in a government-funded care facility.
- On September 15, 2023, RCMP arrested the Connective employee.
- Charges were laid against the individual on September 19, 2023.
- The Connective employee was immediately put on leave pending the outcome of the criminal investigation.
- Information, guidance and resources were provided to clients, their families and other staff members. Direction on referring clients to the RCMP was also provided.

Approved by:Matt KingNovember 5, 2024

Deputy Minister, Health and Social Services

[Date approved]

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Substance Use Health Emergency

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Government priority:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to working with community partners, First Nations and other governments to address the ongoing Substance Use Health Emergency.
- The Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy represents our commitment to implementing innovative, evidence-based initiatives that reduce and prevent substance use-related harms and support Yukoners in their health and wellbeing.

Key messages:

- In January 2022, our government declared a Substance Use Health Emergency in response to an increase in substance use related harms in the territory, including a significant increase in opioid-related deaths.
- In August 2023, in partnership with the Council of Yukon First Nations, the Government of Yukon released the Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy.
- In response to the Substance Use Health Emergency, we have implemented Car 867, increased access to Opioid Treatment Services and access to safer supply, opened the second supervised consumption site in Canada equipped to support people who consume drugs by inhalation and extended the hours of operation at the Supervised Consumption Site, held two Mental Wellness Summits, initiated a Paramedic Response Unit in the downtown core including at 405 Alexander, and increased access to harm reduction supplies.

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- We have developed the territory's first residential Managed Alcohol Program, set to become operational in fall 2024.
 - This is a territory-wide challenge that cannot be solved alone. We appreciate the work of our partners: Blood Ties Four Directions, the Yukon Hospital Corporation, Connective, the RCMP, Yukon First Nations, and all levels of government towards addressing this public health emergency.

Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy:

Key facts:

- Included in the Department of Health and Social Services O&M Main Estimates for the 2024-25 budget are:
 - an increase of **\$1.2M** (\$1,201,000) and a previously approved increase of **\$267K** (\$267,000) for 6.0 FTEs to continue to advance the work on the Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy;
 - **\$4.3M** (\$4,347,000) for the Land-Based Healing Funding Initiative; and
 - **\$1.3M** (\$1,266,000) to fund 5.5 FTEs for the Residential Managed Alcohol Program.
 - These increases are recoverable through the Working Together to Improve Health Care for Canadians Agreement. This bilateral agreement was announced in July 2023, and signed March 12, 2024.

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Current data:

Key facts:

- From April 2016 through the end of 2023, there have been 98 Yukoners who have died due to opioids.
- From January 1 to August 14, 2024, there have been six confirmed substance-use related deaths, all involving opioids.
 - In 2023, there were 23 confirmed substance-use related deaths in the Yukon. Twenty of these involved opioids.
 - In 2022, there were 24 confirmed substance-related deaths in the Yukon.
- From January 1 to June 30, 2024, there were 34 visits to Yukon hospitals for drug poisoning and 1,118 alcohol-related visits.
 - For the same period in 2023, there were 56 drug poisoning visits and 1,010 alcohol-related visits.
 - In 2023, there were 82 visits to Yukon hospitals for drug poisoning and 1,916 alcohol-related visits.
- From January 1 to August 31, 2024, Emergency Medical Services responded to 182 calls related to suspected drug poisoning and 738 alcohol-related calls.
 - For the same period in 2023, Emergency Medical Services responded to 241 calls related to suspected drug poisoning and 556 alcohol-related calls.
 - In 2023, Emergency Medical Services responded to 327 calls related to suspected drug poisoning and 813 alcohol-related calls.

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Actions to date:

Key facts:

- On September 24, 2024, two information sessions were held about the Planet Youth Initiative for community members, organizations, and leaders interested in creating a healthier future for Yukon youth using an evidence-based approach.
- In June 2024, in partnership with the federal government and local NGOs, we launched the new Canada Yukon Housing Benefit rent subsidy for people fleeing gender-based violence.
 - The program, administered through Yukon Housing Corporation, will provide more than \$2 million annually to help survivors of gender-based violence to obtain and maintain safe housing.
- In February 2024, the Supervised Consumption Site expanded their hours to be open seven days a week from 10:30am to 9:30pm, including statutory holidays.
 - On September 30, 2021, we opened the Supervised Consumption Site and in May 2022 we completed renovations to support inhalation as a consumption method.
 - As of July 2024, staff at the Supervised Consumption Staff have reversed 84 overdoses onsite and have had no fatalities.
- In January and June 2024, the Department of Justice increased frontline support staffing within Yukon Community Corrections through the addition of two time-limited positions: a support and outreach worker was hired in January 2024, and a clinical counsellor in June 2024.

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- The two positions work to meet the needs of those transitioning out of the justice system and will travel to communities to provide support to Yukon Community Corrections clients.
- In 2024, Thay K'i Anint'I (Thigh-KEY- anna-tay) and Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services created a partnership to promote cultural healing journeys specializing in recovery after care.
- In 2024, 39 of the 44 applications received for the Land-based healing Fund Initiative were approved by the Council of Yukon First Nations. A total of \$3,740,000 has been allocated to support these projects.
 - We continue to support on-the-land healing and treatment options in the territory.
- In 2024, the Department of Justice is funding two additional RCMP officers and the Department of Health and Social Services' Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services' branch is funding two nursing positions to expand capacity to Car 867.
 - With the additional staffing, the program has now expanded from five eight-hour days to seven days a week, with 10-hour shifts to provide greater coverage during peak need hours.
 - In October 2022, we launched Car 867. This Mobile Crisis Response Team pairs trained RMCP officers with nurses to provide real-time assessment of individuals in crisis and connect clients to support systems.
- In 2023, an additional investigator for the SCAN Unit was hired with funding from the Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy.

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- In January 2022, we increased access to Opioid Treatment Services at 405 Alexander by expanding prescriber coverage to two days per week.
 - We also expanded opioid medication coverage to include Sublocade in January 2022.
 - In February 2022, we expanded medically indicated Opioid Treatment Services delivery and access through outreach workers and nurses at the Referred Care Clinic to outreach clinics at 405 Alexander and Housing First on 5th Ave.
 - We are strengthening the Safer Supply program and Opioid Treatment Services team with nine new positions. These positions include one registered nurse supervisor, two registered nurses, two licensed practical nurses, one community engagement worker, and one administrative assistant.
 - We have organized three territory-wide public awareness and education campaigns.
 - We held Youth Roots: A Substance Use Prevention Gathering over two days in November 2022. We explored innovative and emerging approaches with Yukoners, partners and subject matter experts.
 - We hosted two Mental Wellness Summits on February 14 and 15, 2022 and September 21 to 23, 2022 to hear from leaders, partners, subject matter experts and people with lived and living experience.
 - We have increased access to Withdrawal Management beds by hiring additional licensed practical nurses.
 - The seasonal Rapid Access Bike paramedic team launched in summer 2022 to improve EMS service and provide faster response in

downtown Whitehorse during the summer months. This Yukon EMS program is a partnership with the RCMP and City of Whitehorse.

Community Outreach:**Key facts:**

- We will continue to support Yukon First Nations governments to improve health and social services in Yukon communities.
- We are supporting the Council of Yukon First Nations Moccasin Mobile Outreach initiative, which launched February 1, 2024.
 - The Moccasin Mobile Outreach van is operated by the Council of Yukon First Nations and staffed by approximately five Yukon First Nations community outreach workers.
 - The outreach workers provide individuals a range of services including referral to shelter services, meal services, RCMP and medical services.
 - The outreach van operates between 8pm and 2am on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.
 - The intention of this service is to remove barriers for street-involved people by meeting individuals where and when they need support.
- The Government of Yukon is committed to collaborating with Moccasin Mobile Outreach to explore ways to support and strengthen their efforts.
- We support Blood Ties Four Direction's initiative to increase distribution of take-home fentanyl testing kits in rural Yukon communities.

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- Blood Ties Four Directions provides harm reduction services in Whitehorse through the Outreach Van, and Mental Wellness Substance Use Services staff working in Whitehorse and communities also provide harm reduction supplies and training.
- Expanding Opioid Treatment Services, including a Safer Supply program, to communities outside of Whitehorse is an element of the Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy.

Implementation committee:**Key facts:**

- The Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy implementation committee is formed of project partners who are responsible for carrying out the actions in the strategy.
 - The committee functions as a space for information sharing and collaboration for bringing the actions in the strategy to life.
- We have hired a dedicated project manager to coordinate the implementation of the strategy.
- The recommended actions for the committee will be brought forward by the project manager and members will be responsible for providing advice and recommendations to their Deputy Ministers or other organizational leadership.
 - The committee will seek consensus and viable alternative options on actions but will not have formal decision-making authority.
- Membership in the committee is by invitation and will include:
 - Project manager, Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy;

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- Department of Health and Social Services: Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services, Emergency Medical Services, Population and Public Health Evidence and Evaluation, Health Promotion, Corporate Services, etc.
- Department of Justice: Community Justice and Public Safety;
- Council of Yukon First Nations;
- Blood Ties Four Directions Centre;
- Thay K'i Anint'l (thigh-KEY-anna-tay);
- RCMP;
- Yukon Hospital Corporation;
- Yukon Housing Corporation;
- person(s) with lived experience; and
- other community partners, as needed.
- Population and Public Health Evidence and Evaluation has an evaluation framework that will be used to assess implementation.
- The committee will establish regular meetings every six weeks, with additional meetings called with smaller working groups as needed. Frequency of meetings will be determined and adjusted as needed by the Chair and committee members.

Managed Alcohol Program:**Key facts:**

- The Managed Alcohol Program is a long-term program geared toward supporting individuals who live with severe and treatment-resistant alcohol use disorder.
- A Managed Alcohol Program has been developed in Whitehorse and is anticipated to be implemented in fall 2024.

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- This initiative will help protect one of the Yukon's most vulnerable populations and will support public health and resource allocation.
- The program's 10-bed residential facility is located at 509 Hoge Street in Whitehorse, the former location of the St. Elias group home.
 - Renovations for the residential program have been completed, including an area for alcohol service.
 - This area will allow participants to approach the service area and be provided with predetermined and measured amounts of alcohol based on the individualized care plan.
 - All residents and staff of the St. Elias group home have moved to new locations.
- Managed alcohol programs typically dispense wine, beer, or spirits. Participants of the program will have access to medically prescribed volumes of alcohol that will be served under supervision.
- A participant's consumption and intake patterns will be considered in creating their individualized care plan, including their preferred beverage.
 - A dosing schedule will be overseen by an addictions medicine provider at the Referred Care Clinic.
 - Individual dosages will be calibrated to reduce the likelihood that the participant leaves the residence to obtain additional alcohol.
- The hiring process is near complete, and once staff have been onboarded and trained, the Managed Alcohol Program will open. We anticipate this date to be within the coming weeks.

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- When the program begins, dinner will be provided for the participants. Individual autonomy is highly encouraged in the program and participants will be expected to do their own laundry, breakfast and lunch.
 - Assistance and prompts can and will be provided if required.
 - A referral process will be developed similar to other Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services programs.
 - Participant assessments for this program will be done by Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services staff in partnership with allied health care providers.
 - Assessments on prospective participants who would benefit from the program are underway and case management is being provided to all those who may be eligible in the meantime.
 - Numbers are expected to fluctuate based on intake procedures and participants' interest and experience in the program.
 - Despite being eligible for the program, individuals may decline to participate as they may not want to live in a group living environment.
 - In the initial months of operation, the department anticipates there could be higher attrition amongst participants.
 - The Managed Alcohol Program will be supported by an interdisciplinary team. While the structure and composition of the teams may change as we evaluate the program, we anticipate the teams will be dedicated to:
 - intake and assessment;

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- support workers; and
 - medical oversight.
- The program will be staffed with trained support workers, nurses, social workers and a supervisor.
- Medical oversight for the Managed Alcohol Program will be provided through the addictions medicine prescribers out of the Referred Care Clinic.
- Medical supports for the program will initially be provided through the Referred Care Clinic.
- Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services is working with Human Resources to recruit program staff for the Managed Alcohol Program.
 - On July 29, 2024, the Public Service Commission completed their classification process for all program staff. Job ads for these positions promptly followed.
 - A clinical supervisor has been hired and hiring for support workers is in progress.
- To operate safely, the program must ensure appropriate staffing is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services is working to finalize policies and procedures.
- Experience with this program will contribute to the design of future sites and inform the phased implementation of smaller managed alcohol programs proposed in the Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy.

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- Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services has been working with long-term care staff to support residents' access to managed alcohol since December of 2022. To support a managed alcohol program within Continuing Care, these four eligibility requirements must be met:
 1. The resident must have a diagnosis of Alcohol Use Disorder.
 2. The resident must be unable to seek other treatment for alcohol dependence.
 3. Alcohol is prescribed by a physician as medically necessary.
 4. The physician must continue to follow, and regularly reassess as necessary.

Background:

- This is one of the actions under the initial 14 in the Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy. The action proposes to create a 'residential managed alcohol program' and considers a phased implementation of smaller or drop-in managed alcohol programs in other communities as needed.
- As part of the 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement, the government committed to opening a Managed Alcohol Program by Spring 2024.

Naloxone:**Key facts:**

- Naloxone kits, including nasal naloxone, are available, free of charge, at many locations across our territory, including pharmacies, Kwanlin

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Dün First Nation Health Centre, Blood Ties Four Directions, 405 Alexander, Emergency Medical Services, Community Health Centres, all Yukon Liquor Corporation locations, and from Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services locations throughout the territory.

- Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services staff in communities also distribute Naloxone Kits and have worked with First Nations governments to ensure that kits are widely available.
- Upon request, staff provide Naloxone training to First Nations governments and community partners.

Oversight committee:

Key facts:

- A Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy oversight committee has been formed for additional assessment and oversight of the strategy's implementation. The intention is to provide accountability and oversight for Substance Use Health Emergency-related actions from various perspectives including Council of Yukon First Nations, RCMP and Yukon Government.
- The objectives of the oversight committee are to:
 - share information and contribute to the ongoing evaluation of the implementation of the Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy;
 - review status updates and Situation Reports from the strategy's Project Manager on the 43 recommended actions;
 - assess the progress of the implementation and coordination of the strategy with a whole of government and territory-wide

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-
- lens, and provide feedback, guidance and expertise as needed;
and
 - identify and consider potential future recommended actions and amend or include these actions in the strategy if appropriate.
 - Committee membership currently includes representatives from the Council of Yukon First Nations, RCMP and various departments within the Government of Yukon, including, but not limited to, the departments of Health and Social Services and Justice.
 - The committee also ensures the strategy is coordinated with the federal Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy and several other territorial initiatives:
 - Putting People First
 - Territorial Youth Strategy
 - Creating Home: Yukon Housing Corporation Strategic Plan 2023 –24 to 2027 –28
 - Downtown Whitehorse Safety Response Action Plan
 - Aging in Place Action Plan
 - Changing the Story to Upholding Dignity and Justice: Yukon’s Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirit+ People Strategy
 - Coroner’s inquest report April 2024

Resources:**Key facts:**

- Never use alone: the National Opioid Response Service is at 1-888-688-6677. This anonymous service will have someone stay on the

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phone with you while you use so individuals can be linked to virtual overdose prevention support.

- Opioid Treatment Services is an accessible, low barrier program. Visit 210 Elliott Street or call 867-668-2552.
- Check your drugs: get your drugs checked at the Supervised Consumption Site, the Outreach Van, or Emergency Medical Services. This is a free, nonjudgemental service and other resources are available at the locations drug checking is provided including education, harm reduction supplies and medical assistance.
- Get Naloxone and learn how to use it: Naloxone is free, and you can find it in many places in the Yukon.
- Rapid Access Counselling is available to all Yukoners – call 867-456-3838 to make a virtual or in-person counselling appointment within 72 hours.

Strategy actions:**Key facts:**

- Our government collaborated with health system and community partners on the development of the Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy.
- The primary purpose of the strategy is to provide a roadmap for action on how the Government of Yukon, working with partners, can reduce substance use-related harms in the territory.
- As a living document, the strategy is designed to evolve over time as it adapts to the changing needs of the communities and incorporates ongoing feedback from our partners.

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- The vision of the strategy is that all Yukoners will be mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically well and safe throughout their lifespans and able to contribute to wellness in their families, cultures, and communities.
- The strategy's mission is that partners will work together to implement innovative, bold, and evidence-based actions so that substance use related harms are reduced and the health and wellbeing of Yukoners flourishes.
- The strategy highlights four areas of growth: prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery support, and community safety and wellbeing.
- The Government of Yukon is providing funding to support collaborative efforts aimed at implementing an initial 14 actions outlined in the strategy. The actions cover all four areas of growth.
- The current statuses of these 14 actions are listed in Appendix A: Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy table.

Toxic drug supply

- Our community continues to grieve the loss of our loved ones. My deepest condolences to all those who are mourning friends and families affected by substance use and the toxic drug supply.
 - I urge Yukoners to exercise the utmost vigilance, never use alone and always ensure someone is available who can respond in the event of an emergency.
- The Yukon Coroner's Service has confirmed four deaths occurring between September 23 and October 4, 2024, were the result of toxic illicit drugs.

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- o All four cases occurred in Whitehorse, all involved cocaine use, three also involved fentanyl; two also involved flurofentanyl; two also involved bromazolam (a benzodiazepine); and one also involved alcohol.
- The Yukon Coroner's Service is investigating two more deaths suspected of involving toxic substances in the same 11-day period.
 - o Toxicology results are pending for these two cases, but evidence suggests that cocaine may have been used near the time of their deaths.
- These cases do not appear to be linked to one another, suggesting that toxic substances are circulating in Whitehorse.
- From January 1 to October 4, 2024, there have been 12 confirmed substance-use related deaths, all involving opioids.
 - o In 2023, there were 23 confirmed substance-use related deaths in the Yukon. Twenty of these involved opioids.
- Drug-checking supplies are available through all Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services locations, Blood Ties Four Directions, the Outreach Van, 405 Alexander and Emergency Medical Services.
- Free naloxone kits are available in Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services locations, Community Health Centres, Yukon Hospitals, Kwanlin Dün First Nation Health Centre, the Referred Care Clinic, Blood Ties Four Directions, pharmacies, 405 Alexander, the Outreach Van, and Yukon Liquor Corporation locations.
- You can also call the National Overdose Response Service (NORS) 1-888-688-NORS (6677) for support before using substances.

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- We want to remind Yukoners there is an increasing presence of xylazine, a veterinary tranquilizer that has been detected in significant quantities.
 - o Xylazine is not an opioid and cannot be treated with naloxone. This raises the risk for those using substances, as naloxone may not be effective in addressing the effects of xylazine.
 - o Naloxone should still be used in suspected overdoses.

Approved by:

Matt King

October 21, 2024

Deputy Minister, Health and Social Services

[Date approved]

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Appendix A: Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy table

	Action	Status	Next Steps/Milestones (updated September 24, 2024)
Prevention			
1	Implement Planet Youth in Yukon communities.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are currently developing plans to identify two pilot communities, proposals and assessment criteria. Two information sessions were held in Whitehorse and online on September 24, 2024.
2	Continue to support Yukon communities in creating and implementing community health and wellness plans.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A roadmap outlining the process, scope and roles is being developed to share with partners and communities. Partnership with the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Government of Yukon has been established. Travel to communities planned for fall and winter 2024–25.
3	Continue to launch communication and educational campaigns addressing substance use and mental wellness issues.	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent awareness and educational campaigns have included Opioid Treatment Services awareness, alcohol medications, 988 outreach support and Rapid Access Counselling. We are working to advance communication projects and investigating opportunities to engage with partners in the upcoming months.
Harm reduction			
4	Implement a Managed Alcohol Program.	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The hiring of staff is underway. The program is expected to be launched in fall 2024.

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5	Further expand the operating hours of Whitehorse's Supervised Consumption Site.	Complete as of January 7, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete. The Supervised Consumption Site's hours have been expanded from 12pm-9pm, to 10:30am to 9:30pm, seven days per week including statutory holidays.
6	Further expand access to Opioid Treatment Services, including safer supply and Opioid Agonist Therapy.	6a in progress, 6b not started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Mental Wellness Substance Use and Social Services has worked to expand medically indicated Opioid Treatment Services' delivery and access through outreach workers and nurses at the Referred Care Clinic in Whitehorse, with outreach clinics at 405 Alexander and Housing First on 5th Ave. b) Currently, Opioid Treatment Services are not available through primary care health centres in rural communities. Community Nursing is working on developing a policy framework to make this possible.
Treatment and recovery support			
7	Ensure the availability of Opioid Agonist Therapy wherever Yukoners seek assistance.	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans, including procurement, are being developed for a Mobile Opioid Treatment Services Clinic.
8	Continue to increase support for Yukon First Nations to develop and implement land-based mental health and substance use treatment options.	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In December 2023, a Letter of Intent was signed between the Government of Yukon, Council of Yukon First Nations and federal government for a Yukon First Nations-led treatment centre. Launched in November 2023, the Land-based Healing Funding initiative will provide \$4.3M in funding to Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nation-led organizations in 2025–

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			<p>25. The first intake for 2024 has already been conducted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is underway to raise the capacity collectively to deliver land-based healing by Yukon First Nations groups and governments across the Yukon through this agreement, in addition to funding existing projects.
Community safety and wellbeing			
9	Continue to invest in preventing gender-based violence and improving services for victims of crime.	Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A What We Heard report on expanding the Sexualized Assault Response Team services to communities was released in February 2024. An implementation plan incorporating this feedback is anticipated for 2025. • Funding under the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence includes a transportation project that will provide low-barrier support for victims to travel to Whitehorse or another community (such as Dawson) to access existing services. The funding allocation is administered by Victim Services, in collaboration with several NGOs. • Work is ongoing to increase and improve transportation options and improve overall access to the services needed to support victims of gender-based violence and crime. • In June, in partnership with the federal government and local NGOs, we launched the new Canada Yukon Housing Benefit rent subsidy for people fleeing gender-based violence, considered to be a contributing factor in substance use.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program, administered through Yukon Housing Corporation, will provide more than \$2 million annually to help survivors of gender-based violence to obtain and maintain safe housing. The program is expected to support at least 328 households per year by providing up to \$2,000 per month for the first 12 months, followed by a decreasing benefit for an additional six months.
10	a) Increase frontline support staffing; and b) create more safe and sober housing options for individuals grappling with substance use issues when transitioning from the criminal justice system back into communities.	a) Complete b) Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department of Justice is improving supports for those transitioning into the community through reform of the bail system. The department has increased frontline support staffing within Yukon Community Corrections through the addition of two time-limited positions: a support and outreach worker was hired in January 2024, and a clinical counsellor in June 2024. The two positions work to meet the needs of those transitioning out of the justice system and will travel to communities to provide support to Yukon Community Corrections clients.
11	Continue to collaborate with Yukon First Nations governments to expand therapeutic courts and other restorative justice approaches in response to substance use-related treatment needs.	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategy includes funding for a Senior Community Engagement Specialist, who will work with Yukon First Nations governments interested in developing or expanding therapeutic courts and other restorative justice approaches. Existing restorative justice and therapeutic courts' initiatives include addressing impaired

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			<p>driving, substance use treatment, trauma recovery, intimate partner violence prevention programs for men, healing camps at Jackson Lake, the Community Wellness and Domestic Violence Treatment Court, and other programming in partnership with First Nations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently, the Department of Justice is in partnership discussions with Carcross Tagish, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Vuntut Gwitchin to continue exploring new approaches.
12	Continue to support effective and accountable policing and enforcement responsive to community needs and taking into account the Yukon's modern treaty environment.	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community policing in First Nation communities is supported through Community Tripartite Agreements among the First Nations, Government of Yukon, and Government of Canada. Where there is interest, discussions regarding enforcement and policing are occurring with First Nations. Work is ongoing to address legal and policy questions related to the enforcement of First Nation laws and policing in the territory. Funding for a senior negotiator and a strategic policy advisor is included in the Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy. These positions will support engagement with First Nations regarding issues of jurisdiction and the authority for enforcement of First Nation laws, as well as other justice-related issues. Recruitment is ongoing.
13	Expand the capacity of the Mobile Crisis	Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car 867 pairs trained RMCP officers with nurses to provide real-time assessment of

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	Response Team (Car 867).		<p>individuals in crisis and connect clients to support systems. Car 867 follows up on calls occurring outside their operational hours if the client provides a phone number or can be located.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To expand capacity, the Department of Justice is funding two RCMP officers and Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services is funding, and has filled, two nursing positions. • With the additional staffing provided by the Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy, the program has expanded from Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm to seven days per week, with 10-hour shifts to provide greater coverage during peak need hours.
14	Increase the Government of Yukon's capacity to investigate and for civil remedies to disrupt the distribution of toxic illicit drugs and organized crime in Yukon communities.	Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This action is fulfilled through the existing Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods (SCAN) Unit. • Currently, the SCAN Unit has signed protocols with 10 Yukon First Nations, with an eleventh protocol expected soon. These protocols provide investigative services in First Nation communities. • The SCAN Unit is working with communities to update their protocols. • Funding from the Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy includes an additional investigator for the SCAN Unit, who was hired in 2023.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none">In 2022, the Minister of Justice committed to a full review of the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act, which is ongoing.
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Government priority:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to increasing patients' access to primary health care services, and to working with and supporting our physician partners.

Key messages:

- A healthy and strong community of primary health care physicians is critical to ensuring Yukoners have access to excellent primary health care services.
- In 2022, we negotiated a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Yukon Medical Association to help increase Yukoners' access to primary care services and foster a strong physician community through a series of innovative initiatives that are in effect until March 31, 2025.
- The Department of Health and Social Services and the Yukon Medical Association will be preparing for the next round of negotiations on a new Memorandum of Understanding in advance of the current MOU's expiry date.
 - We will be seeking to have a Memorandum of Understanding that supports the quintuple aims of improving patient experience, improving health outcomes, better managing costs and system effectiveness, health equity and better experiences for care providers.
- We know that the ways family physicians in the Yukon practice are different than in other jurisdictions.
 - Many family physicians here also provide specialized care such as General Practitioner Oncology, General Practitioner

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Anesthesia and General Practitioner Obstetrical Services. These are services that are critical to supporting Yukoners to access primary, acute and palliative care closer to home.

- The increase in specialized care does mean that there are fewer physicians practicing only primary care; this is the same across the country.
- The demand for a variety of health services and the ways in which that care is provided results in challenges in connecting all Yukoners to a primary care physician but allows Yukoners to access care closer to home.
- We have heard concerns about administrative burdens or 'red tape' presenting obstacles for physicians. We are working to ensure our contracts and payment systems are up to date and in line with modern standards.
- We have provided funding to the Yukon Medical Association to explore the development of a family medicine residency program.
- Addressing the gap in access to primary care providers is a priority for our government and the physician community.
- The Joint Management Committee consisting of Yukon Medical Association, the Yukon Hospital Corporation and the department are working towards the development of the first joint workplan.
- In 2024-25, we budgeted **\$6.5M** (\$6,488,000) to support physician benefit programs, the majority of which are administered by the Yukon Medical Association.
- In 2023, the Yukon was supported by 212 visiting physicians, 132 general practitioners and 80 specialists.

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- In 2023, there were 33,830 unique patients seen and 477,733 unique patient encounters at care settings in the Yukon.
- Based on the most recent data on access to health care providers published in 2019 to 2021, the Canadian Institute for Health Information found that approximately 17 percent of Yukoners did not have access to a primary care provider. This compares to a national average of 12 percent.

Claims and billing:

Key facts:

- Ensuring that physicians are paid within an appropriate timeframe is a priority for our government and physician community.
- Physician claims are now being paid in under 60 days for fee-for-service and 30 days for invoices with the Yukon Medical Association stating this is no longer a matter of concern for its members.
- We have formed a Physician Payment Advisory Committee with the Yukon Medical Association to improve the claims and payment system.
- Our physician community has also identified concerns with current administrative burdens including but not limited to billing and payment process, as well as with electronic medical records.
- In Fall 2023, we modified 20 fee codes to allow for auto-payments. The number of claims going to manual assessment has decreased from 30 to 20 percent. This is an average of 600 claims per week no longer being manually assessed by default.
- Work is also underway to update how the system addresses patient names. Currently, claims are validated using a patient's full name and

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date of birth to match their health care card. Once implemented, the system will adjudicate using last name, first initial and date of birth to reduce additional need for manual assessment.

- We are working with the Physician Payment Advisory Committee to identify and determine additional opportunities to decrease processing times.
- We have engaged Meyers Norris Penny to assist with system improvements, including developing an audit and recovery process. Physicians will have an opportunity to share their input during this work.

Contracts:

Key Facts:

- While many physicians are compensated using a fee-for-service model, the Department of Health and Social Services also uses alternative payment models, a mix of alternative payment and fee-for-service with several physicians and specialists.
- Alternative payment models are being used with some resident specialists, community health and wellness centres, the Centre de Santé Constellation Health Centre, and the Whitehorse Walk-in Clinic.
- As recommended by physicians, we have also implemented an alternative payment model for the inpatient Hospitalist program at Whitehorse General Hospital.
- Our government is committed to providing physician compensation that is fairly and equitably set within the local and national market, and that ensures health system resources are managed effectively to enable budget alignment.

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Background:

- Alternative payment models refer to contract models.
- Work is being done to focus on less granular increments of payment within fee-for-service structures.

Fee-for-Service:**Key facts:**

- The Putting People First report recommends “working with the Yukon Medical Association through the next contract negotiation cycle to develop alternative payment models to transition away from primarily fee-for-service payment for medical services.”
- As part of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Yukon Medical Association, we have negotiated fee increases.
 - We continue to work with the Yukon Medical Association and our health system partners to ensure physicians are supported and to explore alternative payment models.

Find a Primary Care Provider Program:**Key facts:**

- In spring 2023, we expanded the Find a Primary Care Provider Program to include Nurse Practitioners.
- As of September 18, 2024, a total of 2,069 individuals have been matched to a primary care provider through the program. There are 3,916 people awaiting a match, which represents approximately 12 percent of the Whitehorse population.

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- There are currently two providers, a nurse practitioner and a physician enrolled with the Find a Primary Care Provider Program.
- The program does not allow duplicate applications. Processes are in place to ensure the waitlist is up to date.
- Individuals who apply for and are accepted to the Centre de Santé Constellation Health Centre will have their names removed from the Find a Primary Care Provider waitlist.
- According to the most recent Canadian Institute of Health Information survey, 78 per cent of Yukoners reported having access to a regular health provider in 2023. The Canadian average is 83 percent.
- Primary health care needs of rural residents are met through Community Health Centres.
- All communities have access to itinerant physician services through a Community Health Centre. Residents of Dawson City, Watson Lake and Haines Junction are supported by resident physicians.
- As of November 1, 2024 the Yukon has not experienced any emergency room closures and has not seen reports of Emergency Medical Services offload delays.

Medical Director:**Key facts:**

- Our government and the Yukon Medical Association are working collaboratively to introduce a Medical Director position.
- The Medical Director position is expected to support areas such as community and clinical care issues and our ongoing work to transition to Health and Wellness Yukon.

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- This will be an important role that will provide a physician perspective within this work.

Memorandum of Understanding:**Key facts:**

- The current three-year agreement with the Yukon Medical Association covers the period from April 1, 2022 through March 31, 2025.
- The Memorandum of Understanding includes:
 - an Attachment and Attraction program that is intended to facilitate access to primary and specialty care while supporting physicians' operating costs;
 - the creation of an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Learning Program and a commitment to help end systemic racism and discrimination in the health care system through learning and behavior change; and
 - a commitment to work with Yukon First Nations, health system partners and other service providers to support collaborative maternity and early years care.
- The Attachment and Attraction program offers funding for overhead costs to physicians who meet a minimum care delivery standard for patients and appointments. Family physicians who spend more days in clinic will have access to more overhead funding for each additional half-day they see patients.
- The Attachment and Attraction program launched in late 2022 and currently has 45 participating physicians.
 - An evaluation of the program was conducted in early 2024 and we worked with the Yukon Medical Association to address

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feedback provided including reducing the administrative burden in the program.

- Future discussions with the Yukon Medical Association include,
 - providing funding to develop a Yukon-based residency program for physicians.
 - supporting the Hospitalist program at Whitehorse General Hospital,
 - supporting some primary care practices to make space available to host allied health professionals where possible.

Physician holiday incentive for Hospitalists:

Key facts:

- The Department of Health and Social Services will be offering a holiday incentive to both local and outside physicians to assist in filling gaps in the schedule as we prepare for the holiday season.
- Physicians who sign up to cover the inpatient care schedule will receive an additional \$1,000 per day over and above the standard daily rate for every day worked over the holiday period.
- For out of territory physicians, in addition to covering the cost of travel and accommodations, there will be an additional \$500 per travel day incentive, to a maximum of \$1000, to cover the cost of their time to come to the Yukon to support the program.
- This holiday incentive package will apply to all current and new additions to the schedule, as we recognize and appreciate those who have already signed up to cover shifts.

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- Participating physicians can expect to see this incentive added directly to the contracts.
 - The department is taking these steps due to scheduling pressures in an effort to ensure that all Yukoners will have access to hospital services if needed.
 - We also acknowledge that the physician community in the Yukon has been working exceptionally hard over the last year and that being able to take time off during the holiday season with their friends and family, without worrying about their patients who may be in hospital is important.
 - Thank you to the physician community and all those at the Hospital Corporation that provide health care services all year round and during periods of slow down. The impact of your commitment cannot be overstated.

Rural Family Medicine Residency Program:

Key facts:

- We are aware that the Yukon Medical Association passed a significant resolution during their Annual General Meeting on November 1, 2024, calling on the Government of Yukon to dedicate substantial additional funding to develop a Yukon Rural Family Medicine Residency Program in the upcoming fiscal budget
- We appreciate the Yukon Medical Association's resolution and recognize that a residential medicine program would be an asset to the Territory.
- To date, the Government of Yukon has provided the Yukon Medical Association with \$25,000 over the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years

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to explore the viability of establishing a family medicine residency program in the Yukon.

- We are working with the Yukon Medical Association to explore program options, identify educational partners and determine the program costs.
- These collaborative efforts support the achievement of Action 5.5 of the Health Human Resource Strategy, which explicitly calls for the development and implementation of a rural family medicine program in the Yukon.
- We look forward to continuing this work in partnership with the Yukon Medical Association.

Approved by:

Matt King

November 12, 2024

Deputy Minister, Health and Social Services

Date Approved

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Corporation

Recommended response:

- The Atlin Hydroelectric Expansion Project is not included in the 2024-2025 Budget, as the Proponent works to finalize the following conditions that need to be put in place before the Project is ready to receive government funding.
 - Receipt of all permits and authorizations required for construction
 - Execution of the credit agreement with the Canadian Infrastructure Bank
 - Clear decision in support of the project from Taku River Tlingit First Nation
 - Conclusion of consultation by all governments
 - Securing the full cost of construction.
- Proponent has not yet finalized funding requirements and has not secured the full cost of construction – areas of focus for the Proponent
 - Investment Tax Credits
 - Continue to look for project cost reductions
 - Actively communicating with the Federal Government for additional grant funding
 - The Yukon Development Corporation continues to work with the Government of Canada, the Canadian Infrastructure Bank and the Proponent to identify funding opportunities.
- We remain committed to the Project and when the conditions for funding are met, we stand by ready to invest.
- We congratulate the Proponent and the Taku River Tlingit First Nation for achieving the important milestone of a Joint Clan Resolution in support of the project in July 2024.

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Additional response:

- As the largest Indigenous proponent-led energy project that the Yukon has been involved with to date, it is also teaching us many lessons that will be applied as additional projects are advanced to fill the widening renewable energy gap.
- These preconditions for Yukon Development Corporation disbursing the funding to the Proponent, include
 - receipt of all permits and authorizations required for construction,
 - execution of the Credit Agreement with the Canadian Infrastructure Bank,
 - clear decision in support of the Project from Taku River Tlingit First Nation, and
 - the funding is secured to cover the estimated cost of construction.
- We applaud the Proponent and the Taku River First Nation for their efforts to get the Project to this state of readiness and we are committed to strong and enduring partnerships with First Nations proponents, governments, and communities in the energy economy in the Yukon.
- As the Project continues through the development phase, there is continual due diligence being done to ensure that the Project will bring the expected benefits to Yukoners in a manner that advances climate change goals, and is also affordable and reliable.

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- The Proponent estimates that there remains a funding gap of between \$80-95 million, depending on the interest rate to be charged on the loan from the Canadian Infrastructure Bank.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There has been extensive media coverage of the Project, and the Opposition has raised the Project regularly in the Legislature.
- Budget 2024-2025 does not identify specific funds for the Project, which is a change from Budget 2023-2024.

Background:

- The Proponent (Taku Homeland Energy Limited Partnership) plans to expand the existing Atlin hydro facility by leveraging the water storage capability of Surprise Lake and connect to the Yukon grid with a 69 kV transmission line from the power plant in Atlin, BC to Jakes Corner in the Yukon. The line will follow the Atlin Highway right-of-way for the majority of the route.
- The Atlin Hydroelectric Expansion Project has been repriced by the Proponent.
- The total cost of the project based on 75% design for generation and construction ready design for the transmission line as of February 2024, is between \$267 million and \$324 million.
- Cost distribution can be considered 75% to generation, 15% to transmission and substations, and 10% to interconnection with YEC/ATCO.
- As outlined in Table 1 below, the total cost of the project will be influenced by the level of contingency required and the interest rate used in the Canadian Infrastructure Bank credit agreement.

Table 1: 2024 Repricing Results (\$ millions)

Construction Costs	\$267	
Contingency	\$42	

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Max. Required for Construction (CIB interest rate 1%)		\$309
Interest Rate Sensitivity (Cost per incremental 1%)	\$15	
Max. Required for Construction (CIB interest rate 2%)		\$324

- There is currently \$226.4 million notionally committed from the Government of Canada, Yukon government, Canadian Infrastructure Bank, and Taku River Tlingit First Nation equity.
- Between \$80 million and \$95 million is required to close the funding gap, depending on the interest rate used in the CIB credit agreement.

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Table 2: Sources and Uses of Funding to March 31, 2024 (\$ millions)

		Allocated	Spent	Available
NRCan	Smart Renewable Electrification Pathways	\$50	\$5	\$45
NRCan	Clean Energy for Rural and Remote Communities	\$6.1	\$2.9	\$3.2
ECCC	Low Carbon Economy Fund	\$32.2	-	\$32.2
CANNOR	IDEANorth	\$6	\$6	-
CIRNAC		\$6.8	\$6.8	-
	Canada Total	\$101.1	\$20.7	\$80.4
YG		\$50	\$2	\$48
BC		\$20	\$2	\$18
CIB	Loan	Up to \$80	-	Up to \$80
THELP	Equity	\$3.2	\$3.2	-
	All Funders Total	\$254.3	\$27.9	\$226.4

Table 3: Project costs over time (\$ millions)

Budget Year	Interest Rate	Completion	Project Cost	Funding Gap
2021/22	1%	2024	\$204	\$0*
2022/23	1%	2025	\$254	\$0*
2023/24	3%	2026	\$360	\$106
2024/25	2%	2027	\$324	\$82.5-97.5

*The project had notionally filled the full funding gap in 2022/23. Costs associated with delay in receiving funding, inflation of construction costs as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, changes in interest rates, no new funding, and less favourable foreign exchange rates resulted in the emergence of a funding gap.

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Corporation

- YDC has provided the Proponent with \$2 million in 2023/2024 to support advancing geotechnical and engineering design of the transmission line.
- Prior to the Transfer Payment Agreement expiring, a TPA Amendment was agreed to that expands the permitting-related expenses that could be supported through the TPA. The Proponent expended the full \$2 million and YDC has received all required reporting.

Approved by:

Gary Gazankas

September 3, 2024

President, Yukon Development Corporation

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

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Nisutlin Bay Bridge Replacement

Highways and
Public Works

Recommended response:

- The existing Nisutlin Bay bridge was constructed in 1953 by the Department of National Defence and crosses the Nisutlin Bay at kilometre 1,243 along the Alaska Highway.
- This is the longest bridge along the Alaska Highway within the Yukon, spanning 584 metres or 1916 feet.
- The replacement project is now in its third year and the construction is being completed by Graham Infrastructure LP.
- This project provides a significant positive economic outcome for the territory, local businesses, and the community of Teslin.
- The substantial completion date is anticipated to be November 5, 2025, and the total completion date is April 6, 2026.
- Infrastructure Canada is contributing \$41.25 million through the *Building Canada Fund* and Transport Canada is contributing \$52.5 million through the *National Trade Corridors Fund*.
- For this 2024-25 fiscal year the Five-Year Capital Plan spending is expected to be between \$45 to \$50 million.

Additional response: Progress To-date

- I am happy to report that that team has successfully completed:
 - trestle and cofferdam construction.
 - The trestle has 90 piles, 32 spans of approximately 15 meters, and 6 fingers.
 - construction of 6 piers and 2 abutments.

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Nisutlin Bay Bridge Replacement

Highways and
Public Works

- A total of 58 permanent piles with a total of 1801 meters of pile driven.
- the removal of all cofferdams as pier construction has been completed;
- a total of 3,000 cubic metres of concrete has been poured so far, between the piers and abutments;
- a total of 52 girders delivered and installed, with a total length of 1935 meters of girders installed;
- 32 bearings installed with 4 bearings per abutment and pier;
 - preload placement on both south and north abutment – total of 16000 cubic metres;
- a total of 504 precast panels delivered and placed; and
- the south and north fish offsetting area construction.

Additional response: Work in the upcoming months

- Work in the upcoming months, includes:
 - casting of concrete deck infill between the panels;
 - casting concrete deck ends;
 - the installation of utility conduit; and
 - production of Class II Rip Rap;

Additional response: 2025-26 Work Plan

- In 2025-26, the work plan includes:

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Nisutlin Bay Bridge Replacement

Highways and
Public Works

- the removal of the trestle and temporary fill;
- completion of the north and south earthworks and road-related works such as warm mix asphalt, culverts and spillways;
- placement of armoring rip rap;
- construction of snowmobile bench;
- completion of expansion joints;
- installation of the bridge guardrail;
- installation of concrete barriers;
- installation of bridge lights;
- paving the new bridge paving;
- installation of waterproofing;
- completion of electric work;
- opening of the new bridge to traffic; and
- demolition and disposal of the existing bridge.

Additional response: Propane leak incident

- On October 20, the Contractor notified Highways and Public Works of a propane leak at the north abutment on the job site due to a faulty pressure equalization and release valve on two tanks.
- As the Contractor is responsible for occupational health and safety in this instance, they followed the proper process and reported the spill.
- The North abutment area was immediately evacuated, and the bridge and highway was closed for safety.

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Public Works

- Shortly after the incident was identified a propane technician was on site to repair the faulty pressure system and relief valve.
- The bridge and highway reopened within less than two hours of the incident.

Additional response: Benefits for Local Businesses (Sub-contracting)

- The contractor, Graham infrastructure LP, is responsible for the hiring of sub-contractors for the project. The Government of Yukon does not direct the contractor, on any sub-contracting opportunities.
- Sub-contractors perform work such as electrical, logistics, earthworks, quarry development, materials procurement, and environmental monitoring.
- There are several Teslin and Yukon businesses that are working as sub-contractors on the project.
- As part of the monthly progress claim submission process the contractor provides a summary of the progress on the involvement of Yukon First Nation businesses and local suppliers.
- The Government of Yukon does not publicly comment on the values or terms of these sub-contracts, as this is proprietary information.
- However, the project team actively works with the contractor and Teslin Tlingit Council to monitor their progress and make certain the contractor meets their proposed targets.

Session Briefing Note**FALL 2024****Nisutlin Bay Bridge Replacement**Highways and
Public Works**Additional response: First Nations Participation Commitments**

- The Government of Yukon is grateful to Teslin Tlingit Council for their ongoing participation in the implementation of the Nisutlin Bay Bridge project.
- First Nations participation was a large component of this value-driven tendering process.
- Both Teslin Tlingit Citizens and Yukon First Nations participation hours are tracked throughout the project and submitted monthly to the Yukon government.
- The Yukon government works with the Teslin Tlingit Council to review the contractor's progress to meet these targets.
- As the project is over half-way completed, the contractor is also trending towards accomplishing the proportionate target value.
- The Government of Yukon has also provided additional funding to the Teslin Tlingit Council to support their participation in the project. These agreements range from project planning, implementation support, a community liaison position, fisheries initiatives and environmental baseline studies, fibre recovery, and artwork for the new bridge.

Additional response: Quality Assurance

- As with any large infrastructure project, frequent inspections are a regular part of construction monitoring.
- Throughout the project, the Contractor is responsible for developing and following an approved Quality Control plan.

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Public Works

- To check quality control the Government of Yukon has a fulltime team of onsite technicians and engineers who are based in Teslin to provide Quality Assurance.
- Inspections are happening at every step of the project and as defects or non-conformances are found they are rectified following an approved protocol to ensure compliance with the project specifications.
- It is also important to note that repairs during the work are a normal part of large construction projects.

Additional response: Project Cost

- The construction contract with Graham Infrastructure LP was originally awarded for \$159.96 million.
- Infrastructure Canada will contribute \$41.25 million through the *Building Canada Fund* and Transport Canada will contribute \$52.5 million through the *National Trade Corridors Fund*.
- The amended *Fisheries Act Authorization* resulted in a change order that increased the construction contract by \$23.89 million to a total of \$183.8 million to accommodate for additional work and services required. It also compensated the contractor for a delay in construction commencement and a 6-day extension to complete the project.

Additional response: Environmental Protection

- From the outset, environmental protection has been a major component of the project.

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- Under the project's *Fisheries Act* Authorization, we are required to establish a sonar enumeration project to make sure that the construction work is not negatively impacting fish populations or migrations.
 - The project helps researchers with Teslin Tlingit Council count Chinook salmon passing through the Nisutlin River Delta National Wildlife Area.
 - This important natural area is along the migration route for Chinook salmon returning to the Nisutlin and Wolf rivers and their tributaries.
 - This work is essential to monitoring salmon migration numbers and making sure the fish reach their spawning grounds while a new bridge is being built in the Nisutlin Bay.
 - The contractor and the Yukon government meet weekly to discuss any environmental issues on the project, such as underwater noise, water quality or spill reports, and mitigations are confirmed.
 - Environmental site inspections with the contractor, the Yukon government and environmental consultants are also conducted weekly to provide a high degree of environmental oversight.
 - The Yukon government has also retained an environmental consultant based onsite to monitor construction activities.
 - An Environmental Technical Working Group meets every two weeks, composed of representatives from Teslin Tlingit Council, the Yukon government and the contractor to review plans in advance of work commencing.

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Public Works

- Through this working group, we are able to address many environmental concerns of Teslin Tlingit Council and the community before they arise during construction.

Additional response: Granular Material

- This project will use over 100,000 cubic metres of aggregate for the various components. This does not include asphalt.
- All the granular material for roadwork is locally sourced.
- However, the Nisutlin Bay Bridge Project will require approximately 2,400 cubic metres of coarse aggregate for the cast-in-place concrete being used.
- This small amount of coarse aggregate for concrete work is coming from Whitehorse.
- The aggregate being used in this concrete has specific requirements to ensure the structural integrity of the bridge.
- There are very limited sources of aggregate in the Yukon that meet this requirement which is why aggregate from the Whitehorse area will be used for this specific portion of the project, which equates to less than 2.5 per cent of the aggregate needed.
- Starting in November, travellers along the highway might notice environmental mitigation work being undertaken at the Ten Mile Pit located at kilometre 1258 of the Alaska Highway.
- This is necessary work to provide continued access to the granular material located in the Ten Mile Pit.

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Nisutlin Bay Bridge Replacement

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Public Works

- The granular resources from Ten Mile Pit will be used by the Yukon government for other projects or construction activities in the surrounding area.

Additional response: Community Wellness

- The contractor has a dedicated liaison for their workers and community members to contact, with any health and wellness issues pertaining to the project they may have.
- The Community Wellbeing Working Group, with representatives from Teslin Tlingit Council and the Government of Yukon meet every two weeks to work through issues of wellbeing that might be arising for Teslin Tlingit citizens, and community members in general, from the project.

Additional response: Interesting Project Details

- The replacement of the Nisutlin Bay Bridge is a massive project, with an estimated cost of around \$180 million. This reflects the challenges posed by its remote location and harsh weather conditions.
- This is the longest bridge replacement in Yukon History.
- The new bridge will ensure improved safety and accessibility, especially given the anticipated wear and tear from decades of service and heavy transport use.
- The replacement of the bridge is being done in stages to allow traffic to continue flowing during the process. This phased approach minimizes disruption for both residents and travellers along the Alaska Highway.

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Public Works

- The new bridge will be wider and designed to accommodate modern traffic, including larger commercial vehicles. It will also improve safety features like better sightlines, wider lanes, and improved pedestrian and cyclist access.
- Though the current bridge will be replaced, there are efforts to preserve the historical significance of the original structure. The new bridge will reflect modern engineering while respecting the cultural and historical context of the region.
- Once completed, the new bridge will continue to serve as a critical link on the Alaska Highway, supporting the region's economy by facilitating the movement of goods and people. It's a vital lifeline for the community of Teslin and travellers heading to and from Alaska.
- These aspects highlight the bridge's importance not just as a piece of infrastructure but also as a cultural and historical landmark in the Yukon.
- This replacement project is a significant investment in Yukon's future infrastructure while balancing the historical and environmental factors tied to this iconic bridge.

Additional Response: Fun Facts

- Approximately 3,500 cubic metres of concrete is being used for the bridge. That's nearly 1.5 Olympic-sized swimming pools!
- Material for the new bridge includes concrete for the piers and deck, steel for girders and structural components, and wood for the temporary structures like the temporary bridge deck.

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Public Works

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- There are 52 girders in total, making the bridge very strong and stable. They are made from weathering steel, which develops a rust-like appearance after exposure to protect against corrosion.
 - The new bridge has 6 piers and 2 abutments. Piers support the middle sections of the bridge and are in the water, while abutments connect the bridge to the land.
 - The piers each contain around 410 cubic metres of concrete and 71 tons of steel. Each abutment has about 235 cubic metres of concrete and 22 tons of steel.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Nisutlin Bay Bridge is a landmark feature in Teslin and a key part of the Alaska Highway transportation infrastructure.

Background:

- Maintenance costs of the existing bridge were between \$0.5 to \$1 million per year.
- In spring 2019, the Government of Yukon and the Teslin Tlingit Council signed a project charter to work together to design and build the replacement bridge.

Yukon First Nation Procurement Policy

- The Nisutlin Bay Bridge Replacement project was tendered shortly after the Yukon First Nation Procurement Policy was implemented.
- This project is in its third year and Teslin Tlingit Council continues to work with the Yukon government to make improvements to the implementation of the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy to help it meets its original intent.
- The Government of Yukon is grateful to Teslin Tlingit Council for their ongoing participation in the implementation of the Nisutlin Bay Bridge project.

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Public Works

- We continue to look at continuous improvement and incorporating the lessons learned from all projects into recommendations to strengthen the policy moving forward.

Authorizations

- The Water Licence for the project was issued on August 31, 2022.
- The Fisheries Act Authorization was issued on October 17, 2022.
- We received the amendment to the Water License on February 24, 2023, and a variance to the authorization on March 8, 2023.
- Due to the collaborative work undertaken by the contractor, YG and TTC to address the unforeseen restrictions of the FAA and Water Licence, the project is progressing well, and 88 piles have been installed in compliance with the Fisheries Act Authorization and Water Licence.

Approved by:	
T. Allen	November 12, 2024
Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works	Date Approved

IHRA Definition of Antisemitism

Executive Council Office

Recommended response:

- The Yukon government supports the implementation of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's – or IHRA's – working definition of antisemitism.
- The Yukon is home to a small but vibrant Jewish population. We are grateful to have Jewish Yukoners who share and bring their culture to the forefront.
- The Government of Yukon will stand together to address intolerance and ensure no type of hate is allowed in any of our communities.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon does not condone any acts of racial, religious or ethnic hatred. Antisemitism is a form of racism that all Yukoners should unite in standing against and calling out.
- Human rights are global - no one should be mistreated because of who they are, where they are born, or what they believe.
- Our government will continue to speak out against hate whenever and wherever it exists.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The working definition of antisemitism adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance in 2016 is:
 - “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

IHRA Definition of
Antisemitism

Executive Council Office

- This definition has recently been adopted by several provinces through non-legally binding declarations (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Ontario), and by the federal government.
- B’nai Brith Canada has requested that the Government of Yukon adopt the working definition of antisemitism proposed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.

Background:

- In December 2022, the National Director for the B’nai Brith Canada emailed the previous Premier requesting an adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism.
- In January 2023, Premier Pillai received the same email with the same request.
- The Official Opposition has indicated its support to adopt the definition and may raise the issue during the 2023 Spring sitting.
- Adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism was also raised during the 2024 Fall sitting.
- As of November 1, 2024, 1,262 entities worldwide, including the Government of Canada, have adopted the IHRA definition.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

Deputy Minister
Executive Council Office

2024 11 05

Date approved

First Nations Interest in Energy Projects

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon supports the development of cost-effective renewable energy projects in a manner that fulfils treaty obligations, promotes reconciliation and provides energy security for the Yukon.
- Our government works with First Nations during the assessment and licensing of energy projects and throughout a project's operation.
- Working with First Nations governments on energy generation projects is fundamental to meeting the Yukon's climate change and energy goals.

Additional response:

- We are in discussions with Carcross/Tagish First Nation, Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council on the relicensing of the Whitehorse Rapids Generating Station and with the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun on the relicensing of the Mayo Generating Station.
- We view these discussions as forums to advance reconciliation and reset our government-to-government relationships, recognizing the historical and cultural value of these areas to First Nations.
- The Whitehorse Rapids Generating Station and Mayo Generating Station are undergoing environmental and socio-economic assessment to renew their water licences which expire in 2025.
- The Yukon government is actively collaborating and supporting the Whitehorse Rapids Generating Station project proposal to ensure there is ongoing progress towards completing the environmental assessment process.
- We signed a joint letter sent to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board asking the Whitehorse Designated Office to complete its assessment of the Whitehorse Rapids Generating Station before the end of October 2024 so that a Decision Document can be issued

First Nations Interest in Energy Projects

Executive Council
Office

by this December. This would allow the Yukon Water Board time to complete its regulatory process before the existing water use licence expires in May 2025.

- Impacts to salmon and other fish species are being discussed as part of the assessment and regulatory reviews.
- We are also at the preliminary stages of exploring a grid connection with British Columbia. If that concept is feasible, partnerships with First Nations will be critical to its success.
- Our government will ensure that discussions on existing and future energy projects include consideration of the rights, interests and potential involvement of Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Some First Nations indicated they will not support energy projects without greater collaboration and commitments from the YG in addressing their broader interests.
- YG is completing pre-feasibility work on a potential connection to the BC grid. Canada has conditionally approved \$40 million to study the feasibility of a potential transmission line.
- Concerns about the potential effects of the Whitehorse and Mayo Generating Stations on salmon migration have been raised in the licence renewal process and in local media. Salmon population decline and recovery is a significant First Nations and public interest.
- The First Nations affected by the operations of the Whitehorse Rapids Generating Station do not agree on an approach to relicensing the facility. Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council support a long-term approach to relicensing whereas Carcross/Tagish First Nation supports a short-term approach. This issue has been featured in local media coverage.
- The current Whitehorse Generating Station water licence may expire before a new licence is issued. This issue has been featured in local media coverage.

Background:

First Nations Interest in Energy Projects

Executive Council
Office

Whitehorse Rapids Generating Station (WRGS)

- The WRGS is operating under a 25-year water licence that expires on May 31, 2025.
- The WRGS project is going through the relicensing process and is currently undergoing an assessment under the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act (YESAA).
- The assessment is taking longer than expected and is currently in the Preparing Recommendation stage until January 2, 2025. YESAB extended the Preparing Recommendation timeline on November 7 due to the scale and complexity of the assessment, as well as the concerns identified by participants.
- Comments submitted by First Nations, YG, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada and members of the public raised concerns about impacts of the dam on salmon and other fish species as well as the data available to the assessors.
- YG, YEC, Carcross/Tagish First Nation (C/TFN), Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN) and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council (TKC) began working collaboratively on the relicensing project in April 2022.
- A Technical Working Group (TWG) with representation from YG, YEC, C/TFN, KDFN, and TKC has been established to focus on the assessment and relicensing processes.
- Negotiators from YG, YEC, KDFN and TKC are developing Energy Agreements which are intended to build a better relationship with respect to the ongoing operation of the WRGS and support reconciliation by promoting long-term benefits and opportunities for the First Nations and their citizens and businesses, including employment, training and contracting opportunities related to the construction and operation of the WRGS.
- C/TFN was involved in Energy Agreement negotiations but has stopped participating as they do not support a long-term approach to relicensing. YG is consulting with C/TFN, KDFN, TKC, and Taku River Tlingit First Nation regarding the potential impacts of the ongoing operation of the WRGS on Aboriginal rights.
- In August 2024, YG, YEC, KDFN and TKC sent a letter to the YESAB asking that the Whitehorse Designated Office complete its assessment of the project proposal by the end of October 2024 so that a Decision Document be issued by December 2024. The letter is publicly available on the YESAB online registry.

Mayo Generating Station (MGS)

- The water licence for the MGS expires on December 31, 2025.
- The MGS project is in the adequacy review stage of the YESAA assessment process.
- YG, YEC and the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun (FNNND) began working collaboratively on the relicensing project in December 2022. Discussions on the relicensing are ongoing and are intended to provide an avenue for collaboration and discussion on the assessment

First Nations Interest in Energy Projects

Executive Council
Office

and relicensing processes; and promote, develop and maintain a positive long-term relationship based on partnership, respect and reconciliation between the parties with respect to the ongoing operation of the MGS, other energy initiatives and other initiatives that the Parties may wish to advance collectively.

- YG will be consulting with FNNND regarding the potential impacts of the ongoing operation of the MGS on its treaty rights.

Independent Power Projects

Atlin Hydro Expansion

- Tlingit Homeland Energy Limited Partnership (THELP) is proposing to expand its Atlin hydroelectric generation infrastructure to increase its power output from 2.1 megawatts (MW) to 10 MW. The additional electricity would be sold to YEC, increasing the Yukon's supply of renewable energy, especially in the winter when it is most needed.
- If the project proceeds, it would include a transmission line from Atlin, BC, to Jakes Corner, a new substation and upgrades to the transmission line from Jake's Corner to Whitehorse.

North Fork Hydro

- Oro Enterprises is proposing to construct and operate a 2 MW run-of-river hydroelectric generating station on the North Klondike River, in the overlapping Traditional Territories of FNNND and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (TH).
- The potential redevelopment of a hydro project at this site is subject to several provisions in the TH Final Agreement. Should the project proceed, these provisions impose certain obligations on YG including an exchange of Settlement Land for Crown land.
- In December 2022, TH indicated that they do not support the project due to potential impacts to TH Traditional Territory and treaty rights. YG encouraged the proponent to contact TH directly to better understand the First Nation's concerns.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 11 18

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

TAB 27 ECO/EMR #105**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2024****Mineral Staking Prohibitions
in Response to Litigation**Executive Council Office
and Energy, Mines and
Resources

Recommended response:

- Our government has continued the mineral staking prohibition within the Kaska asserted traditional territory in the Yukon to allow time to address the court declarations made in the Ross River Dena Council and Kaska Dena Council mining cases.
- We also instituted a mineral staking prohibition for the Áashú (a-shoo) Lands and surrounding area in the asserted traditional territory of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation to support our ongoing discussions.
- We have committed to establishing mineral staking prohibitions for areas of cultural or environmental significance within the Traditional Territory of the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun. We look forward to working with the First Nation to advance regional land use planning and protect those areas.
- Our goal is to identify solutions that address our shared interests in land and resource matters, provide certainty to industry and benefit all Yukoners.
- We are working collaboratively with First Nations to develop new mineral legislation to replace the *Quartz Mining Act* and *Placer Mining Act*. In that process, we are considering many of the issues raised in the court cases and anticipate the new legislation will help address those issues and the declarations. (See EMR #6)

Additional response:If asked about the Ross River Area:

- The mineral staking prohibition in the Ross River Area was initiated on March 27, 2013, and is in place until April 30, 2026. This is intended to

TAB 27 ECO/EMR #105**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2024****Mineral Staking Prohibitions
in Response to Litigation**Executive Council Office
and Energy, Mines and
Resources

allow time to advance consultation with the Ross River Dena Council and the other Kaska First Nations on how best to address the court declarations regarding mineral staking, exploration and development.

- Discussions on the development of new mineral legislation will create the foundation to address the issues covered by the court Declarations, after which we will be able to re-assess the need for the mineral staking prohibition in the Ross River area and in other areas in the Yukon.
- These important discussions about Yukon's mining legislation are ongoing. On behalf of the Yukon government, I would like to extend my thanks to the representatives from Ross River Dena Council and all our First Nations partners for their valuable input to date.

If asked about the southern Yukon portion of the Kaska asserted traditional territory:

- The mineral staking prohibition in the southern portion of the Kaska asserted traditional territory in the Yukon was initiated on February 1, 2017, and is in place until April 30, 2026.
- Liard First Nation is actively participating in the work to develop new mineral legislation.

If asked about White River First Nation:

- We are addressing a range of issues through bilateral negotiations with White River First Nation, including consultation obligations related to the mineral declarations.

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in Response to Litigation**Executive Council Office
and Energy, Mines and
Resources

If asked about Taku River Tlingit First Nation:

- We are advancing discussions with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation on several matters including the mineral declarations, consultation, and their land interests in the Yukon.
- To support these discussions, our government withdrew land associated with the former Áashú Village site from land disposition and mineral staking on March 28, 2019. This withdrawal is in place until December 31, 2024.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Mineral staking prohibitions in asserted traditional territories remain a focus of discussions with affected First Nations and are of interest to other First Nations, industry and stakeholders.
- The Official Opposition raised the staking prohibitions in the Legislative Assembly on March 25, 2024. The mineral staking prohibitions in the Kaska asserted traditional territory were extended for a two-year period in April 2024.

Background:

- In 2012, the Yukon Court of Appeal made two declarations with respect to the *Ross River Dena Council v. Yukon* (2012 YKCA 14) mining case: (1) the Yukon government (YG) has a duty to consult with Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) in determining whether mineral rights on Crown lands within the Ross River Area are to be made available to third parties under the provisions of the *Quartz Mining Act*; and, (2) YG has a duty to notify and, where appropriate, consult with and accommodate RRDC before allowing any mineral exploration activities to take place within the Ross River Area.
- In 2013, YG took steps to comply with the second declaration by amending the *Quartz Mining Act* and *Placer Mining Act* to implement a new regime for Class 1 mining activities.
- In 2014, both the Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN) and Kaska Dena Council (KDC)

TAB 27 ECO/EMR #105**Session Briefing Note****Fall 2024****Mineral Staking Prohibitions
in Response to Litigation**Executive Council Office
and Energy, Mines and
Resources

started court proceedings seeking the same mineral declarations granted in the Ross River Area for their respective asserted traditional territories in the Yukon. The declarations were granted by consent.

- The three mineral staking prohibitions in the Kaska and Taku River Tlingit First Nation asserted traditional territories cover approximately 23 per cent of the Yukon.
- Additional staking prohibitions are in place for reasons such as land use planning, to create parks and protected areas, or to disallow staking within municipal boundaries. About 53 per cent of the total area of the Yukon is currently under a prohibition.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 10 02

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office_____
Date approved

Lauren Haney

October 1, 2024

Deputy Minister, Energy, Mines and Resources_____
Date approved

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Executive Council
Office / Justice

Recommended response:

- Our government has extended an invitation to the leaders of Yukon First Nations to begin discussions on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and its potential application in the Yukon.
- We need to consider how the Declaration would interact with Yukon's legislation, the Final and Self-Government Agreements, and other commitments and ongoing discussions with Indigenous governments.
- Reconciliation is a key and ongoing priority for our government.
- We are guided on our path of reconciliation by the foundational document *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*, which set out a vision for reconciliation and Indigenous self-determination in the territory.

Additional Response:

- Our approach to reconciliation is characterized by:
 - implementing modern treaties and upholding our obligations to Yukon First Nations, the Tetlit Gwich'in, and the Inuvialuit;
 - negotiating agreements related to Yukon First Nations' self-governance, such as those involving the administration of justice;
 - negotiating enduring agreements with First Nations without treaties;
 - advancing joint priorities at the Yukon Forum; and
 - collaborating with Indigenous governments on key legislative initiatives, such as the development of the new minerals legislation.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Governments of Canada (Canada), British Columbia (BC) and the Northwest Territories (NWT) have affirmed in legislation that the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the "Declaration") applies to their laws. There may be interest in whether the Government of Yukon (YG) will enact similar legislation.
- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement seeks "consent from Yukon First

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Executive Council
Office / Justice

Nation Chiefs to initiate a discussion with the Premier and the Leader of the Yukon NDP on [the Declaration]". The Chiefs asked for the NDP Leader to approach them separately and deferred consent on a discussion.

Background:

- The Declaration was adopted by the United Nations in 2007 and endorsed by Canada in 2016. It is a non-binding guidance document that speaks to the individual and collective rights of Indigenous peoples and considers their specific cultural, language, identity, religion, health, education, economic and social circumstances.
- Canada brought into force the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* in 2021 and released an action plan for federal implementation of the Act in 2023. The federal Act provides for joint priority-setting between Canada and Indigenous Peoples; it does not enact any of the 46 Articles of the Declaration into Canadian law, nor bind the provinces and territories.
- Although the topic has been raised at multiple Yukon Forum meetings, there has been no consensus to prioritize working jointly on a Yukon approach to the Declaration.
- YG has made related commitments with respect to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and *Changing the Story to Upholding Dignity and Justice: Yukon's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirit+ People Strategy*, both of which reference the Declaration.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 09 09

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Jeff Simons

2024-09-05

A/Deputy Minister, Department of Justice

Date

First Nation Court Case UpdatesExecutive Council
Office

Recommended response – Kudz Ze Kayah / BMC Minerals:

- In January 2024, the Supreme Court of Yukon released its decision on the Judicial Review of the 2022 Kudz Ze Kayah Decision Document.
- The decision clarified how the territorial and federal governments must conduct consultation when there may be a significant impact to Aboriginal rights.
- It also confirmed that it is not necessary for the parties to agree on the outcome of the consultation for the duty to consult to have been met.
- The Court found that the Governments of Yukon and Canada met the duty to consult over a period of approximately five years, except with respect to one submission from Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation.
- Following an additional consultation meeting directed by the Court, a new decision document was issued on March 8, 2024.
- The new decision document allowed the project to proceed to the regulatory phase, subject to a number of new and modified terms and conditions to address concerns expressed by the Kaska regarding potential impacts to caribou, land, water and air; cumulative effects; and project economics and feasibility.
- The 2024 decision document also includes a number of measures to ensure the Kaska will have opportunities to be meaningfully involved in both the regulatory process and in the project itself if it proceeds.
- Ross River Dena Council, on behalf of itself and the other Kaska First Nations, has filed an appeal of the Supreme Court decision with the Yukon Court of Appeal.
- The appeal is scheduled to be heard in September 2024. We look forward to the clarity that the decision is expected to provide.
- The project is currently undergoing regulatory review while the parties await the Court of Appeal decision.

First Nation Court Case UpdatesExecutive Council
Office

Recommended response – Michelle Creek Judicial Review:

- Our government filed for a Judicial Review of the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board's recommendation on the Michelle Creek project in northern Yukon.
- It is important to note that this request for Judicial Review is not an action against Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in or the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun.
- Rather, the Yukon government is asking the court to provide clarity regarding the Board's decision-making processes.
- This is needed so that all parties involved in YESAA assessments can be assured that recommendations will be made in an informed and unbiased manner, and in accordance with the requirements of YESAA and any applicable regional land use plan.
- We will not comment further on this matter as it is still before the court.

Recommended response – 10 Mile Road Litigation:

- In 2021, Carcross/Tagish First Nation asked the Supreme Court of Yukon to overturn the Yukon government's approval of two lot subdivision applications in the 10 Mile Road area of Tagish.
- In their court documents, the First Nation noted concerns about the potential for the lot subdivisions to impact their treaty rights and the habitat of the Southern Lakes caribou.
- Both of our governments recognize that the area between Tagish and Carcross provides core winter habitat and a migration corridor for the herd.
- As such, the Yukon government has established a new Future Planning Policy for the 10 Mile Road Area. The policy restricts the subdivision of lots in the area until a land use planning exercise is completed.
- We are also exploring the establishment of a Special Management Area

First Nation Court Case UpdatesExecutive Council
Office

and advancing regional land use planning in partnership with local First Nations.

- In response to these measures, Carcross/Tagish First Nation discontinued their litigation in July 2024.
- We are continuing to work with Carcross/Tagish First Nation to advance other shared interests in their Traditional Territory.

Recommended response – First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun / Metallic Minerals

- In 2021, the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun asked the Supreme Court of Yukon to address concerns related to a Decision Document issued by the Yukon government for a Class 3 mining project proposed by Metallic Minerals Corporation.
- In April 2024, the Yukon Court of Appeal upheld the 2023 decision of the Supreme Court of Yukon to overturn the Decision Document for the project.
- The Court clarified that while the duty to consult does not require or guarantee a specific outcome, this consultation process was flawed and as a result, the issuance of the Decision Document was not reasonable in the circumstances.
- While the Yukon government continues to assess the wide-ranging implications of the court decision, we are taking steps to address the concerns raised by the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun.
- We have committed to work with Yukon First Nations to accelerate the pace of land use planning in response to their concerns and are developing additional resources for Yukon government departments to support meaningful consultation and engagement.

Context—this may be an issue because:

First Nation Court Case Updates

Executive Council
Office

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- Court cases involving Yukon First Nations generally receive a high level of media interest.
 - Ross River Dena Council's appeal of the Kudz Ze Kayah decision is scheduled to be heard in September 2024 and this may revive media attention.
 - The judicial review hearing on the Michelle Creek case is scheduled for November 2024 and this may revive media attention.
-

Background:

Ross River Dena Council v. AG (Canada), AG (Yukon), and BMC Minerals.

- In October 2022, Ross River Dena Council (RRDC), on its own behalf and on behalf of the Kaska Nation, filed a petition for judicial review of a decision by the Governments of Canada (Canada) and Yukon (YG) to vary a decision made by the Executive Committee of the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board related to the Kudz Ze Kayah mining project proposed by BMC Minerals.
- RRDC alleged that decision makers did not adequately consider their June 14, 2022, submissions and failed to fulfill the duty to consult on the project.
- On January 2, 2024, the Supreme Court of Yukon released its decision. The Court found that the Crown governments generally met their duty to consult RRDC and Liard First Nation (LFN), other than in respect of their June 14, 2022, submission.
- The Court ordered YG and Canada to meet with RRDC and LFN to discuss that submission within 60 days and to issue a final Decision Document within 30 days after the meeting. That meeting was held in Ross River on February 7 and 8, 2024 and the new Decision Document was issued on March 8, 2024.
- **Next step:** RRDC has filed an appeal of the Supreme Court decision, which is scheduled to be heard in September 2024.

Judicial Review of YESAB Recommendation for Michelle Creek Proposal (#2021-0176):

- In December 2022, the Dawson Designated Office (DO) released its Evaluation Report and Recommendations for the Michelle Creek Quartz Exploration project proposed by Silver47 Exploration Corp. within the area covered by the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan.
- Although the DO had issued Information Requests for additional baseline information to which the proponent did not respond, the DO recommended that the project not be allowed to proceed, because in the assessor's view, it would have significant adverse effects that could not be mitigated.

First Nation Court Case Updates

Executive Council
Office

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- YG requested a Judicial Review on the basis that it was inconsistent of the DO to both issue a request for additional data to inform its recommendation (and as required by the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan), and to conclude that it had sufficient information (without having received that additional data) to finalize its recommendation.
 - **Next step:** The hearing date has been set for November 27 to 29, 2024.

Carcross/Tagish First Nation v. Government of Yukon et al.:

- On March 8, 2021, Carcross/Tagish First Nation (C/TFN) filed a petition for judicial review of YG decisions under the Subdivision Act, which approved two subdivision applications in the 10 Mile area of Tagish.
- C/TFN asserted that YG breached its duty to consult and accommodate C/TFN, failed to uphold obligations under Chapter 16 of the Final Agreement by neglecting to coordinate land and resource management activities with C/TFN in critical caribou habitat and by allowing decisions to be made in the absence of a Chapter 11 land use plan.
- Officials from YG and C/TFN examined various options to address these concerns outside of the court process and determined that a policy restricting future lot subdivisions in the area would meet the shared interest of both governments in protecting the habitat of the Southern Lakes caribou herd. The policy was established in July 2024 and will remain in effect until a land use plan is developed for the 10 Mile Road area.
- The policy does not apply to the two lot subdivision applications that were the subject of the litigation. It also cannot be used to reject applications that were submitted before it came into effect; however, officials must consider the intent of the policy in assessing any such applications.

First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun v. Government of Yukon and Metallic Minerals Corp.:

- On March 15, 2021, the First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun (FNNND) filed a petition for judicial review of a YG Decision Document under the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act (YESAA) to allow a proposed Class 3 quartz mining exploration program to proceed to the regulatory phase.
- FNNND claimed that YG breached its duty to consult by failing to engage directly with community members and failing to complete land use planning pursuant to an Intergovernmental Agreement between YG and FNNND and under Chapter 11 of the FNNND Final Agreement.

First Nation Court Case Updates

Executive Council
Office

- The judicial review was heard on June 28 and 29, 2022 and the decision of the Supreme Court of Yukon was released on January 31, 2023. The Court set aside the Decision Document and referred it back to YG for reconsideration.
- Overall, the Court agreed with FNNND that YG's decision was unreasonable. The lengthy decision touches on several topics including the scope of the duty to consult, the rights protected under s. 35 of Canada's Constitution, the representation of Treaty rights-holders and land use planning.
- YG filed an appeal of the decision on March 1, 2023. FNNND contested the appeal, and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations (CAFN) appeared as an intervenor.
- The appeal was heard in November 2023 and the decision of the Yukon Court of Appeal was released on April 9, 2024. The Court of Appeal agreed with the Supreme Court finding that the issuance of the Decision Document was unreasonable due to flaws in the consultation process and quashed it.
- More broadly, the Court of Appeal decision also raised several issues that may have operational implications for YG, including with respect to: responding to requests for community consultation; assessing the appropriate depth of consultation for potential impacts to treaty rights; the nature of Chapter 11 treaty rights and how they may be impacted by project-related decisions; and the nature and effect of intergovernmental agreements.
- **Next step:** YG is continuing to analyze the implications of the court decisions and preparing additional consultation guidance for departments.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 08 26

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Reconciliation with First NationsExecutive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to building strong working relationships with First Nations.
- We are listening to and working with First Nations to address the harms caused by a long history of inequality and discrimination.
- Our goal is to achieve meaningful change and tangible benefits for all Yukoners through collaboration on a range of environmental, economic and social projects.

Additional response:

- We continue to work with the Government of Canada and Yukon First Nations to implement the Final and Self-Government Agreements.
- We also work directly with Yukon First Nation governments through quarterly Yukon Forum meetings and related processes.
- In partnership with First Nations, we implemented the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy, established a Yukon First Nation School Board and developed and passed the *Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act*.
- We are also implementing the Representative Public Service Plan and advancing land use planning.
- Together with our partners, we released an implementation plan for Yukon's Strategy for Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit+ Peoples in 2023. We continue to undertake key actions in support of the strategy.
- Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups are key voices in our collaborative work to develop new legislation for lands and minerals.

Reconciliation with First Nations

Executive Council
Office

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- Our government is also advancing work to negotiate and implement government-to-government accords with interested Yukon First Nations. Accords provide a formal mechanism for working together on matters of mutual interest and priority.
 - We are also prepared to discuss the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, how it might interact with the Final Agreements, and what it may offer to support and strengthen our existing reconciliation efforts.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon government (YG) has made public commitments to reconciliation and strengthening relationships with Yukon First Nations (YFNs), including a commitment in the 2023 mandate letters to continue to prioritize efforts to uphold true reconciliation.
- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement includes commitments to seek consent from YFN Chiefs to initiate a discussion on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the Declaration); to work with First Nations to continue to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission through targeted investments and to continue to develop successor mining legislation in partnership with YFNs.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon supports reconciliation with YFNs and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups in many ways, including:
 - Working with YFNs through the Yukon Forum (refer to [TAB 32 "Yukon Forum and Intergovernmental Forum"](#)).
 - Presenting a united voice to the federal government (Canada) at Yukon Days (refer to [TAB 68 "Federal Engagement"](#)).
 - Negotiating and implementing bilateral and trilateral agreements, including government-to-government accords, that support shared priorities (refer to [TAB 33 "First Nation Accords and Community Priorities"](#)).

Reconciliation with First Nations

Executive Council
Office

- o Meeting our consultation obligations and building shared expectations about how consultation and engagement will occur by developing an online consultation and engagement system and corporate policies and procedures.
- o Actioning the implementation plan for the Yukon Strategy on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit+ People with YFNs, Indigenous women's organizations, families, Survivors and representatives of the RCMP and Canada.
- o Implementing the Yukon First Nations Procurement Policy to enhance economic outcomes for YFNs and businesses.
- o Working with YFNs to address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action (refer to [TAB 76 "Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Update on the Calls to Action"](#)).
- o Implementing the Representative Public Service Plan, *Breaking Trail Together*, in support of meeting the goal of increasing Indigenous representation in the public service to 22 per cent by the end of 2029.
- o The Government of Yukon has signaled its willingness to enter into a broad discussion on the potential application of the Declaration in the Yukon (refer to [TAB 28 "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples"](#)).

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 08 29

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Support for Residential School Site InvestigationsExecutive Council
Office**Recommended response:**

- The residential school system caused widespread and lasting trauma for Indigenous people, families and communities.
- The Government of Yukon continues to support the Yukon Residential Schools Missing Children Project Working Group in their efforts to bring to light the history and impact of residential schools.
- While this work is a necessary part of truth and reconciliation, we recognize that it can retraumatize Survivors and their families and communities. We offer our ongoing support and compassion for all those with lived experience of these harms.
- We are available to the Working Group as they lead this important work and will assist as requested to support healing and reconciliation.

Additional response:

- In the Yukon, searches have so far been conducted in Carcross and Whitehorse.
- Funding for this important work was provided by the Governments of Canada and Yukon and administered by the Council of Yukon First Nations.
- The Yukon government continues to discuss with partners and work internally on how to best continue to support the work being done by the Yukon Residential School Missing Children Project.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Working Group publicly expressed concerns about the July 2024 announcement by the Government of Canada on new caps and restrictions on their funding program supporting this work. On August 16, 2024, Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister released a statement indicating the Government of Canada had removed the funding cap. However, they did not increase the total funding pot.
- There is likely to be interest about funding from the Yukon government (YG) for 2024/25 and future years. This has not yet been publicly announced but is expected to be

Support for Residential School Site Investigations

Executive Council
Office

included in the Supplementary Budget request for 2024/25 and the Mains for 2025/26.

Background:

- In the Yukon there were six residential schools that operated between 1903 and 1985: Chooutla School in Carcross; Coudert Hall, Yukon Hall and Whitehorse Baptist Mission in Whitehorse; Shingle Point School in Shingle Point on the Yukon's Arctic coast (the predecessor to All Saints (Aklavik Anglican) School in Aklavik); and St. Paul's Hostel in Dawson. The Lower Post School in northern British Columbia also housed Yukon First Nation students.
- The Yukon Residential Schools Missing Children Project (YRSMCP) Working Group is mandated by Yukon First Nations leadership and supported by YG leadership through the Yukon Forum to coordinate ground searches for unmarked or missing graves at former residential school sites in the Yukon with ground penetrating radar. The Working Group's mandate also includes conducting Survivor interviews and archival research, and managing and protecting the personal data collected.
- All Yukon First Nations are represented on the Working Group and the Working Group has sought participation from the transboundary First Nations.
- The Working Group is collaborating with and supporting the Daylu Dena Council (DDC) and Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC) in researching and locating missing children who attended the residential schools in Lower Post and Shingle Point.
- The Working Group will continue to gather archival research for residential school students who attended the Lower Post and Shingle Point residential schools while both DDC and IRC will be responsible for ground searches at the sites and will share results with YRSMCP.

YRSMCP research and results

- In 2023, the Working Group completed an initial ground search at the Chooutla residential school site in Carcross. In September 2023, the Working Group announced that the search identified 15 anomalies and noted the number of students missing is 33 (originally believed to be 20).
- In April 2024, the Working Group completed a ground search at two former residential school sites (Coudert Hall and Yukon Hall) in Whitehorse. Results have not been publicly announced to date.
- A second ground search of specific additional locations on and around the Chooutla site

Support for Residential School Site Investigations

Executive Council
Office

is currently on hold until funding is secured.

Funding for YRMCP

- Officials from Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) and YG have continued to support the Working Group to develop a work plan to guide the project and attend Working Group meetings when invited.
- YG provided \$1.3 million in funding between 2021/22 and 2023/24.
- The Working Group has submitted a revised five-year funding request to start in the 2024/2025 fiscal year.
- In July 2024, the Government of Canada advised organizations of changes to their Residential School Missing Children Community Support funding program that narrowed the criteria for eligible activities and established funding limits of \$500,000 per initiative in fiscal years 2024/2025 and 2025/2026. These changes were reversed in August 2024. The total amount of funding available under this program has not changed.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 10 01

Deputy Minister, Executive Council

Date

**Yukon Forum and
Intergovernmental Forum**Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- The Yukon Forum and the Intergovernmental Forum are important venues for government-to-government collaboration and meaningful dialogue.
- We will continue to work with Yukon First Nations governments at the Yukon Forum to identify and take collaborative action on shared priorities that advance reconciliation and improve the lives of all Yukoners.
- We also remain committed to advancing strategic discussions on the implementation of Yukon's modern treaties and self-government agreements with Yukon First Nations and federal leaders at the Intergovernmental Forum.

Additional Response:

- On September 5, 2024 the Yukon Forum was hosted at Kwanlin Dün First Nation's Nàkwät'à Kù [Nah-kwah-da-koo] Potlatch House in Whitehorse.
- During the meeting, leaders discussed new minerals legislation, land use planning, emergency management, housing and Arctic foreign policy.
- We were also pleased to be joined by the federal Minister of Northern Affairs and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs for these discussions.
- We continue to work with Yukon First Nations leaders to make our voices stronger in working with the federal government on shared priorities.
- The last Intergovernmental Forum took place in December 2023 during Yukon Days in Ottawa. Leaders discussed salmon, housing, emergency preparedness, land use planning, health, justice and education.

Yukon Forum and Intergovernmental Forum

Executive Council
Office

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- I look forward to meeting again with our partners this fall. The next Yukon Forum is tentatively scheduled for November 8th. The date for the next Intergovernmental Forum has not yet been set.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- There may be interest in what is discussed at Intergovernmental Forum and Yukon Forum meetings, updates to the joint priority action plan and next steps.

Background:

- The Yukon Forum is a regular meeting between leaders of the Yukon government (YG), Yukon First Nations and the Council of Yukon First Nations.
- The Yukon Forum was established in 2005 under the *Cooperation in Governance Act* between the Government of Yukon, Council of Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nations with Final Agreements.
- In January 2017, the governments signed a declaration to renew the Yukon Forum and committed the governments to meet four times a year.
- In May 2017, the governments agreed on the four joint priority areas which include:
 - fiscal relations;
 - bilateral and trilateral engagement on justice, health and social services, education and heritage;
 - land claim and self-government implementation; and
 - ensuring the territory's legislative agenda considers First Nation priorities.
- In September 2017, the Yukon Forum approved a joint priority action plan. It lays out the next steps on topics such as justice, heritage, education, health, land claim agreement implementation and fiscal relations.
- In June 2018, the Yukon Forum agreed to add fish and wildlife to the joint priority action plan.
- In June 2021, the governments reconfirmed their commitment to advancing the joint priorities and discussed plans to investigate former residential school grounds in the Yukon (refer to [TAB 31 "Support for First Nation Governments Burial Sites Investigations"](#)).

Yukon Forum and Intergovernmental Forum

Executive Council
Office

- In March 2023, the governments discussed shared actions to address the Substance Use Health Emergency.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 09 27

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date Approved

First Nation Accords and Community Priorities

Executive Council Office

Recommended response:

- One of our government's overarching priorities is to work collaboratively with First Nations and focus on upholding reconciliation in all that we do.
- Government-to-government accords facilitate a practical and transparent way of working with individual Yukon First Nations to identify and address shared priorities that matter to their Citizens and bring real benefits to Yukon communities.
- Cultivating strong government-to-government relationships with Yukon First Nations advances the territory's economic and social development and benefits all Yukoners.

Additional response:

- Accords are intended to help the Government of Yukon and a Yukon First Nation realize the spirit and intent of their Final and Self-Government Agreements.
- Our government continues to meet with and hear directly from Yukon First Nations governments on their community priorities and needs on an ongoing basis.
- In July, the Government of Yukon and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation signed a 10-year Government-to-Government Accord focused on community wellness, community development, and education and training initiatives.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The public may be interested in the July 2024 signing of a government-to-government accord with Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and may seek progress updates on the implementation of existing Accords with other First Nations.
-

First Nation Accords and Community Priorities

Executive Council Office

Background:

- Accords are non-legally binding bilateral agreements between the Yukon government (YG) and a Yukon First Nation government.
- Accords identify shared priorities and set out an Action Plan to coordinate both governments' actions in addressing those priorities.

Carcross/Tagish First Nation

- The previous five-year accord expired in 2020. YG and Carcross/Tagish First Nation are now in discussions to establish a new accord.

Champagne and Aishihik First Nations

- In 2022, YG entered into a project-specific accord with Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and Yukon Energy Corporation on the licensing of the Aishihik Generating Station.

Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation

- YG is working towards the development of an accord with Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation.

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation

- YG signed a 10-year Government-to-Government Accord with Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation on July 27, 2024 in Old Crow.

White River First Nation

- YG has an active five-year Government-to-Government Accord with White River First Nation that was signed in 2020. The associated Action Plan was updated in July 2024 to include additional items related to Highways and Public Works.
- See appendix below on bilateral meetings held in 2024 between ECO and Yukon First Nation officials to discuss community priorities.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

TOC

2024 08 26

Deputy Minister

Date Approved

Executive Council Office

First Nation Accords and Community Priorities

Executive Council Office

Appendix A: Recent Bilateral Meetings with Yukon First Nations on Community Priorities

Yukon First Nation	Date / Location	Participants	Description
Carcross/Tagish First Nation	Jan. 11, 2024 Carcross	C/TFN Ƙaa Sháade Héní (Chief) Benoit and Executive Council, Premier Pillai	Discussion of C/TFN community priorities, including planning and energy development projects
Champagne and Aishihik First Nations	Feb. 28, 2024 Virtual	CAFN Executive Director, ECO Deputy Minister	Discussion of CAFN community priorities
First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun	May 27, 2024 Mayo	FNNND Chief Hope and Council, Premier Pillai	Discussion of FNNND community priorities
Kluane First Nation	January 10, 2024 Burwash Landing	KFN Chief Dickson and Council, Premier Pillai	Discussion of KFN community priorities, including community safety and economic development opportunities
Kwanlin Dün First Nation	April 29, 2024 Whitehorse	KDFN Chief Smith, Premier Pillai, Minister Mostyn, Minister Streicker	Discussion of KDFN priorities and interests involving the Range Point Development project

First Nation Accords and Community Priorities

Executive Council Office

Yukon First Nation	Date / Location	Participants	Description
Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation	May 13, 2024 Carmacks	LS/CFN Chief Tom and Council, MLA for Mayo-Tatchun Jeremy Harper, Premier Pillai	Discussion of LS/CFN community priorities including Chinook salmon recovery, subdivision development, and the second phase of the Carmacks bypass
Selkirk First Nation	May 13, 2024 Pelly Crossing	SFN Chief Nelson and Council, Premier Pillai	Discussion of SFN community priorities, including housing, mining and community wellness
Ta'an Kwäch'än Council	Feb. 9, 2024 Virtual	SFN Executive Director, ECO Deputy Minister	Discussion of TKC community priorities
Teslin Tlingit Council	April 25, 2024 Whitehorse	TTC Chief Morris, Premier Pillai, Minister Clarke	Discussion of TTC community priorities
Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in	Feb. 8, 2024 Virtual	TH Executive Director, ECO Deputy Minister	Discussion of TH community priorities
Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation	July 27, 2024 Old Crow	Chief Frost, Premier Pillai	Signing ceremony for Government-to-Government Accord
White River First Nation	Jan. 9, 2024 Beaver Creek	WRFN Chief Chassé and Council, Premier Pillai	Discussion of WRFN community priorities, including a potential community hub, new mining legislation, and housing

Liard First Nation – Issues and InitiativesExecutive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- We are working with Liard First Nation on shared priorities including economic development and land planning and development. We are also collaborating on the management of natural resources such as forestry, fish and wildlife.
- We are working directly with Liard First Nation to ensure that Yukoners and local industry can access reliable sources of firewood and timber while respecting First Nations' interests.
- We are also exploring new approaches to reconciliation with Liard First Nation and renewing our intergovernmental relationship.
- On September 23, 2024 we marked a significant step in this renewal by signing a Political Protocol with Liard First Nation to provide a strong foundation for respectful partnership and collaboration.

Additional response:

- The Supreme Court of Yukon's January 2024 decision on the Kudz Ze Kayah proposal provides important guidance about how the Government of Yukon and First Nations are to work together during consultation on major projects.
- We considered the concerns shared by Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation during the consultation meeting required by the court and released a new decision document in March 2024.
- We will continue to consult with the Kaska as we consider applications for the authorizations required to construct and bring the mine into production, while awaiting the decision from the Yukon Court of Appeal.
- More broadly, we will continue to consult Liard First Nation and the other Kaska First Nations on activities that may affect their asserted Aboriginal rights in the Yukon, including mineral exploration and land and resource development proposals, while exploring other ways to work collaboratively.

Liard First Nation – Issues and Initiatives

Executive Council
Office

-
- Our government has maintained the mineral staking prohibitions within the Kaska asserted traditional territory in the Yukon and we are collaborating with First Nations to develop new mineral legislation that addresses mineral staking, exploration and development.
-

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) and Liard First Nation (LFN) did not support the issuance of the new Decision Document allowing the Kudz Ze Kayah (KZK) project to proceed to the regulatory phase.
 - The Yukon Court of Appeal heard RRDC's appeal of the Supreme Court of Yukon decision on the KZK project on September 12 and 13, 2024.
 - The Official Opposition raised the staking prohibitions in the Kaska asserted traditional territory in the Legislative Assembly on March 25, 2024.
 - The availability and cost of firewood in Whitehorse is of interest to the media and the public.
-

Background:

Kudz Ze Kayah ([refer to Tab 8 – “Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project – BMC Minerals”](#))

- On January 3, 2024, the Supreme Court of Yukon issued its decision on the Judicial Review of the Decision Document for the Kudz Ze Kayah project.
- The Court set aside the June 15, 2022, Decision Document and directed the parties to hold a meeting to complete consultation on the June 14, 2022, letter from Liard First Nation (LFN) and Ross River Dena Council (RRDC). That meeting was held in Ross River on February 7 and 8, 2024. A new Decision Document, which also allowed the KZK project to proceed, was issued on March 8, 2024.
- On February 1, 2024, RRDC, on its own behalf and on behalf of all members of the Kaska Nation, filed a Notice of Appeal of the Supreme Court's decision. The parties are now awaiting the decision of the Court of Appeal.

Negotiations

- The Yukon government (YG) and LFN established a bilateral negotiation table in August 2020.
 - The table's current focus is on land development and planning in the vicinity of the Town of Watson Lake and fish and wildlife management.
 - YG and LFN are working to advance short- and medium-term collaborative approaches to opening areas for fuelwood and timber harvesting in the Watson Lake area.
 - The Department of Energy Mines and Resource's (EMR) Forest Management Branch and LFN jointly developed a Timber Harvest Plan for a salvage harvest project at Scoby Creek east of
-

Liard First Nation – Issues and Initiatives

Executive Council
Office

Watson Lake. Following a recommendation from the Watson Lake Designated Office of the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board that the project proceed, LFN and EMR jointly developed a Decision Document, held a community engagement session and consulted with the other Kaska First Nations about the project.

- The Timber Harvest Plan and salvage harvest project would allow for an adequate supply of dry fuelwood to meet the demand in southeast Yukon and the Whitehorse area.

Mineral Staking Prohibition

- YG consented to two mineral declarations in the Yukon portion of the Kaska asserted traditional territory outside of the Ross River Area.
- The mineral staking prohibitions in the Kaska asserted traditional territory were extended in April 2024 for a two-year period and now expire on April 30, 2026 (refer to Tab 27 “Mineral Staking Prohibitions in Response to Litigation”).

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 10 01

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Ross River Dena Council – Issues and Initiatives

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- We continue to advance our shared priorities with Ross River Dena Council, including economic development, infrastructure, land and resource planning, and fish and wildlife.
- We are also working with Ross River Dena Council and the Government of Canada to ensure that community lands are available for construction of new housing and other community infrastructure in Ross River.
- We are exploring new approaches to reconciliation in the Ross River area and look forward to working with the Government of Canada and Ross River Dena Council to advance their self-determination.
- We are also working with Ross River Dena Council to respond to complaints of inappropriate and harmful conduct toward women in the community by a Yukon government employee. ([refer to Tab 3 – “Response to Ross River Dena Council Allegations”](#))

Additional response:

- The Supreme Court of Yukon’s January 2024 decision on the Kudz Ze Kayah proposal provides important guidance about how the Government of Yukon and First Nations are to work together during consultation on major projects.
- We considered the concerns shared by Ross River Dena Council and Liard First Nation during the consultation meeting required by the court and released a new decision document in March 2024.
- We will continue to consult with the Kaska as we consider applications for the authorizations required to construct and bring the mine into production, while awaiting the decision from the Yukon Court of Appeal.
- More broadly, we will continue to consult Ross River Dena Council and the other Kaska First Nations on activities that may affect their asserted

Ross River Dena Council – Issues and Initiatives

Executive Council
Office

Aboriginal rights in the Yukon, including mineral exploration and land and resource development proposals, while exploring other ways to work collaboratively.

- Our government has maintained the mineral staking prohibitions within the Kaska asserted traditional territory in the Yukon, and we are collaborating with First Nations to develop new mineral legislation that addresses mineral staking, exploration and development.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) and Liard First Nation (LFN) did not support the issuance of the new Decision Document allowing the Kudz Ze Kayah (KZK) project to proceed to the regulatory phase.
- The Yukon Court of Appeal heard RRDC's appeal of the Supreme Court of Yukon decision on the KZK project on September 12 and 13, 2024.
- The Official Opposition raised the staking prohibitions in the Legislative Assembly on March 25, 2024.

Background:

Kudz Ze Kayah ([refer to Tab 8 – “Kudz Ze Kayah Mine Project – BMC Minerals”](#)).

- On January 3, 2024, the Supreme Court of Yukon issued its decision on the Judicial Review of the Decision Document for the Kudz Ze Kayah mine project.
- The Court set aside the June 15, 2022, Decision Document and directed the parties to hold a meeting to complete consultation on the June 14, 2022, letter from Liard First Nation (LFN) and Ross River Dena Council (RRDC). That meeting was held in Ross River on February 7 and 8, 2024. A new Decision Document, which also allowed the Kudz Ze Kayah mine project to proceed, was issued on March 8, 2024.
- On February 1, 2024, RRDC, on its own behalf and on behalf of all members of the Kaska Nation, filed a Notice of Appeal of the Supreme Court's decision. The parties are now awaiting the decision of the Court of Appeal.

Mineral Staking Prohibitions

- In 2013, YG implemented a notification regime for Class 1 mining activities in the Ross

Ross River Dena Council – Issues and Initiatives

Executive Council
Office

River Area (RRA) and withdrew the RRA from mineral staking.

- The mineral staking prohibitions in the Kaska asserted traditional territory were extended in April 2024 for a two-year period to continue discussions with RRDC on implementing the two mineral declarations. The staking prohibitions now expire on April 30, 2026 (refer to Tab 27 “Mineral Staking Prohibitions in Response to Litigation”).

Negotiations

- In 2022, YG and RRDC established a new YG-RRDC senior officials negotiation table. The current focus of the table is on land planning and fish and wildlife management.

Major Projects and Initiatives

- YG must develop a new proposal for the Pelly River crossing at Ross River by November 2027.
- Aboriginal Relations and Community Services are working with the Town of Faro to support consultation with the Kaska First Nations on the amendment of their Official Community Plan.
- The 2020 Gateway Project agreement between YG and RRDC for the North Canol Road and Robert Campbell Highway has yet to be implemented.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 10 01

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

White River First Nation – Issues and Initiatives

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon, White River First Nation and the Government of Canada are working together to advance shared interests and priorities.
- We have a bilateral government-to-government accord with White River First Nation focused on capacity development, education, justice, health, infrastructure, emergency planning, hunting and relationship building.
- We will work with White River First Nation and nearby First Nations to find constructive solutions when issues arise in the overlapping areas of their traditional territories.

Additional response:

- We understand that White River First Nation signed an Impact-Benefit Agreement with the Newmont Corporation regarding the Coffee Gold project.
- We are encouraged to see this positive example of a proponent and First Nation working together to address their shared interests.
- We look forward to further consultation and discussion with White River First Nation in the project's regulatory phase.
- We have started consultation with White River First Nation on the proposed Casino mine and look forward to further discussions as more project details become available.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The proposed Casino mine will be the first project assessed via Panel Review under the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* (YESAA).
 - This will require extensive consultation and accommodation with all affected First Nations, including White River First Nation and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in.
-

White River First Nation – Issues and Initiatives

Executive Council
Office

Background:

Government-to-Government Accord

- On June 5, 2020, White River First Nation (WRFN) and the Yukon government (YG) signed a government-to-government Accord that identifies priorities and action items over a five-year term. The associated Action Plan was updated in July 2024 to include additional items related to Highways and Public Works.

Bilateral and Trilateral Negotiations

- WRFN and YG are in exploratory bilateral discussions to further understand WRFN's interests and investigate potential solutions.
- YG, WRFN and the Government of Canada are engaged in trilateral discussions on shared priorities, with a focus on parks and protected areas and the Canada-US border station.

Interim Protected Lands (IPLs)

- Since 1989, approximately 136 land parcels have been protected for a future treaty with WRFN. The current protection orders expire on March 31, 2025.
- It is anticipated that the continuation or potential replacements for the Interim Protected Lands will be discussed at the trilateral table.

Major Projects

- YG is working with WRFN and other affected First Nations to develop a disturbance monitoring plan in accordance with the s.110a recommendation of the Coffee Gold project decision document under YESAA.
- YG and WRFN are developing a project-specific consultation plan for the proposed Casino Mine Project, which is currently in the pre-assessment phase of the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board's process.

White River First Nation – Issues and Initiatives

Executive Council
Office

Capacity Funding and Consultation

- YG provides annual funding to support WRFN's participation in YG's negotiations and consultation and engagement processes.
- YG also provides project-specific engagement and consultation funding in certain scenarios

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 08 26

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

**Taku River Tlingit First Nation –
Issues and Initiatives**Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- We are advancing bilateral discussions with the Taku River Tlingit on several topics including a government-to-government agreement guiding how we work together.
- As a part of these discussions, the Yukon government is considering a land transfer.
- The potential land transfer relates to an 11.5 square kilometer area, known as the Áashú [AH-shoo] Lands.
- It is located off the Atlin Road, within the Taku River Tlingit First Nation's asserted traditional territory and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation's Traditional Territory.
- These initiatives are intended to address the decision in the litigation brought by the First Nation against the Yukon government in 2014.

If additional information is needed:

- These discussions are not treaty or self-government agreement negotiations.
- We are consulting with Carcross/Tagish First Nation on potential impacts to their treaty and Aboriginal rights should the land transfer go ahead.
- No decision will be made about the land transfer before the consultation with Carcross/Tagish First Nation is concluded.
- The proposed Áashú Lands transfer does not include lots held by private landowners.
- The private lots would remain with existing owners and their access would be maintained on a public road.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The potential transfer of the Áashú Lands was publicly announced by the Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN) in their newsletter in 2023.

Taku River Tlingit First Nation – Issues and Initiatives

Executive Council
Office

-
- Carcross/Tagish First Nation (C/TFN) also distributed a letter to its Citizens about TRTFN's land interests in the Yukon in 2023.
 - Several questions about the potential transfer of the Áashú Lands were raised during the 2023 Spring and Fall Legislative Assembly sittings.
-

Background:

- TRTFN is a transboundary First Nation based in Atlin, British Columbia. TRTFN asserts a traditional territory in the Yukon that overlaps portions of the Traditional Territories of C/TFN, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and Teslin Tlingit Council.

Statement of Claim

- In 2014, TRTFN filed a Statement of Claim requesting court declarations on three matters: consultation on mineral staking and exploration, the proposed Atlin Lake Campground and the issuance of hunting licenses and seals.
- The court granted two mineral declarations.
 - Declaration 2 regarding mineral exploration is in effect and was addressed through the implementation of the Class 1 notification system.
 - A consent order suspending Declaration 1 from coming into effect is currently in place. (Declaration 1 states that YG has a duty to consult TRTFN before granting mineral rights. This is not possible under the current free entry system.)
- In July 2017, the Yukon government (YG) and TRTFN filed an Abeyance Agreement with the Supreme Court of Yukon.
- Under the Abeyance Agreement each party agreed to provide notice prior to taking steps on the other matters set out in the 2014 Statement of Claim.
- In March 2019, YG prohibited entry for mineral staking and land dispositions on the Áashú Lands. Those prohibitions are in place until December 31, 2024.
- In Fall 2023, YG and TRTFN negotiators completed draft agreements to resolve the litigation.
- YG temporarily paused consultation with C/TFN and discussion with TRTFN about the agreements because of ongoing discussions with C/TFN on other matters and election processes for both Nations.

Tripartite Negotiations and Tlingit Nation Rebuilding

- TRTFN, YG and the governments of Canada and BC are engaged in joint discussions on matters of priority to TRTFN.

**Taku River Tlingit First Nation –
Issues and Initiatives**

Executive Council
Office

- TRTFN has informed YG of its ongoing engagements with C/TFN and Teslin Tlingit Council to rebuild a Tlingit approach to governance. YG is providing support for ongoing discussions among the Tlingit Nations.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 08 26

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Recommended Response:

- The Yukon *Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* Oversight Group is a joint effort between the Governments of Canada and Yukon and Yukon First Nations to oversee the YESAA process and promote its ongoing improvement.
- It is a priority for the YESAA Oversight Group to seek efficiency and certainty of assessment processes under the Yukon *Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* and support the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board's ability to fulfil their legislated responsibilities.
- The Oversight Group is making progress on an amendment to the Yukon *Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*.
- This amendment would provide a mechanism in which existing projects requiring amendments or renewals of their authorizations could be exempted from a new assessment if certain criteria are met and affected First Nations consent.
- The Oversight Group continues to work with the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board to identify and advance other improvements to the YESAA process and is supportive of YESAB's efforts to address their ongoing capacity challenges

Additional Response:

- The Oversight Group committed to undertake a review of the development assessment process set out in YESAA by 2027, as outlined in their Terms of Reference.
- The Oversight Group will define the scope and approach for this review.

Context - this may be an issue because:

- Industry representatives are monitoring progress on the proposed amendment to the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* (YESAA).
- On May 5, 2024, the Yukon Chamber of Mines sent a letter to the Chair of the Oversight Group outlining concerns with YESAB's notice on YESAB's current organizational challenges and anticipated impacts on assessment timelines.
- YESAB continues to indicate organizational challenges to meet rules-based timelines.

Background:

- The Oversight Group was established because of the YESAA Reset Memorandum of Understanding ("Reset MOU"), signed in November 2017.
- The Oversight Group is composed of representatives from Canada, YG and the CYFN. A representative from ECO represents YG.
- In 2018, the Oversight Group adopted joint priorities which focus on three main areas:
 - revitalizing the YESAA Forum;
 - improvements to consultation and engagement; and
 - policy development and targeted technical working groups.
- YG and CYFN sent a joint letter to the federal Minister of Northern Affairs in December 2020 requesting a focused review of the YESAA.
- In February 2021, the Minister of Northern Affairs indicated his commitment to working with members of the Oversight Group on amendments and renewals.
- The purpose of the review will be to propose amendments to address the need for an assessment when a project's authorization is amended or renewed.
- Yukon First Nations maintain that any decisions concerning determining the need for an assessment of project amendments and renewals within First Nations' traditional territories will require the agreement of that First Nation. YG supports their position.
- The Technical Working Group, supporting the Oversight Group, held engagement workshops with industry, First Nations, and other organizations on the targeted YESAA amendment to address the assessment of amendments and renewals on October 25 and November 16, 2022.

YESAA Reset Oversight Group

Executive Council
Office

- The engagement period closed December 2, 2022. A What We Heard report was developed and shared with the Oversight Group.
- In fall 2023, the Technical Working Group completed a guidance document that would address concerns identified during engagement and recommended to the Oversight Group a small revision to the proposed amendment.
- The Oversight Group continues to advance the targeted amendment, while taking steps to identify the requirements and process for initiating the full review of YESAA and the Regulations to follow.
- A federal Memorandum to Cabinet is expected to be submitted by the Government of Canada for the targeted amendment to YESAA in fall 2024; the federal government is currently completing Crown consultation with First Nations on the proposed concept.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 10 07

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Session Briefing Note

Yukon Wetland Policy and Status

Fall 2024

Environment and
Energy, Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- I am pleased to share that we are making progress on several initiatives to implement the wetland stewardship policy.
- All projects undergoing environmental assessment by the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB) are reviewed for potential impacts to wetlands.
- We are working to improve guidance for operators and project proponents to identify and mitigate potential impacts to wetlands during the environmental assessment stage.
- We are in year two of a four-year project to complete territory-wide wetland mapping. So far, we have established a partnership with Environment and Climate Change Canada, evaluated our existing data and methodologies, and completed extensive field data collection.
- We have developed a draft guidance document for the nomination and evaluation of Wetlands of Special Importance. Once the guidance document is finalized, we will be able to accept the first intake of nominations for Wetlands of Special Importance.
- We have also drafted Yukon-specific wetland classification standards. These standards will establish a common foundation for all future work relating to wetlands in the territory. We intend to engage with First Nations and other interested parties on both documents in late 2024.

Session Briefing Note

Yukon Wetland Policy and Status

Fall 2024

Environment and
Energy, Mines and Resources

Additional response:

- During the summer of 2023 and 2024, we collected aerial imagery to support local-scale wetland mapping and vegetation mapping in the Klondike goldfields region. This information is needed to support more detailed local-scale wetland mapping.
- We also supported Ducks Unlimited Canada to develop an accessible and user-friendly field guide to identify wetlands. This document is now available through Ducks Unlimited Canada.
- We are supporting a new research effort led by the Wildlife Conservation Society Canada that looks at how carbon is stored and released in Yukon wetlands and how it may be impacted by industrial activities.
- You can now find information about Yukon wetlands, how the policy is being implemented, and guidance for industry on Yukon.ca. We are also developing a new public-facing information hub for wetlands maps and related spatial information.

Third response:

- We acknowledge the importance of responding to new information as we continue to improve our understanding of the Yukon's wetlands through scientific, traditional and local knowledge.
- We will continue to engage with other governments, departments, agencies, regulatory bodies, and external partners to discuss specific aspects of wetland stewardship policy implementation.

Session Briefing Note

Yukon Wetland Policy and Status

Fall 2024

Environment and
Energy, Mines and Resources

- We remain committed to addressing wetland stewardship and protection within land use planning discussions and project reviews.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Implementation of the Wetlands Policy and the ongoing management of wetlands is of significant interest to Yukoners.

Background:

- On January 10, 2023 we released A Policy for the Stewardship of Yukon's Wetlands. The goal of the policy is to ensure the benefits of Yukon's wetlands are sustained.
- The Government of Yukon committed \$1.68 million over two fiscal years (2023-24 to 2024-25) for the departments of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources to begin jointly implementing the wetland stewardship policy.
- In January 2023, the Government of Yukon formed an internal working group to advance and coordinate the implementation of the wetland stewardship policy.
- The working group is composed of members of Environment, Energy, Mines and Resources, Executive Council Office, and Highways and Public Works.
- The group meets monthly to advance various aspects of policy implementation and ensure a whole-of-government approach to policy implementation.
- See [Appendix A](#) for updates on implementation status.

Approved by:

Dennis Berry

Deputy Minister, Environment

September 25, 2024

Date approved

Lauren Haney

Deputy Minister, Energy, Mines and Resource

Sept 22, 2024

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Yukon Wetland Policy and Status

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Energy, Mines and Resources

Appendix A: Actions within the wetland stewardship policy

Policy Actions (bold = near-term priorities)	Timeline * priority adjusted	Lead	Status update
			Not Started Initiated Underway Near_Complete
1. Develop guidance for the evaluation of wetland benefits in the Yukon	Long-term	ENV	We have completed some initial work comparing processes in other jurisdictions.
2. Update and finalize a Yukon wetland classification system	Near-term	ENV	A draft Yukon Wetlands Classification Standards document will be shared with management partners and stakeholders when it is ready.
3. Develop an accessible and easy to use guide to identifying Yukon's wetlands for proponents and the public	Mid-term	External	We supported Ducks Unlimited Canada in developing an accessible field guide for public use, aligned with our classification system (action 2). Ducks Unlimited Canada released this field guide in July 2024.
4. Develop wetland mapping standards for regional, local, and project specific mapping applications	Near-term	ENV	We are continuing to develop a draft wetland mapping standards document. Following internal government review, we will circulate the draft to management partners and interested stakeholders for review.
5. Create a broad scale territory-wide wetland inventory	Near-term	ENV	In 2023/24 (Year 1 of this work), we evaluated our predictive wetland mapping methodology and compiled existing wetland field information. We are collaborating with Environment and Climate Change Canada to this advance territory-wide wetland mapping. The draft wetland map (level 1: wetland / not wetland) is complete. In 2024/25 we completed an extensive field data collection campaign which will be used to produce a wetland map for the Northern Tutchone region. Future mapping work will expand into other regions.

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6. Support local scale wetland mapping, where needed	Near-term*	ENV	We have partnered with EMR's Forest Management Branch, to collect stereo (3D) aerial imagery for the Yukon Plateau region.
7. Promote northern wetland research	Near-term*	EMR/ENV	Environment is supporting a three-year research project that began in summer 2024, led by the Wildlife Conservation Society, with funding support from Environment and Climate Change Canada.
8. Promote public awareness of wetlands	Long-term	ENV	We anticipate that the release of the Wetlands of Special Importance Guide and the Yukon Wetland Classification Standards will provide some awareness, as will the future launch of the wetlands information hub at Yukon.ca and the first designations of wetlands of Special Importance. Longer-term public information actions are not yet planned.
9. Develop guidance for the application and use of the mitigation hierarchy	Near-term	EMR/ENV	EMR is leading the development of guidance for the application and use of the mitigation hierarchy. ENV is continuing to work with regulatory agencies, particularly related to mining activity, to address wetland impacts during project assessment and regulatory approvals.
10. Update or develop proponent guidance to be used when submitting wetland impact mitigation information	Near-term	EMR	Plans are in place to develop proponent guidance on how to communicate impact mitigation plans.
11. Update or develop Standard Operating Procedures / Preferred Management Practices for	Long-term	EMR	EMR has developed standard terms and conditions for Class 1 mining activities. These are now being applied at the regulatory stage. EMR will review the effectiveness of these standard terms and revise as necessary. EMR

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different activities impacting wetlands			has also developed draft standard terms and conditions for higher impact mining activities that will be applied at the regulatory stage once finalized.
12. Update or develop general wetland reclamation guidelines, and, where required, sector specific guidelines	Near-term*	EMR	EMR continues to apply the Ruby Creek reclamation plan guidelines for placer activities in the Indian River area. During the initial policy implementation phase, reclamation plans are not currently required outside of this area.
13. Develop guidance for offsetting wetland impacts	Long-term	ENV/EMR	A long-term objective that will be explored after near-term and midterm priorities have been advanced.
14. Develop specific and measurable guidance for the interpretation and application of Wetland of Special Importance nomination criteria	Near-term	ENV	We have completed a draft implementation document: <i>Wetlands of Special Importance: Nomination and Evaluation</i> . We intend to share this document with our management partners, for review.
15. Establish a process for legal designation of Wetlands of Special Importance (e.g., through existing legislation such as application of Wilderness Management Areas under the <i>Environment Act</i>).	Mid-term*	ENV	The Department of Environment is evaluating how existing legislative and policy tools can be applied to Wetlands of Special Importance.
16. Create a publicly accessible catalogue of Wetlands of Special Importance.	Mid-term	ENV	In advance of the first call for Wetlands of Special Importance (WSI), we are developing the tools and systems to support a public catalogue. This will be available on the wetland hub at Yukon.ca, once complete.

Executive Committee Faro Mine Remediation Project Canada

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon supports the remediation of the Faro Mine, including the appropriate assessment and licencing of remediation activities.
- The Faro Mine Remediation Project's environmental and socio-economic effects are considered and evaluated through the Yukon *Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* screening process.
- As a decision body for this project, the Yukon government is consulting with the Kaska First Nations, Selkirk First Nation and Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation in a way that meets our obligations and our commitment to build strong relationships with First Nations.

Additional response:

- As with any project, we are committed to participation in all stages of the assessment.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The project is of broad interest to Yukoners, particularly to the communities of Faro and Ross River and other Kaska First Nations, Selkirk First Nation and Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation.
-

Background:

Project information

- The Faro Mine was an open pit lead-zinc mine that began operations in 1969.
- The site was abandoned in 1998 and is currently in care and maintenance.

Executive Committee Faro Mine Remediation Project Canada

Executive Council
Office

- In May 2018, the Government of Canada assumed responsibility for the care and maintenance operations at the mine site.
- A Transition Agreement between the Government of Canada and YG was signed by YG with the support and agreement of the Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) and Selkirk First Nation (SFN).
- The Faro Mine Remediation Project is an important initiative of the Government of Canada – Crown Indigenous Relations Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) – to improve the existing conditions at the Faro mine site.
- The project includes active remediation for a 15-year period to stabilize contaminants.

Assessment process

- The project proposal was submitted to the Executive Committee on August 27, 2019, and after an extended adequacy review, screening of the project commenced on November 21, 2021.
- On July 5, 2024, the Executive Committee issued its Final Screening Report and recommendation. The Decision Bodies had up to 52 days (to August 27, 2024) to decide if the Final Screening Report should be referred back to the Executive Committee for reconsideration. Federal Decision Bodies subsequently extended this deadline to September 27, 2024.
- On September 27, 2024, federal Decision Bodies referred the project back to the Executive Committee for reconsideration. Reasons for this referral included:
 - Anticipated challenges with implementation of some of the terms, particularly term #2 related to water quality objectives.
 - The need for clarifications on some of the terms.
 - Outstanding concerns from First Nations, raised with federal Decision Bodies during consultation.
- Government of Yukon was prepared to accept the Final Screening Report but is supportive of First Nations and federal Decision Bodies in referring the project back for reconsideration.
- On October 2, 2024, the Executive Committee invited the public to provide comments on the FSR and referral back until October 23, 2024. Government of Yukon plans to submit comments by this deadline.

Executive Committee Faro Mine Remediation Project Canada

Executive Council
Office

Consultation with First Nations

- The Government of Yukon is consulting Kaska First Nations, as the project is located within the asserted Kaska traditional territory.
- Selkirk First Nation and Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation are being consulted as well due to potential downstream effects from the Faro Mine on treaty rights.

Yukon Act amendment

- An amendment to the Yukon Act gives the federal Minister responsible for Northern Affairs the same powers with respect to a Type II site on federal land as the responsible Minister in the Yukon government.
- This amendment was agreed to as part of transitioning the administration and control of the Faro Mine site from the Government of Yukon to the Government of Canada.
- It brings together governance of the project, financial responsibility for the remediation and statutory power to manage risks at the site under a single federal Minister.
- This amendment was contemplated in the Faro Mine Transition Agreement, entered into by the federal and territorial governments in 2020.
- The Government of Yukon was consulted.
- It is anticipated the amendment to the Yukon Act will be completed before the end of this fiscal year.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 10 07

Deputy Minister

Date

Executive Council Office

EMR # 4 / ENV #10
Fall 2024**Session Briefing Note**
Dawson Regional Land
Use PlanningEnergy, Mines and Resources
and Environment

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon appreciates that the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government has submitted their proposed modifications to the Recommended Dawson Regional Land Use Plan.
- The Government of Yukon recognizes how important it is for both Parties to complete the current stage of this significant land planning process in the Dawson region and are investing the time needed to complete a thorough review of the Recommended Plan, including consideration of all pertinent views and information.
- We anticipate submitting our response to accept, reject or modify the Recommended Dawson Regional Land Use Plan with written reasons to the Dawson Regional Planning Commission this fall.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government concluded consultation on the Recommended Dawson Regional Land Use Plan [in April 2024](#).
- [Upon the conclusion of consultation with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government, the Government of Yukon completed consultation with White River First Nation through the summer of 2024](#), due to overlapping asserted Traditional Territory in the planning region.
- We remain committed to working with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government and the Commission to achieve a plan that balances diverse land uses in this region, ensuring Yukon First Nation and public priorities are appropriately reflected to best serve the area and all Yukoners.

Session Briefing Note
Dawson Regional Land
Use PlanningEnergy, Mines and Resources
and Environment

- If the Parties reject or request modifications to the Recommended Plan, the Commission will prepare a Final Recommended Plan. We anticipate they could provide a Final Recommended Plan in 2025, at which point there will be another round of public engagement and First Nations consultation.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The Dawson Regional Land Use Plan, the Government of Yukon's response to the Recommended Plan, and the future of the interim withdrawals are of high interest to Yukoners.
- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation has expressed frustration to the media that the Government of Yukon has been slow to respond to the recommended plan, further delaying the land use planning process in their region.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government formed the Dawson Regional Planning Commission in December 2018, [following a pause from 2012-2018 due to the Peel Watershed court case](#).
- The *Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement Chapter 11* process provides the Commission with the autonomy to develop and recommend a plan to the Parties for their consideration.
- The Commission conducted a public consultation on the Draft Plan from June 15 to November 1, 2021.
- The Government of Yukon's response to the Draft Plan in November 2021 focused on six key topics: designations and Land Management Unit boundaries, cumulative effects, wetlands, culture and heritage, missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirited people, and implementation.
- Subsequent comments submitted to the Commission by the Government of Yukon pertained to critical minerals, access, rivers and watercourses, cumulative

Session Briefing Note
Dawson Regional Land
Use Planning**Energy, Mines and Resources**
and Environment

effects and working within the Draft Plan prohibition of entry order (interim and permanent).

- The Commission delivered the Recommended Plan to the Parties (the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government and the Government of Yukon) on June 10, 2022.
- The Government of Yukon and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government conducted a public consultation on the Commission's Recommended Plan from September 20 to December 20, 2022.
- Interim withdrawal of land proposed by the Commission was approved by Order-In-Council on June 15, 2021. This Order was amended on September 7, 2022, to reflect the Recommended Plan. The interim withdrawal is in effect until December 1, 2024, and may be extended to allow time to complete a final plan for the region.
- The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government [concluded party-to-party discussions to achieve consensus on response to the Recommended Plan and submitted their proposed modifications](#) to the Recommended Plan pursuant to 11.6.4 of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement on April 30, 2024, to the Commission.
- The Government of Yukon commenced consultation with White River First Nation, pursuant to bilateral Consultation Agreement and legal duty to consult, in May 2024. On August 21, 2024, White River First Nation submitted a written consultation response to Yukon government.

Approved by:**Paul Moore****November 12, 2024**

Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

Dennis Berry**November 12, 2024**

Deputy Minister of Environment

Date approved

Prepared for Minister Streicker and Clarke,
Departments of Energy, Mines and Resources, and
Environment

Date prepared: August 5, 2024
Last Updated: November 7, 2024

Session Briefing Note

Successor Resource Legislation – Minerals and Public Lands

Energy, Mines and
Resources

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is developing new minerals legislation and new public lands legislation in collaboration with Yukon First Nations governments and transboundary Indigenous groups and governments.
- Creating new minerals legislation is a high priority and we are actively working with First Nations governments and Indigenous groups to develop a recommended framework for the new legislation. The recent heap leach failure at the Eagle Gold Mine has elevated the priority of this work.
- New minerals and lands legislation will improve our regulatory system, respect Aboriginal and Treaty rights and promote reconciliation, protect the environment, minimize public liabilities, strengthen our economy, create the conditions for viable and responsible industry, and ensure benefits for Yukoners and Yukon communities.

Additional response:

- The important insights and perspectives received from First Nations governments, industry representatives, environmental organizations, and the public will inform the next phases of the legislative development process for both new minerals and new lands legislation.
- In August 2024, we completed a 3-month public engagement on public lands legislation. Over 200 people attended public open-houses held in most communities throughout the Yukon and approximately

Session Briefing Note

Successor Resource Legislation – Minerals and Public Lands

Energy, Mines and
Resources

100 people completed the online survey to share perspectives on the legislative options.

- On August 27, 2024 we released a What We Heard report on new minerals legislation which summarizes the input received from the public, industry, stakeholders and First Nation governments during an engagement period in spring 2023.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The desire to see new minerals and public lands legislation developed has been a longstanding interest of Yukon First Nations governments stemming from commitments in the 2003 Devolution Transfer Agreement. The recent heap leach failure at the Eagle Gold Mine has elevated the priority of this work.

Background:

- As of August 23, 2024, EMR has committed \$1.7M (of a total budget of \$1.9M) to support the participation of First Nations governments, transboundary Indigenous groups, and stakeholders in the development of new minerals and new lands legislation.

Minerals

- A Steering Committee for new minerals legislation which includes representatives of the Government of Yukon, Council of Yukon First Nations, Yukon First Nations governments and transboundary Indigenous groups was struck in September 2021.
- The Steering Committee worked to develop potential approaches for key policy issues from August 2021 to December 2022.
- This work formed the basis of a 90-day public engagement which concluded in May 2023. A What We Heard report was released on August 27, 2024.
- The Steering Committee is currently developing a recommended legislative framework and the participating governments have expressed a priority to work towards an agreement based on those recommendations.

Session Briefing Note

Successor Resource Legislation – Minerals and Public Lands

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Resources

- The Steering Committee has shifted to a smaller working group to advance its work on a recommended legislative framework at a rapid pace. This working group meets intensively approximately every two weeks.
- The Steering Committee is using the results of consultation, public and stakeholder engagement to inform its work.

Public Lands

- Work on new public lands legislation has been ongoing since 2020 and in spring 2022, the Government of Yukon carried out Indigenous consultation and public engagement to understand the views and interests for new lands legislation.
- In November 2022, a Steering Committee was established to direct legislative development that includes representatives of the Government of Yukon, Council of Yukon First Nations, Yukon First Nations governments and transboundary Indigenous groups and governments.
- The Steering Committee drafted a suite of potential approaches for each key policy issue from November 2022 to early 2024, and Indigenous consultation and public engagement on these options was conducted from May through August 2024 and a What We Heard report is currently in preparation.
- This work will lead to a modernized land regime that respects Aboriginal and treaty rights and balances a wide range of interests and values, including the use, sale and lease of public land.

Approved by:

Dennis Berry

2024.09.04

Deputy Minister

Date approved

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

Casino Mine Project

Executive Council
Office

Recommended Response:

- The Casino Mining Corporation informed the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board that their Environmental and Socio-economic Effects Statement submission for the Casino Mine Project will be submitted in or around July 2025.
- The submission will initiate the Panel of the Board review process.
- We are preparing to engage and participate in the panel review process, recognizing the significance of the potential mine to the Yukon and to Canada, particularly for the development of critical minerals, as well as its significance to Yukoners following the heap leach failure at the Eagle Gold Mine.

Additional Response:

- Our government supports mineral development that is environmentally and socially responsible.
- While large-scale mining operations are the backbone of our territorial economy, we must ensure that industry operating today is not doing so at the expense of future Yukoners or the environment.
- We understand our role and responsibility as technical experts, regulators and land and resource managers to ensure that mineral development is planned and evaluated on the best information available during the panel review.
- Some details of the panel review process are still being developed by the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board, such as operational policies.
- Our government continues to monitor these developments.

Casino Mine Project

Executive Council
Office

- Our government is taking a proactive approach to Casino's proposed access which includes the use of the Klondike Highway, upgrades to the Freegold Road, and development of the Casino Road.
 - There are potential benefits and impacts to existing public infrastructure, and to First Nations interests and values.
 - Our government is committed to not licensing another new heap leach facility in the Yukon until the outcomes of an Independent Review Board are incorporated, as appropriate, into licensing and enforcement policies and practices.
-

Context - this may be an issue because:

- The Casino Mine Project would be one of the largest mine projects in Canada and will be the first Panel of the Board review undertaken since the enactment of the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* (YESAA).
 - The failure of Eagle Gold's heap leach facility has brought new attention to Casino's proposed heap leach facility that, as proposed, would process approximately 9.125 million tonnes (Mt) of ore per year for a total of 210 Mt over the life of the mine, comparable to Eagle Gold's licensed processing rate of ~10 Mt per year for a total of 92 Mt of ore annually.
 - Several recent Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB) assessments within the footprint of the Casino Mine Project access road or mine site have recommended that projects not proceed, due to impacts to moose and caribou, implying that a threshold for cumulative effects has been reached.
-

Background:

Project Overview

- The Casino Project (the Project) is a proposed large-scale copper, gold, molybdenum and silver mine located approximately 150 kilometres northwest of Carmacks in west-central Yukon.
-

Casino Mine Project

Executive Council
Office

- It is owned by Casino Mining Corporation (CMC), a subsidiary of Western Copper and Gold.
- The proposed mine, and its access road and infrastructure, are within the Traditional Territories of Selkirk First Nation, Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and within the White River First Nation asserted area.
- Kluane First Nation Treaty rights may also be impacted by downstream effects.
- The mine would process about 145,000 tonnes of ore per day over a 27-year mine life, making it the largest mine by production in Canada's history.
- The project proposes a conventional open pit mining operation and processing using a mill and flotation circuit and heap leach facility, and permanent storage of tailings and waste rock in a large-scale tailings management facility (TMF).
- Proposed access to the mine would involve upgrading the Freegold Road (83 kilometers), and development of the 123 kilometers Casino Trail into an all-season road.
- Approximately 188 trucks/day, (376 trucks round trip), would haul the processed ore from the mine site to the Port of Skagway.
- The mine is expected to employ approximately 1,400 people during construction and approximately 700 people during operations.
- As proposed, the mine requires the construction and operation of a 200 MW LNG facility.

Panel Review Process

- In 2014, the Casino Mining Corporation (CMC) submitted a Project Proposal to the YESAB Executive Committee for screening.
- After two years in the Adequacy Review stage, the YESAB Executive Committee determined that the Project requires a Panel review for the following reasons:
 - a) the project involves technology that is controversial in the Yukon; and
 - b) the project might contribute significantly to cumulative adverse environmental or socio-economic effects in the Yukon.
- YESAB issued guidelines for the development of the Environmental and Socio-economic Effects Statement (ESES) for the Project in 2016.
- In a letter to Casino Mining Corporation dated October 28, 2022, YESAB outlined the reasons for their decision to revise the ESES guidelines. YESAB issued the draft

Casino Mine Project

Executive Council
Office

revised ESES guidelines on January 3, 2023. The Government of Yukon Interdepartmental Working Group for the Casino Mine Project reviewed and provided comments on the guidelines on April 19, 2023.

- YESAB issued the final revised ESES Guidelines on September 12, 2023. CMC provided an updated schedule for their ESES Submission on August 11, 2024 indicating a submission date in July, 2025. Submission of the ESES will initiate the panel review process.
- Yukon government attended several participant education sessions hosted by YESAB on the development of key components of the panel review process, including the Panel of the Board Terms of Reference and the determination of the primary location of effects.
- Representatives from Yukon government, Canada, the governments of Selkirk First Nation, White River First Nation, and Little Salmon Carmack's First Nation, as well as the Proponent, were unanimous in their view that YESAB should begin work, and engage with participants, on a draft Terms of Reference in advance of the submission of the ESE Statement. The Minister of the Executive Council Office is the Government of Yukon decision body for a YESAB Panel Review.
- Other decision bodies will include Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation and several federal decision bodies.
- The Panel will comprise three YESAB members, excluding the chair. Its membership will be determined once the company files its submission.
- Details of participant funding and related processes for the Panel Review have yet to be determined.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 10 07

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is actively engaged in Yukon Water Board proceedings as appropriate.
- Our government supports a regulatory process that meets the commitments of Yukon First Nation Final Agreements and is grounded in the principles of reconciliation.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon aims to balance the conservation, development and use of water on behalf of all Yukoners and Canadians.
- We respect the quasi-judicial nature of the Board.
- It is important that governments and regulatory bodies operate within their responsibilities to support predictable regulatory processes and reasonable outcomes.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- On February 21, 2023, the Yukon Water Board (the Board) received an application by Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation (LSCFN) pursuant to Chapter 14 of the LSCFN Final Agreement and ss. 16 & 19 of the Waters Act in relation to the Type B water licence (QZ19-055) issued to the Mount Nansen Remediation Limited Partnership (MNRLP) to determine whether:
 - the licence should be amended in the public interest;
 - the terms and conditions of the licence need to be reviewed due to unforeseen impacts on LSCFN including the consideration of alternatives and measures that can be taken to avoid impacts to LSCFN's treaty rights;
 - MNRLP is in compliance with the terms and conditions of the licence; and
 - LSCFN is entitled to compensation under various provisions of Chapter 14 for loss and damage caused by MNRLP's use of water under the licence and MNRLP's uses of water that are not covered by the licence.

Mount Nansen - LSCFN

Executive Council Office

- LSCFN named three respondents to the application including MNRLP, Government of Yukon (YG) and Government of Canada (Canada).
- Canada and YG submitted Responses to the Board on December 28, 2023, and LSCFN submitted a Reply to the Board on February 2, 2024.
- MNRLP applied for and obtained an amendment to its water licence to temporarily increase the allowable rate of discharge from the water treatment plant from 360 m³/day to 600 m³/day in October 2023.
- Due to LSCFN concerns communicated and reported in the media about insufficient storage capacity for contaminated water, MNRLP submitted a further application for amendment to its water licence. That amendment was granted by the Board on March 27, 2024, and allows for the operation of a mobile water treatment plant among other measures.
- The Water Board indicated that LSCFN's application is likely to be heard in January or February 2025.

Background:

- In 2016, Canada initiated the sale of Mount Nansen due to a combination of escalating remediation costs (paid for by Canada).
- In May 2018, the Supreme Court of Yukon approved the sale of the Mount Nansen Mine site to Alexco Resource and JDS Energy and Mining.
- Under this arrangement, the Mount Nansen Remediation Limited Partnership or MNRLP, a joint venture between Ensero Solutions (formerly Alexco) and JDS Energy and Mining, is contracted to complete remediation work for the Government of Canada, with input from YG and LSCFN.
- Canada and MNRLP entered into a Remediation and Security Agreement (RASA) which describes how MNRLP shall implement a remediation plan at Mt Nansen.
- Canada, YG, and LSCFN entered into a Governments Agreement on June 13, 2019, describing how the governments will work together to implement remediation of Mount Nansen.

Mount Nansen - LSCFN

Executive Council Office

- In support of the sale and remediation process, YG issued a land lease for an area greater than 640 acres and amended an existing Water Board policy to waive the requirement for financial security.
- The transfer of the site to the MNRLP was contingent on the issuance of the care and maintenance water licence.
- In April 2018, YG submitted a project proposal to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board for care and maintenance activities at the site.
- In April 2019, after consulting with First Nations, YG and Canada issued a joint Decision Document for the project.
- In fall 2019, Canada submitted an application for a water licence for care and maintenance activities. MNRLP assumed responsibility for the application in 2020 and received a water licence from the Yukon Water Board on August 21, 2021.
- The Yukon Water Board received comments on the application from YG, LSCFN, and the Yukon Conservation Society.
- There was no public hearing held for the application although one was requested by LSCFN.
- The water licence was significant because it allowed YG to transfer care and maintenance responsibilities to MNRLP in October 2021.
- The water licence enabled MNRLP to install a water treatment plant to address contaminated water originating in the tailing's storage facility.
- The water treatment plant became operational on April 10, 2022.
- It is designed to treat Seepage Pond Water before discharge to ensure it is non-toxic.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

Deputy Minister

Executive Council Office

2024 09 09

Date approved

**Yukon government's approach to
respecting and reflecting Indigenous
ways of knowing, doing and being**

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- We recognize the importance of working collaboratively with Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous groups to deepen our understanding of their knowledge, values and perspectives so that our actions and decisions respect and reflect these ways of knowing, doing and being.
- We held numerous conversations with Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous groups, as well as across Yukon government departments, to build an understanding of needs, interests, values and concerns related to working with Yukon First Nations knowledge.
- Together with an Intergovernmental Working Group, we are working to identify prerequisites and milestones on the path to confirming guiding principles, which will then support implementation priorities.

Additional response:

- Seven Yukon First Nations and two transboundary Indigenous groups identified representatives for an Intergovernmental Working Group so far and we are working on recruiting additional members.
- We are advancing discussions and working toward technical and policy solutions for the appropriate protection and management of Yukon First Nations and Indigenous data and knowledge that has been shared with the Yukon government.

Additional response (Science Advisor):

- The Government of Yukon values the role of Western and Indigenous science in an informed decision-making process.

Yukon government's approach to respecting and reflecting Indigenous ways of knowing, doing and being

Executive Council
Office

- While the Senior Science Advisor position is currently vacant, the work to gather and apply good evidence continues across departments and with partners.
- We intend to take this opportunity to reflect on how we might best situate and support advancing science policy and practice priorities.

Context: this may be an issue because:

- The Yukon government reiterated its commitment to this work in the July 2021 mandate letter; however, it was not included in the 2023 mandate letter.
- Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous groups wish to ensure that the Yukon government proceeds in a way that respects the ownership, levels of sensitivity, value and importance of their accumulated and evolving knowledge.

Background:

- The Government of Yukon does not have a comprehensive corporate approach to working with Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous groups to receive and apply Traditional Knowledge for our actions and decisions.
- Beginning in late 2017, the Office of the Science Advisor led a comprehensive pre-engagement process with Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous groups, as well as Government of Yukon departments.
- A draft approach was brought to the December 2019 Yukon Forum, where discussions reinforced the importance of this work, and the need to proceed carefully.
- Invitations were issued to Yukon First Nations and transboundary Indigenous groups in summer and fall 2021 for a formal Intergovernmental Working Group to guide this work.
- Eleven members are delegated to the Intergovernmental Working Group so far, representing seven Yukon First Nations (Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Carcross/Tagish First Nation, Kluane First Nation, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, Ross River Dena Council, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and White River First Nation)

Yukon government's approach to respecting and reflecting Indigenous ways of knowing, doing and being

Executive Council
Office

and two transboundary Indigenous groups (Acho Dene Koe First Nation and Gwich'in Tribal Council).

- Working group meetings have focused on relationship and trust building; terms of reference; goals, milestones, and related steps on the path toward guiding principles; as well as on the group's guidance and questions on developing Indigenous knowledge protection and a tracking policy and technical solution.
- The Yukon government remains open to bilateral conversations with Yukon First Nations that do not wish to participate in multilateral group discussions and to those that are not ready to proceed with this conversation at this time.
- While these broader efforts and discussions continue, we are applying what we have learned so far to other areas of work, including support for Indigenous-led research and research methods, exploration of corporate training options for concepts related to Indigenous knowledge ownership and control, and guidance for Yukon government employees and external researchers on best practices for working with Yukon First Nations and Indigenous knowledge holders and knowledge.

Senior Science Advisor

- The Senior Science Advisor position is currently vacant. This provides the opportunity to reflect on its mandate, scope, and where these functions are best situated in government.
- The Indigenous Knowledge Policy Advisor will continue for the duration of the incumbent's term, and will be supported by other branches to continue ongoing work.
- Across government, many departments are taking steps to work respectfully with Indigenous knowledge and knowledge holders, such as through the establishment of Information Sharing Agreements that reflect Yukon First Nations' rights to govern the access to and application of their collective knowledge.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 09 09

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Streamlining of Regulatory Assessment Process

Executive Council Office

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is taking action to improve the territory's assessment and regulatory system.
- Assessment and regulation should be efficient, predictable and grounded in the principles of reconciliation.
- The Government of Yukon is developing new minerals legislation and new public lands legislation in close collaboration with Indigenous governments.
- Since early 2021, the YESAA Oversight Group has been developing an approach that would allow, with Yukon First Nations' consent, an exemption from assessment for projects that involve a renewal or amendment to an existing authorization.

Additional response:

- We are implementing priority actions from the Wetlands Stewardship Policy, which was released in January.
- The Government of Yukon is committed to working with Yukon First Nations, Government of Canada and relevant Boards and Councils to ensure project proposals have effective Regional Land Use Plan conformity checks.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Industry groups have identified concerns around efficient regulatory and assessment processes.
-

Streamlining of Regulatory Assessment Process

Executive Council Office

Background:

- A Steering Committee for New Minerals Legislation was struck in September 2021. It includes representatives of the Government of Yukon, Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN), Yukon First Nations governments and Transboundary Indigenous governments.
- The Steering Committee for New Minerals Legislation is working to develop a recommended framework for a new regime that will cover all aspects of new legislation. Information from the public engagement and Indigenous consultation period in 2023 is being considered by the Committee, and a What We Heard document was released on August 27, 2024.
- The Steering Committee for New Public Lands Legislation developed options for new legislation based on several key policy issues. The Yukon government recently finished a public engagement and First Nation consultation period on the options. The Steering Committee will reconvene in the coming months to develop a recommended framework for a new regime, considering input received during public engagement and consultation.
- The YESAA Reset MOU established the YESAA Oversight Group, with members from the governments of Canada and Yukon, and CYFN. One of the YESAA Oversight Group objectives is to look for improvements in its implementation.
- Consultation and engagement on a proposed approach to renewals and amendments under YESAA occurred in early 2023. A draft Guidance Document and Implementation Plan was developed and engagement with First Nations on the approach to the targeted amendment is complete.
- Canada received the signed resolution from CYFN in support of the proposed targeted amendment and will seek a Cabinet date for the amendment in fall 2024.
- The YESAA Reset MOU and the Oversight Group's Terms of Reference commit the Oversight Group to undertake a comprehensive review of the YESAA development assessment process at least once every 10 years, beginning from November 2017 unless the Parties agree otherwise. The first review is due in

Streamlining of Regulatory Assessment Process

Executive Council Office

2027. To meet this commitment, the Parties expressed support to prepare for a comprehensive review of YESAA and its Regulations.

- The YG wetlands stewardship policy is a high-level guide that supports environmental and socio-economic assessment, regulatory approval and licensing, as well as provide tools for land-use planning.
- The Department of Environment is leading several policy implementation actions including advancing wetland mapping in priority areas, developing wetland classification standards for the Yukon, wetland mapping standards and guidance for nominating/reviewing Wetlands of Special Importance. (See ENV session note on Wetland Policy).
- The Government of Yukon is in discussions with Council of Yukon First Nations, Yukon First Nations, Canada, and relevant Boards, Councils and Commissions to confirm short-term approaches to conformity checks and long-term funding approaches that are consistent with the Yukon First Nation Final Agreements.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

Deputy Minister
Executive Council Office

2024 09 09

Date approved

Youth Directorate Funding to Community Organizations

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- The Youth Directorate supports programs and services that help youth reach their full potential through mental health and wellness.
- The Youth Directorate provides more than \$1.6 million annually to youth-serving organizations and community groups through several funding programs.
- The Confidence and Supply Agreement provides an additional \$1 million per year to support youth mental health and wellness.

Additional response:

- Our government is committed to organizations that provide valuable supports and services to the territory's youth and communities.
- Our contributions help these organizations keep Yukon youth engaged and build better futures.

Context – this may be an issue because:

- Additional funding to support youth organizations is an ongoing issue.
-

Background:

CASA

- The Youth Directorate was allocated \$500,000 of CASA funding for three fiscal years to provide additional funding support to five key youth organizations to support youth mental health and wellness (2023–24, 2024–25 and 2025–26).
- For 2024-25, over \$1.6 million in annual funding will be provided to the:
 - Association franco-yukonnaise \$32,860 total per year
 - \$31,000 operational funding + \$1,860 CASA funding

Youth Directorate Funding to Community Organizations

Executive Council
Office

- BGC-Yukon – \$479,140 total per year
 - \$297,000 operational funding + \$182,140 CASA funding with additional funding being to support a seven-day per week drop-in service.
- BYTE-Empowering Youth Society \$384,000 total per year
 - \$304,000 operational funding + \$80,000 CASA funding
- Heart of Riverdale Community Centre – \$378,000 total per year
 - \$298,000 operational funding + \$80,000 CASA funding
- Youth of Today Society – \$371,000 total per year
 - \$291,000 + \$80,000 CASA funding
- The Department of Education is also receiving \$500,000 in CASA funding to support mental health in schools.

Funding Programs

- The Youth Directorate provides up to \$422,000 of annual project funding to support:
 - The Youth Developmental Asset Program – \$320,000 for youth activities, training and employment for Kwanlin Dün First Nation and 16 Yukon communities. (see attached)
 - The Youth Investment Fund – \$102,000 for community-driven initiatives aimed at marginalized youth ages 18 and under. (see attached)

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

Deputy Minister

Executive Council Office

2024 09 24

Date Approved

Youth Directorate Funding to Community Organizations

Executive Council
Office

Youth Developmental Asset Program (YDAP) 2024-25 Funding Breakdown

Community	Organization Funded	Allotted Funding	Status
Beaver Creek	White River First Nation	\$14,000.00	Active
Burwash Landing	Kluane First Nation	\$14,000.00	Active
Carcross	Carcross Recreation Board	\$20,000.00	Active
Carmacks	Village of Carmacks	\$20,000.00	Active
Dawson	City of Dawson	\$12,500.00	Active
Dawson	Dawson Arts Society	\$12,500.00	Active
Faro	Town of Faro	\$20,000.00	Active
Haines Junction	Champagne Aishihik First Nation	\$20,000.00	Active
Kwanlin Dun	Kwanlin Dun First Nation	\$20,000.00	Active
Marsh Lake	Marsh Lake Community Society	\$14,000.00	Active
Mayo	Village of Mayo	\$20,000.00	Active
Mount Lorne	Lorne Mountain Community Association	\$14,000.00	Awaiting 23-24 Fiscal Reporting
Old Crow	Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation	\$20,000.00	Active
Pelly Crossing	Selkirk First Nation	\$20,000.00	Active
Ross River	Ross River Recreation Society	\$20,000.00	Active
Tagish	Tagish Community Association	\$14,000.00	Active
Teslin	Village of Teslin	\$20,000.00	Active
Watson Lake	Town of Watson Lake	\$25,000.00	Active
Total Funding for 2024-25 Fiscal Year:		\$320,000.00	

Youth Directorate Funding to Community Organizations

Executive Council
Office

Youth Investment Fund (YIF) 2024-25 Funding Breakdown

Community	Organization Funded	Project	Funding Awarded	Status
Whitehorse	BYTE Empowering Youth	Artist Showcase	\$3,000.00	Closed
Whitehorse	BYTE Empowering Youth	Trail Crew	\$5,000.00	Active
Whitehorse	Fiddleheads Yukon Org.	Pan Northern Youth Fiddle Summitt	\$4,921.00	Active
Whitehorse	Freedom Trails Therapeutic Riding Association	Therapeutic Horseback Riding	\$5,000.00	Active
Dawson	Dawson City Arts Society	Youth Art Enrichment 2025	\$5,000.00	Active
Marsh Lake	Marsh Lake Community Society	Youth Employment	\$5,000.00	Active
Whitehorse	Music Yukon	Arts in the Park 2024	\$5,000.00	Active
Whitehorse	Nlaye Ndasadaye Daycare Society	Preschool Graduation Ceremony	\$1,299.00	Closed
Haines Junction	Pedal Junction Club	Pedal Power: Building Skills in Haines Junction	\$5,000.00	Active
Faro	Town of Faro	Riverside Rhythms	\$5,000.00	Active
Dawson	T'rondek Hwëch'in First Nation	First Trapper Program	\$5,000.00	Active
Whitehorse	U Kon Echelon Bike Club	U Kon Echelon Youth & Para Project	\$5,000.00	Active
Carmacks	Village of Carmacks	Carmacks Recreation Summer Camp	\$3,933.40	Active
Whitehorse	Yukon Theatre for Young People	YTYP Presents "Hadestown"	\$5,000.00	Active
Whitehorse	BYTE Empowering Youth	Rise and Shine Skateboarding Jam	\$500.00	Active
Whitehorse	Freedom Trails Therapeutic Riding Association	Pro EFW Training	\$500.00	Active
Total Funding for 2024-25 Fiscal So Far (Fall intake coming October 1 st , 2024)			\$64,153.40	

Recommended response

- The Government of Yukon is committed to working in partnership to help youth succeed.
- We continue to support programs and services that promote wellness and help youth to reach their full potential.
- This includes supporting initiatives that increase awareness of available programs and services, empowering youth voices, involving youth in developing programs directed towards them, and providing opportunities for youth to contribute to their communities.

Examples include:

- Community Partnership Table. meets monthly to hear and/or provide current updates to the group.
- Strategy Tracking System A YG strategy tracking system, developed by the Territorial Youth Collective, was received in August 2024.
 - Once placed on a sharable platform, this tracking system will be populated by respective YG department policy staff.
 - The tracking system will identify how all partners are addressing year-two priorities and will be shared quarterly with the Territorial Youth Collective.
- Implementation Teams
 - Yukon government representatives have also joined the Implementation Teams.
 - All Implementation Teams had their second meeting and are considering the following potential projects:
 - Basic Needs/Community Safety
 - working on a substance free Halloween dance in Haines Junction.
 - researching community safety audits.
 - Mental Wellness/Land Stewardship
 - youth climate anxiety workshop.
 - uplifting the next gen men positive masculinity groups.
 - Access to Education/Employment

Territorial Youth Strategy

Executive Council Office

- community dinners where youth work alongside a local chef to gain culinary experience and food related trainings.
- community build where youth/community members come together to build something like community garden, picnic tables, library boxes.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- In July 2024, the Territorial Youth Collective released year-two priorities of the Territorial Youth Strategy which may lead to questions about Yukon government support to address these priorities.

Background:

- In 2023, Communities Building Youth Futures, in collaboration with many diverse stakeholders (young people, youth serving organizations, businesses, community members and First Nations governments) created a draft Territorial Youth Strategy consisting of youth identified issues with year-one priorities.
- The strategy is community-driven and includes Government of Yukon input from various levels. The strategy's vision is that all youth in the territory feel empowered, have a positive sense of self, have mutually caring and fulfilling relationships, and feel connected to and supported by their family, community and land.
- The six main priority areas in the strategy are called "Pathways to a Sense of Belonging" and focus on: basic needs, community safety and harm reduction, mental wellness and connects, access to learning and education, employment and career opportunities, and land and stewardship.
- The intent of the strategy is to serve as a guiding document for decision-makers at all levels and in all sectors and will be revised as needed on an ongoing basis at annual Yukon Youth Summits.
- The primary organizations involved in the Territorial Youth Strategy included: Communities Building Youth Futures, BGC Yukon, BYTE – Empowering Youth Society, the Child & Youth Advocate Office and the Youth of Today Society.

Territorial Youth Strategy

Executive Council Office

- In March 2024, the Tamarack Institute funding to Communities Building Youth Futures ended so the entity changed their name to the Territorial Youth Collective and is now part of BYTE – Empowering Youth Society.
- It is anticipated that there will be a future request for funding from YG to support the operational funding of the Territorial Youth Collective.

Territorial Youth Strategy and Year-two priorities:

- In April 2024, Premier Pillai and Minister McLean signed a declaration in support of the draft Territorial Youth Strategy along with other Yukon leaders.
- Signatories of this declaration are expected to assist in, and support, the implementation of this strategy.
- In July 2024, the final version of the strategy and respective year-two priorities were publicly released.
- Year-two priorities align with the six pathways to a sense of belonging and include:
 - housing security;
 - funding for treatment centres and intervention supports;
 - harm reduction supports;
 - training for recreation capacity;
 - healthy mentors and positive role models;
 - mental health resources for remote communities;
 - intergenerational connections;
 - reducing stigma and increasing support for people struggling with mental wellness challenges;
 - sense of belonging in schools;
 - alternative education;
 - healthy relationships and consent;
 - work-study opportunities;
 - youth employment in remote communities; and
 - land based programming and healing .
- The Youth Directorate manager will continue to be a member of the Community Partnership Table and will be YG's primary contact for the strategy tracking system.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 09 25

Deputy Minister

Executive Council Office

Date approved

**Notable Yukon Water Board
Applications**Executive Council
Office

Topic: Current Yukon Water Board (“Board”) licence applications of note.

QUARTZ UNDERTAKINGS	
APPLICANT	DETAILS
BMC – Kudz Ze Kayah	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A new Decision Document (DD) was issued for the project on March 7, 2024.• The Type A water licence application went to public comment in January 2023 with a deadline for interventions of May 5, 2023.• The applicant responded to interventions and submitted updated documents to the Board on July 15, 2024.• The updated documents are being reviewed for adequacy.
Goldcorp Kaminak Ltd.- Coffee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The company submitted a Type A water licence application in November 2023.• Adequacy review of the application is underway with technical review supported by external consultants.
Alexco Keno Hill Mining Corp.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The company has a Type A Water Licence and pursuant to its water licence, submitted an updated Reclamation and Closure Plan (RCP) and security costing on November 27, 2023• The Board is reviewing the RCP and security costing with the support of external technical consultants.

CHAPTER 14 WATER USE DISPUTE	
APPLICANT	DETAILS
Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In February 2023, Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation (“LSCFN”) submitted a water-use dispute application under the Waters Act and Chapter 14 of the First Nation Final Agreement regarding the water licence at the Mt. Nansen mine site.• The Parties to the Chapter 14 dispute are the LSCFN, Government of Canada, Government of Yukon and Mount Nansen Remediation Limited Partnership (licensee).• Technical and compensation review is supported by external consultants.• A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for Q1 2025.

**Notable Yukon Water Board
Applications**Executive Council
Office

HYDRO UNDERTAKINGS	
APPLICANT	DETAILS
Yukon Energy Corp. – Aishihik - Five-Year Monitoring & Adaptive Management Plan – Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Yukon Energy Corporation (“YEC”) has a Type A licence for the Aishihik Generating Station.The Board’s review of the Five-Year Monitoring & Adaptive Management Plan (“MAMP”) is currently underway.Pursuant to the water licence, YEC must submit a long-term MAMP for review by December 31, 2024.
Yukon Energy Corporation – Whitehorse Rapids	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Yukon Energy Corporation’s (“YEC”) current Type A water licence expires May 31, 2025.A water licence application has not been submitted to the Board.An external technical consultant will be required to support the Board’s review of the application.

MUNICIPAL UNDERTAKINGS	
APPLICANT	DETAILS
Town of Watson Lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Town of Watson Lake’s current water Type A water licence for the municipal water use and deposit of waste expires January 24, 2025.The Town of Watson Lake has not yet submitted an application to the Board.

Notable Yukon Water Board Applications

Executive Council
Office

PLACER UNDERTAKINGS	
APPLICANT	DETAILS
Fellhawk Enterprises Ltd.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On October 6, 2021, the company submitted an application to the Board for a Type B Water Licence and Class 4 placer land use approval. The mining plan proposed works on mining grants currently granted in another company's mining land use approval. The Board denied the application for a Water Licence and Approval. The company filed a petition filed in Supreme Court of Yukon on August 30, 2022. The YSC found the Board's reasons for decision were not adequate and as a result the Court found the Board's decisions were not reasonable. The YSC ordered the Board to reconsider the application. The reconsideration is underway.

Statistics - Water Licence Applications 2013 to Date			
Year	Type B	Type A	Total
2014	120	4	124
2015	133	2	135
2016	123	8	131
2017	135	7	142
2018	121	5	126
2019	102	7	109
2020	116	5	121
2021	93	6	99
2022	108	3	111
2023	88	4	92
2024	78	0	78

Statistics do not include plans submitted for review and approval by the Board.

**Notable Yukon Water Board
Applications**

Executive Council
Office

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 09 18

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Budget Operations for Cabinet

Executive Council Office

Recommended response:

- This year's Cabinet budget is \$3.4 million.
- This funding provides members of the Executive Council with planning and administrative support services.
- There has been no increase to this budget since 2019/20.
- Details of out-of-territory travel for Ministers are posted to Yukon.ca.

Ministers

\$348,400 in funding is for expenses related directly to the Ministers.

- \$293,400 is allocated for in-and out-of-territory travel for Ministers and their staff, as required.
- \$50,000 is allocated for communication costs (telephones, etc.) for Ministers and their support staff.
- \$5,000 is allocated for other miscellaneous expenses.

	2024-25		2023-24		2022-23	
	Budget	Estimate	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Travel	293,400	315,000	293,400	384,991	293,400	250,764
Communications	50,000	30,000	50,000	27,415	50,000	27,938
Other Expenses	5,000	8,000	5,000	9,790	5,000	9,344
TOTAL	348,400	353,000	348,400	422,196	348,400	288,046

Cabinet Offices support

The Cabinet Offices support budget totals \$3,083,000.

- 98 per cent of this budget funds personnel costs and the remaining being allocated to office operations (supplies, material, training etc.).

Budget Operations for
Cabinet

Executive Council Office

- There are currently 24 full-time employees budgeted in the Cabinet Office.
 - 14 advisory positions;
 - 7 administrative positions; and
 - 3 executive positions.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Travel expenses for the past two years have exceeded the budget. This is mainly due to increased international travel and increased costs for hotels and transportation.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey
Deputy Minister
Executive Council Office

2024 09 16
Date approved

Electoral Boundaries

Executive Council Office

Recommended response:

- The Electoral Boundaries Commission examined the current territorial electoral district boundaries and tabled their final report on October 9, 2024 with suggested changes to the boundaries, and the number and names of electoral districts.
- As required by section 418 of the *Elections Act*, our government tabled a bill, the Electoral District Boundaries Act, reflecting the recommendations of the Commission.
- Review of the electoral districts ensures that Yukoners have fair, effective and balanced representation in the Assembly as the territory's population grows and shifts.

Additional response:

- Updated electoral district boundaries will apply in the next election if the required legislation is passed and a period of six months elapses before the dissolution of this Legislative Assembly.
- I want to thank the Electoral Boundaries Commission for their hard work. They conducted research and public hearings, listened to Yukoners, and thoughtfully considered what is best for the Yukon.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- In the 2019 and 2021 reports, the Chief Electoral Officer recommended that a Commission be established ahead of the next territorial general election.
- The boundaries recommended by the 2018 commission were introduced as amendments to the *Electoral Boundaries Act* but were defeated by the government.
- The Chief Electoral Officer's reports recommend that other changes be made to the *Elections Act* such as imposing restrictions on political parties and campaign financing. The Yukon is the only jurisdiction in Canada without such limits.

Background:

- Current electoral boundaries were established in 2008.

Electoral Boundaries

Executive Council Office

- Three elections have been held using these boundaries (2011, 2016, 2021).
- The *Elections Act* provides that commissions should be appointed after every second general election. A commission was appointed in 2017.
- The Yukon's population has grown and shifted significantly since 2008.
- The growth of the Whistle Bend neighbourhood is one example where the population has grown by over 3,700 in the last 16 years.
- The Commission proposes:
 - to create two new electoral districts in Whitehorse - Whistle Bend North and Whistle Bend South - that will provide representation to the Whistle Bend population;
 - to combine Watson Lake, Ross River and Faro into one electoral district;
 - to divide Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes into two districts by:
 - including Golden Horn with Mount Lorne, and Marsh Lake; and
 - merging Teslin with Southern Lakes, Carcross and Tagish; and
 - that Vuntut Gwitchin and the Klondike remain distinct districts.
 - The proposed changes will increase the number of electoral districts in the Yukon from 19 to 21 MLAs, 13 in Whitehorse, and 8 in rural Yukon.
- Small boundary adjustments to electoral districts in the City of Whitehorse are also proposed to reflect population changes and the removal of Golden Horn.
- The proposed changes increase the number of electoral districts in the Yukon from 19 to 21 MLAs, 13 in Whitehorse, and eight in rural Yukon.
- Nominees from each party represented in the Legislative Assembly were appointed to the Commission in mid-December 2023.
- Members include:
 - Chief Justice Suzanne M. Duncan, Chair, determined by legislation;
 - Warren Holland – nominated by the Yukon Party;
 - Patricia Cuning – nominated by the Yukon Liberal Party;
 - Elizabeth Hanson, nominated by the Yukon New Democratic Party; and
 - Maxwell Harvey – Chief Electoral Officer, Commission support

Electoral Boundaries

Executive Council Office

- The Commission conducted research and held public hearings to prepare its report and recommendations.
-

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 10 22

Deputy Minister
Executive Council Office

Date approved

Yukon media spending

Executive Council Office

Recommended response:

- Having a strong local media presence is important to our community and critical to a healthy, functioning democracy.
- We use a range of advertising mediums to reach Yukoners where they are – this includes print, radio and digital advertising.
- The Government of Yukon is committed to advertising with local media outlets in order to keep Yukoners informed about the services and supports available to them.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon's advertising budget is not centralized. This allows communications and program experts across departments and corporations to make decisions about when, where and to whom to advertise to maximize reaching their target audiences.
- I can provide a sense of overall advertising spending for the 2023–24 fiscal year broken down by department but bear in mind that each department tends to track, name and pay for advertising differently.
- It would take an unjustifiable amount of time to pull comparable information together. Public servants need to be focusing their time on delivering programs and services to Yukoners.
- On this basis of not comparing like with like, departments tracked the following approximate amounts under their advertising coding:
 - Community Services – \$61,100
 - Economic Development – \$128,100
 - Education – \$83,200
 - Energy, Mines and Resources – \$91,500
 - Environment – \$39,700
 - Executive Council Office – \$108,900
 - Finance – \$3,400

Yukon media spending

Executive Council Office

- French Language Services Directorate – \$16,100
- Health and Social Services – \$257,900
- Highways and Public Works – \$157,700
- Justice – \$128,600
- Public Service Commission – \$10,500
- Tourism and Culture – \$127,300
- Women and Gender Equity Directorate – \$2,500
- The total of these amounts is just under \$1.3 million.
- Generally, the majority of government advertising occurs through local outlets with only a small percentage directed towards social media companies outside the territory.
- Significant government spending supports many businesses beyond traditional media outlets. This includes graphic designers, ad placement agencies, marketing firms and others.
- We welcome information about Yukon media outlets' circulation, rates and readership demographics to help us plan how to best reach Yukoners about specific government programs and services.
- Over the past year, we have invited Yukon media outlets to join the government's communications directors' meeting to present their advertising opportunities. We would be happy to make this a regular occurrence.
- We respect the independence of the media and therefore the Yukon government does not provide direct funding for media outlets beyond advertising.

Context – this may be an issue because:

- On April 9, 2024, the topic of the government's local advertising spending and the closure of the Whitehorse Star was raised in the Yukon Legislative Assembly. The Premier committed to share the amount spent on advertising, including in print and online, and also referred to the change in procurement advertising.

Yukon media spending

Executive Council Office

- The Yukon Star newspaper, set up by former Whitehorse Star staff in May 2024 after the Whitehorse Star closed, announced its closure on August 25, 2024, “due to insufficient revenues and working capital”.

Background:

- The Whitehorse Star announced its closure on April 5, 2024, and its plans to cease publication on May 17, 2024. The Whitehorse Star was the longest-running independent newspaper in the Yukon, operating for 124 years.
- Before closing, the Whitehorse Star provided the Cabinet Office with information that they billed the Yukon government \$263,881.68 for advertising in the 2023–24 fiscal year, which was roughly in line with what was billed to the government during each of the past five fiscal years.
- Based on anecdotal information, we can estimate that:
 - the Department of Environment spent 89 per cent of its advertising budget with local outlets and just 11 per cent with Meta, or Facebook;
 - 63 per cent of the Department of Economic Development’s advertising dollars were spent in the Yukon in 2023–24;
 - **The Department of Highways and Public Works, who run bids&tenders, spends around \$60,000 a year in the territory on other advertising, such as safety campaigns; and**
 - since 2017, Yukon Housing Corporation has advertised almost entirely within the Yukon market.
- **While departments use Quest accounting software, Yukon Housing Corporation, Yukon Liquor Corporation and Yukon Development Corporation use other software, so are not included in the provided list of advertising spending.**
- Potential bidders who are registered on our online Yukon bids&tenders platform receive automatic notifications of government tender opportunities. This is why we no longer advertise tender opportunities.
- The Aid to Publishers component of the federal government’s Canada Periodical Fund can provide local media applicants up to \$1.5 million per periodical.

Yukon media spending

Executive Council Office

- Supporting sustainable, local businesses and helping them thrive is a priority of this government. The Government of Yukon's Department of Economic Development offers several funding programs designed to assist businesses with start up or new program costs.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 10 02

Deputy Minister

Executive Council Office

Date approved

Media Monitoring

Executive Council Office

Recommended response:

Media monitoring and transcription helps the public service make informed decisions.

- In 2024, the Executive Council Office posted a Request for Proposals (RFP) in response to feedback from the Opposition and several government departments that the current media monitoring service is not providing enough detail for the top of the hour broadcast and the cost of transcripts for these short broadcasts is too high.
- We have chosen to terminate the RFP and continue our current contract until March 31, 2026, as the contract states.
- We will work with procurement and the vendor to explore options to improve this service, including addressing top of the hour summaries.

Additional response:

- Transcripts of media coverage are for the use of Government of Yukon staff for internal review, analysis and research.
- As a courtesy, we also provide several arm's-length offices with media monitoring services.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Given opposition parties use the Government of Yukon's media monitoring services, they may be interested in any changes to the service.
-

Media Monitoring

Executive Council Office

Background:

- When the last media monitoring and transcription services contract ended, the department was required by government procurement processes to send out a Request for Proposals.
- The most cost-effective and qualified supplier was awarded the contract.
- The current vendor is providing a similar service at a reduced price.
- While the previous supplier chose to provide verbatim transcripts of news broadcasts in the media monitoring reports, the new provider considers them transcripts and charges accordingly.
- When concerns were first raised about this change, the department worked with the vendor to provide expanded descriptions of each broadcast in the report.
- We were unable to make any further changes within the scope of the contract at the time.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 08 26

Deputy Minister

Executive Council Office

Date approved

Recommended response:

- Work continues on electoral reform, which will ensure that Yukoners are best represented in this Legislative Assembly.
- On November 7, 2023, the motion to accept the Special Committee on the Yukon Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform's final report was supported by a majority of this House.
- That motion enabled the creation of a Yukon Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform, which will recommend a model for electing Members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.
- They will table their final report to the Speaker of the Yukon Legislative Assembly by October 31, 2024.

Additional response:

- The Citizens' Assembly is a representative body of all Yukoners with two representatives from each of the 19 ridings.
- Participants were selected randomly with assistance from the Yukon Bureau of Statistics.
- Almost 1,800 Yukoners declared their willingness to participate in a Yukon Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform.
- Dr. Sara McPhee-Knowles is Chair of the Committee.
- The budget for this work was \$240,000 in the 2023-2024 fiscal year and \$750,000 in the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- The motion to create the Yukon Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform was passed in the fall sitting, and the final report is due October 31, 2024.
-

Background:

- The Official Opposition did not support the passing of the motion.
- Dr. McPhee-Knowles is not related to MLA Tracy McPhee

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 08 26

Deputy Minister

Executive Council Office

Date approved

Establishing the Yukon Fund

Executive Council Office

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to ensuring Yukoners benefit from our natural resources.
- Through budget 2024/25, we enabled the creation of the Yukon Fund.
- This fund celebrates the Yukon's 125th anniversary and is intended to provide long-term financial benefits to future generations of Yukoners.
- We look forward to sharing more details about this exciting initiative after public engagement and technical work is completed.

Additional response:

- The fund will maximize the investment of revenues collected from past oil and gas activities in the Beaufort Sea.
- Work is underway to outline the fund's parameters and how it will be managed.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Premier Pillai announced the Yukon Fund on March 28, 2024, and committed to a public engagement on it later this year.

Background:

- The Yukon government signed the Western Arctic-Tariuq (Offshore) Accord with the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Canada, and the Northwest Territories in August 2023, which formalized resource revenue sharing from future oil and gas exploration and development activities in the South Beaufort Sea.
- The conclusion of the Accord was a condition for Canada to disburse historical oil and gas revenues, further to commitments in the 1993 Canada-Yukon Oil and Gas Accord.

Establishing the Yukon Fund

Executive Council Office

- The Yukon's share of historical revenues remains to be determined and is under negotiation with the Government of the Northwest Territories.
- The Yukon Fund was announced in March 2023, with one dollar symbolically allocated to establish the fund in Budget 2024-25.
- The Yukon government is preparing for a public engagement on the Yukon Fund to obtain input on how to use, grow and manage the Yukon Fund.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey
Deputy Minister
Executive Council Office

2024 09 16
Date approved

Jim Smith Building Warming Centre

Executive Council Office

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon is dedicated to improving the lives of vulnerable Yukoners and committed to creating a safe, inclusive and thriving downtown Whitehorse.
- In December 2023, the Government of Yukon announced the Downtown Whitehorse Safety Response Action Plan, which was updated several times to incorporate public feedback and findings from a Coroner's Inquest.
- As part of this plan, our government executed a pilot project for a warming centre in the Jim Smith Building from March 18 to May 17, 2024.
- During this time, Yukoners accessed a range of essential services, including computer and internet access, printing, telephone, outreach services, warming areas, snacks and beverages, harm reduction supplies, period products, and washroom facilities.
- The warming centre pilot program was a success, and the government looks forward to hosting people on the ground floor of the Jim Smith Building again starting this winter.

Additional response:

- We will continue to work with partner organizations like Blood Ties, the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition, the Council of Yukon First Nations, the RCMP, and numerous women's organizations to help make Whitehorse safer for everyone.

Context — this may be an issue because:

Jim Smith Building Warming Centre

Executive Council Office

- In late January 2024 the warming centre was announced by the Department of Health and Social Services and the pilot began during the spring sitting.

Background:

- The warming centre was opened, in part, because the Whitehorse Public Library was closed from March to April to replace the carpets.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

October 3, 2024

Deputy Minister

Date approved

Executive Council Office

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2024

Health Human Resources

Health and Social
Services

Government priority:

- The Government of Yukon is committed to building a healthy, vibrant and sustainable community using a person-centered approach to wellness to help Yukoners thrive.

Key messages:

- Health Human Resources presents one of the greatest challenges facing Canadian health care systems today.
- Domestically and globally, we are facing unprecedented challenges in retaining, recruiting and training enough health care workers to meet demand.
- These challenges have been further exacerbated by COVID-19, and by our growing and aging population.
- These impacts are being felt here in the Yukon, and we recognize the seriousness of these shortages. A comprehensive Health Human Resource Strategy was released on December 13, 2023.
- This strategy was developed by a Health Human Resources Steering Committee jointly led by the Department of Health and Social Services and the Yukon Hospital Corporation and consisting of members from a wide representation of the sector.
- We are also working closely with federal, provincial, and territorial government partners to respond to these pressures being felt across jurisdictions.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2024

Health Human Resources

Health and Social
Services

Addressing Housing Barriers in Health Human Resource Recruitment:

Key facts:

- One of the key challenges in attracting health professionals to the Yukon is the limited availability of affordable housing, particularly in rural communities. This is a critical barrier to both recruitment and retention efforts.
- The Department of Health and Social Services provides housing for nurses and other critical workers in rural communities.
- When available, the Yukon Hospital Corporation has dedicated short-term staff accommodation units in Whitehorse, Watson Lake and Dawson. It is available for short locum staff, agencies and staff from the Department of National Defense under the MOU to advance their work experience.
- Meeting housing demands is an ongoing challenge. The Department of National Defense staff are scheduled at times when the organization can support them, including housing availability.
 - In seasons of peak housing demand to support itinerant staff, the Yukon Hospital Corporation may choose to not have the Department of National Defense staff on-site.

Bursaries:

Key facts:

- Our government provides funding for the Medical Education Bursary, the Nursing Education Bursary, and the Health and Social Profession Education Bursary programs.
- Consistent with the Health Human Resource strategy, these programs are under review to ensure that they meet current needs and objectives.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2024****Health Human Resources**Health and Social
Services

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- During the 2024– 25 fiscal year, the Department of Health and Social Services has budgeted \$89,000 through the Medical Education Bursary, the Nursing Education Bursary, and the Health Profession Education Bursary programs to provide financial supports for up to 16 new recipients each year.
 - In 2023– 24, a total of 46 Yukoners received bursaries for studies in health care fields:
 - \$82,500 went into 14 medical bursaries;
 - \$65,000 went to 16 students pursuing nursing education, and
 - \$50,000 went to 16 students pursuing other health care professions.
 - Currently, our bursary programs do not include a Return of Service Agreement that requires graduates to return to the Yukon to deliver care.
 - Our government is working to expand our programs to create greater incentives for students to return to work in the Yukon.
 - Yukon residents studying medicine or intending to study medicine can apply to other funding programs administered by the Canadian Medical Foundation, the First Nations Health Program at Whitehorse General Hospital, and the Yukon Foundation.
 - The Government of Canada is offering a student loan forgiveness program for doctors and nurses who reside in a community with a population of 50,000 or less to entice more doctors and nurses to rural communities. It is expected to expand to other health professionals in the future.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2024

Health Human Resources

Health and Social
Services

Department of National Defence's Canadian Forces health services:

Key facts:

- This program welcomes health professionals from the Department of National Defence's Canadian Forces Health Services Group to work in Yukon health care settings to maintain and enhance their knowledge and skills between their deployments.
- Through this partnership, Canadian Forces Health Services nurses and other regulated health professionals have been working in the Yukon to learn, advance and share their expertise while enhancing our health care service across the territory.
- Department of National Defence nurses have been working in the Watson Lake and Dawson community hospitals since May 2024.
- A medical radiation technologist has joined the diagnostic imaging team at the Whitehorse General Hospital under the memorandum of understanding.
- The program has been successful for both the communities and the visiting nurses and has supported workplaces.
- Length of visits depend upon placements and can be for a few weeks to months at a time. The number of health professionals participating will depend on availability and interest.

Foreign Credential Recognition Program:

Key facts:

- The Government of Yukon has entered into a **\$3.6M** funding agreement with the Government of Canada to deliver a four-year pilot project called the Foreign Credential Recognition Program.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2024

Health Human Resources

Health and Social
Services

- The program aims to strengthen and streamline pathways for internationally educated health professionals to enter Yukon's health and social services workforce.
 - This project is expected to run until January 2028.
 - This program is jointly led by Health and Social Services and Economic Development and includes the Internationally Educated Health Professionals navigator program.

Health Human Resources Strategy:

Key facts:

- The Yukon Health Human Resources Strategy was released in December 2023.
- The strategy provides a systemic, coordinated and informed roadmap towards a health and social services system that will meet Yukoners' current and future needs.
 - The strategy builds on existing progress in the Yukon's health and social service sectors and includes key metrics to track progress and success, which will be reported publicly.
- The strategy is built on five key pillars, which aim to boost the delivery of quality care and services and attract more health professionals to live and work in the Yukon.
 - Retain: Build and support skilled, passionate, healthy, diverse and inclusive teams.
 - Recruit: Grow and attract a passionate, engaged and qualified workforce reflective of the needs of Yukoners.
 - Plan: Collect the right data to support long-term workforce planning, identify gaps and make evidence-based decisions.

Session Briefing Note

Fall 2024

Health Human Resources

Health and Social
Services

- Innovate: Promote and implement new ways of working and learning.
 - Learn: Create more growth, training and educational opportunities for Yukoners to learn locally.
- Within these pillars are 25 actions to be implemented jointly over the next three years by the Government of Yukon, the Yukon Hospital Corporation and our partners on the Health Human Resources Steering Committee.
- We are working with our partners to strengthen our collective recruitment efforts by building a centralized recruitment website, increasing and focusing our marketing and attending more recruitment events.
- In December 2023, we conducted surveys and focus groups with health and social professionals to gather ideas and input on potential retention initiatives as part of the Health Human Resources strategy.
 - The reports from these activities are now in the final editing stage and staff have provided many achievable solutions, some of which have been implemented or are being planned.

Background:

- The Health Human Resources budget includes funding to support the following initial initiatives:
 - \$559K for staffing.
 - \$224K (\$224,050) for consulting including a physician recruiter for the Yukon Medical Association.
 - \$584K (\$584,000) for university programming, including the Social Worker Degree Program and the MOA Diploma Program and Yukon University, and funding for a licensed practical

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2024****Health Human Resources**Health and Social
Services

nurses-registered nurses bridging program through the University of New Brunswick.

- **\$280K** (\$280,000) for recruitment efforts, with a focus on Canadian recruitment and partnerships in India, Ireland and the United Kingdom.
- **\$244K** (\$244,048) for administrative costs associated with strategy implementation.
- Additional funding for long-term initiatives will be made available through future budgetary processes as the strategy is implemented.
- Employees wishing to pursue a higher level of education (outside of the bridging program) can access funding through the Learning Development Fund, financially supported by Health and Social Services and Organizational Development Branch.

Health Human Resource Steering Committee:**Key facts:**

- The Health Human Resources Steering Committee comprises representatives from Yukon Medical Association, Yukon Registered Nurses Association, Yukon University, First Nations, L'AFY, Yukon Hospital Corporation and several government departments.
- The Committee is looking at all aspects of Health Human Resources including retention, recruitment, planning, learning and innovation. They provide overall direction and oversight to the implementation work stemming from the strategy.
- The work of this committee aligns with the ongoing collaborative efforts of Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments, which are

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2024****Health Human Resources**Health and Social
Services

supported by recent federal investments that identify health human resources as a shared priority.

Health Human Resources steering committee YEU withdrawal

- Yukon Employee's Union (YEU) and the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPSC) issued a press release on October 7 announcing their withdrawal from the HHR steering committee.
- We respect the concerns raised by the Yukon Employee Union and Professional Institute of Public Service of Canada and remain committed to ensuring that labour voices are heard in the implementation of the Health Human Resource Strategy. We view unions as essential partners in shaping solutions for the healthcare workforce.
- While we are disappointed by their decision to step away from the committee, the door remains open for continued dialogue. When the time is right, we will welcome their return to the table to continue our important work together.
- From the outset, our goal has been to include a range of stakeholders, including union representatives, in the Health Human Resources Steering Committee. We acknowledge that improvements are needed to ensure more meaningful and active participation from all parties.
- The Department of Health and Social Services met with representatives of both YEU and PIPSC on September 9 to address concerns about union participation on the steering committee.
- While YEU was unable to attend the September 25 steering committee meeting, they did commit to providing feedback by October 23. They also expressed that they did not have the capacity to provide feedback within the eight working days requested.

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Services

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- Representatives from the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PIPSC) or Yukon Employees' Union (YEU) attended five Human Health Resources (HHR) Steering Committee meetings in 2024.
 - Department staff engaged with YEU and/or PIPSC representatives on three separate occasions in 2024 to discuss the HHR strategy, its implementation, and the roles of SC members.
 - The HHR Steering Committee includes representation from the following organizations:
 - Yukon Government (various departments)
 - Yukon Hospital Corporation
 - Yukon University
 - Yukon Medical Council
 - Yukon Registered Nurses Association
 - Yukon Medical Association
 - Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN)
 - Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN)
 - Association franco-yukonnaise
 - The Health and Social Services Department (HSS) and Yukon Hospital Cooperation co-chair the HHR Steering Committee. Meetings are typically held every 1-2 months.
 - The co-chairs invite additional agenda items at the start of each meeting.
 - The committee has been flexible in making time for emerging issues raised by member organizations during meetings.
 - The Committee is looking at all aspects of Health Human Resources including retention, recruitment, planning, learning and innovation.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2024****Health Human Resources**Health and Social
Services

They provide overall direction and oversight to the implementation work stemming from the strategy.

- The steering committee remains dedicated to finding long-term, sustainable solutions for Yukon's healthcare system. This work is essential for ensuring the future of healthcare services in our territory.
- The use of staffing agencies is a temporary measure to address urgent healthcare staffing needs, especially in light of the global shortage of health professionals. However, we are actively working toward longer-term solutions that prioritize sustainable, full-time, and unionized employment in the healthcare system.
- Despite this setback, we will continue to move forward to achieve the goals of the Health Human Resource Strategy. The work is too important for Yukoners, and we are committed to making progress together.
- We are deeply committed to improving the work environment for Yukon healthcare professionals, including competitive wages, work-life balance, and secure employment.
- The Health Human Resource Strategy remains focused on finding lasting, effective solutions for healthcare workers and the quality-of-care Yukoners receive.
- We believe we are stronger when we bring together diverse voices and experiences from across the healthcare system. The involvement of unions and other stakeholders remains vital to ensuring the success of this strategy.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2024****Health Human Resources**Health and Social
Services**India internationally educated health professional recruitment:****Key facts:**

- We are working on an arrangement with the University of New Brunswick to add up to 15 nursing seats a year to their dual degree program with a university in India.
- Students in this program would do practicum work in the Yukon and graduate with full accreditation with a dual Indian and Canadian degree and practical and cultural experience to work in the Yukon afterward.
- The Department of Health and Social Services has engaged in positive meetings with Apollo Hospitals, which is the largest private health care provider in India.
- Apollo presents many promising opportunities for recruitment, education and technology support for the Yukon.
- Our primary focus is piloting a recruitment pathway for nurses, initially with the Yukon Hospital Corporation.

Internationally educated health professionals:**Key facts:**

- Internationally educated health professionals have historically played an important role in the delivery of health care in Canada. We recognize that leveraging their expertise is a priority for all Governments across Canada.
- We are working with regulators and our federal, provincial and territorial partners to discuss pathways to licensing physicians, including internationally educated physicians.

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Health Human Resources

Health and Social
Services

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- The Government of Yukon and the Yukon Registered Nurses Associations are working to evolve regulations to improve entry pathways for nurses both nationally and internationally.
 - Amendments will allow registered nurses and nurse practitioners to apply directly for licenses in the Yukon, reducing system barriers and expanding prescribing abilities to enhance health support and broaden essential health care roles.
 - We are establishing a navigator program for Internationally Educated Health Professionals already living in the Yukon. We have a list of self-identified individuals, and the navigators will be reaching out to them imminently.
 - Continuing Care has provided educational reimbursement funds to Internationally Educated Nurses to help them meet the educational requirements for obtaining their Canadian license and have been offering extra mentoring once they are hired.
 - Internationally educated health professionals who are underemployed and living in the Yukon can contact HHR@yukon.ca to connect with a team collecting information on how best to support them.
 - From January 31, 2023 to August 26, 2024, we hired 24 internationally educated professionals into nursing home attendant positions.

Letter of Intent with Nova Scotia:

Key facts:

- On July 26, 2023, our government signed a Letter of Intent with the Government of Nova Scotia to work collaboratively on Health Human Resources.

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Health Human Resources

Health and Social
Services

- Nova Scotia has adopted innovative strategies to create new opportunities to address recruitment and retention.
- Officials from both jurisdictions have developed a comprehensive set of issues and have partnered and shared information on several of these topics. Collaboration continues at the working level.
- Three officials from Health and Social Services attended the Healthcare Recruitment & Retention Community Conference in Truro, Nova Scotia on April 23– 24, 2024, which was primarily related to recruitment of health sector workers and integration of internationally educated professionals. These learnings are being applied to a framework for transitions to practice for Internationally Educated Nurses and new Canadian nursing graduates. It will be adapted to other professions in the future.
- We are also in contact with officials in the province to explore options for a more efficient physician licensing arrangement for Yukon-bound doctors.

Licensing:**Key facts:**

- As of November 3, 2024, newly graduated registered nurses and nurse practitioners, as well as student nurses can register directly to practice in the Yukon. Pathways for nurses to work in the Yukon have opened with the proclamation of the *Amendment to the Registered Nurses Profession Act*, which was assented to last fall.
- Internationally educated nurses can also apply directly to register to practice in the Yukon. This includes those who may already be or live here but are working in other fields.

Session Briefing Note**Fall 2024****Health Human Resources**Health and Social
Services

- Under the old legislation, nurses and nurse practitioners were required to be registered in another Canadian jurisdiction before they could apply to work in the Yukon. With the amendment to the *Registered Nurses Profession Regulation* this extra step is no longer required.
- The Registrar of Medical Practitioners actively participates in national and cross-jurisdictional organizations and initiatives aimed at harmonizing and streamlining licensing pathways.
- We recognize that nurses are fundamental to a high-functioning health care system. We are working with the Yukon Registered Nurses Association to find ways to streamline licensing for registered nurses.
- Our goal is to minimize any administrative burden that draws resources away from care while ensuring that health professionals are appropriately regulated, and Yukoners have access to safe, high-quality health care.

LPN-RN bridging**Key facts**

- The Government of Yukon is working to finalize an agreement with the University of New Brunswick for two cohorts of a Yukon “Learn Where You Live” LPN – RN Pathway starting September 2024.
- 17 Yukon LPNs will start this pathway in the first cohort and up to 20 LPNs can be supported in the second cohort starting fall 2025.
- Through this pathway the first set of LPNs are expected to graduate with their degree in Nursing and be eligible to write their RN licensing exam in summer of 2027. The second group will graduate in summer 2028.

Session Briefing Note

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Health Human Resources

Health and Social
Services

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- This program supports existing Yukon LPNs who are already committed to the territory and working in the system to obtain their next level of education without leaving the Yukon.
 - The program will incorporate classroom, Virtual Reality clinical simulation and in-person clinical learnings throughout.
 - The University of New Brunswick program is cutting edge in the country using technology to support virtual learning.
 - Yukon U is exploring options for a Yukon based nursing degree program while these classes commence.

Partnership with Canadian educational institutions:

Key facts:

- We are working with Yukon University to expand programming to support Yukoners to pursue health-related careers.
- The Government of Yukon funds Yukon University to offer a Practical Nurse Diploma.
- Yukon University offers, in partnership with the University of Regina, a Bachelor of Social Work degree. We are supporting Yukon University to enhance this program to better meet the needs of Yukoners and deliver a more locally based program as a Yukon U degree program.
- Yukon University offers a Health Care Assistant program which provides Yukoners with the skills needed to be front-line caregivers.
- Since the beginning of 2023, Continuing Care has supported more than 10 staff in moving from Nursing Home Attendants into Licensed Practical Nurse or Registered Nurse positions. Additionally, 10 staff

Session Briefing Note

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Services

members are currently preparing for the National Council Licensure Examination this year.

- We are supporting Yukon University to offer a Medical Office Assistant program in 2025 with the intent to lower the administrative burden on all health professionals in the long term.
- Yukon University's Board of Governors approved the University to pursue a nursing degree program.

Physician recruitment and retention:

Key facts:

- The Government of Yukon has provided funding to the Yukon Medical Association to explore the development of family medicine residency program.
 - In the fiscal year 2023 – 24, we provided \$5,000 to launch exploration and in 2024 – 25, we allocated an additional \$20,000.
 - We are also collaborating with the Yukon Medical Association on options and educational partners to solidify associated costs.
- Our government has also invested \$120,000 to support the Yukon Medical Association in enhancing physician recruitment for locum physicians. This investment has resulted in;
 - 32 physicians supporting the hospitalists program since January 2024.
 - 107 locums have been booked to cover leave for physicians in Whitehorse in 2024.
 - Additional support for extensive onboarding of locums including support to obtain licensing, hospital privileges etc.

Session Briefing Note

Health Human Resources

Fall 2024Health and Social
Services**Approved by:** Matt King November 5, 2024

Deputy Minister, Health and Social Services

[Date approved]

Intergovernmental Relations (General)

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- The Government of Yukon regularly works with other governments, in Canada and abroad, to advance our priorities and ensure our voice is heard.
- We have strong relationships with other provinces and territories and the federal government, and we look forward to continued collaboration on shared priorities.
- Internationally, we are working to promote the Yukon as a place to live, work, visit, and invest.

Recommended response (Western Premiers' Conference):

- As the Chair of Western Premiers' Conference, I was proud to welcome my counterparts to the Yukon this past June.
- Our discussions were wide-ranging and productive, covering issues such as affordability, Arctic security, infrastructure, economic reconciliation, and disaster preparedness.
- The Yukon benefits from working collaboratively with neighbouring jurisdictions on issues of regional and national importance.
- Together, we called on the federal government to seize opportunities for improved collaboration and ways to support the wellbeing, safety, and prosperity of western Canadians.
- I also had the opportunity to bring Premiers on an excursion outside Whitehorse, where they could experience our incredible landscapes and history.

Intergovernmental Relations (General)

Executive Council
Office

- We were honoured to be joined by Deputy Kaa Sháade Héní Lindstrom of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation on a visit to the Chilkoot Trail National Historic Site.
- The full event budget for Western Premiers' Conference was approximately \$48,000. This includes all venues, hospitality, transportation, and delegate materials.

Recommended response (travel):

- In-person engagements help to cultivate strong, productive relationships with leaders across Canada and the world.
- There are costs and environmental impacts associated with these trips out of territory.
- However, nothing can replace the value of looking people in the eye and listening to what they have to say.
- We will continue to weigh the merits of travel carefully to ensure it is cost-effective and environmentally responsible and advances our objectives and priorities.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Premier Pillai chaired the 2024 Western Premiers' Conference, which was hosted in the territory and received local and regional media attention.
- Engagements outside the territory may raise questions about costs and climate (emissions) impacts.

Intergovernmental Relations (General)

Executive Council
Office

Background:

- Since the conclusion of the previous sitting, Premier Pillai has participated in intergovernmental engagements including:
 - In May, Northern Premiers' Forum in Pond Inlet, NU, with sideline meetings in Iqaluit with federal ministers;
 - Western Premiers' Conference, which was held in Whitehorse on June 9 and 10, with an excursion for Premiers to the Chilkoot Trail National Historic Site;
 - Council of the Federation annual summer meeting, held in Halifax, Nova Scotia on July 14 to 17, as well as the Premiers' meeting with National Indigenous leaders;
 - Federal bilateral meetings, including with Minister Fraser (Housing, Infrastructure, and Communities); Minister Anandasangaree (Crown-Indigenous Relations); Minister Vandal (Northern Affairs); Minister LeBlanc (Public Safety and Intergovernmental Affairs); Minister Miller (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship); and Minister Joly (Foreign Affairs); and
 - Diplomatic engagements, including meetings with the Ambassador of France; Ambassador and Consul General of the United States; Ambassador of Germany; Japanese embassy Deputy Head of Mission; and Canada's Ambassador-designate to Denmark.
- The Western Premiers' Conference is an annual meeting of the Premiers of the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba to discuss issues of common interest and concern. Discussions included:
 - Arctic security;
 - Disaster preparedness and response;
 - Housing and affordability;
 - Electrification and energy security;
 - Economic prosperity, including strategic infrastructure, economic corridors, and Indigenous economic reconciliation;

Intergovernmental Relations (General)

Executive Council
Office

- Canada-U.S. relations; and
 - Public safety.
- In addition to coordinating the business meeting, hosting duties involve arranging social engagements for Premiers and delegates.
- As Chair, Yukon organized a private excursion for Premiers to the Chilkoot Trail National Historic Site. A delegates' tour to Carcross brought supporting officials to the community for an afternoon.
- Premier Pillai also attended events in Normandy, France to commemorate 80th anniversary of D-Day, alongside other Canadian and international leaders.
- In addition, Deputy Premier McLean participated in a mission to London, United Kingdom with a number of Yukon First Nations leaders (see TAB 81: International Engagements).

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 09 04

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Federal Engagement

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- We advocate for the needs of Yukoners clearly and consistently to the right people, all the way up to the Prime Minister, to secure important federal investments and policy for the territory.
- Engagement with the federal government ensures that the Yukon's distinct perspectives are reflected in federal decision-making on issues of national significance, such as Arctic security and sovereignty.
- We will continue to work with the federal government to advance the Yukon's priorities, including strong and sustainable health care, clean energy, and infrastructure projects that support our prosperity and growth.

Additional response (Yukon Days):

- We continue to work with Yukon First Nations leaders to make our voices stronger in working with the federal government on shared priorities.
- This helps to ensure that federal decision-makers understand our unique northern context, the issues of greatest importance to Yukoners, and the home-grown solutions that can help tackle our biggest challenges.
- I look forward to returning to Ottawa again this winter, alongside other Yukon leaders, to advance our shared interests.

Additional response (Intergovernmental Forum):

- The Intergovernmental Forum is an important table to advance the implementation of Yukon's modern treaties and self-government agreements with federal ministers.

Federal Engagement

Executive Council
Office

- The last Intergovernmental Forum took place in December in Ottawa as part of Yukon Days.
- I look forward to our next opportunity to gather with Canada and First Nation Leaders for this important Multilateral Forum.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- A number of high-profile Government of Yukon projects and initiatives require significant federal investment to be successful.
- Yukon Days is recognized as an annual engagement, typically held shortly following the conclusion of the fall sitting.

Background:

- ECO Intergovernmental Relations coordinates engagement with the federal government on the Government of Yukon's priorities.
- Recent areas of focus for federal engagement include:
 - support for the Yukon government's infrastructure priorities, notably clean energy infrastructure (British Columbia-Yukon grid connect), the Yukon Convention Centre, and the redevelopment of the Port of Skagway;
 - regulatory efficiency, specifically the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* targeted amendment on project amendments and renewals;
 - Arctic security;
 - funding for affordable housing; and
 - measures to support critical minerals development.
- Yukon Days is a longstanding annual event to promote the Yukon's priorities with the federal government and focuses on Premier, Minister and Chief-level advocacy on Yukon priorities with federal leadership.

Federal Engagement

Executive Council
Office

- This form of engagement helps to fulfil the Yukon government's commitment in the Yukon Forum Joint Action Plan to bring a joint voice to Canada on multilateral initiatives.
- Dates for this year's Yukon Days have not yet been confirmed, but will likely be scheduled in early December, based on convention since 2018.
- The last Yukon Days meetings took place on December 4 to 6, 2023.
 - On December 4, the Yukon's Premier and several Ministers participated in an Intergovernmental Forum meeting, alongside Chiefs and federal Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries.
 - Further trilateral conversations occurred with select federal ministers to support focused engagement on specific priorities, notably infrastructure, housing, public safety, and mental wellness.
 - Topics for the 2023 event included housing; the substance use health emergency; land use planning; salmon management; Indigenous languages; and emergency management and community safety.
- An Intergovernmental Forum was convened in December, 2023. The parties to the Intergovernmental Forum Protocol did not all agree to define the Yukon Forum held on September 5, 2024, as an Intergovernmental Forum.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey
Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

2024 09 19
Date Approved

Arctic and Northern Policy Framework

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- The Arctic and Northern Policy Framework is the Government of Canada's vision for the North.
- Several of our government's priorities are reflected in the framework, including access to renewable and affordable energy, a safe and secure Arctic region and investments in infrastructure that can support healthy and prosperous communities.
- We continue to work with the federal government for the benefit of northerners and all Canadians, within and outside of the scope of the framework.

Additional response (engagement):

- Our government's strategies and priorities on issues from clean energy to health care will continue to guide our work with the Government of Canada, as we consider ongoing engagement on the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework and its governance structures.
- On October 11, 2024, leaders from across the North are meeting to discuss the implementation of the Framework, including Arctic security, international policy, housing, and other regional priorities.
- Participating in these discussions is an opportunity to share our interests with the federal government and other Northern leaders.
- We continue to encourage the federal government to match the level of ambition in the Framework with the investments that the North needs.

Arctic and Northern Policy Framework

Executive Council
Office

Additional response (Yukon chapter):

- The Government of Yukon has no intention of publishing a stand-alone chapter. Ultimately, this is a federal policy tool.
- Through work with Yukon First Nations governments and public engagement, we developed a set of strategies and action plans that guide our work on issues such as health care transformation, climate and clean energy and economic development.
- These offer “made-in-the-Yukon” approaches to solving the challenges we face today.
- We will continue to engage with the framework as one of several federal strategies that influence decision-making about northern investments.

Context –this may be an issue because:

- The annual Arctic and Northern Policy Framework (ANPF) Leadership Committee Meeting will be held on October 11, 2024, in Iqaluit (hybrid meeting with virtual participation).
 - The Government of Yukon has not released a “partner chapter” to the ANPF which could lead to questions on where we see ourselves in the framework.
 - This was raised in the spring 2023 session.
-

Background:

- The framework was released in September 2019 and sets out the federal policy vision for Canada’s Arctic and northern regions to 2030.
- The federal government continues to engage with “partners” to the ANPF, including territorial governments, several provincial governments (Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, and Quebec) and northern Indigenous governments and organizations, on implementation.

Arctic and Northern Policy Framework

Executive Council
Office

- There is no implementation plan, nor an investment strategy associated with the Framework.
- While federal announcements occasionally include connections with the ANPF, there is no dedicated source of funds to achieve the Framework's objectives, or for partner governments.
- "Partner chapters" to the ANPF were conceived as a way for Indigenous, territorial and provincial governments to outline their priorities in the context of the framework's goals.
- A pan-territorial chapter was developed by the three territorial governments and released at the same time as the federal framework.
- It highlights the key opportunities and challenges shared by the three territories, such as infrastructure needs, limited fiscal capacity and collaborative governance.
- The Governments of Nunavut and the Northwest Territories, and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami each released stand-alone chapters.
- The Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) is developing their own chapter for the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework and received funding from the federal government for this work.
- Where relevant and appropriate, the Government of Yukon continues to work through ANPF mechanisms to advance the full suite of territorial priorities with the federal government.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 08 20

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Recommended response (Arctic security)

- The Yukon's security is key to our safety and prosperity.
- We continue to strengthen the lines of communication with the Department of National Defence and Joint Task Force North.
- I was very pleased to see the announcement of Canada's new defence policy vision, *Our North, Strong and Free*, to be supported by significant investment of \$73 billion over the next two decades.
- What territorial leaders have been saying for years is resonating with federal decision-makers: that we need a strong, modern military capable of protecting Canada's North in the face of global uncertainty and volatility.
- I applaud Canada's recent commitment to reach two per cent defence spending by 2032.
- I look forward to continuing to work with Minister Blair and his colleagues to increase the Armed Forces presence in the Yukon, and to ensure that we benefit from future investments.
- The Yukon is strategically important, and needs more infrastructure investment from Canada, and for the Department of National Defence to have a close look at increasing the military personnel presence in the Yukon.
- Right now, the Yukon Detachment has three members.
- We are proud of their hard work but know that there is interest to see more of a presence in the Yukon.

Recommended response (Arctic Security Advisory Council)

- The Council is exploring not only the risks that the Yukon faces, but also how we can leverage opportunities to support economic development and infrastructure in our communities.
- I look forward to seeing the results of their work which will help shape our strategic approach to these issues, support effective advocacy with the federal government and identify opportunities for dual-use infrastructure and other investments.
- We invited Yukon First Nations leadership to participate in this conversation, and I look forward to further discussions with Chiefs on this important issue.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- Security and defence in the North have a national profile in the context of the ongoing invasion of Ukraine and increasing activity and interest in the Arctic by Russia, China, and others.
- On January 5, 2024, the Premier announced the establishment of the Arctic Security Advisory Council.

Background:

Arctic Security

- The Premier has had many engagements on this topic, including regular connections with the Minister of National Defence and Joint Task Force North.
- Northern Premiers delivered consistent messages to the Prime Minister, other Premiers, and other Arctic leaders about investments in Arctic security and the connections between strong communities, robust infrastructure, and Canadian sovereignty. Messages have focused on the importance of northerners driving decision-making.
- Global relationships and geopolitics have changed since the invasion of Ukraine. Russia is sanctioned and economically isolated and the high-level operation of

the Arctic Council is on pause. Other forums, such as Arctic Circle and bilateral conversations with Arctic nations are filling in the diplomatic gap.

- Operationally, YG maintains contact with the Department of National Defence and Joint Task Force North in order to stay abreast of and influence the policy implementation decisions and understand the operational conditions regarding security.

Canada's Defence Policy Update and NATO 2 per cent commitment

- The federal government announced *Our North, Strong and Free: A Renewed Vision for Canada's Defence* on April 8, 2024.
- It will be implemented with an investment of \$8.1 billion over five years, and \$73 billion over 20 years.
- The policy recognizes the urgency and importance of asserting Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic and Northern regions, in the context of geopolitical shifts and climate change which have created new threats.
- The investment spans a wide range of initiatives, including improvements to Canada's naval fleet; new satellite and cyber operations capacities; ocean surveillance; and infrastructure and assets.
- It also includes \$218 million over 20 years for "Northern Operational Support Hubs" to expand the military's presence in the North, and to establish or enhance multi-use infrastructure that meets the needs of Northern communities.
- At Western Premiers' Conference in June 2024, Premiers called on Canada to work towards the NATO target of spending two per cent of GDP on defence.
- In July 2024, during the NATO conference in Washington, D.C., Canada made commitments to reach the NATO two per cent goals by 2032.

Arctic Security Advisory Council

- The Council is mandated to develop a report for government that will assess risks across the Yukon security landscape; identify priority assets and infrastructure, and future opportunities for dual-use infrastructure; and areas of focus for the Yukon government's work with the Government of Canada to enhance security across the region.

Arctic Security

Executive Council
Office

- The Council is chaired by Dr. Ken Coates (McDonald-Laurier Institute, Yukon University), who specializes in Northern and Indigenous issues.
- Members of the Council include:
 - Maj.-Gen. (Ret.) Derek Joyce, who served in the Canadian Armed Forces for more than three decades;
 - Dr. Heather Exner-Pirot, Senior Fellow and Director of Energy, Natural Resources and Environment at the McDonald-Laurier Institute;
 - Dr. Jennifer Spence, Arctic Initiative Senior Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs; and
 - Dr P. Whitney Lackenbauer, Canada Research Chair in the Study of the Canadian North and a professor at Trent University.
- Yukon First Nations leaders were invited to recommend individuals to sit on the Council; at this time, no nominations have been provided.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey

2024 09 24

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Recommended response:

- The Yukon's international engagement helps meet labour force needs, attract investment across our economy and ensures our voice and values are heard in global discussions about the Arctic.
- Taking the Yukon abroad shows that we are serious about being a productive partner in the global economy, including in critical minerals supply chains. It also demonstrates that the Yukon is a place where people from around the world can find success.
- We regularly host diplomats from other countries here in the Yukon, giving us opportunities to create personal connections and showcase what is exceptional about our territory.
- Throughout the past year, the Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations leadership have had strong engagement with a wide variety of international partners, both in the Yukon and outside.

Additional response (UK Mission)

- After my visit to London in November 2023, the High Commissioner recommended that a larger Yukon delegation, including Yukon First Nations leaders, would be well-received.
- In June of this year, in addition to supporting the opening of the 'Honouring our Future: Yukon First Nations Graduation Regalia' exhibition at Canada House, the Deputy Premier and seven Yukon First Nations Chiefs and representatives met with government, business, and institutional leaders in the UK. They also participated in a media event with travel and leisure media.
- This was an outstanding opportunity to bring the Yukon to the UK and for friendly and open discussions on further opportunities for cultural exchange, while promoting the Yukon as a travel destination.

International Relations

Executive Council Office

- The UK is one of the top ten origin markets for Yukon tourism, and the second European origin market.
- UK visitors look for authentic First Nations tourism experiences and products.
- We are grateful for the participation of Yukon First Nations leaders and their willingness to share their culture and stories as part of this trip, showing reconciliation in action.

Additional response (Asia Mission):

- The mission to Asia last September built on the significant engagement we had with Japan and India through their diplomatic corps in Canada over the last few years.
- Our extensive program of meetings with government and business officials was the next step in strengthening these relationships.
- I am pleased that we were able to bring some Yukon businesses with us, to help them get exposure to new markets and opportunities.
- We have kept the dialogue going with continued engagement from the Japanese diplomatic corps in Canada.
- Despite the challenges at the national level with the Indian government, we continue to look at business and human resources opportunities with India.

Additional response (costs):

- Government travel is essential to developing our relationships, enhancing the Yukon's profile and promoting new opportunities abroad.
- Travel is managed under a longstanding government policy, the travel directive. The directive sets out the authorities required for travel by government officials, is based on principles of economy and efficiency, and establishes rates for certain costs.

International Relations

Executive Council Office

- Airfares are booked at the best rate through our travel desk and the travel agents we work with.
- Our choices for hotels are guided by whether those facilities have been vetted by the Global Affairs missions in each country.
- We take their recommendations, and in many cases, we get preferred rates or negotiate group rates.
- Most of the budget for international trips includes travel, hotel and per diems. The remaining budget lines were costs associated with hosting meetings and sponsoring events in each city.
- Ministerial travel expenses will be posted online as soon as they are finalized. This normally takes around 90 days.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Questions on the mission to the UK may emerge regarding the amount spent and value for money.
- There may be continued questions on the 2023 mission to Asia given continued coverage of Canada-India diplomatic relations.
- There have been a number of diplomats who have visited the Yukon in the last number of months.

Background:

UK Mission 2024

- A Yukon Delegation visited London, England on June 13 and 14, 2024. Engagements included:
 - Profiling Yukon First Nation culture at Canada House and supporting the launch of the regalia exhibit;
 - A business event hosted by the Yukon First Nations Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Canada-UK Chamber of Commerce, including senior representatives of Yukon businesses;
 - Sharing cultural experiences at Parliament through the House of Lords;

International Relations

Executive Council Office

- Accessing Yukon cultural artifacts at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford;
 - A dinner with members of the High Commission and notable guests from other civil society organizations, academia, and business; and
 - Supporting the Yukon's tourism sector through the collection of photo and video collateral by Yukon North of Ordinary that can be used for future opportunities.
- The total cost for the London trip was approximately **\$131,162**. This includes:
 - ECO and Cabinet (travel, High Commission charge-backs): \$37,452
 - Tourism and Culture (travel, gifts and hospitality, Yukon North of Ordinary participation): \$31,532.
 - Economic Development (supporting Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nations Chamber of Commerce participation, Chamber breakfast event): \$62,178
 -

UK Mission 2023

- A Yukon delegation visited Frankfurt and London November 24 to 30, 2023.
- Outcomes from Frankfurt included:
 - Profiling the Yukon as a gold mining leader at the German Gold Show;
 - Private conversations with industry; and
 - Media.
- Outcomes from London included:
 - Connecting with UK MPs and Ministers at Critical Minerals Day;
 - Direct conversation with Canada's High Commissioner to the UK, Ralph Goodale;
 - Speaking engagements, private meetings and media at the Mines and Money @ Resourcing Tomorrow conference;
 - Bilateral discussion with Rio Tinto; and
 - Meeting with Canada UK Chamber of Commerce.
- The total cost for the Frankfurt/London trip was approximately **\$35,000**. This figure does not include the Economic Development sponsorships at the conferences.

Asia Mission

- A Yukon delegation made a visit to Japan and India September 8 to 20, 2023.
- Outcomes and engagements in Tokyo included:
 - Meetings with private companies (Mitsubishi Materials, DOWA Metals) and government (JOGMEC, JOIN) on critical minerals investment;
 - General business development with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan;
 - Meeting with Japanese Arctic interests to discuss clean energy and climate change;
 - Signing a letter of intent to support another special Aurora flight and tourism to the Yukon; and
 - Several tourism engagements with Japanese companies.
- Outcomes and engagements in Trivandrum:
 - Meetings with the Chief Minister and several state Cabinet ministers on health care, training and commerce;
 - A letter of intent from the Yukon government to work with NORKA on a targeted recruitment program; and
 - In-depth tour of Technopark Trivandrum and exposure to many tech companies working there.
- Outcomes and engagements in New Delhi:
 - Meeting with the federal minister of mines;
 - Engagement with Indian business leaders, including in tech; and
 - Exposure to health training institutions.

International Relations

Executive Council Office

- The total cost of the Asia trip was \$170,899.54, broken down as follows:
 - ECO (travel, gifts and hospitality, charge-backs for embassy services, Canada-India Business Council support): \$111,556.53;
 - Economic Development (travel, hospitality): \$26,542.71;
 - Tourism and Culture (travel, Tokyo event venue): \$16,802.69; and
 - Health and Social Services (travel): \$15,997.61.

Approved by:

Justin Ferbey
Deputy Minister
Executive Council Office

2029 09 11
Date approved

Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Update on Calls to Action

Executive Council
Office

Recommended response:

- Reconciliation is an ongoing process and a shared responsibility of all governments and individuals in the Yukon.
- Our government is deeply committed to advancing reconciliation through collaboration and partnership with Indigenous governments and groups.
- We continue to share our progress toward addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, most recently through a progress report and Pathways magazine both released in Fall 2023.
- The magazine and report provided an update on the actions being taken across the Yukon government and in collaboration with First Nation governments and groups in areas including child welfare, health, education and justice.

Additional response:

- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nation governments are leaders in demonstrating a collaborative approach to reconciliation.
- While there is still work to do, targeted investments are resulting in meaningful change and creating better programs and services for all Yukoners.
- We will continue our collaborative work to implement and report on the Calls to Action, including through work on the Yukon Forum joint priorities and by implementing the *Putting People First* recommendations.

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2023 mandate letters include a commitment to fulfill the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC's) Calls to Action.
- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement includes a commitment to working with Yukon First Nations to continue to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission through targeted investments.

**Truth and Reconciliation Commission
– Update on Calls to Action**Executive Council
Office**Background:**

- The TRC report *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future* was released in 2015 and contains 94 Calls to Action on redressing the harms resulting from Residential Schools and creating better relations between the federal, provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous Peoples. There are 32 Calls to Action that relate directly to YG.
- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations (YFNs) collaborated on addressing the Calls to Action under the 2017 Yukon Forum Joint Priority Action Plan and through other reconciliation initiatives, such as supporting the important work of the YFN-led Yukon Residential Schools and Missing Children Project.
- The Government of Yukon has taken additional steps to address the Calls to Action, including:
 - establishing the position of Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations Initiatives at the Department of Education, signing an agreement to establish a YFN School Board and entering into education agreements with all YFNs (speaks to Calls 7 and 10 directed to the federal government);
 - supporting Indigenous athletes and the North American Indigenous Games (Call 88);
 - implementing the YFN Procurement Policy (relates to Call 92) and the Representative Public Service Plan: *Breaking Trail Together* (relates to Call 7);
 - working with YFNs and Yukon Indigenous women's groups to implement the Yukon's *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit+ People Strategy* (MMIWG2S+ Strategy) (relates to Call 41);
 - participating at the Trilateral Table on the Wellbeing of YFN Children and Families to address gaps for culturally appropriate parenting programs (Call 5); and
 - receiving input from YFNs on Health and Social Services programming through the Mental Health Advisory Committee (relates to Call 19).

Approved by:**Justin Ferbey****2024 08 20**

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date

Recommended response:

- Yukoners continue to face challenges across the housing continuum, which include:
 - Homelessness and a lack of access to housing with services;
 - A lack of affordable rental supply; and
 - High house prices and mortgage rates.
- Exceptionally high building costs and high borrowing costs due to interest rates are creating significant challenges for both Yukon Housing Corporation and partners.
- The corporation's five-year strategic plan, Creating Home, will help transform affordable housing service delivery through the adoption of a more client-centred and collaborative approach that integrates support and leads to better outcomes for Yukoners.

Additional response:

- Across governments, we are working with stakeholders to develop new land parcels, increase housing stock while also responding to the findings of the 2022 Office of the Auditor General Report on Housing.
 - We continue to advance projects that provide new housing to meet Yukoners' needs.
-

Context:

- The combination of high rental costs, limited affordable housing options and difficulties in securing mortgages, continues to be a challenge for many Yukoners.
-

Background:

General housing information in the Yukon

Homelessness

- At least 197 people were experiencing homelessness in the 2023 Whitehorse Point-in-Time Count. This included: 58% men; 38 % female; 4% other.

Rental housing

- According to the Census 2021, within the renter population in Whitehorse:
-

Housing Issues

Yukon Housing Corporation

- 22.7% of households live in unaffordable housing;¹
- 17.9% live in unsuitable housing; and
- 10.5% live in inadequate housing.

Rents and vacancy rate, Yukon (YBS)

	October 2022	April 2023	October 2023	April 2024
Median rent (all types)	\$1,300	\$1,325	\$1,350	\$1,420
Vacancy rate (all types)	1.9%	2.2%	1.8%	1.8%

Housing construction

- Labour shortages contribute to higher construction costs and are leading to lower residential construction output.²

Residential building construction, Yukon (YBS)

	January-June 2023	January-June 2024
# residential permits issued*	518	329 (-35% decrease)
\$ value of new permits*	\$59.4 million	\$47.6 million (-20% decrease)

*In addition to new dwelling units, residential permits include renovations, garages, and additions. The totals do not include permits issued for plumbing or stoves.

House prices

- Yukon Bureau of Statistics reports that there were 84 real estate transactions recorded in Whitehorse in the first quarter of 2024 – a decrease of 35 compared to the first quarter of 2023 (119).
- While average prices for single-detached homes in Q1-2024 had fallen relative to Q1-2022 and Q1-2023, condo prices for Q1-2024 had increased 13% since Q1-2023.

Average House Prices, Whitehorse (YBS)

Residence type	Whitehorse Average House Prices		
	2023 Q1	2024 Q1	% Change
Single-detached house	\$635,000	\$629,500	-0.9%
Condominium	\$403,800	\$456,400	13.0%

¹ Housing costs are considered “unaffordable” when they exceed 30% of household income.

² Northern Housing Report, 2023

Yukon Housing Corporation Approach to Address Housing Issues

Creating Home – YHC’s new strategic plan

- Creating Home draws on a recognized framework intended to re-design and transform health care delivery, called the Quadruple Aim, and adapts it to housing.
- This innovative approach to housing delivery will lead to better outcomes by:
 - Improving the client and provider experiences;
 - Strengthening community wellbeing; and
 - Contributing to a sustainable future.
- Creating Home represents a significant shift in how Yukon Housing Corporation operates and delivers housing services.

Capital builds recently completed by YHC or partners:

- Since 2022, 10 YHC-led projects have been completed, creating a total of 77 new residential units; and
- 8 major partnership projects have been completed through the Housing Initiatives Fund, creating over 276 new units.

YHC projects completed 2022-2024

YHC Project	Construction Start Date	Construction Completion Date	Number of Units
401 Jeckell Street, Whitehorse	May 2020	December 2022	47
RHI affordable triplex, Whitehorse	June 2021	June 2022	3
RHI affordable triplex, Watson Lake	June 2021	March 2022	3
RHI affordable triplex, Mayo	June 2021	March 2022	3
Accessible duplex, Mayo	July 2022	June 2023	2
Accessible duplex, Carmacks	August 2022	July 2023	2
RRDC staff trailer, Ross River	June 2023	December 2023	3
10-plex*, Old Crow (*Asset owned by HPW and managed by YHC)	Summer 2021	January 2024	10
Accessible duplex, Faro	Summer 2023	Spring 2024	2
Affordable duplex, Dawson City	August 2022	June 2024	2
Total units completed (YHC projects):			77

Major partnership projects completed 2022-2024

Project (Lead)	Construction Completion Date	Number of Units
Bringing Citizens Home, Whitehorse (Champagne and Aishihik FN)	Summer 2022	20
Cornerstone multi-use building, Whitehorse (Opportunities Yukon)	July 2022	53
Normandy Living seniors supportive residence, Whitehorse (KBC)	December 2022	84
Boreal Commons apartments, Whitehorse (536754 Yukon Inc)	January 2023	87
Affordable modular housing, Mayo (Na-Cho Nyäk Dun FN)	March 2023	8
Jëje Zho 12-bed men's shelter, Dawson City (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in FN)	July 2023	8
VGFN elders complex, Old Crow (Vuntut Gwitchin FN)	January 2024	9
VGFN mobile homes, Old Crow (Vuntut Gwitchin FN)	March 2024	7
Total units completed (major partnerships):		276

Underway or upcoming housing capital projects for YHC and partners

YHC – Underway (113 units):

- 10-unit Supported Living Residence in Watson Lake
- 34-unit residential building with 8 accessible units in Dawson (former Korbo Apartments)
- 45-unit residential building, which includes 9 accessible units in Whitehorse (former Ryder Apartments)
- 6 staff units across three duplexes in Burwash Landing
- 18 two-bedroom units – purchase of 190 Olive May Way in Whitehorse

YHC – Upcoming (37+ units):

Community housing	Staff housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 units in Mayo • 6-plex in Teslin • 6-plex in Carcross • 6-plex Haines Junction • Accessible triplex in Whitehorse • Accessible duplex in Ross River 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible duplex in Destruction Bay • Accessible duplex in Pelly Crossing

Major partnership projects underway (299 units):

Project	Anticipated Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date	Number of Units
Safe at Home Society's permanent supportive housing project "The Hearth"	March 2024	Spring 2026	67
Safe at Home Society's temporary housing project at 408 Alexander	May 2024	October 2024	17
DDDC's affordable rental project "Winter Crossing"	Spring 2024	Spring 2026	105
Northern Community Land Trust Society's "Project 1096"	June 2024	December 2025	32
HIF-7 funding recipients	Spring 2024	Fall 2026	78
Total units			299

Rent subsidy programs to make life more affordable for renters and seniors

- July 2023, the corporation acquired an additional 16 units for lease from Normandy, for a total of 26 units to lease to clients through its rent supplement program.
- Since 2020, the corporation has supported over 300 households pay rent through the Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit. As of September 2024, 170 clients are receiving monthly support.

Support for homeowners

- March 8, the corporation announced the Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit Homeowner Stream for homeowners in severe core housing need³ with annual household incomes under \$100,000:
 - Clients received a one-time payment of \$1,000.00 for Whitehorse homeowners and \$1,500.00 for homeowners living outside of Whitehorse.
- June 2023, the Yukon government launched an \$8.25 million flood recovery program for residents and businesses affected by flooding in the Klondike Valley.
- April 2023, Yukon Housing Corporation launched the expanded Yukon Home Ownership Program to provide qualified households with mortgages to build or buy their homes across the territory, including Whitehorse.
- The program was recently discontinued due to low uptake and the corporation is currently exploring alternative program options to support homeownership.

³ Severe core housing need is spending 50% or more of a household's income on shelter costs.

- In 2020, Yukon Housing Corporation launched the revised Home Repair Program to support low to moderate-income Yukon homeowners to remain in their homes and age in place by providing funding to address mobility requirements, repairs or core housing needs.

Support for new residential land development

September 2024	<p>As part of the Government of Yukon's ongoing commitment to increase land and housing availability and support business growth, new residential and industrial lots were released in partnership with municipalities and Yukon First Nations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ seven residential lots in Haines Junction, Mayo and Watson Lake; and ○ three industrial lots in Teslin and Haines Junction <p>This was the sixth lot release this year and is a direct result of the Government of Yukon's historic investment in land development. Through the lotteries and tenders process, the Government of Yukon has released 685 lots across the territory since 2021 and is on track to release over 1,000 lots by 2026 (TAB #59).</p>
August 2024	<p>As part of its efforts to work in collaboration with municipalities and Yukon First Nations governments to address housing and business space needs across the territory, the Government of Yukon released 33 new residential lots across the Yukon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Twelve lots were made available in Carmacks and Faro ○ 21 country residential lots were made available in the Lone Tree subdivision north of Teslin.
June 2023	Government of Yukon partnered with the Government of Canada and the City of Dawson to develop four new residential lots in Dawson.
February 2023	120 lots, including single family, multi-family and townhouse lots in Whistle Bend made available through public lottery.
March 2023	Government of Yukon partnered with Liard First Nation on developing 43 new residential lots on Frances Avenue in Watson Lake.
March 2023	74 residential lots in Logan, Mayo and in Whitehorse's Whistle Bend made available through public lottery.
November 2022	Signed a loan agreement with Kwanlin Dün First Nation's arm's-length development corporation, Chu Níkwān Limited Partnership, for a new

Housing Issues

Yukon Housing Corporation

25-09-24
Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Our Clean Future Implementation

Fall 2024Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

Recommended response:

- We recognize the urgency of the climate emergency and launched Our Clean Future in September 2020 to map our route forward.
- The Government of Yukon continues to make significant progress on implementing Our Clean Future.
- In 2023, we announced the addition of 42 new actions to help us reach our climate goals, which brings the total number of climate actions to 178.
- These new actions are a product of the important work of the Yukon Climate Leadership Council, the Yukon Youth Panel on Climate Change, Navius Research and the findings in the Climate Risk Assessment report.
- We continue to track our progress on goals, targets and actions. Information on our progress was most recently published in [November in the 2023 Our Clean Future Annual Report](#) and on the Our Clean Future website.
- Since releasing Our Clean Future in 2020, the Government of Yukon has completed [68](#) Our Clean Future actions, [105](#) are in progress or ongoing and [5](#) have not yet been started.

Additional response:

- As we continue to address climate change, it is important for us to look back on our progress as we diligently work towards our objectives.
- Under Our Clean Future, the government is focused on ensuring the Yukon is highly resilient to climate change impacts by 2030. (See [ENV BN #21](#))

Session Briefing Note

Our Clean Future Implementation

Fall 2024Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

- This year, we:
 - Completed flood maps for the Southern Lakes region, [Teslin](#) and Carmacks. Flood hazard mapping for Old Crow and the City of Dawson and the Klondike Valley are expected to be completed in 2025. [A flood hazard mapping study for Mayo is also underway and will be completed in 2026.](#)
 - Worked with municipalities and First Nations governments to finalize the Community Wildfire Protection Plans in Faro, Haines Junction, Teslin, the [City of Dawson and Whitehorse](#). [Plans for Beaver Creek, Mayo, Old Crow, Watson Lake, Destruction Bay and Burwash Landing are underway.](#)
 - Advanced climate change preparedness by initiating development of a permafrost monitoring system for key public buildings, and guidelines to address climate hazards in major infrastructure projects.
 - Established a geohazard mapping program to understand risks from climate change to the Yukon's transportation corridors.
 - Completed flood risk mapping for all transportation corridors in the Yukon.
- We are committed to efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and we support Yukoners in the transition to cleaner transportation options and energy efficient homes and buildings.
- This year, we:
 - Began providing rebates for medium-duty electric vehicles.
 - Passed an electric vehicle charging station regulation under the *Public Utilities Act* to allow First Nation governments, private

Session Briefing Note

Our Clean Future Implementation

Fall 2024Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

businesses and municipalities to sell electricity through electric vehicle charging stations.

- Installed electric vehicle chargers in every road-accessible community in the Yukon, enabling zero-emissions travel throughout the territory. 19 fast charging stations are now operational throughout the territory, [and one new Level 2 charger in Swift River](#). (See EMR BN #30)
- Since 2020, we have provided rebates for 518 energy efficient new homes, exceeding our 2030 target of 500.

Third response:

- Existing actions put us on track to reduce the Yukon's emissions by 30 per cent by 2030. However, there is still significant work required to meet our target reduction of 45 per cent by 2030.
- [One of the major drivers of emissions is population – more people means more cars on the road and more homes to heat.](#)
- [However, as the population of the Yukon continues to grow, we aren't seeing the rate of emissions increase that we would expect.](#)
- [We are seeing lower emissions per Yukoner than we saw in 2010.](#)
- [This is a promising sign that the emissions intensity of everyday life for Yukoners may be starting to decrease.](#)
- We [passed](#) legislation to set a target of a 45 per cent reduction in mining sector emissions per unit of production by 2035.
- We will continue to build on Our Clean Future as we learn more and implement new actions. This will be reflected in future annual reports.

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Our Clean Future Implementation

Fall 2024Environment and Energy,
Mines and Resources

- We will continue to find opportunities to reach our targets as we work with experts, stakeholders and partner governments across the territory and beyond.

Context — this may be an issue because:

- Climate change and the government's progress in delivering on Our Clean Future commitments is of interest to Yukoners.

Background:

- Our Clean Future was released on September 14, 2020, and now has 178 actions, of which 136 are original actions and 42 are new actions. These actions seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support the Yukon to be highly resilient to the impacts of climate change by 2030.
- The Government of Yukon reports annually on progress for the implementation of Our Clean Future. Four Annual Reports have been published to date, with the latest report released on [November 12, 2024](#) (capturing [2023](#) data).
- The Our Clean Future website was launched in December 2023, which shows the government's commitments and successes towards fighting climate change.

Approved by:

Dennis Berry

November 19, 2024

Deputy Minister, Environment

Date approved

Paul Moore

November 13, 2024

Deputy Minister, Energy, Mines and Resources

Date approved

Session Briefing Note

Supplementary Overview (Corporate Note)

Recommended response:

- The 2024-25 Supplementary Estimates No. 1 forecasts an overall gross increase of \$150.1 million in O&M spending, with an offsetting increase of \$20.7 million in recoveries. The net increase in new O&M spending is forecast at \$129.4 million.
- Capital spending for Supplementary Estimates No. 1 reflects a slight overall gross decrease of \$299,000 in spending and a \$4.2 million decrease in recoveries, resulting in a net increase in spending of \$3.9 million. These adjustments are mainly the result of updated cashflow forecasts for various projects.
- Revenues are projected to decrease by \$8.8 million, primarily due to a revenue forecast update from Canada which revised the projection for Corporate Income Tax downward by \$6.7 million as well as a reduction in royalty payments from Victoria Gold of \$2.5 million. This is partially offset by a \$350,000 increase for driver licenses due to recently increased fees.
- The Yukon government continues to maintain a surplus. As part of the 2024-25 Main Estimates, the Yukon government budgeted for a \$50 million contingency to address emergency pressures. \$50 million of the contingency has been applied towards the pressures identified in the Supplementary Estimates No. 1.
- The use of the contingency fund allows the government to present a revised surplus of \$75.4 million as part of these Supplementary Estimates. Changes in the Supplementary Estimates result in a revised year-end net debt of \$530.4 million

Session Briefing Note
Supplementary Overview
(Corporate Note)

Additional response:

- The Supplementary Estimates reflect an O&M increase mainly for:
 - \$50 million for payments to the Receiver for environmental protection work at the Eagle Gold Mine;
 - \$34 million for pressures in Insured Health reflecting support for the wellbeing of Yukoners;
 - \$21 million for wildland firefighting costs in response to the significant fire season experienced in the territory and which helped ensure the safety of Yukoners; and
 - \$10 million for various Yukon Hospital Corporation funding requirements including the added O&M costs of converting ten beds at the Thompson Centre for Acute Care use.
- For the Supplementary Estimates, updates to the 2024-25 Capital Plan have resulted in a decreased allocation of \$299,000. Notable changes include:
 - \$1.9 million towards the completion of the Mental Wellness Unit at Whitehorse General Hospital;
 - \$1.9 million for long-term and acute care bed optimization at Whistle Bend Place and Whitehorse General Hospital;
 - Decrease of \$3.2 million due to cash flow revisions for the construction of the school in Burwash Landing;
 - Decrease of \$600 thousand for the creation of new campsites aligning costs with the revised project timeline.

Session Briefing Note
Supplementary Overview
(Corporate Note)

- There is an increase of 46.6 in FTEs (Full Time Equivalents) for Supplementary Estimates No. 1. These are primarily to hire new long-term care staff in support of additional care beds at Whistle Bend Place, for the Aging with Dignity initiative and new FTEs for schools including teachers, clerical and custodial staff.
- There is also an increase in FTEs related to a transfer in the Capital Planning Office from Highways and Public Works capital budget to Finance in the O&M budget.

Corporate approach to fiscal sustainability:

- We continue to work to ensure that government spending is allocated in a way that meets key priorities and long-term goals.
- To meet these priorities, departments continue to follow established processes to ensure that funding is distributed efficiently and effectively across public services and programs.
- This means regular financial scrutiny is applied to decision-making and that new requests for funding are approved in a financially sustainable way, while continuing to provide the services that Yukoners expect.
- This coordinated approach to funding ensures that government can respond to new and evolving challenges, while managing resources responsibly.

Session Briefing Note
Supplementary Overview
(Corporate Note)

Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2024-25 Second Appropriation Act is tabled in the fall session and will be the subject of debate.

Background:

- Supplementary Estimates are used annually by a government to account for unforeseen spending at the time of tabling the annual Budget. It is common to have one or two spending updates throughout the fiscal year.
- They are tabled during the fall and spring sessions, debated and voted on in the legislature and provide departments with increased spending authority for O&M and Capital for the current fiscal year.

Approved by:

Jessica Schultz

September 19, 2024

Deputy Minister, Finance

Date approved