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FOR RELEASE #11-078
June 15, 2011

Community Services minister announces new search and rescue funding

WHITEHORSE—A total of \$492,000 in new federal funding will help to improve Yukon's search and rescue capability, Community Services Minister Archie Lang announced today.

"Yukon's dedicated and highly trained search and rescue team volunteers are a critical component of our emergency response system. They help keep Yukoners and visitors safe and they contribute to our quality of life and peace of mind," Lang said. "This new three-year funding commitment will allow us to improve training for Yukon search and rescue teams."

In Yukon, ground and inland water search and rescue services are provided through a partnership between the RCMP, Yukon's Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) and volunteer search and rescue (SAR) teams. The RCMP are responsible for ground and inland water searches; EMO supports SAR teams by providing training, equipment and funding; and volunteer SAR teams provide motivated, trained and equipped volunteers with local knowledge.

"We are also pleased that this new multi-year funding will allow us to assess opportunities to further improve our search and rescue program and to enhance the capacity and capabilities of Yukon's search and rescue teams," Lang added. "We anticipate discussing specialized rescue as part of this forward looking assessment."

Yukon has eight active search and rescue societies with almost 150 volunteers. Yukon's SAR teams are trained to locate missing or lost persons when called upon by the RCMP. Recently, the Whitehorse and district SAR team was activated and successfully located a missing hospital patient in Whitehorse.

The funding is provided by the Search and Rescue New Initiatives Fund of the National Search and Rescue Secretariat.

For more information, visit www.community.gov.yk.ca.

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