



FOR RELEASE  
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## **Dempster Highway route selected to bring fibre diversity to Yukon**

WHITEHORSE—Minister of Economic Development Stacey Hassard announced a project to build a new fibre optic link along the Dempster Highway, introducing needed redundancy and resiliency to Yukon's telecommunications infrastructure.

"For the past two years, our government has conducted extensive research into fibre optic route possibilities, with particular focus on the Dempster Highway and Juneau as viable options," Hassard said. "Building a new fibre optic line connecting the N.W.T. and Yukon fibre networks is the best way to provide robust protection to critical telecommunications services in more Yukon communities."

This project will complete a fibre loop in northern Canada, providing the ability for data to flow in another direction in the event of damage to the fibre at any point. This fibre loop will protect Internet, telephone, cellular and credit card services as well as government and emergency 911 services where available.

Northwestel has committed to contributing its own capital to strengthening fibre infrastructure in Yukon, including extending the existing fibre line from Stewart Crossing to Dawson City.

"The completion of the fibre loop will bring benefit to all Yukoners and more communities in the N.W.T.," Northwestel president and CEO Paul Flaherty said. "As a truly northern company, we at Northwestel are proud to be a part of an all-Canadian solution that will protect the everyday services that northern Canadians increasingly rely on. This critical infrastructure link will help all Yukon communities, N.W.T. communities along the Mackenzie River and in fact satellite served communities throughout the North."

The project will see the connection of Yukon's existing fibre optic lines with the Government of N.W.T.'s Mackenzie Valley fibre optic line to Inuvik. Every Yukon community will benefit from the introduction of increased redundancy under this model, with 10 Yukon communities along the fibre line gaining full redundancy.

"Providing reliable, consistent and economic telecommunications services to Yukoners is a priority for the Yukon government," Hassard added. "This link will provide long-term, diversified infrastructure to deliver increased protection to telecommunications services for Yukoners and local businesses."

The Government of Yukon remains committed to providing the infrastructure required for Yukon's social and economic prosperity. It is expected the Dempster Highway route will take two years to build, with an anticipated completion in 2017.

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