



FOR RELEASE
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Watson Lake Sign Post Forest receives official Yukon Historic Site designation

WHITEHORSE—Yukon Minister of Tourism and Culture Mike Nixon today announced the official designation of the Watson Lake Sign Post Forest as a Yukon Historic Site under the territory's Historic Resources Act.

"For Yukoners, the Watson Lake Sign Post Forest is an iconic reminder of an important part of our history connected to the building of the Alaska Highway," Nixon said. "For visitors, it's a unique stop along the highway that is much more than a collection of signs—it's an evolving and growing cultural landmark that connects us through a shared passion for storytelling and our desire to acknowledge where we come from."

The Watson Lake Sign Post Forest was nominated for designation by the Watson Lake Historical Society. The nomination was evaluated and recommended for designation by the Yukon Heritage Resources Board, and supported by the Department of Tourism and Culture.

"I am happy we can pay tribute to all those men and women working and living in harsh conditions during the construction of the Alaska Highway with the designation of the Sign Post Forest," society president Teri McNaughton said. "It is a strong visual reminder of the struggles and hardships endured by the pioneers who settled this area."

In 1942, Carl Lindley, a U.S. soldier from Danville, Illinois added his hometown sign to an army mileage post during the construction of the Alaska Highway. At that time the area was a military air base and airport on Watson Lake. Since then, tourists from around the globe have added more than 75,000 signs to the sign post forest, which is located at the junction of the Alaska Highway and the Robert Campbell Highway.

The Watson Lake Sign Post Forest is the eighth Yukon Historic Site.

"This designation is an important landmark for the people of this community," said Watson Lake Member of the Legislative Assembly Patti McLeod. "The hard work and dedication of the local historical society has ensured that a very popular and important part of Yukon's history is recognized and protected for future generations."

A date will be announced in 2014 for the formal ceremony recognizing the designation. That ceremony will include the unveiling of the designation plaque and will offer dignitaries and visitors an opportunity to continue the tradition of the sign post forest by placing their own signs. Also, the community and visitors will be invited to celebrate the designation and to have an opportunity to acknowledge the nomination made on behalf of the community by the Watson Lake Historical Society.

For more information about the Watson Lake Sign Post Forest and other Yukon Historic Sites, visit www.tc.gov.yk.ca.

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