

FOR RELEASE
April 5, 2017

Yukon and B.C. sign water management agreement

B.C. Environment Minister Mary Polak and Yukon Environment Minister Pauline Frost signed an agreement pledging to co-operatively manage shared water in the Mackenzie River Basin, specifically the Liard River and its tributaries.

Through the British Columbia-Yukon Bilateral Water Management Agreement, both governments are committing to protecting the aquatic ecosystem health within the basin, as well as the interests of citizens and First Nations.

The signed agreement also recognizes and respects each jurisdiction's laws, regulations, plans, policies, and economic opportunities – and addresses issues of water consumption, flow needs and water quality.

This is the second bilateral water management agreement both Yukon and B.C. has signed under the broader Mackenzie River Basin Transboundary Waters Master Agreement – a water management partnership between the Federal Government and Saskatchewan, Alberta, B.C., Yukon and Northwest Territories.

Quotes

"Together with the Government of British Columbia, we have made concerted efforts to ensure all affected First Nation groups and governments are integral to this agreement and its implementation. We will work together to maintain the quality, quantity and health of our shared water for both nature and people."

-Yukon Minister of Environment Pauline Frost

"By signing this agreement, we are strengthening our relationship with the Yukon. We will work co-operatively to ensure the health of both our environment and citizens, now and in the future. This is yet another step towards managing the shared waters in the Mackenzie River Basin."

-B.C. Minister of Environment Mary Polak

Quick Facts

- The Mackenzie is the longest and largest river in Canada. The river and its tributaries flow through the Northwest Territories, Yukon, B.C., Alberta and Saskatchewan.
- The Mackenzie River Basin is the largest river basin in Canada covering 1.8 million square kilometres. The Liard River Basin is the 9th largest watershed in Canada and the river is the 11th longest in the country.
- The Mackenzie River Transboundary Waters Master Agreement, signed in 1997, commits all jurisdictions to establish partner agreements for shared waters. To date, three of the seven agreements have been signed: Yukon and NWT signed in 2002; NWT and AB signed in 2015; BC and NWT signed in 2015.
- This agreement with BC is the last one Yukon needed to fulfil its commitments under the Master Agreement.
- B.C. and the Northwest Territories signed a bilateral water management agreement in October 2015 which focuses on the Liard and Petitot watersheds.
- B.C. is also working with Alberta to finalize a bilateral water management agreement.

Learn More:

Signed agreement between the B.C. and Yukon governments

Information about the Mackenzie River Basin Board and the Transboundary Waters Master Agreement

Contact:

Sunny Patch
Cabinet Communications
867-393-7478
sunny.patch@gov.yk.ca

Jennifer Solomon
Communications, Environment
867-456-6782
Jennifer.solomon@gov.yk.ca

Media Relations
B.C. Ministry of Environment
250-953-3834

News Release #17-063



Stay up to date with the latest Yukon government news by subscribing to our RSS feed here:
<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/rss.html>. Or follow us on Twitter @yukongov.