



FOR RELEASE
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Yukon government to enhance prevention of wildlife-human conflict

WHITEHORSE—The Government of Yukon will take additional measures to help reduce wildlife-human conflicts, especially those involving bears, Environment Minister Currie Dixon announced today.

"Last year we experienced a remarkably high number of cases of human-bear conflict, which was an eye-opener for a lot of Yukoners," Dixon said. "While we were tremendously lucky that no one was seriously hurt or killed, it did become clear that we could be doing more to encourage preventive action to limit human-bear conflict."

The Department of Environment is seeking \$75,000 in the 2013/14 Main Estimates to cover the costs of the new conflict prevention program. These funds would increase the capacity of the Conservation Officer Services Branch to deal with wildlife-human conflict complaints, support the delivery of public awareness and education measures, and assist the development of partnerships with NGOs.

"While protecting Yukon people is our primary concern, we have a duty to protect wildlife and our environment," Dixon added. "There are a number of simple things people can do to discourage bears from coming to their houses, which will reduce the number of bears that have to be killed, or relocated."

The bear conflict web page piloted last year will be improved and complemented with additional awareness actions and tools. The department will also work with a new local organization, WildWise, on innovative awareness and conflict prevention measures.

As well, conservation officers will implement a graduated enforcement response over the coming summer, including warnings to individuals and businesses that poorly manage bear attractants, Dangerous Wildlife Protection Orders, tickets and, in extreme cases, prosecution.

For more information about how to stay safe in bear country—and to keep bears wild and alive—visit www.env.gov.yk.ca/bearsafety.

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