



FOR RELEASE
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New water monitoring stations enhance baseline data collection in North Yukon

WHITEHORSE—The Government of Yukon has enhanced its water monitoring program in Yukon's north to improve its overall understanding of water distribution, movement and quality in an area with increasing potential for development, Minister of Environment Currie Dixon announced today.

"The Yukon government established three new hydrometric monitoring stations over the summer to help us ensure we have the information we need for good decision making," Dixon said. "This work supports the Draft Yukon Water Strategy goal of strengthening our understanding of Yukon's surface and groundwater regimes."

One of the new stations is near the mouth of Dalglish Creek in the Peel basin. The remaining two are upstream of Old Crow in the Porcupine River basin: one is on the Eagle River at the Dempster Highway, and the other is near the mouth of McParlon Creek. The Eagle River station was installed in partnership with Environment Canada.

The new stations complement the five hydrometric stations in place for several decades in the North Yukon area. Department of Environment will install a groundwater monitoring station next year on the Eagle River. There will also be several water quality sampling campaigns in the area over the next three years in order to capture seasonal variations in water quality.

The government is spending \$147,700 this fiscal year to install and operate the new stations, with a further \$119,000 identified for 2014/15. Northern Cross (Yukon) Ltd. has contributed helicopter time and other in-kind services because it is already in the area exploring for oil and natural gas and will find the new data helpful.

"The health of our water systems has always been a top priority in North Yukon and it's great to see our government acting to ensure we maintain the water quality through baseline data collection," said Vuntut Gwitchin MLA Darius Elias. "The more surface water knowledge we have, the better management decisions we can make. I believe this decision reflects the values that Yukoners hold because water is essential to all aspects of our lives."

In addition to working with Northern Cross, the government also invited the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation to observe and/or assist its water specialists in the field. Na-Cho Nyäk Dun helped conduct field and baseline sampling in the Peel watershed in 2012 and 2013.

The Yukon Department of Environment and Environment Canada together operate 64 hydrometric monitoring stations across the territory to collect information such as water levels and flow rates. Data collected by the new stations will be available on yukonwater.ca, the government's one-stop water information source, starting later this year.

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