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**SHAKWAK AGREEMENT PROJECTS SHOW SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS TO YUKON HIGHWAYS**

WHITEHORSE – Yukon road contractors have completed major construction projects in the Haines Junction area, Highways and Public Works Minister Archie Lang announced.

Projects include the reconstruction of the Alaska Highway along Sheep Mountain, paving the highway through the Village of Haines Junction including recreational trail construction, replacement of the Duke River Bridge and the recently commenced work on the Slims River Bridge.

These projects, under the Shakwak Agreement, totalled \$42 million, with \$14 million spent on Sheep Mountain, \$5 million for paving in Haines Junction, \$9 million to replace the Duke River Bridge and \$14 million is allocated for the replacement of the Slims River Bridge.

“Considerable progress has been made in providing an all weather paved road for the Haines and Alaska Highways that connects Yukon communities on a year round basis and provides access to the state of Alaska,” Minister Lang said. “Not only have these Shakwak projects enhanced the safety and condition of major roads but Yukoners have benefited from employment opportunities.”

The funding agreement also included the construction of the Beaver Creek Permafrost Testing Site which was completed at the beginning of summer. Results from the test site will be monitored over the next five years providing information on cost effective adaptation techniques to stabilize areas on the road affected by melting permafrost.

Yukon continues to put forth significant effort to ensure that funding for this research and other Shakwak projects such as the asphalt paving on the Haines Road and North Alaska Highway to Destruction Bay carry on.

“The Shakwak Agreement has played a major role in the Government of Yukon’s commitment to providing a modern transportation system for the safe and effective movement of people and goods,” Lang added.

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