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**Governments Work Together to Provide Cleaner Drinking Water to Yukon Families**

**Whitehorse, Yukon, April 6, 2009** — Canada's Minister of Health, The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, together with the Honourable Archie Lang, Minister of Community Services in Yukon, today announced that their governments will work together to upgrade and improve water treatment systems in Yukon.

"The Government of Canada understands the need for quality public infrastructure to build healthy communities and to create jobs for Northerners," said Minister Aglukkaq. "These water treatment initiatives are great examples of the many ways we're keeping Northerners working and our communities healthy and vibrant."

Families in Ross River, Carcross, Marsh Lake, Carcross/Tagish First Nation, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, the Village of Haines Junction, and the Village of Teslin will soon benefit from new water treatment initiatives that will meet their needs now and for years to come.

"It is a priority of the Government of Yukon to ensure that Yukoners have access to safe and sustainable drinking water resources for the future," said Minister Lang. "We are pleased to be able to provide for key infrastructure upgrades in Yukon communities with the significant investment Canada is making for our territory under the Building Canada plan."

These upgrades will happen over the next two years at a total cost of approximately \$10 million. This money is part of the \$182.9 million Yukon will receive from 2007 to 2014 under the Provincial-Territorial Base Fund, which is part of the Building Canada plan. The funding will address Yukon-wide infrastructure priority initiatives to help drive economic growth and productivity, and build strong, sustainable communities.

For further information on the Building Canada plan, visit [www.buildingcanada.gc.ca](http://www.buildingcanada.gc.ca) or visit [www.infrastructure.gov.yk.ca](http://www.infrastructure.gov.yk.ca).

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See backgrounder below.

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## **Funding for Water Treatment Initiatives in Yukon**

The Governments of Canada and Yukon are working together under the unprecedented Building Canada Plan to deliver a more reliable clean water supply for Yukon families.

Newly approved initiatives will see upgrades to water treatment systems serving several Yukon communities. These will help the water treatment plants meet current and future needs and, in a few cases, help remove arsenic from local water supplies.

The total cost of these initiatives is approximately \$10 million and will be funded under the Government of Canada's Provincial-Territorial Base Funding Initiative. Under this program, Yukon will receive a total of \$182.91 million between 2007 and 2014.

The initiatives being funded include:

### **Water System Upgrades – Haines Junction, Teslin, CTFN, CAFN (\$4.5 million)**

- Arsenic treatment upgrades to public water supplies in the Village of Haines Junction, Village of Teslin, Carcross/Tagish First Nations, and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. The treatment upgrades will ensure that the water supplies will meet the new regulatory requirements for potable water which will come into affect in 2011.
- Yukon government is working this year (09/10) on planning, design and construction of the necessary upgrades to address arsenic treatment issues. The project is to be completed in time to meet the regulatory regime planned for 2011.

### **Water System Upgrades – Carcross (\$1.5 million); Ross River (\$1.5 million)**

- Upgrade to the Carcross water treatment system to ensure that it meets new regulations, due to take effect in 2011, for treating surface water for use as drinking water.
- Following a water treatment pilot project last year in Ross River, a full scale water treatment system and housing facility will be built there. The new treatment process is required to remove arsenic and upgrade operations to meet the incoming regulation.

### **Marsh Lake Intake & Commercial Fill System (\$2.5 million)**

- A new water treatment system at Army Beach that will improve access and lower the current costs of hauling drinking water. The system will use directional drilling to draw water from Marsh Lake, treatment, and provide filling systems for personal and commercial use.
- Project planning will be underway over the next two years to plan, design, obtain regulatory approval and construct the new water treatment plant.