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**Partnership Reduces Risk of Wildfire**

WHITEHORSE – Yukon government is working in partnership with the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations (CAFN) to conduct community fuel abatement projects in the southwest Yukon.

As part of the ongoing implementation of the 2004 Strategic Forest Management Plan (SFMP), CAFN received \$60,000 to reduce and remove trees and wood debris to decrease the risk of wildfire dangers to nearby communities.

“This fuel abatement initiative provides improved fire protection and healthier forests for the community,” Energy, Mines and Resources Minister Brad Cathers said. “It is an important part of the forest management partnership between the Yukon government and the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.”

“We are pleased to continue working with the Yukon government to make our communities safer. We know this issue is a priority to our citizens, who passed a resolution at our general assembly requesting continued fire prevention work,” CAFN Chief Diane Strand said. “It is an added bonus that this agreement provides new work opportunities for CAFN citizens and community members.”

CAFN crews are currently conducting manual fuel abatement treatments in the Canyon Creek area. This treatment is one of three fuel abatement projects underway which will treat close to 40 hectares. Mechanical treatments are also being done in Silver City and in Canyon Creek by Yukon forest operators Ivan Thompson and Dimok Timber respectively.

Fuel abatement treatments include thinning or spacing of trees, pruning tree limbs and stems, and disposing of the slash and debris. Much of the wood removed will be sold while the remainder will be made available to the community for local firewood consumption.

The fuel abatement initiatives are part of the 2004 SFMP for the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations’ traditional territory and are part of the Yukon government’s Climate Change Action Plan.

For more information on Yukon’s forests visit [www.forestry.gov.yk.ca](http://www.forestry.gov.yk.ca).

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