

FOR RELEASE #09-159
July 6, 2009

New Carving Centre Expands Carcross Attractions for Visitors and Locals Alike

CARCROSS – Minister of Tourism and Culture Elaine Taylor joined Mark Wedge, Khà Shâde Héni of Carcross/Tagish First Nation (CTFN) in celebrating the grand opening of the carving centre today in downtown Carcross. Officials from the governments of Canada, Yukon and CTFN, visitors and Carcross residents participated in the event, which featured ceremonial prayers and traditional singing and dancing.

The \$470,000 carving centre is a key component of the Carcross waterfront development, which is funded under the Canadian Strategic Infrastructure Fund. The fund supports large-scale projects of federal and regional significance in areas that are vital to sustaining economic growth and enhancing the quality of life for Canadians.

"Canada is a proud partner in the development of the Carcross waterfront," Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians said. "This project is a great example of strategic community infrastructure that is vital to sustaining economic growth and enhancing quality of life for Canadians. It is great to see the community's vision for the waterfront taking shape."

"The Yukon government is committed to the growth of sustainable tourism through cooperative partnership such as this," Taylor said. "The Carcross carving centre will create employment opportunities and will offer visitors the opportunity to experience Carcross/Tagish First Nation culture."

"As the process of implementing self-government evolves, we understand that one of the most important factors is the revitalization and reemergence of our cultural heritage," said Wedge. "Our carvers have worked hard at recreating a vital aspect of our culture which lay dormant for a long time. We are very pleased to have been able to enter into a long-term agreement with the Yukon government so that our carvers have a modern and safe facility in which to practice, teach carving skills to others, and foster this important part of our culture. I look forward to seeing many beautiful works of art produced here in our on-going efforts to revitalize our heritage and bring spirit back to our community."

In total, \$3.55 million has been allocated under the Canadian Strategic Infrastructure Fund for the development of the Carcross waterfront. In addition to the carving centre, several other projects identified in consultation with the community have been completed including the Carcross walking bridge, viewing deck and beach access. Work is underway on a new public dock and boat launch. Entrance landscaping, welcome signage, road realignment and drainage work is expected to be completed by 2010.

-30-

Contact:

Roxanne Vallevand
Cabinet Communications
867-633-7949
roxanne.vallevand@gov.yk.ca

Brenda Wale
Communications, Community Services
867-667-5941
brenda.wale@gov.yk.ca

Vaughan Johnstone
Carcross/Tagish First Nation
867-821-4202
vaughan.johnstone@ctfn.ca