

# Alaska Highway Aboriginal Pipeline Group

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NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

## SEVEN FIRST NATIONS FORM ALASKA HIGHWAY PIPELINE GROUP

CALGARY - Seven First Nations from the Yukon and British Columbia along the Alaska Highway pipeline route signed a Cooperation Protocol on September 29 that creates a coordinating body to address their collective interests during the planning and development stages of pipeline development. The organization will also play a collaborative role with First Nations and public governments to streamline regulatory processes where possible.

“This initiative by Yukon First Nations along the pipeline corridor creates an effective forum for meaningful engagement in the pipeline dialogue. We will focus on regulatory affairs, environmental assessment, impact benefit agreements, and associated social and economic impacts,” said Mike Smith, Alaska Highway Aboriginal Pipeline Group spokesperson who is at the Far North Oil and Gas conference in Calgary.

“While the organization isn’t endorsing pipeline development it does provide a mechanism that will help its members to make an informed decision,” said Dave Porter, of the Alaska Highway Aboriginal Pipeline Group. “The organization will work alongside the Government of Yukon to provide a single window for First Nations to share information, provide advice to government and industry, and be an advocate for an approval and construction process that will address the interests of First Nations’ and northerners.”

“Building a sustainable economy remains a priority for all Yukoners and pipeline construction would have a significant positive impact on the Yukon economy,” said Yukon Premier Dennis Fentie. “This organization is one more way people in the Yukon are preparing for long-term growth.”

Research released in 2002 suggested that the construction phase alone could bring the Yukon direct investment of \$3.4 billion, and increase GDP by \$3.7 billion. The construction phase is estimated to employ about 1100 people in the Yukon on an annual basis.

(MORE)

Representatives of the Alaska Highway Aboriginal Pipeline Group are meeting with representatives from Foothills Pipe Lines and the Alaska Producers Group in Calgary this week to discuss their mandate.

Signatories to the cooperation protocol include the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Kaska Dena Council, Kwanlin Dun First Nation, Liard First Nation, Ross River Dena Council, White River First Nation and Ta'an Kwach'an Council.

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Government of Yukon

**MEDIA ADVISORY: Please note that Calgary-based media can call to hear brief statements from Yukon Premier Dennis Fentie and Alaska Highway Aboriginal Pipeline Group spokespeople Dave Porter and Mike Smith. Some time will be allotted for questions as well. Connect by calling 403-232-6311 at 3 p.m. and enter access code 97983#. The call will conclude at 3:30 p.m.**