

For Immediate Release
2007CS0082-001275
Oct. 10, 2007

Ministry of Community Services
Ministry of Economic Development
Western Economic Diversification Canada

FUNDS IMPROVE WATER QUALITY FOR WILLIAMS LAKE RIVER

WILLIAMS LAKE – The Government of Canada and the Province of B.C. are investing \$483,330 in Williams Lake’s stormwater system, improving water quality in Williams Lake River. Cariboo-Prince George MP Dick Harris and Prince George-Omineca MLA John Rustad announced the federal-provincial investment from the Canada-B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (CBCMRIF) today.

“This initiative will upgrade the community’s storm-water system, improving the quality of water and protecting the surrounding ecosystem,” said Harris, on behalf of the Honourable Rona Ambrose, President of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification. “Through collaboration and partnership, the Canada-B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund is building a healthier and more prosperous community in Williams Lake.”

The funding will allow the City of Williams Lake to upgrade its storm-water system to ensure that storm water is directed to an infiltration and retention basin for treatment. This project is conditionally approved pending the successful completion of an environmental assessment.

“Our government is committed to building green, healthy, sustainable communities and supporting sustainable infrastructure,” said Rustad, on behalf of Community Services Minister Ida Chong. “Through our partnership with the federal and local governments, the City of Williams Lake will be able to improve its water quality and safeguard a valuable fish habitat.”

“This has been an important project for our community and region. It has been an environmental issue that we wanted to solve,” said Williams Lake Mayor Scott Nelson. “We appreciate the co-operation we have received from the provincial and federal governments as well as the hard work that the Cariboo Regional District has put into this successful application.”

Under the initial CBCMRIF Agreement signed in June 2006, the federal and provincial governments each committed \$51 million to the fund, with participating local governments expected to make up the remaining costs. This year, Canada’s New Government and the Province of B.C. have each provided an additional \$23.5 million to the Canada-B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund as part of their commitment to help smaller communities meet their pressing infrastructure needs. This additional funding brings the total federal and provincial investment and matching local government contribution in CBCMRIF projects to over \$220 million.

The majority of the funding is targeted towards communities of fewer than 250,000 people and at least 60 per cent of the funding will assist with “green projects” such as drinking water supply, treatment and distribution needs as well as wastewater and energy efficiency projects. The remaining funds will be dedicated to other projects like tourism, recreation and other infrastructure.

- 2 -

More details on the program are available through the Canada-British Columbia Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund website, at www.canadabcmrif.ca.

-30-

Media contact: Karl Yeh
Western Economic Diversification
Canada
604 666-4714

Marc Black
B.C. Ministry of Community Services
250 356-6334

For more information on government services or to subscribe to the Province's news feeds using RSS, visit the Province's website at www.gov.bc.ca.