

TNDC to Provide Fibre Optic Communication to Iskut and Dease Lake in Northwest British Columbia

Dease Lake, B.C./July 3, 2019: [Tahltan Nation Development Corporation](#) (TNDC), the business arm of the Tahltan Nation in northwest British Columbia, has been selected to receive funding from the federal and provincial governments to bring fast, reliable and advanced fibre optic communications to the communities of Iskut and Dease Lake, located in Tahltan Territory.

TNDC will use the optic strands that are part of the BC Hydro Northwest Transmission Line (NTL) agreement to provide fibre optic connectivity to Iskut and Dease Lake. This \$13-million project will encompass a two-year phased approach, establishing fibre optic light connectivity between New Aiyansh and Iskut as phase 1 and phase 2 from Gitanyow to Dease Lake, with the intention to provide fibre optic to Telegraph Creek in the future.

Fibre optic communication will bring significant benefits, improving the delivery of health, safety, education and social services and fostering economic development, environmental protection and infrastructure development.

The funding is being provided through the Government of Canada's [Connect to Innovate Program](#) and was announced July 2, 2019 by the Honourable Bernadette Jordan, Minister of Rural Economic Development, together with the Honourable Jinny Sims, British Columbia's Minister of Citizens' Services.

"I am extremely excited about this announcement and what this means for the Tahltan Nation. The Tahltan economy is growing exponentially and our local people require the connectivity necessary to improve education and health services, grow their businesses, and improve their quality of life in our isolated region. Providing fibre optic to our communities of Iskut and Dease Lake will do just that, and we look forward to providing the same connectivity to Telegraph Creek in due course," said Chad Norman Day, President of Tahltan Central Government.

"This announcement has been a long time coming. We are pleased to see the government agencies committing to completing this project. Bringing fibre optic communication capabilities increases the quality of our healthcare system, education and community connectivity. Providing service to Iskut and Dease Lake are important first steps. We are fully committed to extending service into Telegraph Creek as the next priority," said Chief McLean, Tahltan Band.

"Confirmation of this long-anticipated funding is welcome news to our community. We are encouraged by the decision the Federal Government has made to move this forward. Fibre optic communication is vital in today's world and will allow our members to benefit from the digital age, accessing technology commonly enjoyed in urban centres. It will enable important telehealth, distance education and videoconferencing services, helping reduce the needs, costs and risks of travel on treacherous roads during the winter months. Fibre optic communication will have the most profound impact on the youngest members of our community, enabling advanced technology for our future Klappan Independent School to inspire and educate our future generation," said Chief Marie Quock, Iskut Band.

“Next generation high speed internet service is vital to enhancing the lives and building the capabilities of the Tahltan people and benefitting those who live and work in the region. Tahltan Nation Development Corporation (TNDC) appreciates the confidence the Government of Canada and Ministry of Citizens Services' have demonstrated in supporting this important infrastructure project. TNDC looks forward to working with the funding providers, infrastructure parties and the Tahltan communities to carry out this important initiative for the benefit of the Tahltan communities,” said Calvin Carlick, Chair of Tahltan Nation Development Corporation.

About TNDC

Tahltan Nation Development Corporation (TNDC) is the business arm of the Tahltan Nation. TNDC provides Heavy Construction and Camp Services for the resource exploration, mine development and mining, building construction, forestry, hydroelectric power, civil, infrastructure and public works sectors. TNDC's primary business units are Heavy Construction, Mining & Earthmoving and Camp Catering, Services and Management. TNDC also provides labour, logistics, expediting, personnel shuttle, ground transportation, heavy equipment hauling and support operations in administration and accounting. To expand its capabilities and services, TNDC has business partnerships with industry experts providing a comprehensive range of services. TNDC pursues sustainable business and economic development opportunities in the region that lead to employment, training and business opportunities for Tahltan members. For more information visit www.tndc.ca

About the Tahltan Central Government

The Tahltan Central Government (TCG) is the administrative governing body of the Tahltan Nation. The Iskut Band and the Tahltan Band continue to govern Tahltan interests with respect to the Indian Act. The TCG is the representative government of the Tahltan Nation with respect to inherent Aboriginal title and rights. The Tahltan Nation's Territory spans 95,933 square km of Northwest British Columbia or the equivalent of 11% of the province. Tahltan Territory includes 70% of BC's Golden Triangle – a world-class mining jurisdiction with a thriving mineral exploration sector. Tahltan Territory is home to three of BC's 19 operating mines or their shared footprint, and to approximately 25% of BC's exploration activities by expenditure. Please visit TCG's website at www.tahltan.org.

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