



News Release

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GOVERNMENT OF CANADA SUPPORTS YUKON QUEST

Whitehorse, Yukon (February 03, 2010) – The Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency is promoting tourism in Yukon by supporting the territory's top wintertime attraction, the Yukon Quest dog sled race.

The Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor), made the announcement today.

CanNor will provide Yukon Quest International Association (Canada) with \$262,320 in support of the annual event. This funding will help stage the race in 2010 and 2011, enhance the course infrastructure, and support the development of a merchandising program.

"The Yukon Quest brings thousands of visitors to the territory each year to experience the thrill of the North, while providing Yukon residents with a tangible connection to their history and culture," said Minister Strahl, who is also Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor of Métis and Non-Status Indians. "This investment will improve the race experience for tourists and participants alike."

"This annual event makes an important contribution to the territory, providing increased spending to businesses and job opportunities for local residents," said the Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Minister Responsible for the North and Minister of Health. "The Government of Canada is proud to support the Yukon Quest International Association as it works to ensure its long-term sustainability."

"We are very happy to be the recipients of this funding," said Al Doherty, President of the Yukon Quest International Association (Canada). "The success of the Yukon Quest is tied to the connections we have with communities and residents along the trail. Receiving this funding allows the Yukon Quest to contribute economic benefits in our communities and ensure a quality trail and a strong sustainable race."

Funding for this project was made possible through Canada's Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development (SINED), part of [Canada's Economic Action Plan](#). The SINED program falls under the mandate of CanNor and focuses on long-term economic growth, economic diversification and capacity building in the three territories.

CanNor is responsible for coordinating and delivering federal economic development activities in the territories, and for policy, research and advocacy. Promoting social and economic development in the North is one of the four pillars of the Government of Canada's integrated Northern Strategy.



For copies of CanNor news releases, visit: <http://www.north.gc.ca/index-eng.asp>.

To learn more about Canada's Economic Action Plan, visit www.actionplan.gc.ca and for more information on Canada's Northern Strategy, visit www.northernstrategy.ca/index-eng.asp.

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Backgrounder

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA SUPPORTS YUKON QUEST

The Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor), on behalf of the Government of Canada, will provide \$262,320 to Yukon Quest International (Canada). Funding from CanNor will ensure short-term survival of the race in 2010 and 2011, and support work to secure long-term sponsorship and develop a merchandising program.

Yukon Quest International (Canada) is a registered non-profit organization. Its core purpose is to facilitate the annual Yukon Quest, a 1,609 kilometre sled dog race between Whitehorse, Yukon, and Fairbanks, Alaska. The race follows the historic frontier routes of the Gold Rush Era, an important part of Yukon's culture, and attracts thousands of visitors to the territory annually.

Since it was founded in 1984, the event has grown to become a significant source of economic activity for the territory.

The race maintains about 30 long-term, off-season positions for residents of four Yukon communities, and boosts revenue to local businesses during the slower winter months.

In 2006, it resulted in an estimated \$1.16 million of additional spending in the territory, according to the 2006 Economic Impact Analysis of the Yukon Quest, published by the Government of Yukon.

By enhancing race infrastructure, this funding will also contribute to the long-term viability of the race.

CanNor's investment targets the following four areas:

- **Successful staging of the 2010 and 2011 races**
This includes high-quality trail construction for the 2010 and 2011 races, and the purchase of safety and communications equipment like satellite phones, two-way radios, safety kits and permanent trail markers.
- **Scroggie Creek Dog Drop Cabin**
A new 16- by 20-metre frame construction cabin will be constructed at the Scroggie Creek support stop. The existing cabin is not large enough to provide required cooking space and accommodations for the mushers and volunteers. The new cabin will also include an examination area and medical equipment storage for the race veterinarian.
- **Race enhancements at start/finish and checkpoints**
Additional fencing and checkpoint chutes will make the race safer and more enjoyable for the fans, media and dog teams. The purchase of public address (PA) systems will allow organizers to share race results with fans and media. Media will



also be able to do on-site interviews to be enjoyed by fans, increasing media exposure.

- **Implementation of the Yukon Quest merchandising program**
Funds will support the development of the Yukon Quest branding and marketing plan, which will provide new long-term revenue sources to support on-going race and trail expenses. The Yukon Quest will hire a merchandising coordinator to implement the plan.

Support for this initiative is being provided through Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development (SINED), made possible through [Canada's Economic Action Plan](#). SINED is delivered by CanNor in the three territories. CanNor is a newly established agency responsible for coordinating and delivering federal economic development activities in the North.