



# Media Advisory

## **TA'AN KWÄCH'ÄN COUNCIL PARTNERS WITH THE CITY OF WHITEHORSE TO PREVENT FUTURE CONTAMINATION OF SALMON BEARING WATERS.**

The Ta'an Kwäch'än Council with assistance from biologists at EDI Environmental Dynamics Inc., is constructing a berm to prevent the lower portion of McIntyre Creek from re-entering a channel that is clogged with waste and debris from the historic Range Road dumpsite located near the confluence of McIntyre Creek and the Yukon River. This site, known in Southern Tutchone as *Chasàn Chù* ("copper creek"), is culturally important to the Ta'an Kwäch'än, serving as a traditional fishing camp and travel corridor up the creek valley to Fish Lake. Furthermore McIntyre Creek is a chinook salmon spawning and rearing stream and is important spring waterfowl habitat at the receiving waters in a side channel of the Yukon River.

The lower portion of McIntyre Creek (downstream of Range Road) was at one time moved from its route to isolate it from large volumes of dump waste and debris filling the channel and adjacent slope. The debris in this location began with a slope failure causing a large slide of waste and debris from the Range Road dumpsite to enter the stream channel. Subsequently, more waste and debris began to accumulate below this slope. Eventually, it was determined that the most effective means of halting the contamination of McIntyre Creek and the Yukon River was to move the creek to the other side of the valley and isolate it from the dump refuse. To accomplish this, a berm was constructed along the length of the stream. This berm isolated the stream from its historic channel until recently. McIntyre Creek has begun to erode the upstream end of the berm, threatening to re-enter its past route through dump waste and debris.

On September 13<sup>th</sup> Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Environmental Dynamics began construction of a berm to remedy the situation. The construction includes building a new section of berm using bio-technical methods. The new berm section will prevent McIntyre Creek from re-entering its historic channel and becoming exposed to the large amounts of debris and waste. To minimize in-stream works, the berm will be located in an area set-back from the stream channel. The set-back will allow the stream to adjust naturally (i.e. erode towards the berm) and prevent the creek from entering the toe of the dumpsite. Funding for this portion of the project comes from the Yukon River Panel's Restoration and Enhancement Fund. The City of Whitehorse is also providing considerable in-kind assistance which includes provisions of heavy equipment and operators.

The Ta'an Kwäch'än Council has also been involved in a clean-up operation to remove large amounts of old dump waste/debris along the riparian areas of the Yukon River and the mouth of McIntyre Creek. Clean-up started in the spring and will commence in October, when water levels are low in the Yukon River. Funding for the cleanup was provided by the Yukon Government Community Development Fund.

For further information or comments, please contact:

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