



NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Labour, Citizens' Services and Open Government
All Nations Trust Company
Doig River First Nation

Doig River First Nation gets connected in high-speed

DOIG RIVER – With the flick of a switch, the families and businesses of the Doig River First Nation are now able to access broadband Internet service in their community for the very first time.

Doig River is also one of the first communities to be connected under Pathways to Technology, a \$40.8-million provincewide First Nations connectivity project managed by the All Nations Trust Company (ANTCO), with funding from the Province and the Government of Canada.

Previously, Doig River's Internet access was limited to only satellite and dial-up. Now, with better and faster access to Internet services, the Band and its 260 community members will be able to improve local health care, open up educational and cultural opportunities for children and families, and manage resources more effectively. As well, local businesses will be able to more easily expand beyond the borders of the community, creating jobs and greater economic opportunities.

In the next three to five years, the Pathways project expects to connect or enhance connectivity to more than 50 remote First Nations communities that currently have no Internet access or only limited service.

The Pathways to Technology project has also recently signed a \$23-million contract with TELUS to connect the majority of these communities, many located in the TELUS service area. Doig River is the first community to be connected by TELUS as part of the project.

Quotes:

Stephanie Cadieux, Minister of Labour, Citizens' Services and Open Government –

"I want to congratulate the Doig River people, ANTCO and the Pathways to Technology steering committee for all of their efforts in bringing broadband Internet to the community. This is one more step in the right direction as we continue to work together to bridge the digital divide and close the education, health and economic gap between First Nations peoples and other British Columbians."

Ruth Williams, CEO All Nations Trust Company –

“The Pathways to Technology project is the 21st century version of the on-ramp for First Nations people and communities who have been bypassed by the Information Highway. Internet access and the technological leap this brings may be the greatest agent of truly transformative change that many remote First Nations have seen in a generation. We are pleased to have the provincial and federal governments and TELUS working with us on this important project, which will open up significant opportunities in education, health care, culture, and economic development.”

Chief Norman Davis, Doig River First Nation –

“Technology is our future. I am very happy high-speed Internet has reached our community. This will now allow us to connect to the world.”

Tony Geheran, TELUS senior vice-president of Customer Solutions Delivery –

“TELUS has a long history of connecting First Nations communities in B.C., and welcomes the opportunity to further that commitment in partnership with ANTCO and the provincial government. We will be connecting communities to broadband over some of the most challenging terrain in the world. It is ambitious work, and we have the expertise and determination to take it on to make these critical connections a reality for B.C.’s First Nations.”

Quick Facts:

- The Pathways to Technology project was previously funded through \$23.3 million from the Province and \$17.5 million from Health Canada.
- ANTCO has contracted with TELUS, NorthwestTel and other private telecommunication providers to deliver the necessary infrastructure and expertise to overcome the geographic and logistical challenges of connecting remote and rural First Nations communities.
- In addition to funding the construction of the broadband infrastructure network, the Pathways to Technology project has established a \$5-million Capacity Building Fund, delivered by the First Nations Technology Council, to provide training and support programs to give communities and new users the online technical skills they need to capitalize on the full benefits of the Internet.
- To celebrate today’s milestone, TELUS has donated computers to Doig River that will be used by the Band and the community for education, research and training.
- Currently, 93 per cent of British Columbians have access to a wired high-speed or broadband Internet connection, and 157 of 203 First Nations communities already have some Internet access, making B.C. one of the most connected jurisdictions in the world.
- Outside of the Pathways project, since 2008, the Province has also provided \$6.83 million and funded nearly 150 connectivity projects to establish the infrastructure needed to bring high-speed Internet services to over 210 new locales in B.C.
- Doig River First Nation is located 70 km northeast of Fort St. John. The Doig River community runs a number of businesses including forestry, construction, oil and gas ventures and ranching.

Learn More:

- For more information on ANTCO and the Pathways to Technology project:
www.PathwaysToTechnology.ca
- Following the event, photos from today's community celebration will be available online on the Province of B.C.'s Flickr account: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/bcgovphotos>

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