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

## **WIRELESS ACCESS TO IMPROVE INTERNET SERVICE FOR YAHK**

YAHK – A federal and provincial investment of \$75,000 will improve broadband services and introduce high-speed Internet access to the Yahk-Kingsgate area and other nearby rural communities. The funding is provided through the Canada-B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (CBCMRIF), which is enabling communities across B.C. to become healthier, greener and more sustainable places to live.

The announcement was made today by the Honourable Jim Abbott, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and MP for Kootenay-Columbia, and Bill Bennett, MLA for East Kootenay.

Approximately 100 new users located in the communities of Yahk, Kingsgate, Curzon, Glenlily and Majestic subdivision will gain access to wireless broadband. The project includes the erection of a radio tower to service the Yahk townsite, and the installation of radio repeater towers along the Moyie River Valley to service users between Yahk and the U.S. Border at Kingsgate.

“Improved broadband service enables area residents and business to access high-speed Internet at competitive prices,” said Abbott 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. “Our government is proud to partner with the Province of British Columbia to support the long-term growth of communities as vibrant places to live, work and raise families.”

“Wireless Internet access is a great way for residents and business to stay connected with each other and other communities,” said Bennett, on behalf of Community Services Minister Ida Chong. “We’re pleased that through this funding partnership we are able to support these communities around Yahk with this type of infrastructure that makes a real difference in people’s lives.”

“This improvement will be like a magic key to the outside world of home-based employment, improved medical service, and educational opportunities, along with a wealth of other benefits,” said Jon Pritchard, chair of the Yahk Area Communication Society. “The last mile connectivity could not happen without assistance like this. I’m sure I speak for most of our people in the valley when I pass along our sincere appreciation.”

The majority of the program funding from the CBCMRIF, which was launched in June 2006, supports communities of fewer than 250,000 people in minimizing the costs to taxpayers of local infrastructure upgrades or new construction projects.

At least 60 per cent of the funding will assist with “green projects” that are geared towards enhancing environmental sustainability, such as water and waste-water systems, public transit and environmental energy improvements. Other infrastructure projects will support local roads, cultural and recreational facilities, tourism and broadband connectivity. Funding for this project is conditionally approved pending the successful completion of an environmental assessment.

The total amount available through the CBCMRIF, with federal and provincial investments and matching local government contribution, is over \$220 million. More details on the program are available online at [www.canadabcmrif.ca](http://www.canadabcmrif.ca).

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