

CARMACKS - STEWART TRANSMISSION PROJECT



July 2008

Carmacks-Stewart Line a Boost to Local Economy

The Carmacks to Stewart Transmission Line Project continues to provide substantial economic



Clearing work on the Carmacks-Stewart line. Photo: Derek Crowe

benefits to the territory. Since the groundwork began in early December of last year, several dozen Yukoners have been hired to work on various aspects of the project.

Challenger Geomatics, which was awarded the centerline surveying contract, hired more than 20 Yukoners to do line cutting, flag clearing limits, catering and other services. Companies such as Selkirk Groceries in Pelly Crossing received spin-off benefits through providing accommodations, fuel for vehicles, and miscellaneous dry goods.

The clearing contract went to Pelly Construction of Whitehorse and was then subcontracted to three companies – two of which are Yukon firms: Ewing Transport of Mayo and H.R. Vance Construction of Whitehorse.

Pelly Construction says about two dozen Yukoners, including heavy equipment operators and ground crews were hired to work on the project and says approximately \$2.5 million of its contract was spent in Yukon on wages, food, fuel, equipment and other services.

The Carmacks Hotel has been extremely busy housing and feeding crew members. And Mobile Maintenance of Whitehorse was awarded a \$1 million contract to produce all the steel cross arms and cross bracings for the transmission poles.

Valard Construction, the lead contractor on the line construction, formed a joint venture with Arctic Power and the Northern Tutchone First Nations to complete the project. For the construction portion of the work there are between 40 and 50 employees on the job. About thirty percent of those are Yukoners, including 10 to 15 labourers from the Northern Tutchone First Nations, two operators from the Northern Tutchone First Nations and four other Yukoners (safety officer, material manager, operators). As well, a Yukon business is providing catering for Valard's work camp. Two of the catering staff are members of the Northern Tutchone First Nations.

Wardrop Engineering is providing engineering and project/construction management services. It hired Yukon Engineering Services, a Whitehorse engineering consulting firm, to provide construction management services for the civil/structural part of the project. And F&M Installations Ltd., the civil and electrical construction contractor for the substation work, is planning to hire local construction forces.



Fred Harper from Pelly Crossing (right) and Jason Rideout, assembling the transmission line structures. Photo: www.archbould.com

Good Progress on Line

Yukon Energy is making good progress on Phase 1 of the Carmacks-Stewart transmission line. When completed late this fall, the line will run from Carmacks to Pelly Crossing, with a spur to the Minto mine.

"I am very satisfied with the way this project is proceeding," Yukon Energy President David Morrison said. "We are keeping within our expected time frame and budget and the line should be operating by the end of September."

Crews that include several Yukoners are assembling and erecting the wooden structures that will hold the transmission line. On both the main line and the smaller spur line to the Minto mine, well over half of the almost 900 necessary structures have been set into the ground. The stringing of the line is expected to begin very shortly.

Work is also underway to build substations at Carmacks, Minto Landing and the Minto mine, with substation work at Pelly Crossing to start shortly. The largest piece of equipment, a transformer at Minto Landing, should arrive in the Yukon sometime in August.

The Carmacks to Stewart line will give Yukon Energy a customer for its surplus hydro and will allow Pelly Crossing to switch to clean hydro for its electricity needs.

Phase 1, from Carmacks to Pelly Crossing, is expected to cost about \$27.8 million, with the Minto spur line costing approximately \$8.8 million. The Yukon government is providing \$10-million to this project.

The project has been through an extensive environmental screening by the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board and through three public hearings by the Yukon Utilities Board.

Working with Local Residents

Part of Yukon Energy's work towards getting the necessary approvals for the transmission line involved meaningful and on-going consultations with the Northern Tutchone First Nations, project area residents, Renewable Resource Council members, government departments and other members of the public. Yukon Energy worked closely with them to select the route for the proposed transmission line. With their input, the route design was refined to avoid – wherever possible -- wetlands, traplines and camps/cabins.

Routing was also designed to avoid protected areas, areas of critical habitat for moose and caribou, and areas with potential heritage resources. Yukon Energy had an inventory done of rare plants that occurred along the transmission line's proposed route. The location of the plants was marked and measures were taken to ensure they were not disturbed or removed during line construction.

Yukon Energy also reached a project agreement with the Northern Tutchone First Nations, which addressed such issues as land use and socio-economic benefits for their members.



*Northern Tutchone First Nations chiefs and Yukon Energy sign transmission line project agreement.
Photo: Yukon Energy*

Archaeological Work Along Route



Michael Ross of Matrix Research holds up what appears to be a scraping tool.



Adam Perdue sifts through soil looking for artifacts

Last fall, the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Board asked that a couple of sections of the transmission line route be realigned because of possible heritage value. The plan was to do a thorough assessment of the areas to see what was there of archaeological value, but it was too late in the season, so Matrix Research Ltd. of B.C. just did some preliminary work in the fall and then went back in May and June to complete the job. It did the work in collaboration with the Selkirk First Nation and the Yukon government.

What they found was a collection of stone flakes and what appears to be tools. The contractor is now preparing a report on the findings and once that is finished, the material found on Selkirk First Nation land will be returned to the First Nation.



Bags holding the day's findings of Quartzite flakes and scrapers. Three photos: www.archbould.com

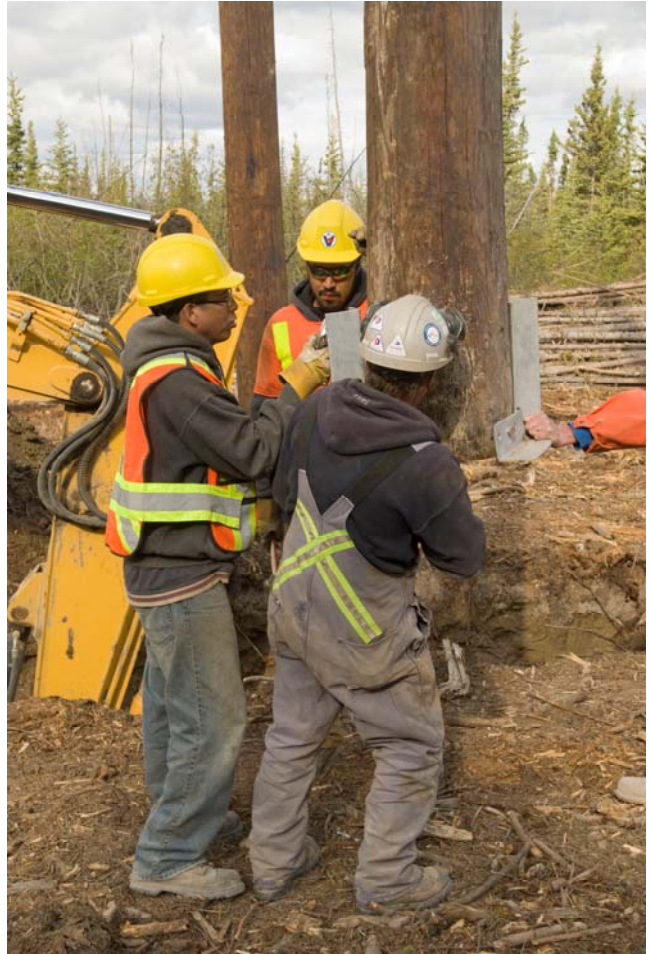
Safety First

Safety is a part of every decision Yukon Energy makes and every action it takes. The Corporation is committed to giving all contractors on the Carmacks-Stewart transmission line project a health and safety and environmental orientation, including detailed information about the safety, environmental and regulatory obligations that must be fulfilled.

Both the Northern Tutchone First Nations and the Yukon government have inspectors who regularly check the worksite to ensure that the rules are being followed. They are updated weekly (and sometimes more frequently than that) on planned operations and locations. Yukon Energy feels it has a good working relationship with the inspectors and any issues that have come up have been quickly resolved.



Digging holes for the transmission poles. (L-R) William Fairclough of Carmacks, Tyler Skookum of Carmacks and Gene Hellman. Photo: www.archbould.com



Guiding the poles into place. (L-R) Dean Gill of Pelly Crossing, William Fairclough of Carmacks, and Lionel Cobbert. Photo: www.archbould.com

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Pole structures on the Carmacks-Stewart line. Photo: Valard Construction