

## LEGISLATIVE RETURN

SUBMITTED BY: Pauline Frost, Minister of Environment



1. On March 26, 2019 \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_ Wade Istchenko, Member for Kluane

- asked the following question during the Oral Question Period at page(s) \_\_\_\_\_ of *Hansard*
- submitted the following written question – WQ No. \_\_\_\_\_
- gave notice of the following motion for the production of papers – MPP No. \_\_\_\_\_

RE: \_\_\_\_\_

OR

2. This legislative return relates to a matter outstanding from discussion related to:

Bill No. 210-Committee of the Whole (Environment)

On March 26, 2019 \_\_\_\_\_ at page(s) 4078-4085 of *Hansard*

The response is as follows:

1. The department maintains 42 roadside campgrounds across Yukon with more than 1,000 campsites in total. This year, we are planning to invest \$833,000 to expand and improve campground infrastructure, like playgrounds, trails, outhouses and boat launches. We use a systematic approach to address four levels of need to determine which campgrounds are prioritized for improvements. These include: public and workplace health and safety (repair/replacement of bridges, boat launches and playgrounds, and bear proofing); environmental standards (installation of pump-out outhouse tanks); universal access (wheelchair accessible campsites, trails and facilities); and where there is a reduction in quality of services (road upgrades, replacement of aging tables and shelters).

A general cost breakdown of the improvements to Yukon government campgrounds being undertaken this year include:

- \$300,000 for upgrades to campground infrastructure (such as outhouses, additional bear-proof food and garbage storage bins, tree removal and repairs to kitchen shelters);
- \$98,000 to expand campsites in existing campgrounds;
- \$300,000 in replacing playground infrastructure replacement; and
- \$135,000 on the Wolf Creek Bridge repair.

General maintenance work has been done at Francis Lake and Simpson Lake campgrounds along the Robert Campbell Highway.

2. Public consultation on the proposed surcharge on single-use shopping bags includes engagement sessions with industry. We have reached out to an extensive list of individual retailers as well as the Yukon and Whitehorse Chambers of Commerce. We are co-hosting a meeting with the Chambers and their members on April 10, 2019.

The engagement survey (open until April 26, 2019) includes a question about what type of shopping bag the proposed surcharge should apply to. This could be plastic, paper, bags used for unpackaged bulk items (such as produce, bakery, candy and small hardware items), restaurant take out bags (paper or plastic), bags for prescription drugs, bags used for dry cleaning, and/or other bags that respondents may identify. We also ask, from the same list, which bags respondents think should be excluded from a surcharge.

3. There are five permanent employees within the Animal Health Unit, these include:
- 1) **Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO)** who is responsible for strategic direction, program development, public engagement to support legislative reform and program development, program delivery for animal health and welfare initiatives and collaboration with local, regional, national and international partners to achieve Yukon government objectives with respect to health and welfare of domestic animals and wildlife.
  - 2) **Program Veterinarian** who is responsible for delivery of wildlife and domestic animal health programs including health surveillance, specific relevant research, oversight of livestock veterinary services program and the meat inspection program in coordination with Agriculture Branch. In addition, this position is responsible for oversight of wildlife capture, is the Deputy CVO and lead on the newly formed Yukon Government Animal Care Committee.
  - 3) **Environment Laboratory Coordinator** who is responsible for managing and updating the databases to track animal health surveillance and research data, manages all mandatory harvest submissions, is the expert for aging sheep, and coordinates and manages all aspects of the laboratory and associated equipment, protocols and safe work practices to serve all branches of the Department of Environment.
  - 4) **Animal Protection Officer** who is responsible as an officer for all duties under the *Animal Protection Act* and *Dog Act*, including investigation, education and enforcement. Delivers the community dog care initiative, voluntary dog surrender program, and responds to all enquiries related to animal welfare concerns and dog control. Is a Livestock Control Officer under the *Highways Act* and is responsible for monitoring and responding to horses or other livestock on the highway corridor.
  - 5) **Administrative Assistant** who is responsible for reception, correspondence, record control, purchasing, meeting and engagement support and all typical administrative support duties.

In addition to the five permanent positions, there is a five-year term **Animal Health Inspector** position funded (started in 2018) to deliver duties surrounding the new Control Order on Sheep and Goats. This position developed the program specifics in cooperation with the Agriculture Branch and is responsible for inspecting premises, approving fencing, issuing orders (for quarantine), testing domestic sheep and goats, overseeing destruction when required, providing education and outreach, and supporting compensation decisions.

4. The Water Resources Branch recently completed two targeted baseline studies to support understanding of water quality and quantity in the Kotaneelee and Eagle Plains area. Final reports for both projects will be communicated in the coming months. The Water Resources Branch is also currently in the second year (of three) of a targeted research on uranium baseline in the Dawson Range region. So, while we have wrapped up the two baseline projects in the Kotaneelee and Eagle Plains area (baseline projects are intended to capture three years of data), we have initiated a new one in the Dawson Range region.

In support of our *Water for Nature, Water for People: the Yukon Water Strategy and Action Plan* we have also expanded our long-term monitoring work. This includes the addition of 35 wells to the long-term groundwater network (seven of which are newly drilled), 26 hydrometric stations, and six water quality stations.

Date

April 2, 2019

Signature

