

On The Land Collaborative Fund

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide Members with an update on the NWT On The Land Collaborative.

We know that on the land programs contribute to community wellness, healing, healthy living, and environmental stewardship and protection. These are fundamental goals of our government's mandate. Residents have also been clear in telling us that opportunities to be on the land are important to them. That is why, in addition to community wellness and programming supports, our government worked with partners to launch a new type of funding model, the NWT On The Land Collaborative, three years ago.

The funding collaborative approach brings people together: government; the charitable sector; business and industry; and other community partners, so we can combine our efforts and pool our resources – including funding, expertise, tools and equipment, and other supports. The Department of Health and Social Services was a proud partner in the creation of the On The Land Collaborative in 2014, and has continued to work closely with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Tides Canada, and the NWT Recreation and Parks Association as the administrative leads for the Collaborative.

At its heart, the Collaborative's goal is to find new approaches to meet shared priorities across sectors. Businesses, governments and charitable organizations contribute financial and human resources collectively to maximize the overall impact and benefit to NWT residents. This partnership approach has shown great success towards improving the lives and wellbeing of NWT residents and has proven to be an efficient and effective use of resources.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most innovative elements of the Collaborative, and a key to its success, is the participation of Community Advisors who are appointed by participating Indigenous governments. We have been fortunate to have representatives from the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation; Gwich'in Tribal Council; Tłı̨chǫ Government; Dehcho First Nations; NWT Métis Nation; and Akaitcho Territory Government sitting at the table as equal partners throughout the creation of the Collaborative and its ongoing work. Community Advisors are an amazing resource for anyone applying for funding through the Collaborative, and they contribute a huge amount of time and effort towards helping people through the application process. They also provide invaluable insight and guidance to the other partners to help them make good decisions about how to allocate funding.

With the help of Community Advisors and the continued commitment of funding partners, this innovative approach to support land-based programming has seen tremendous success since it was first launched, and has reached an important milestone this year.

Mr. Speaker, this year the NWT On The Land Collaborative has successfully grown its funding pot to \$1 million dollars. To provide some context, three short years ago the Collaborative distributed \$381,850 to 35 projects in year one, followed by \$634,845 for 35 projects in year two. Now with \$1 million available, this year the Collaborative will support 48 land-based initiatives across the territory, with more than half of these projects receiving full funding. This remarkable growth is made possible through the increased support of existing partners, and by welcoming new partners to the table.

Two more GNWT Departments have joined the Collaborative and have committed time and funding this year. I'd like to acknowledge my colleagues from the Departments of Education, Culture and Employment and Industry, Tourism and Investment for seeing value in the work that the Collaborative makes possible. I would also like to recognize my colleague from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources who was an early partner and supporter of this initiative. Most importantly, I want to acknowledge and congratulate the other sector partners for believing in the On The Land Collaborative and recognize their continued support: Tides Canada; Dominion Diamond Corporation; the

NWT Recreation and Parks Association; the Indigenous Leadership Initiative; the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation; Diavik Diamond Mine; Health Canada, and the Gordon Foundation.

As has been the case in previous years, a wide range of grant amounts and project types will be supported in 2018. Small grant recipients include an ice fishing program in Whatì, and a land and culture-based retreat for LGBTQ+ students and their allies in the South Slave. Medium-sized grants will allow the Ulukhaktok Community Corporation to run a summer language camp for young people in their community, and Chief Julius School in Fort McPherson to immerse students in traditional Gwich'in culture while travelling on the Peel River. Large grants have been awarded to the Dehcho First Nations' Stewardship & Guardian Program, and the Tulít'a Dene Band's walking journey along traditional trails for Elders and youth.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all of the collaborative partners, I want to congratulate all of the recipients and thank all of the applicants for their leadership and dedication to on the land activities in their communities. I also want to recognize all of the partners whose continued commitment to the NWT On The Land Collaborative is supporting meaningful programming in our communities and is contributing to the health and wellness of our residents.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.