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For Immediate Release

Update on Nain Airport feasibility studies

The Nunatsiavut Government is planning to build a new certified airport for the community of Nain to replace the existing infrastructure that is currently under stress from the impacts of climate change. Studies have determined that the existing runway is unsafe and cannot be expanded or upgraded.

If feasible, the proposed new site will have a gravel airstrip measuring 5,000 feet long and 100 feet wide, exclusive of the manoeuvring areas, with a surface area of approximately 14,000 square feet set aside for future development. Once all feasibility studies are completed, a final decision will be made on the location of the new airport to ensure that it is sustainable and optimal. Further community consultations and land use mapping will be conducted during the environmental and impacts assessment stage of the project.

The construction of an access road to connect the community to the new airport is part of the project. The proposed alignment includes an approximately 12-kilometre gravel surfaced roadway, starting at Annainak Brook (quarry). The alignment will have some key design and construction challenges, including three water crossings requiring bridges/structural culverts, challenging topography including steep terrain sections prone to avalanches in some areas, as well as low-lying poorly drained areas to cross.

The investigation will include drilling boreholes and digging test pits. For the land-based portion of the program there are a total of 60 boreholes being advanced to a depth of six metres along the airstrip, potential terminal locations and access route; one borehole advanced to a 30-metre depth for a pump test at one of the potential terminal locations; two boreholes advanced to 10 metres near Kauk Brook; and 27 test pits along the access route. Groundwater samples will be collected from four locations at the proposed terminal site for water quality testing. Thermistors will be installed at six locations for measuring ground temperatures (permafrost, and active zone). Samples collected during the geotechnical investigation will be tested.

Tree clearing will be completed ahead of the proposed drilling program. Timber and debris will be stockpiled at convenient locations, or as instructed, not burned, and will be made available to residents of the community. The contractor will also provide mobile and heavy equipment (excavators) on site, as well as bear monitors (firearms use). Equipment to support clearing activities will include hand tools, gas-powered tools (e.g., chainsaws), portable fuel tanks and light duty vehicles.

For more information, please contact:

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