

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Shares Highway Stories at Mile “0”

*Alaska Highway House opening marks the beginning of a larger planning effort
for Dawson Creek*

Dawson Creek, BC, July 4, 2007 – The Alaska Highway House opens to the public today. Celebrating one of the longest and most adventurous highways in the world, the Alaska Highway House’s interpretive exhibits journey into the highway’s storied past and introduce travelers to the adventures of the road ahead. The opening marks completion of a 3-year project by Tourism Dawson Creek (TDC) and the communities of the highway corridor, who worked closely with AldrichPears Associates (APA), a planning and design firm that developed the conceptual program and exhibits for the centre.

“What is remarkable in this project is the community’s involvement and contribution to the process. We knocked on over 100 homes and hosted an open house with over 200 residents attending to ensure the stories told are a rich and accurate account of the highway,” says Ryan MacIvor, Tourism Development Coordinator for Tourism Dawson Creek.

APA facilitated a series of visioning workshops to help community stakeholders establish an overall thematic framework for the Alaska Highway corridor. The collaborative planning process demonstrates how Dawson Creek and other communities can create a meaningful regional experience for visitors. The thematic strategy has been applied to an interpretive strategy for the city of Dawson Creek and a concept plan for the future Alaska Highway House.

Within 1000 square feet of TDC’s downtown offices, Alaska Highway House visitors can explore the first phase of the project. New exhibits feature the historic context of the highway and its remarkable wartime construction. A recreated Quonset hut features films and documentaries that bring the highway’s story to life. Visitors can pose in front of a real Willys Jeep sitting atop partially recreated “corduroy road”, or examine the gallery’s centerpiece: a scale model of the 1942 Kiskatinaw Bridge under construction. Artifacts, photos and illustrations bring the story into the present day by exploring the critical role of the Black Troops, the lasting effect on First Nations and the impact of the road to the North, as well as the growth of trucking and transportation that continues to this day.

A larger Alaska Highway House is being planned for the future. The concept for a larger centre includes 3D exhibits, an adventure theatre, displays of road building equipment and interactive exhibits that allow visitors to experience the life of a road builder.

“We were pleased to support TDC with a project that showcases Dawson Creek as Mile ‘0’ of the Alaska Highway. The temporary centre allows us to test our themes and exhibits and potentially change them for the future centre based on feedback from visitors,” says Marc Belanger, Associate at AldrichPears Associates.

Dawson Creek's Alaska Highway House provides new travelers with inspiration for their journey, and reflection for those completing it.

About AldrichPears Associates

AldrichPears Associates is a Vancouver-based firm that provides exhibit design and planning services to museums, science centers, zoos, and interpretive centers. Serving an international clientele, the firm plans and creates compelling and entertaining visitor experiences that captivate the imagination and invite lifelong learning.

About Tourism Dawson Creek

Established in 2001, Tourism Dawson Creek (TDC) responds to local operators and business leaders wanting to further develop and diversify the tourism industry in Dawson Creek. Its focus is to develop the tourism industry and its sectors within Dawson Creek. TDC is the recognized Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) responsible for the marketing and promotion of Dawson Creek. TDC is a subsidiary organization of the Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association (NRAHTA). NRAHTA is a member-based organization that represents nine communities in Northeastern BC, and members in the Yukon, Alaska and Alberta. Tourism Dawson Creek also operates the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) and considers the VIC a crucial part of its development and marketing strategy.

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