

RESPONSE TO PETITION

No. 8-91(1)

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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Petition tabled by Mr. Nerysoo on February 25 1991

Response by the Honourable Gordon Wray
Minister of Transportation

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IMPROVEMENTS TO THE DEMPSTER HIGHWAY BETWEEN THE YUKON BORDER - (NWT HWY 8 KM 0 - 85)

It is the Department of Transportation's responsibility to maintain the Northwest Territories' public highway system in a safe condition for the use and benefit of the people of the Northwest Territories. The Department does its utmost within its resources to fulfill this responsibility.

This petition calls the attention of the Government of the Northwest Territories' to the section of the Dempster Highway between the Yukon Border and the Hamlet of Fort McPherson.

Every year, the Department spends approximately \$600,000 on the regular and standard maintenance of this section of highway.

In addition to routine maintenance activities, the Department is committed to the steady improvement of the highway. In September 1989, the Department spent \$110,000 to re-surface the Dempster Highway between km 38 and 66. Again last year, in August 1990, the Department spent another \$120,000 re-surfacing between km 0 and 38 and between km 66 and 74. Thus, over the last two years, the Department has applied a fresh layer of gravel over the entire length of the highway from the Yukon Border to the Peel River ferry crossing, ten kilometres west of Fort McPherson. Over the same period and the same section of highway, the Department has spent \$270,000 on culvert replacements to improve the drainage of water from the highway. The Department's budget for 1991/92 allocates another \$100,000 to continue with the culvert replacements.

In the winter, snow-drifting has been a serious problem on the Dempster Highway. Since 1989, the Department has spent \$62,000 installing new snowfences along the highway with another \$20,000 scheduled for this year. Last year the Department spent \$245,000 replacing all the conventional style guardrails between the Yukon Border and Fort McPherson with a new box-beam style guardrail that does not collect blowing snow. The highway can become completely blocked with snow in places where the road cuts through the top of an elevation leaving steep embankments on either side of the road. This summer the Department will spend \$250,000 cutting back some of these side slopes so that they will not catch so much snow.

Through such measures as its gravel re-surfacing, culvert replacements, new snowfencing, new guardrails and back slope reductions, the Department of Transportation works continually to improve the driving conditions on the Dempster Highway.