



For Immediate Release

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The Cold Climate Housing Research Center (CCHRC) and Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council (YRITWC) are proud to announce they have entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to jointly analyze the performance of a new hydrokinetic project in Ruby, Alaska.

The YRITWC received funding from the Alaska Energy Authority as part of the Alaska Renewable Energy Fund to enhance their existing 5 kilowatt in-stream hydrokinetic turbine. It is the first successful installation of its kind in the United States. The system features a low impact turbine that is adaptable to a variety of locations where there is sufficient water flow. The YRITWC secured new funding to reinstall the turbine this summer with improved anchoring and data monitoring systems, and expand the installation with a larger turbine in 2010. The longer term objective is to determine the feasibility of fully displacing diesel generation for significant periods of time.

Jon Waterhouse, YRITWC Alaska Region Director, stated, "The Ruby hydrokinetic project is applying leading-edge and culturally appropriate technologies to meet the energy needs of indigenous communities in the Yukon River watershed and beyond. Our exciting new partnership with CCHRC will enhance both organizations' capacity and reach and allow us to better serve Alaskans and those working toward clean energy."

CCHRC's role in the project is to analyze the performance of the hydrokinetic system and help communicate valuable information to Alaskans. CCHRC is currently performing similar work on its Hybrid Micro Energy Project (HMEP), which is designed to demonstrate how a variety of renewable energy sources can work together to meet small-scale energy demands in Alaska year-round. Photos, performance data, reports, and other useful information about the hydrokinetic project will be hosted on CCHRC's website, along with the other systems that comprise the HMEP. The analysis will help inform future in-stream hydro projects.

"This project stands to provide a fuel-free alternative to many remote villages along the Yukon River," says CCHRC President and CEO Jack Hébert. "The unique challenges of living in such an isolated and rugged environment have always forced Alaskans to be resilient and innovative. For our communities these challenges represent opportunities. This collaboration between two organizations is an example of how Alaskans with a shared vision can work towards solutions for a sustainable future."

The MOU also recognizes opportunities to collaborate on other existing renewable energy projects in the Yukon watershed including solar photovoltaic systems in Ft. Yukon, Beaver, Venetie, and Arctic Village.

The Cold Climate Housing Research Center is a non-profit institution dedicated to research that improves the durability, health, and affordability of shelter for people living in circumpolar regions around the globe.

The Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council is an Indigenous grassroots organization, consisting of 66 First Nations and Tribes, dedicated to the protection and preservation of the Yukon River Watershed. The YRITWC helps Yukon First Nations and Alaska Tribes through development and exchange of information, coordinating efforts between First Nations and Tribes, undertaking research, and providing training, education and awareness programs to promote the health of the Watershed and its Indigenous peoples.

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