

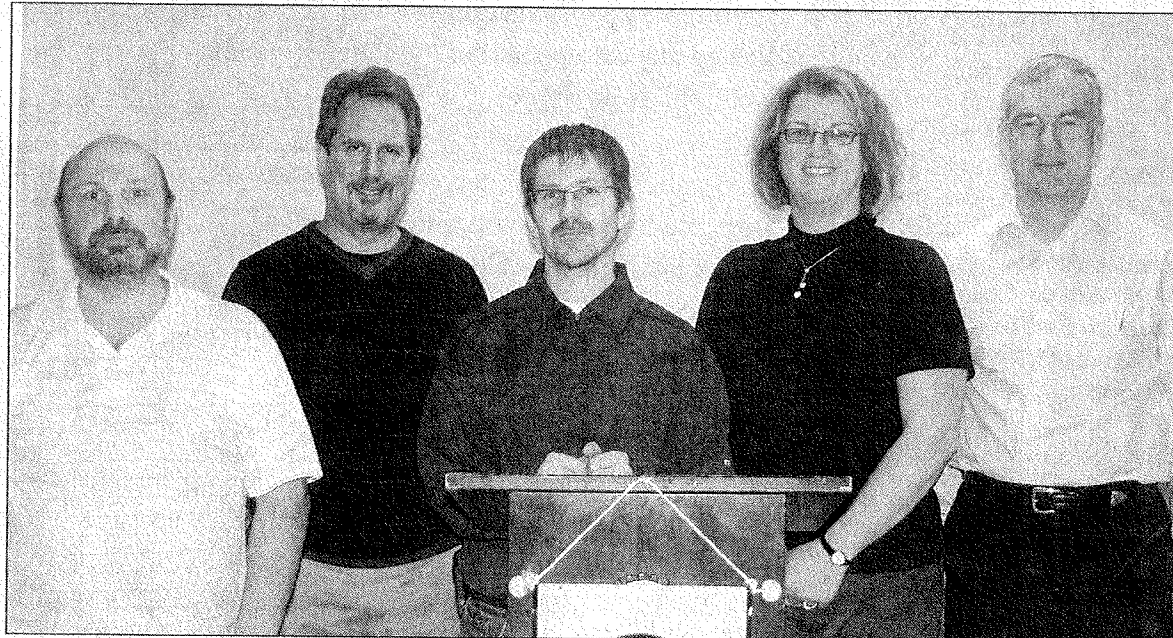
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Connector road

Raymond Tardiff, Road Specialist for the Ministry of Forests and Range, Rob Johnson, Regional Staff Manager, Ministry of Forests and Range, Shayne Lamber, Chamber President, Tracy Raume Regional Engineering Officer, Ministry of Forests and Range, Dave Francis, Manager of Forestry for Mackenzie all spoke at the Chamber of Commerce Annual General meeting.

Photo by Jackie Benton

CONNECTOR COMPLETION PLANNED FOR NOVEMBER 2010

By Jackie Benton

At the Annual General meeting of the Mackenzie Chamber of Commerce on February 18th Chamber members were given an update on the connector road.

Provincial and Federal funding has been secured for the Mackenzie/ Fort St. James Connector project. "This is good news for Mackenzie and Fort St. James, we have been working away on this concept for many years," said Dave Francis, Manager of Forestry for Mackenzie. He said it would be a big year for road construction. Dave said with the road in place there would be more improvement to other communities and it would be better for business and a win win

for everyone.

Rob Johnson Regional Staff Manager of the Ministry of Forests and Range said that they are hoping to have a project manager in place in the next few weeks.

"The key piece is to consult with first nations, we want to have on going communication," he said.

He said there are two Forest Districts, two first nation groups, and two communities to work with and consider. "It is a juggling act and we have to be aware of the communities needs," he said.

The plan is to have the road completed the second or third week in November.

He said they want to get a website going so they can get informa-

tion out about the project details, and links to where people can bid for the jobs.

Tracey Raume P. Eng. for the Ministry of Forests and Range said that the idea behind the road is that it will be maintained long term.

"The intention of the road is to have it open all year," she said.

As well, they hope to have kiosks on each end of the road so people can see what is taking place.

It is hoped that activity from both ends will take place during the construction. "We have a very tight time line," she said.

The Connector will link Mackenzie and Fort St. James opening up both areas and provide business opportunities for both communities.