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Geotechnical Investigations and Master Drainage Plan project helping Gjoa Haven  
#Nunavut prepare for the effects of climate change @GovCanNorth

## **News release**

For immediate release

### **New adaptation project helping Gjoa Haven prepare for risks posed by climate change**

August 10, 2022 —Gjoa Haven, Nunavut — Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

The Hamlet of Gjoa Haven is taking steps to address and adapt to the effects of climate change thanks to a community-led project that will conduct geotechnical investigations and drainage planning in the existing townsite as well as areas that have been identified for potential future development.

The *Geotechnical Investigations and Master Drainage Plan* project, led by the Government of Nunavut, will combine local traditional knowledge with information gathered by engineering consultants to create a Development Suitability Map and Master Drainage Plan for the community. The goal of these plans will be to identify climate change impacts caused by melting permafrost, such as water-induced erosion, thaw settlement, and flooding; protecting existing infrastructure from these impacts; and helping plan climate-resilient future development.

Understanding the impacts of climate change plays a critical role in infrastructure planning and emergency management in Indigenous, northern and Arctic communities, particularly those where climate change affects drainage and ground stability. In communities throughout Nunavut, melting permafrost is causing ground instability, the sinking of buildings and the washing-out of roads. This project will help the Hamlet of Gjoa Haven maintain their present buildings and infrastructure, while avoiding building new infrastructure on ground made unstable due to melting permafrost.

Today, the Honourable Daniel Vandal, Minister of Northern Affairs, announced \$200,000 in funding from the Climate Change Preparedness in the North Program for work that will incorporate traditional knowledge and community engagement in a plan to protect current and future community infrastructure.



The Climate Change Preparedness in the North Program supports projects that help Indigenous and northern communities and governments increase their capacity to adapt to climate change. This includes providing support to assess a community's vulnerability to climate change factors such as changing ice conditions, permafrost degradation, coastal erosion, flooding, and wildfires on the natural environment and infrastructure portfolio. The program also supports communities and governments in addressing climate change as part of community planning and implementing appropriate measures to respond to various impacts.

### Quotes

"As Indigenous and northern communities are already feeling the devastating effects of climate change, it's crucial that they have the tools they need to lead on adapting to the changing environment. This project will play an important role in supporting drainage and geotechnical site planning to ensure climate resilient infrastructure development in the Hamlet of Gjoa Haven. It will also help support innovation and build community resilience as we keep working toward our climate goals."

The Honourable Daniel Vandal, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Northern Affairs

"This project continues Nunavut's work to secure a sustainable and climate-conscious future. By combining geotechnical insights with traditional knowledge and values, future generations will benefit from this important initiative. Climate adaptation is here to stay - continuing to form partnerships at local, territorial, and federal levels is what will strengthen our success."

*The Honourable David Joanasie,  
Minister of Community and Government Services*

### Quick facts

- The Climate Change Preparedness in the North Program funds climate change adaptation projects in Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Nunavik, Nunatsiavut, NunatuKavut and Eeyou Istchee territory. To date, the Climate Change Preparedness in the North Program has invested more than \$53 million in 284 projects across the North.
- Budget 2016 allocated \$21.4 million for the first five years and \$3.5 million annually afterward for climate change preparedness in the north. Budget 2017 allocated an additional \$55.9 million over eleven years to support the assessment of climate change impacts and the implementation of adaptation measures in the North.



- So far in the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the program has provided \$13 million to fund 52 projects across Nunavut.

### **Associated links**

[Climate Change Preparedness in the North Program](#)

- 30 -

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