

### **Yukoners are a positive group, but not supportive of current political leaders**

Yukoners are feeling quite optimistic this winter season. For the first time since 2007, more than 20% of Yukoners feel that they are either much better or somewhat better off than they were last year. Only 12% feel they are worse off, which is better than seen since the end of 2007. Part of that might be contributed to strong feelings about the state of the economy. During 2009 only 10% of the Yukoners felt the economy was in healthy or peak condition. This increased slightly, to approximately 15% earlier this year, but is now up to 22%, returning to 2007 and 2008 levels. At the same time, the economy is no longer considered to be one of the top issues facing the Yukon. The economy was the top issue for most of 2009, and has rotated with the environment as the top issue for the past several years. However, by late 2009, it dropped to the third position, as the concern over poor government grew. In this poll, the economy dropped into the fourth position, with only 7% of Yukoners rating it number one. The environment was tied with poor government as the number one issue (as rated by 14% respectively). The third ranking issue was education/schools at 12%. Housing issues have now increased to 5%.

However, the politicians, at neither the Territory or Federal levels, are significantly reaping the benefits of this optimism, with satisfaction ratings up only slightly. At the Territorial level, all three parties witnessed a small increase in satisfaction scores compared to the summer of this year. At that time, 13% rated the Yukon Party a 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale, the lowest rating they have seen since the start of the polling in 2003. That increased to 16% this winter season, and is still significantly below their peaks of

31% in spring 2007 and again in spring 2009. The Liberal Party's high ratings increased from 14% in the summer to 16% this winter. The NDP had the largest gain, up from 6% in the summer to 13% this winter. This returned to levels seen in 2007.

If a Territorial election was held today, 27% of Yukoners would still be undecided. This is similar to 2008 and 2009 levels, but down from July 2010 levels when 39% were undecided. Among decided voters, the Liberal Party would gain 33% of the vote, compared to 30% for the NDP, 24% for the Yukon Party and 13% for other.

Federal MP Larry Bagnel dropped in the poll this winter, with only 47% of the decided voters deciding to vote Liberal, down from 62% in July, which was his highest level since 2005. At 47% he is close to scores seen in most of 2008. He won the 2008 election with 45% of the vote. Compared to this past summer, the Conservative Party increased from 17% to 23%, the NDP was up from 7% to 10% and the Green Party was up from 13% to 20%.

Approval ratings for Steven Harper recovered to 35% after dropping in late 2009 and early 2010, but remain below levels seen in earlier years. And even while nearly half of Yukoners would be voting for a Liberal MP, 37% rate their choice for Federal Leader as Mr. Harper. This is due to 56% of Yukoners basing their Federal vote on what they feel the candidate can do for the Yukon (vs. 44% basing it on what they can do for Canada.)

The survey was conducted by DataPath Systems, an independent Yukon-based market research company. Telephone surveys were conducted with 169 Whitehorse residents and 135 non-Whitehorse residents between December 2 and 15, 2010. The data is

weighted to accurately represent Yukoners based on the community they live in, their age and gender. Percentages are statistically valid to +/- 5.5%, 19 times out of 20 (95% confidence). This was a non-commissioned study, paid for by DataPath Systems.

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