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YUKON SUPPORTS POSITIVE WORK OF ENERGY SOLUTIONS CENTRE

WHITEHORSE – The Energy Solutions Centre is continuing its positive work in delivering valuable energy efficiency and renewable energy programs and services, but under tighter controls than in the past.

“The Yukon government has made it a priority to support energy conservation initiatives and to ensure that Yukon’s energy resources are developed and managed in an economically and environmentally responsible manner,” Energy, Mines and Resources Minister Archie Lang said. “We recognize the significant impact climate change is having in the North, and support programming that helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”

An estimated annual budget of \$1.2 million will be offset by funds remaining in the Green Power and Energy Efficiency funds, and an additional contribution of \$400,000 from the Yukon Development Corp. The Yukon government is also working on a partnership basis with the federal government to be able to offer a number of federal energy related programs.

“Through energy programs offered by the centre we can have a positive impact on climate change,” Lang said. “We support the work of the Energy Solutions Centre to provide energy programs and carry out projects that lower energy costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”

Recently, the Energy Solutions Centre has been working with several Yukon communities to help them access federal programs and funding to improve the energy efficiency of their buildings, and to help them use renewable resources where possible. For example, the centre has been working with Haines Junction and Mayo to help access financial and technical resources to investigate the feasibility of replacing fossil fuel heating systems with local geothermal resources to heat several buildings in those communities.

These projects could potentially enhance the sustainability of these communities by reducing their reliance on fuel oil, reducing long-term heating costs, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The centre has plans in 2006 to work with several more Yukon communities to help reduce heating costs and greenhouse gas emissions by improving the energy efficiency of their operations and, where feasible, adopting the use of renewable resources to replace non-renewable resources.

The Energy Solutions Centre is a storefront operation that provides Yukoners with information and access to energy efficiency and renewable energy programs. The centre was transferred from the Yukon Development Corp. to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources on January 1 of this year. The transfer was made to address concerns identified by Sheila Fraser, Canada’s Auditor General, in her report on the operations of the Energy Solutions Centre.

The Auditor General was in Whitehorse in February and she praised the Yukon government for the transfer, and other steps taken by Yukon government to improve accountability.

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Contact:
Peter Carr
Cabinet Communications
(867) 667-8688
peter.carr@gov.yk.ca

Tara O’Donovan
Communications, Energy, Mines and Resources
(867) 667-5809
tara.odonovan@gov.yk.ca