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**TAYLOR BRINGS ENCOURAGING RESULTS FROM EUROPEAN VISIT**

WHITEHORSE – Tourism and Culture Minister Elaine Taylor has returned from meetings in Europe with encouraging news for tourism operators.

Taylor met with Condor Airlines in Frankfurt, Germany. Company officials were pleased with the number of passengers that traveled on the twice-weekly summer flights to Yukon and will be scheduling additional flights for next season. New flights will add 520 seats and extend the summer travel season from May 9 to Oct. 3.

The Department of Tourism and Culture will be encouraging local tourism operators to extend their summer hours of operation to correspond with Condor flights. The department will also be looking at longer hours for Yukon's visitor information centres.

Whitehorse CanaDream station manager, Sten Linde, is excited about Condor's interest in extending its spring and fall operating season, "We view this as a tremendous opportunity for us to expand on our efforts. We are willing to partner with other Yukon businesses that will be open for these early and late flights and put together something for our customers to give them a full vacation," Linde said.

Meeting with Air Canada officials in Germany also produced positive results. For the first time, Tourism Yukon and Air Canada will be participating with German tour operators in a five-week promotional print campaign focusing on winter travel in Yukon. Air Canada has also committed to providing affordable one-way fares to Whitehorse and other western Canadian destinations to facilitate fly-drive tour programs.

Taylor also met with major tourism wholesaler Thomas Cook in Germany to discuss cross-promotions of Yukon as a viable and choice destination for winter travel. Among seven major European wholesalers featuring Yukon tourism product, Thomas Cook will be offering Yukon winter packages for the first time.

Fulda Tire Company has also confirmed dates for the 2006 Fulda Challenge. A new route for the Challenge will feature an all-Yukon course beginning at Whitehorse and continuing along the Robert Campbell Highway to Watson Lake. The adventure race will be held from Jan. 28 to Feb. 7 with teams from Germany, Belgium, Great Britain, Poland, Netherlands, Austria and Canada.

Taylor also attended the opening of a First Nation exhibit entitled "Traditions of Change", showcasing 11 Yukon First Nations artists at the Nordamerika Native Museum in Zurich, Switzerland.

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