

FOR RELEASE #05-236
September 14, 2005

CULTURE, AIR ACCESS AND TOURISM MARKETING TO BE PROMOTED IN EUROPE

WHITEHORSE –Tourism and Culture Minister Elaine Taylor leaves for Europe today to promote cultural tourism and marketing initiatives.

Taylor will meet with air carriers and leading travel wholesalers who are critical to the continued growth of Yukon as a year-round travel destination.

“Switzerland is considered part of German speaking Europe which is our largest overseas market,” Taylor said. “The partnership with Nordamerika Native Museum is a good example of what can be achieved when marketing initiatives and art and culture work together.”

Taylor will also meet with travel wholesalers, air carriers and Fulda representatives.

“This is a key time of year when tour operators finalise their 2006 package tour brochures and marketing campaigns,” Taylor said. “The department of Tourism and Culture has arranged meetings to discuss product exposure and promotions to showcase Yukon in the European marketplace.”

Taylor’s discussions with Fulda Challenge Extreme Arctic Winter Adventure representatives will cover possible future partnerships that would continue to build on the highly successful winter event which contributes \$1.1 million in local spending to Yukon’s economy each winter.

Air access remains critical to the future growth of the Yukon’s tourism industry. Taylor’s meetings with Condor and Air Canada will focus on sustaining sufficient access, frequency and capacity from Europe to Yukon in order to maintain growth.

Overall, European visitation has been steadily growing over the past few years. Visitors arriving to Yukon on the twice-weekly Condor flights in the summer months more than doubled in the past two years with over 4,500 European visitors arriving in 2004.

In addition to meeting with airline representatives, Taylor will also attend the opening reception of *Traditions of Change*, a contemporary art exhibition in Zurich, Switzerland that features the work of 11 Yukon First Nation artists.

“The promotion of Yukon’s arts and culture community to one of our key overseas growth markets is an essential element in sustaining one of our strongest assets in the territory,” Taylor said. “In return, tourism provides the arts and culture community with a platform to showcase and share our history and culture to the world.”

The Yukon First Nation art exhibition, *Traditions of Change*, is a joint partnership between the Government of Yukon, the Society of Yukon Artists of Native Ancestry and the Nordamerika Native Museum in Zurich. The exhibit will run until April 2006.

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Yukon First Nation artists presented at the *Traditions of Change* exhibit are:

- **Eugene Alfred**, of northern Tutchone and Tlingit ancestry. Member of the Crow clan. From Selkirk First Nation.
- **Ken Anderson**, of Tlingit/Scandinavian ancestry. Member of the Raven clan.
- **Vernon Asp**, of Tahltan ancestry, raised in northern Tutchone tradition. Member of the Wolf clan.
- **Mary Caesar**, of Kaska ancestry. Member of Wolf clan of Liard First Nation.
- **Frances Oles**, of Southern Tutchone/Tagish and Danish/Anglo Saxon ancestry. Member of the Crow (Raven) clan.
- **Jackie Olson**, of Tr'ondek Hwech'in ancestry.
- **Gordon Peter**, of Kaska and Slavey ancestry. Member of the Wolf clan. Member of the Ross River Dena Council.
- **Christina Peters**, of northern and southern Tutchone ancestry. Member of the Raven clan.
- **Mark Preston**, of Tlingit/Irish ancestry.
- **Doug Smarch Jr.**, of Tlingit ancestry. Member of Raven clan. Member of Teslin Tlingit Council.
- **Keith Wolfe Smarch**, of Tlingit ancestry. Member of Eagle clan.