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YUKONERS GIVE CONFERENCE A GLIMPSE OF NORTHERN IMPACTS

WHITEHORSE – The world was given a quick look at how climate change is affecting the North during Arctic Day at the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Montreal this week.

Premier Dennis Fentie attended the event with Lorraine Peter, MLA for Vuntut Gwitch'in, on Tuesday. Several Yukon chiefs, including Council of Yukon First Nations Chief Andy Carvill, also attended.

“This was a perfect opportunity to demonstrate how the effects of climate change are changing peoples’ lives in the North,” Fentie said. “The Yukon government is committed to continuing its work with local, national and international governments to help mitigate the impacts of global climate change on the Yukon’s environment, our people and our way of life.”

As part of the event, Fentie helped launch a production by the Arctic Athabaskan Council entitled “*Through Arctic Eyes: Athabaskan Observations on Climate Change*.” It shows how traditional knowledge and scientific research combine to reveal how intricately linked local environment is to the global ecosystem.

Representatives from the departments of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources as well as the Energy Solutions Centre, Yukon Climate Exchange, Council of Yukon First Nations and others gave presentations at the event as well.

“The Yukon is in fact one of the most minor contributors to greenhouse gas emissions – less than 0.1 per cent – we are also one of the most affected areas in the world,” Fentie said. “Our First Nation elders have told us about how things have changed over the generations and we are working with them on a number of projects including ice patch research and ways to address spruce bark beetle infestations.”

The conference, which is made up of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol as well as the 11th meeting of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, continues until the end of the week in Montreal. It is the largest intergovernmental climate change conference since Kyoto was adopted in 1997 with more than 10,000 participants.

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