

FOR RELEASE
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Placer miner recognized for lifetime contributions to Beringian research

Placer miner Stuart Schmidt was recognized at the annual Yukon Placer Forum this past Sunday to honour his decades of support for Yukon palaeontology and Beringian research.

Government of Yukon Minister of Tourism and Culture Jeanie Dendys presented the Yukon Beringia Research Award to Schmidt with the support of the Klondike Placer Miners' Association. The award recognizes significant and outstanding contributions to our understanding of Yukon's ice age record. The Minister also thanked Schmidt for his ongoing support of researchers, his enthusiasm for discovery and his involvement in efforts to establish a Klondike palaeontology field station.

Schmidt's most recent contribution to Yukon's historical record is a helmeted muskox skull, believed to be around 25,000 years old. The skull was showcased at the Forum as part of a display of the most notable finds from the last few seasons.

Quotes

"Partnerships with placer miners are invaluable to our heritage resources staff. We greatly appreciate Mr. Schmidt for his incredible career-long effort to support our palaeontologists and their colleagues. It's always exciting for Yukoners to learn more about our territory's ancient past and be a part of global research."

–Minister of Tourism and Culture Jeanie Dendys

"The Klondike Placer Miners' Association is both proud and pleased that the Yukon Beringia Research Award is going to such a worthy recipient. Stuart's lifetime contribution to the advancement of our scientific understanding of Yukon's pre-history is well documented and extensive, and is yet another prime example of what can be accomplished when placer mining activity is done in partnership with the broader community."

–KPMA president Mike McDougall

Quick facts

- The helmeted muskox skull found by Schmidt is remarkably well preserved and will provide valuable opportunities for the study of ancient genetics and other research. He found the skull on September 11, 2017 while mining at Canyon Creek.
- The Yukon Beringia Research Award has previously been presented to government and academic researchers, First Nation elders and placer miners for significant contributions to the understanding of Yukon's Beringian human and palaeoenvironmental heritage.
- The fossils collected at Yukon placer mines are some of the best preserved palaeontological specimens of ice age history in the world, due to the permafrost found in the goldfields.
- The Yukon Placer Forum is an annual event presented by Yukon Geological Survey. Its purpose is to share information and advance the placer mining industry in Yukon. This may include information about palaeontological and archaeological discoveries made on Yukon mines.

Learn more: Klondike Placer Miners' Association

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