



Government of Yukon

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NEWS *release*

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November 23, 2009

Impact of Climate Change on Yukon Forests Studied

WHITEHORSE – The Government of Yukon is studying the impacts of climate change on Yukon forests with a comprehensive three-year research initiative that started this year.

“Northern tree species are particularly susceptible to the challenges of climate change,” Energy, Mines and Resources Minister Archie Lang said. “Fully understanding this challenge is key to ensuring the long-term sustainable management of Yukon’s forests.”

Led by the Forest Management branch, the research will investigate the vulnerabilities to climate change and adaptive capacities of Yukon tree species and forest ecosystems. Forest research is one of the adaptation actions called for in Yukon’s Climate Change Action Plan.

Working in partnership with the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), the research began with an assessment of current knowledge on Yukon forest vulnerability and preliminary field work to examine forest-environment relationships under a variety of conditions.

Funding and staff support for the research initiative is being provided by UNBC and the Government of Yukon with an additional \$175,000 commitment by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada under the Impacts and Adaptation fund.

The study area for the project includes all the forested areas of Yukon with particular emphasis on areas where forest management planning is completed or underway. Researchers will develop a Yukon framework and methodology to apply the findings of this study and the recently released Canadian Council of Forest Minister’s (CCFM) report entitled Vulnerability of Canada’s Tree Species to Climate Change.

“Climate change may already be impacting Yukon’s forests and these impacts are expected to increase over the coming century,” Lang added. “This project will provide critical information on the impacts of long-term climate change.”

For more information on the Forest Management Branch research or to download the CCFM report, visit <http://www.forestry.gov.yk.ca/>.

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