

The muskox processed into burgers by Kitikmeot Foods will be sold under the newly created Tundra Brand label. Dale Smith, the plant's general manager, shows off what the packaging will look like.

Muskox harvest returns

300 tags for commercial hunt mean 30 to 35 jobs

by David Ryan
Northern News Services

Ikaluktutiak/Cambridge Bay

After a five-year break, the commercial muskox hunt here is back on and it's creating jobs for hunters and trappers.

"There's 30-35 jobs created from this harvest," said Dale Smith, general manager of Kitikmeot Foods.

The plant, which generally processes about 50,000 pounds of Arctic char annually, has been converted into a makeshift slaughterhouse and tags have been issued allowing

for the harvest of up to 300 animals.

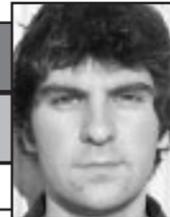
"We want to get the harvest going on a yearly basis," said Smith.

Reaction to the hunt has been positive around Cambridge Bay, said community elder and outfitter Allen Kitigon.

"People have been working very hard during the harvest and it looks as if its creating jobs," said Kitigon.

About 20 to 25 workers

Please see **Idea, page 36**



BUSINESS

around the North

with David Ryan

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Meadowbank deal for Inuit

Qamanittuaq/Baker Lake

The Kivalliq Inuit Association and Cumberland Resources have reached an understanding on the proposed Meadowbank gold mine.

In principle, there is now an Inuit Impact and Benefits Agreement to be signed should the project advance through permitting.

"It gives us certainty toward the relationship with the Inuit," said Gordon Davidson, exploration manager.

The deal calls for eight training positions and eight apprentices to be created for Inuit, as well as placing a priority on using Inuit hires and contractors, he said.

Agreement ratified

Sahtu

Imperial Oil has a signed and ratified an Access and Benefits agreement with Tulita and Deline for the construction of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline, according to company spokesman Pius Rollheiser.

"We are now working with the groups to set up joint advisory committees," he said, adding these committees will help develop business opportunities in the communities.

Tulita and Deline representatives were unavailable for comment.

One up, one down

NWT/Nunavut

Public and private construction spending estimates for 2006 have been released by Statistics Canada, with the NWT and Nunavut moving in opposite directions.

Capital spending in NWT is expected to surpass \$1.7 billion, up 10.9 per cent from 2005, which is the second biggest increase nationally behind Manitoba.

Private investment will lead the way, with more than \$1.5 billion worth of projects.

In Nunavut, total capital expenditures are expected to drop 14.5 per cent from last year to just more than \$401 million.

By far the biggest percentage decline in the country, Nunavut is one of two jurisdictions predicted to see a drop, with the other being Newfoundland.

Continued on **next page**

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Business & Labour

Trends at a Glance

Bad vibrations around Cameron Hills

Factions meet to discuss Paramount's seismic plans

by David Ryan
Northern News Services
Hay River

Possible seismic testing in Cameron Hills by a southern oil and gas company has raised the ire of at least one First Nations group in the South Slave region.

NWT Metis Nation President Rob Tordiff said Paramount Resources has ignored his people while planning 45 km of two-dimensional seismic testing in Cameron Hills, southwest of Hay River.

"Paramount is just not following the law," he said.

The Cameron Hills area where the proposed testing would occur is part of the traditional lands open for selection by the Metis Nation which has yet to resolve its land claim.

"Cameron Hills is a very sensitive area, both environmentally and socio-economically," he said.

Clearing the air

A scoping session was held in Hay River last week to bring all groups interested in the project together.

"The scoping session was to provide the public an opportunity to ask questions and voice their opinions," said Shirley Maaskant, manager of regulatory and community affairs for Paramount.

"We want to have an open, fair process."

The K'atloodeche First Nation, also in

attendance, wanted to use the meeting as a starting point for re-building relations with Paramount, but maintains it's up to the company to make the first move.

"They are corporate citizens. If they want to make an attempt at a relationship, they will have to offer their hand first," said Lyle Fabian, of K'atloodeche's resource development advisory.

"It was a good first step, we wanted to go in on a neutral position."

The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board organized the gathering to help people focus their efforts on the issues that are important,

said the board's executive director Vern Christensen.

"Those issues will be a guide for the remainder of the environmental assessment," he said, adding the board will refer its findings to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

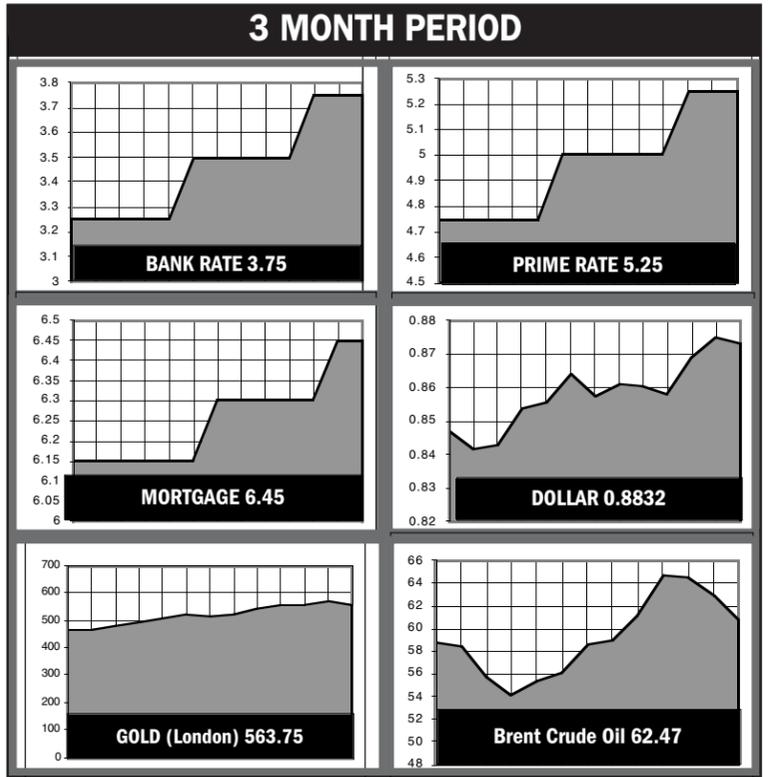
As far as the Metis are concerned, the meeting did little to calm their fears they've been ignored.

"Frankly, we have the intension and desire to be involved, but Paramount has refused," said Tordiff, adding the issue will be discussed further at the upcoming Metis leadership meeting.

Paramount's existing wells in the Cameron Hills area began producing in 2002 and yield about 305,000 barrels of oil and more than 3.2 billion cubic feet of natural gas annually.



Rob Tordiff: Metis Nation not being included in seismic testing process.



Idea is to develop employment

Muskox, from page 34

cleaning the muskox and processing it with Canadian Food Inspection Agency representatives present to ensure the meat, and the way it's handled, is in line with all health standards, said Smith.

Three hunters and seven haulers have been shuttling animals from the land to the plant since work began on Feb. 22, with the harvest expected to last for up to two more weeks.

"We are trying to use all of the by-products from the muskox," said Jacques Larabie, manager of the Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization.

The HTO has a partnership with Kitikmeot Foods where it retains the valuable qiviuq – the animals' soft under-wool, which is used to make clothing – as well as the horns. Knitted qiviuq mittens sold in Yellowknife fetch between \$100-\$250 a pair, while sweaters go for several hundred dollars more.

This year the muskox are being shot out on the tundra, but Larabie said if the harvest continues each year, the ideal situation would be to get large pens and herd the animals into them.

"It would be more cost effective," he said.

Create wealth

Funding from the territorial and federal governments helped to create the muskox group partnership, said Chris King, community economic development officer.

"We want to develop employment that creates wealth and employment within the community rather than distribute it to other places," said King, adding the economic affect of the hunt could be as much as \$150,000 for the local economy.

Once processed, the muskox will be sold throughout the North, as well as in locations in southern Canada and the U.S.



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