

MLA Darius Elias

Vuntut Gwitchin RIDING UPDATE



Dear Friends,

During my time as the MLA for the Vuntut Gwitchin riding, we have had many great partnerships and successes to celebrate. As always, I thank each and every one of you for your passionate guidance and the sharing of your talents to maintaining our healthy community.

Below are the Yukon Territorial Government 2011/2012 Budget Highlights for the Vuntut Gwitchin riding & community of Old Crow.

\$2,000,000	Old Crow Water Well upgrades
\$1,955,000	Old Crow Roadways (Phase 1 and 2)
\$500,000	Old Crow Upgrade to Solid Waste Facility (Dump)
\$143,000	Old Crow Nursing Health Centre Renovations
\$141,000	Heritage & Culture Capacity Development
\$67,000	VGFN Youth Programs
\$65,000	VGFN Regional Services
\$63,000	Old Crow Community Forest Planning
\$50,000	VGFN Caribou Effort
\$46,190	Sports & Recreation
\$30,000	Land Based Experiential Learning Education Project

There were also a couple Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency announcements:

\$300,000	To develop a feasibility study and business plan to assess the viability of future oil and gas development in the Eagle Plain region of Northern Yukon.
\$242,500	Bandwidth Upgrade to Improve Old Crow's Internet service.

I wish you all a wonderful spring season!

Darius Elias

MLA Vuntut Gwitchin

Spring 2011

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In The News

Reporter, Dan Jones | February 24th, 2011,
CHON FM

“In a rare moment in territorial politics, one opposition Liberal MLA is praising the government’s investment into Old Crow. The community will see funding in the millions for a winter road, solid waste treatment and other key initiatives. Vuntut Gwich’in MLA Darius Elias says the money will go a long way in helping create a sustainable and healthier community”.

(Elias) “It’s the diligence of the community to continue to move forward and make our community a better place to live year after year. These are examples of working together and achieving a healthier community. I think this is an opportunity for us to give credit where credit is due.”

Reporter Steve MacArthur | October 13th, 2010,
CKRW

“The MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin is beginning his battle to have energy drinks banned from Yukon schools. Darius Elias says not enough is known about the health risks of the popular drinks and they should be prohibited within the school system. He says the drinks aren’t safe for children and he worries about their effect.”

(Elias) “Many of these drinks are loaded with caffeine and up to 14 other ingredients and I don’t believe they are safe for children and teenagers to consume. Most energy drinks contain 70 to 300 milligrams of caffeine.”



LEFT: The Honourable Lenny Kohm in Washington D.C. RIGHT: I spoke briefly with the Federal Minister of Health Leona Aglukkaq about our Food Mail Program.

Lobbying to ensure the Old Crow students travel home for Thanksgiving & Easter.

(Elias) “There are 16 students from our community of Old Crow attending high school in Whitehorse this year. I want to see every one of them graduate. They travel 800 kilometres from their homes, their families and their community to further their education.

It’s a noble goal, and I believe it’s a goal essential to their success in life and it’s a goal we should do everything in our power to support. One way we can help is to get these kids home to reconnect and re-energize with their families whenever possible.”

We must continue with our tireless dedication to the herd.

April 26, 2011 Letter to the Editor ~ Darius Elias

Yukoners were recently informed that, following nine years of uncertainty, the Porcupine caribou herd has been counted at approximately 170,000 animals.

Despite this good news, the herd faces mounting threats from development to its long-term survival.

The herd requires careful stewardship, and joint conservation measures are in place in Canada.

Despite these important controls, there is no security for the Porcupine caribou if their calving grounds in northeast Alaska’s Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) are not also permanently protected from industrial intrusion.

Without their nursery, the caribou will not survive. The herd is the lifeblood of our community of Old Crow and it is much more than just food to us. Our cultural and spiritual survival depends on the herd.

There is tremendous pressure to open ANWR’s coastal plain, including the caribou’s irreplaceable calving grounds, to commercial oil and gas drilling.

Either opening the refuge to oil and gas exploration and development, or permanently protecting this pristine wilderness, will require an act of the U.S. Congress.

At present, the congressional agenda includes only two pieces of legislation aimed at permanent protection, and seven aimed at opening the area for drilling.

Despite the fact that there are over 80,000 square kilometres of nearby land already open to drilling, there is mounting, and unnecessary, pressure to open fewer than 5,000 square kilometres within ANWR for development. This can be seen by considering the extensive oil leases already in place surrounding the refuge and within the Beaufort Sea just off its coast.

Earlier this month, I travelled with Lorraine Netro and Elsie Hume, powerful advocates for the Porcupine caribou, to Washington, D.C. to continue the 25 years of work already devoted to protecting the refuge.

In 1988, the Gwich’in Nations jointly resolved to permanently protect the calving grounds.

As long as this goal remains unrealized, it is our responsibility to share with our American colleagues our concerns for the herd, our support for any protective legislation, and our absolute opposition to any pro-development legislation within the Porcupine caribou calving grounds.

As long as the powerful oil industry continues to threaten the calving grounds, we must continue with our tireless dedication to the herd, informed and given life by our cultural heritage.

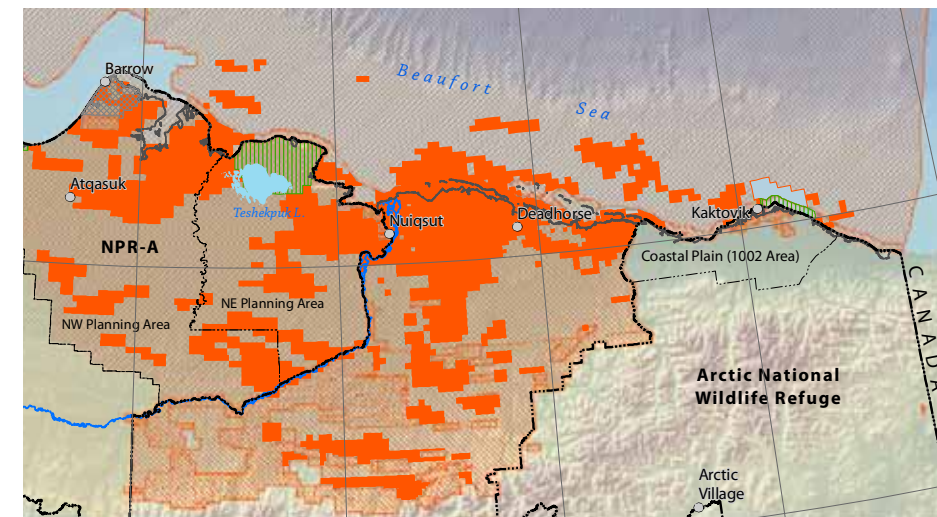
It has been my privilege to meet with American legislators over the years to advance permanent protection for the herd’s calving grounds.

Many Yukoners are proud of the fact that we have such a wonderful resource within the boundaries of our territory, and I believe Yukoners want to see continued leadership on this issue.

This is also about a healthy northern ecosystem, and it’s about the intrinsic value of knowing that we have a treasure that is alive and well in our territory.

I thank all Yukoners for their continued support in achieving permanent protection for the caribou calving grounds.

Vadzaih yeendoo gweheendaii geenjit. It translates to “Caribou in the future... they are going to live.”



ABOVE: The orange areas represent sold federal and state oil and gas leases. The oil and gas industry already has access to these areas which amount to approximately 80,000 square kms.



LEFT: 2011 YMCA youth exchange with Old Crow and Saint Felix DeValois students in front of the Quebec National Assembly. CENTRE: Deputy Chief Lorraine Netro speaking at the Canadian Embassy in Washington D.C. RIGHT: 2011 Remembrance Day Ceremony in Old Crow.

Trapping Education in our Schools?

(Elias) “The minister of Environment could work to ensure that a trapper education certification is offered in all Yukon schools alongside the hunter education ethics development program. He could create a reconnecting with the land, youth at risk trapping program that supports land based accredited education. He could offer a fuel tax rebate and a grub stake advance for Yukon trappers.”

~ Question Period, March 2011, Yukon Legislature

Old Crow Drinking Water System Project Update

“The preliminary design award has been done. Conceptual design report is complete; YESAA and water license approvals will be April, 2011. Detail design and tendering in May of 2011; construction awarded in June 2011.

Construction scheduled to be completed by October 2012. There is \$1 million budgeted this year for upgrades and improvements to the Old Crow water supply. The project is expected to cost \$2 million in total.”

~ Minister Of Community Services



TOP: Gwich'in Gladiators Win Gold at the 2011 Yukon Native Hockey Tournament.
BOTTOM: Meeting with the Governor General, his Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston.

In Memoriam

May You Rest In Peace

Hannah Netro
~ January 17th, 2011

Helen Marjorie Charlie
~ April 30th, 2011

Beebii Vigoonlii Geenjit Shoh Tr'iinlii

We are happy for the new born baby!

- Tiam Josh Danny Skookum-Kassi ~ April 1st, 2011
- Drake Carter James Gully-Charlie ~ December 9th, 2010
- Eleanor Clara Frost ~ August 22nd, 2010
- Nova Catherine Belle Gray ~ July 6th, 2010
- Jermaine Kendi & Mason Kendi (Twins) ~ May 4th, 2010
- Aiden Carl Kember ~ May 1st, 2010
- Murithi Nathan Marangu ~ April 26th, 2010
- Mary Rubianne Lilly Marjorie Smith ~ March 21st, 2010
- Johnathan Michael Mathew Montgomery-Frost ~ March 2nd, 2010
- Brooklyn Mary Blackjack-Netro ~ January 6th, 2010

In Recognition!

- Thank You **Charles Montgomery** for your countless volunteer hours flooding the skating rink for the children.
- Thank you to **Ronald Benjamin, Peter Frost, Philip Frost, Charles Montgomery and Brian Lord** for your daily water and vacuum truck services.
- Gold Medals for the **Gwich'in Gladiators** (Youth division) and Silver Medals for the **Gwich'in Spitfires** (Jamboree division) in the 2011 Yukon Native Hockey Tournament—great job boys and girls and coaches **Ron, Greg, Wade, Carl and Kerry!**
- Thank you to **Cpl. Olito, Cst. Horbachewsky and Cst. Allain** for your great community policing and volunteerism.