

Climate Change Outreach in Arviat

The Government of Nunavut met with the community of Arviat to examine how shifting permafrost is affecting infrastructure and how to minimize the impacts

CONTEXT

Community engagement activities were held in Arviat in August, 2014 to gather and share information on how climate change is impacting the community. Discussions focused on how infrastructure is affected by shifting permafrost and how these changes influence current and future development in the community.

These sessions were part of a larger ongoing Government of Nunavut-led project to map the suitability of land for future development in seven Nunavut communities. These maps will allow community planners and others involved in infrastructure development to gain knowledge about the site conditions of land chosen for future development.



Photo: Government of Nunavut

OBJECTIVE

The overall goal of this project was to discuss how shifting permafrost is affecting Arviat's infrastructure and how to deal with these impacts. More specifically, objectives included:

- Sharing initial results of the land suitability map for Arviat;

- Identifying additional hazards based on local knowledge and incorporating this information into current maps; and
- Discussing methods already being used for dealing with risks associated with permafrost shift and brainstorming new strategies for adaptation.

APPROACH

Meetings occurred with local businesses, the Hamlet, and the housing sector. Discussion topics focused on ensuring that climate change was being considered in all aspects of the design, construction and maintenance of infrastructure development.

Other stakeholder groups included students, elders and the general community. Students from a variety of age groups participated in hands-on activities related to permafrost thaw. A session with elders provided context on how the landscape in and around Arviat has drastically changed over time. A public information session was also hosted in order to promote the project to the broader community. Other community-wide engagement methods included hosting a radio call-in show and delivering a permafrost knowledge survey.

RESULTS

This project showed that it is important to consider shifting permafrost when building in Nunavut communities. It also showed the need for continued partnership-building in the community planning and infrastructure development sector.

Significance

Meeting with community members about shifting permafrost can provide valuable insight into community-specific issues, and can bring about stronger adaptation measures that are tailored for each community.

Partners

- Government of Nunavut, Department of Community and Government Services
- ArcticNet
- Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
- Arviat Wellness Centre

FOR MORE INFO

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