

Aurora Completes Winter 2014 Michelin Drilling and Fuel Transport

Aurora Energy has successfully completed a 7-week winter drilling program at Michelin. The program, which ran from late January to mid-March, included 4,668 metres of drilling in 15 drill holes. Compared to the winter 2013 program, this was a 42% increase in metres drilled at about the same cost.

Favorable winter weather contributed to higher drilling productivity and fuel delivery. Excellent ice conditions in mid-January combined with little snow enabled the camp and ice airstrip to be opened in three days.

Staff for the winter program reached 46 people, which included 25 people from Labrador, and camp occupancy ranged from 25 to 40 people. The program was supported by Major Drilling, Air Labrador, Universal Helicopters, Frontline Medics and Sikimuit Environmental.

“Every time a plane landed at Michelin with people, fuel or supplies our employees were ready with skidoos to offload the plane,” said Field Manager and Senior Geologist Steve Barrett. “They are great to work with regardless of the cold temperatures or how hard the wind is blowing.”

“A large volume of fuel (893 drums) was delivered to Michelin and has eliminated the need for expensive fuel transport in the summer by helicopter,” commented Steve. Additionally, building supplies were delivered to camp by twin otter in preparation for camp facility upgrades scheduled for the summer. Over 700 line kilometres of ground magnetic surveys were conducted on frozen lakes, filling gaps from the previous summer surveys.

The flexibility, focus on safety and excellent service offered by Air Labrador were key components of Aurora’s successful winter program. Air Labrador completed almost 100 trips for Aurora from Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Postville and Makkovik.



(l-r) Matt Walsh, Bobby Edmunds, Tyler Edmunds and Waylon Williams take a break on the airstrip.

John Jory, Aurora’s Exploration Manager was pleased with the winter program. “The teamwork and results demonstrated by Aurora staff and our contractors was impressive. Efficiencies initiated during the summer 2013 program were realized during the winter 2014 drilling and these will be carried into the summer work.”

Excellent long-term planning by the Aurora team for fuel delivery to Postville and expansion of the fuel cache last summer were important in delivering a more cost effective program. “A real bonus is that everyone works well together for the good of the project,” concluded John.

Ed Becker, Paladin’s General Manager of Geology and Exploration, visited the Michelin camp for four days and was impressed by the people, the operation and the quality of work.



Drilling on Ranjan Lake next to Michelin camp

Aurora Preparing for Summer 2014 Program

Aurora’s summer exploration program will focus on fieldwork such as mapping, prospecting, geophysical surveys, geochemical sampling, core logging and camp facilities expansion. While Paladin remains committed to Aurora and the Michelin Project, during low uranium prices the company has decided to reduce drilling activity. Longer term, the plan is to carry out three years of resource development and exploration to increase the Michelin resource size and to pursue new discoveries.

Aurora Continues to Focus on Safety and Environmental Performance

Safety and planning meetings were held at Michelin every day after breakfast. Special safety topics included how to prevent or address hypothermia, frostbite, manual handling, accident prevention and emergency response. While there were a number of minor safety incidents during the winter program, Aurora continues to work on improving the safety performance so that zero harm occurs at the work place.



The Michelin fuel cache contains over 300 drums in this photo. Over 800 drums were flown into Michelin during the winter.



Cal Priddle, Brian Jacque and Donald Gear prepare to load fuel in Postville.



An essential job is clearing the Michelin airstrip with snow blowers. The airstrip is the Michelin camp’s lifeline to the outside world.



Another day at the ‘office’. Bradford Jacque and Russell Palliser brave the January cold.



Jessica Sheppard measures core in the Michelin camp core shack

Aurora Team Member Profiles

Jessica Sheppard, Geological Technician

Jessica was born and raised in Postville, Labrador and has worked for Aurora as a Geological Technician (or Geotech) since 2012. Jessica received her high school graduation certificate in 2011 and applied for a job with Aurora in 2012.

Geotechs are responsible for collecting core from the drill rigs, delivering it to the core shed, and measuring the depth, recovery, fracture frequency and Rock Quality Designation or RQD. Geotechs are also responsible for weighing the core before it is logged. “We use an instrument called the Magnetic Susceptibility Meter, which tells us how magnetic the rocks are,” explains Jessica. “We also conduct core orientations from the drillers’ marks, then photograph, split and sample the core.”

“A Geotech’s work is very interesting and educational because we collect a lot of information that has to be stored in the computer and transferred to the Geologists.”

“Preparing the core took some practice but after getting the hang of things I really enjoy working with it. My job involves working outside and in the core shed, and I’m not stuck at a desk all day.”

Jessica advises anyone interested in Geology or in being a Geotech to be certain that you have a passion for the outdoors. “I have met many new people and couldn’t ask for better co-workers. We laugh a lot and get a lot of work done!”

Aurora Team Member Profiles

Gary Andersen, Logging Technician

Gary Andersen was born in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and raised in Makkovik, where he lives now with his partner Marilyn and two young daughters. Gary's hobbies include photography, cutting and hauling firewood, fishing, working on skidoos, and hunting. He has worked at the Makkovik fish plant, worked with Paulo Ventures in the upgrading of the community dock and Budgell's helping install water and sewer in new subdivisions in the community.

Gary started working for Aurora in 2006 as a Geological Technician, and then learned gamma probing and ground magnetic and radiometric surveys. As a Probe Technician Gary maintains and checks the logging equipment, which includes two 1.5 metre long gamma probes and two long winches that lower the probes down the drill holes to measure the gamma and uranium content of the rocks inside the drill holes.

"We gamma log each drill hole when it is finished and, therefore, need to be on-call at all times," explains Gary. "A drill hole can finish any time in the night or day, depending on what they see in the rocks, and so I have to be prepared and ready to go." Probing (gamma logging) each hole takes one to three hours depending



Gary Andersen (l) and Matt Walsh (r) survey drill hole collars on Ranjan Lake.

on its depth and the thickness of the mineralized zone. After the logging, Gary downloads the data files and e-mails them to the Geologists.

"I enjoy my work because it allows me to be outdoors a lot and to see the land. I really like working with the other people at Aurora," concludes Gary.



Photo credit: Sandra Dicker

Ches Andersen, Aurora's Vice-President of Labrador Affairs, attended the Labrador Inuit Youth Symposium in Rigolet where he spoke about the Michelin Project work activities.

Aurora Supports Community Events

Aurora continues to support community events in the towns near the Michelin Project. Donations have been provided for prizes at the Easter Carnivals in Rigolet, Postville and Makkovik. Aurora also provided funding for the William and Douglas Jacque Memorial and Kimmuksik Dog Team races. The Postville Women's Ministry was also given a donation to support their ministerial work.

Any questions or comments? Please contact us:

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