

News Release

Ministry of Northern Development and Mines



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Ontario Government Invests In New Technology - #32010

Virtual Reality Network Will Improve Access to Business Information

SUDBURY — The Ontario government will help create jobs and strengthen the northern economy by investing in a network of virtual reality facilities, Northern Development and Mines Minister Rick Bartolucci announced today.

"Our government is very pleased to invest in leading-edge technology that will improve access to information for industry transactions in Northern Ontario," said Bartolucci. "This project is expected to create many new jobs in the region's virtual reality facilities as well as in the mineral exploration sector."

The Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) is investing \$1.7 million in the Northern Advanced Visualization Network (NAVNet) for a Tele-Decision-Making project. Turning data into valuable information and bringing users together is called "tele-decision-making."

This NAVNet initiative, led by the Mining Innovation, Rehabilitation and Applied Research Corporation (MIRARCO) at Laurentian University in Sudbury, will establish two linked virtual reality facilities from Timmins and Thunder Bay, improve technology in the Red Lake and Sudbury locations and provide a mobile facility for other centres and remote mineral exploration sites. The facilities will allow business concepts and proposals to be converted into virtual imaging models, which can help the business decision maker better understand and visualize the project under consideration.

"We are delighted that the Ontario government could support this project, which will promote tele-decision-making as a cost-effective and productivity enhancing tool," said MIRARCO President Dr. Peter Kaiser. "This initiative will create high-technology employment and will develop a unique and internationally marketable capability right here in Northern Ontario."

"The NOHFC recently launched six new programs as part of the Northern Prosperity Plan for delivering real, positive change across the North," said Bartolucci, who chairs the NOHFC. "A refocused Heritage Fund will again work with northern entrepreneurs, companies and business organizations to create private-sector jobs with a focus on new enterprises, young entrepreneurs, community development, emerging technologies and energy conservation."

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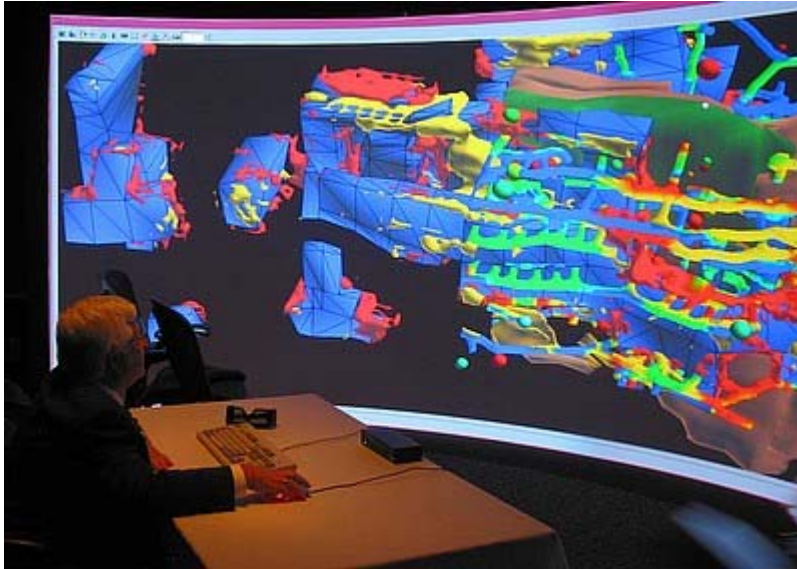


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Monday, February 28, 2005 -- The Ontario government will help create jobs and strengthen the northern economy by investing in a network of virtual reality facilities, Northern Development and Mines Minister Rick Bartolucci announced today. The Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) is investing \$1.7 million in MIRARCO's (Mining Innovation, Rehabilitation and Applied Research Corporation) Northern Advanced Visualization Network (NAVNet) for a Tele-Decision-Making project. In photo, Minister Bartolucci (fifth from left) is joined by NAVNet Project Co-ordinator Andrew Dasys, Greater Sudbury Deputy Mayor Ron Dupuis, Millstream Mining President Ernie Harrison, Laurentian University President Judith Woodsworth, NOHFC board member Murray Scott, CEO of Timmins Library Brian Nimeroski and MIRARCO board member Allan Hayward, who is Falconbridge Vice-president and General Manager of Sudbury operations.



Monday, February 28, 2005 -- The Ontario government will help create jobs and strengthen the northern economy by investing in a network of virtual reality facilities, Northern Development and Mines Minister Rick Bartolucci announced today. In photo, Minister Bartolucci (bottom left) is seen 'piloting' a virtual reality model, which converts data into colourful three-dimensional images.