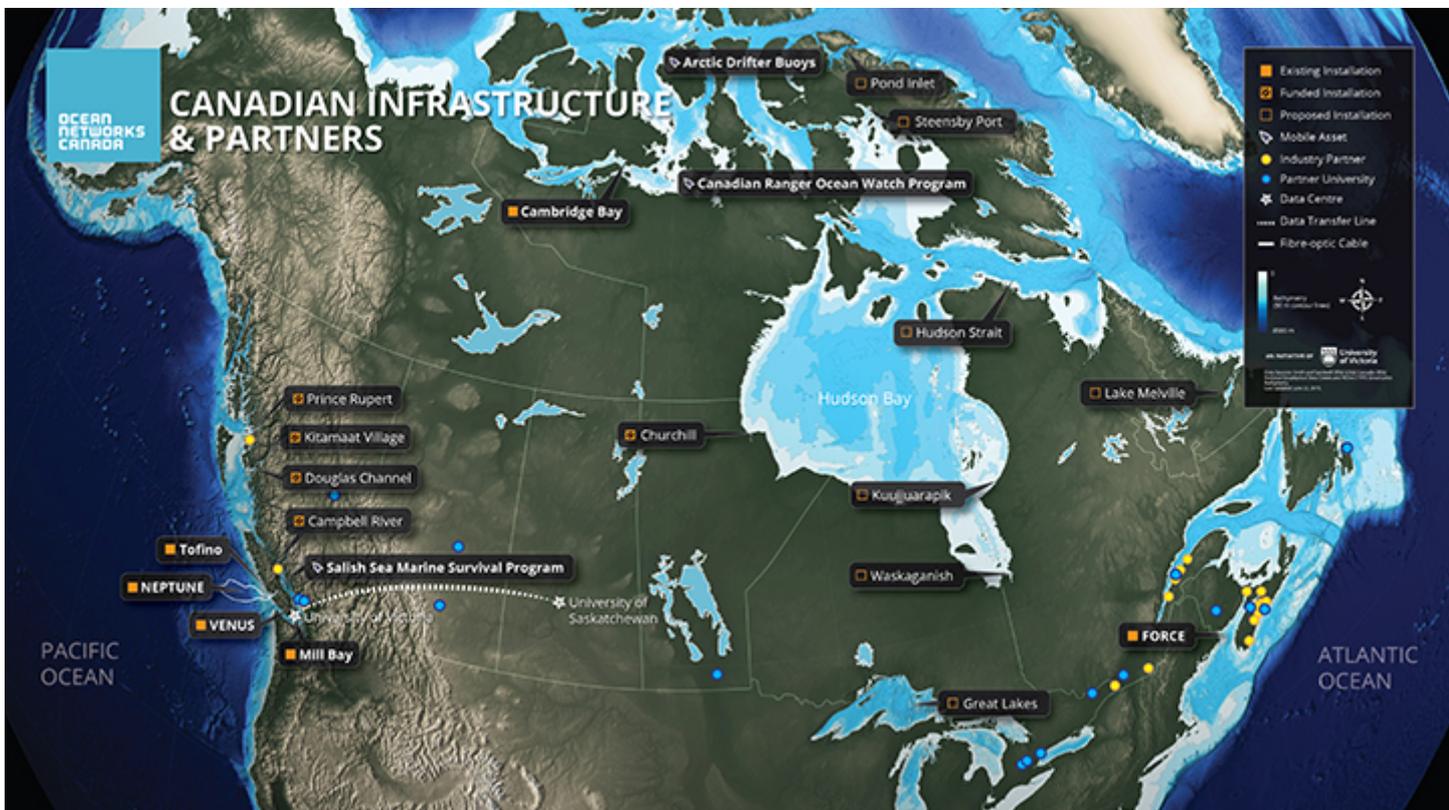


Ocean Networks Canada Partners to Protect the Arctic

Submitted by Virginia Keast Tue, 2015-07-07 14:45

The University of Victoria's Ocean Networks Canada (ONC) is partnering with the University of Manitoba to develop, install and maintain the cabled estuary observatory component of a new Churchill Marine Observatory (CMO) in Hudson Bay.

The CMO, formally announced by the federal government on July 6 in Churchill, Canada's only Arctic deep-water port, will be a multidisciplinary facility where researchers will study the impact of oil spills on sea ice and investigate issues related to marine transportation and resource development in the Arctic.



The facility, led by the University of Manitoba, is funded by the Canada Foundation for

Innovation (CFI) and the Province of Manitoba. CFI has provided \$200,000 to UVic for the ONC portion.

The ONC contribution involves a cabled observatory to be built in the mouth of the Churchill estuary, along the main shipping channel across Hudson Bay and Strait, providing a state-of-the-art monitoring system designed to strengthen Canada's ability to protect the Arctic environment.

The collaboration builds on the success of ONC's world-leading NEPTUNE and VENUS cabled observatories and, since 2012, a community observatory in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut.

"We're thrilled to be part of this ambitious project that will bring real-time ocean observing to Hudson Bay," says ONC Chief Scientist Dr. Kim Juniper. "This will be our second Arctic observatory, which adds to ONC's growing network of coastal observing systems in Canada's three oceans."



Fig. 1 - The Churchill cabled observatory will be similar to Cambridge Bay's Arctic community observatory (above) installed in September 2012

Information from ONC observatories is being used for research, forecasting and monitoring the health of the ocean environment. In the coming years, says Juniper, the Arctic Ocean will face a dramatic increase in human pressures from climate warming, ocean acidification, and increased shipping and resource development. "High-quality scientific data will be critical to understanding these changes and mitigating their impacts on ocean ecosystems and coastal communities."

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