

CANDAC

Canadian Network for the Detection of Atmospheric Change



Photo Credit:

Ashley Harrett, 2008

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Link for High-Resolution Photo:

<http://www.candac.ca/candac/Links/Media/Images/AH-2008-suntracker-RB.jpg>

Caption:

Rebecca Batchelor, a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Toronto, checks the alignment of the suntracker on the roof of the Ridge Lab of PEARL, the Polar Environment Atmospheric Research Laboratory. This suntracker follows the sun to direct light into the Fourier transform spectrometer (FTS) in the lab below, where absorption features in the solar spectrum are used to study the quantity and location of a range of trace gases in the atmosphere. PEARL is managed by the Canadian Network for the Detection of Atmospheric Change (CANDAC).

Summary:

A ground-based Fourier transform spectrometer (FTS) allows measurements of a range of trace gases in the atmosphere to be made using direct-sun solar absorption spectroscopy. The FTS at the Polar Environment Atmospheric Research Laboratory (PEARL) was installed in July 2006, and makes measurements throughout the sunlit part of the year. PEARL is a unique national and international resource. It is located on Ellesmere Island at Eureka, Nunavut (80N, 86W). The cornerstone of PEARL is the Ridge Laboratory. This iconic red building was built in 1992-93 by Environment Canada and operated as the Arctic Stratospheric Ozone observatory (AStro) until 2002 when it was mothballed due to lack of funding. It was revitalized in its present form when a collaboration between university researchers and government departments, the Canadian Network for the Detection of Atmospheric Change (CANDAC), undertook its operation in 2005. The Ridge Lab is situated about 15km from the Eureka weather station by road. Since the laboratory is at 610m above sea level, an additional site - the Zero altitude PEARL Auxiliary Laboratory (ØPAL) - was established at the edge of the Environment Canada weather station at approximately sea level. In addition, the Surface Atmospheric Flux and Irradiance Remote Extension (SAFIRE) site, was established for instruments that require minimal impact from surrounding surface features both natural and man-made. SAFIRE is located near the Eureka runway approximately 3km from the weather station proper.

PEARL contains instrumentation distributed between these three sites that measure the atmosphere from the ground to about 100km. These measurements provide scientists with information on everything from the temperature, to composition and aerosol distributions, to radiation balance and energy transport. It is one of the most broadly instrumented atmospheric research sites located anywhere on the globe, and a significant contribution to the understanding of the Arctic atmosphere in particular.

Funding Partners:

CANDAC/PEARL is funded by the Atlantic Innovation Fund/Nova Scotia Research Innovation Trust, Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Science, Canadian Foundation for Innovation, Canadian Space Agency, Environment Canada, Government of Canada International Polar Year funding, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, Ontario Innovation Trust, Polar Continental Shelf Program and the Ontario Research Fund.