

SPECTACULAR NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

PRESS RELEASE



May 20, 2008



Connecting the Mackenzie,
Liard and Alaska Highways

Alberta - Northwest
Territories - British
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Diamonds to Lure Road Travellers

Deh Cho Travel Connection Opens Today

YELLOWKNIFE (May 15) – The Government of the Northwest Territories is using the lure of diamonds to entice road visitors to the Northwest Territories (NWT) this summer.

The 2008 "Diamonds in the Rough" Campaign, which begins today, will increase traffic along the Deh Cho Travel Connection by offering visitors an opportunity to win a GOVERNMENT CERTIFIED CANADIAN DIAMOND™, mined cut and polished in the NWT.

The Deh Cho Travel Connection is a scenic touring route linking the Alaska, Mackenzie and Liard Highways and features side trips, in the NWT, to Fort Smith, Yellowknife and Wrigley.

Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Bob McLeod says communities in the Northwest Territories will benefit from the increased tourism traffic that this promotion will create.

"The route has proven to be popular for road visitors seeking wildlife viewing, outdoor recreation opportunities, and a taste of history and culture," he says. "By adding to this experience we are building and expanding on the range of tourism benefits that can be realized by all of the participating communities."

The Government of the Northwest Territories has worked with its tourism partners in the NWT, British Columbia and Alberta for several years to establish and promote the Deh Cho touring route.

Last summer, tourism traffic at the 60th Parallel Visitor Information Centre was up by 32% from 2006. Tourism travel by road to Fort Simpson rose by almost 20%. Meanwhile, camping permits issued in the NWT increased in 2007 by 17.5% in the South Slave and 16% in the Yellowknife region.

Research sponsored by the GNWT has identified a trend of healthy and energetic baby boomers that are taking to the roads in RVs and looking for unique and exciting places to visit and interesting activities to undertake.

Minister McLeod says this information is the basis for ongoing GNWT efforts to identify and develop tourism products and services designed to capture and attract this growing tourism market.

The "Diamonds in the Rough" campaign will run May 15 - September 15, 2008. It is made possible, in large part, by the City of Yellowknife, DIAMOND CAPITAL OF NORTH AMERICA™ and its donation of a one-carat POLAR BEAR DIAMOND™ valued at over eleven thousand dollars.

Full contest details are available at www.dehchotravel.com. For further information, please contact:

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