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Raising the Profile of Northern Issues at PNWER Annual Summit

YELLOWKNIFE (July 25, 2011) – The Northwest Territories delegation has returned from the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) Annual Summit in Portland. During the summit, NWT representatives had the opportunity to raise the profile of critical northern issues such as energy and mining.

Attendees discussed various issues including resource development, sustainability, and the environment. The Summit was held over four days and explored issues of interest to the NWT and the other PNWER members: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, the Yukon, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Alaska.

The NWT delegation at the PNWER Summit included Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment Bob McLeod; David Ramsay, MLA Kam Lake and Chair of the Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure (SCEDI); and David Krutko, MLA Mackenzie Delta.

Minister McLeod delivered a keynote speech to delegates updating them on the state of the NWT mining industry, as well as co-chaired a session on natural resource development.

“The PNWER Annual Summit is an important tool in fostering partnerships and gaining advice from other territories, provinces and states” said Minister McLeod. “I am excited with the progress made here this week towards maximizing not only the potential of the NWT, but of the entire Pacific Northwest.”

“As members of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, the NWT faces many of the same challenges of other participating jurisdictions” said MLA Ramsay. “Gatherings such as this Summit are key in sharing information which can benefit the region as a whole.”

“The scope of the NWT's economy is no longer limited to Canada – it is international” MLA Krutko remarked. “Being an active member of organizations like PNWER will help ensure that the NWT has a voice in providing input on pertinent international issues.”

Media requests for interviews with Members of the Executive Council may be directed to:

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While in Portland, Minister McLeod, MLA Ramsay, and MLA Krutko invited delegates to this summer's meeting of the PNWER Arctic Caucus, which will be held from August 17-19 in Yellowknife. The caucus, comprised of delegates from the northern jurisdictions of PNWER, will meet to identify core issues that are priorities to the NWT, the Yukon, and Alaska.

The NWT's participation in PNWER is an example of the actions being taken by the 16th Legislative Assembly to maximize northern opportunities for economic development, as envisioned in the *Northerners Working Together* plan.

PNWER is a statutory public/private partnership established in 1991 to promote collaboration between the organization's 10 regional partners. The NWT joined PNWER in 2009.

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