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**News Release
Yellowknife NT**

Merry Christmas Yellowknife

Last month, the 33rd annual Geoscience Forum was held in Yellowknife. It's a technical conference for prospectors, geologists, geophysicists, environmental and engineering experts and the people who service the industry. It is the largest conference of any kind North of 60°.

“Northerners know the key role that mining and exploration play in our northern economy and lifestyle. What they may not realize is the role that they play in tourism and local business development.” said Lou Covello, President of the NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines, the conference organizers. “This year, there were 780 delegates, over half of them were visitors who all needed transportation, a hotel, motel or room at a bed & breakfast. They all ate at local restaurants, shopped in our stores, participated in our nightlife and used our taxis.”

Over 90% of the cost of hosting the conference was paid directly to Yellowknife businesses. Some of these are:

Advertising	\$ 9,000
Printing	12,000
Catering	70,000
Facility and equipment rental	23,000
Transportation	5,000
Other purchases and services	33,000

In addition, the Forum made \$ 7,500 in contributions to fund-raising campaigns of non-profit groups who provided services to the conference. These include groups like St. Patrick SADD and the NWT Seniors Society.

“The Forum was a tremendous success and could not have happened without the sponsorship of many businesses and agencies” said Mike Vaydik, general manager of the Chamber of Mines. “We particularly want to thank the students and staff of Weledeh and St. Patrick Schools whose gymnasium contributed to our most successful trade show ever”.

Office manager Cheryl Wourms, the conference organizer, said “Many visitors expressed surprise that we hosted a conference in a movie theatre and a school gym. They wondered why a growing city like Yellowknife didn't have a convention centre. So do I.”

Backgrounder attached: Delegate Registrations by location