



## News Release

### **Chamber of Mines welcomes Northwest Territories Government support for mining**

Yellowknife, NWT, February 10, 2010.

The NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines welcomed the Statement on Support for Mining made today to the Legislative Assembly of the NWT by the Hon **Robert McLeod**, **Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment**, Government of the Northwest Territories.

In his Statement, Minister McLeod said *“The mining sector is a source of significant employment in the Northwest Territories, creating over 2000 direct jobs each year and aside from direct benefits the mining industry generates significant employment in the transportation, services, trades and construction sectors”*.

Minister McLeod also talked about the work the GNWT is doing to support the mining industry and ensure the economy has a sector where development occurs and where that development is done responsibly and where NWT residents benefit.

The Minister emphasized dialogue with industry stakeholders, including the Chamber of Mines, and recognized the work the Chamber is doing to improve relations between the mining industry and aboriginal communities. *“Through this dialogue, we can find ways to work together to ensure we have win-win scenarios for both the Northwest Territories and the mining industry”*.

Minister McLeod referred to the MOU signed between the GNWT and the three diamond mines on the Northern Mining Workforce Initiative where the goal is to improve the skills of the NWT workforce and attract and train residents to work at the mines. The Government is also supporting the industry through its involvement in the NWT Mine Training Society training more aboriginal people and northerners for jobs in the mining industry.

“It is encouraging to hear the Minister recognize the contribution of the mining industry to the NWT and to hear the Government’s commitment to support the industry” said **John F Kearney, President of the Chamber of Mines.**

Mr. Kearney also noted the mining industry’s past contributions to infrastructure that have played a major role in the development of the north. All the hydro power generated in the NWT was developed originally to service the mines of the day and, even though those mines have now closed, the infrastructure is still in use to service the communities. The barge system on the Mackenzie River was originally developed to service a mine and continues to serve the communities along the river and along the arctic coast. Most northern roads were also developed to support the resource sector.

The GNWT and the Chamber of Mines have lobbied the federal government to provide the funding for the Taltson Hydro Expansion Project. *“The expansion of Taltson hydro project would provide benefits not only for existing mines but it would also encourage future exploration and mine development in the Slave Geological Province”* said Chamber President **John Kearney.** With proper infrastructure development, the Chamber believes that the Slave Province could become one of Canada’s premiere mining camps; stretching from Yellowknife to Nunavut’s arctic coast and including gold, silver, base metal and diamond production in both territories.

The GNWT and the Chamber will also continue to push the federal government for progress to improving the northern regulatory regime. The Minister stated that, “all northerners await announcements on the response to the McCrank report on regulatory improvement that the federal Minister of Indian Affairs said would be forthcoming this spring:”. The Chamber believes that regulatory improvement is critical to encouraging investment in the northern mineral industry.

#### **For Further Information Contact**

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