



NEWS RELEASE

New Naats'ihch'oh National Park Strikes Reasonable Balance

(Yellowknife, August 24, 2012) The Chamber of Mines supports the Prime Minister's announcement this week to create the new Naats'ihch'oh National Park Reserve in the western Northwest Territories as a reasonable and balanced approach by the Government of Canada.

"The Chamber of Mines strongly supports the development of park boundaries based on the exclusion of resource-rich areas with significant mineral potential so that northerners and all Canadians can take full advantage of future economic opportunities," said Chamber President Pamela Strand. "It's those non-renewable mineral resources that are the anchor of the NWT's economy, and will provide socio-economic opportunities for future generations. They also need protection albeit for development."

The Mineral and Energy Resource Assessment undertaken by the Geological Survey of Canada (GSC) as part of the park establishment process documented many areas of high and moderately-high mineral potential within the Mackenzie Mountains Cordillera, the region that surrounds and includes the Naats'ihch'oh Park Reserve area. The GSC identified very high potential for a variety of mineral deposit types including SEDEX, carbonate-fault related, intrusion, and disseminated gold. Several mineral deposits have already been discovered within the area, including Lened, Mactung and Howard's Pass. We are pleased that the GSC's work has been taken into account by Parks Canada in recommending various boundary options and by the Government of Canada in making the final boundary decision.

The establishment of Naats'ihch'oh complements the already established and adjoining Nahanni National Park Reserve. Together, they now create a nearly 35,000 square kilometre contiguous national park to protect the environmental, wildlife and geographic values of the Nahanni watershed, making it one of Canada's largest national park areas.

Creation of the park means ownership and control of the 4,850 square kilometres within Naats'ihch'oh will stay with the Federal Government via Parks Canada. The excluded and surrounding lands will come under the purview of the Sahtu Land Use Plan, now in preparation, and along with the completion of resource devolution to the NWT Government will provide more flexibility and control to local land management.

"Our northern economy relies on non-renewable resources. They are our economic strength and will continue to be important to the North's future. So it's tremendously important to future generations that we strike the right balance," said Ms. Strand. "We believe the Prime Minister's announcement has done that."

The Chamber of Mines 2010 recommendations on the Naats'ihch'oh boundary are on its website here: <http://www.miningnorth.com/docs/Naats'ihch'oh%20Submission%20Complete%20April%2030,%202010.pdf>. For more information on the NWT and Nunavut mining industries, please visit the website at www.miningnorth.com or contact Tom Hoefer, Executive Director at Tel: 867-873-5281 or email: executivedirector@miningnorth.com.