



## NEWS RELEASE

### GNWT Leadership with NWT Mineral Strategy a Big Step Forward

Yellowknife, NT – May 24, 2012. The NWT Government announced today it is investing over \$1 million to develop a *Mineral Development Strategy* and an *Economic Development Strategy*.

In delivering the NWT Government's *Budget Address 2012-2013*, NWT Finance Minister Michael Miltenberger acknowledged a number of times the benefits of mineral exploration and mining, stating:

"Led by the diamond industry, mining is still the economic engine of the NWT, accounting for a third of our economy. Although carat production decreased in 2011, stronger diamond prices propelled diamond production values to \$2.1 billion in 2011, the highest in seven years. Production targets are higher for 2012.

Exploration activity, a key precursor to actual mines, is set to increase by \$20 million this year. However, while the other territories have exceeded their pre-recession peaks, we continue to lag behind. Our share of total exploration dollars has fallen from 7 per cent in 2007 to 3 per cent anticipated in 2012.

Mining is a cornerstone for robust growth in our economy. We have long heard about the rise of the west. Now it's time for the rise of the north, and a cohesive strategy for mineral development will ensure we play a leading role.

In 2012-13, we will invest over \$1 million to develop a *Mineral Development Strategy* and an *Economic Development Strategy* to guide our economic policies, programs and services. The territory-wide *Mineral Development Strategy* for the NWT will celebrate the successes we've enjoyed as a result of mining, but it will also address the challenges. There is no time like the present to address the challenges of one diamond mine approaching the latter half of its life and the other nearing its mid-point. We also need to address exploration expenditures well below historical highs and unfavourable industry perceptions of the NWT's regulatory regime.

Developing a plan for mineral development, with input from all levels of government, citizens, and industry will help us sustainably realize our full mineral potential."

Pamela Strand, President of the Chamber of Mines responded on behalf of the northern mineral industry: "The Chamber of Mines congratulates the NWT government with this announcement. Clearly establishing the importance of the mineral industry to the economic prosperity of this region is a big step forward for the NWT. We look forward to providing input into the *Strategy* and we are confident that all northerners will benefit from the increased opportunities our industry can create when supported by such an initiative."

For the full text of *Budget Address 2012-2013*, Visit: <http://www.fin.gov.nt.ca/address/index.htm>.

For more information on the NWT and Nunavut mining industries, please visit the Chamber website at [www.miningnorth.com](http://www.miningnorth.com) or contact Tom Hoefer, Executive Director at Tel: 867-873-5281 or email: [executivedirector@miningnorth.com](mailto:executivedirector@miningnorth.com).