

Northern Alberta Development Council
Helping deliver on the promise of the future

2011
2012





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MESSAGE from the CHAIR



It is my pleasure, as the acting chair of the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC), to present the 2011-2012 Annual Report on behalf of the Council. This report highlights Council's achievements in the past year in developing the north. The NADC worked closely with many partners to achieve these successes.

These are some highlights:

- A number of excellent conferences and events highlighted opportunities and built partnerships. The 2012 Leading the North Conference, organized in collaboration with many organizations in the Municipality of Wood Buffalo, brought together a record number of delegates and many quality speakers. The fourth annual Physician Recruitment and Retention workshop, cohosted by the NADC and the Rural Physician Action Plan, also saw record attendance from communities across the province. Biomass Fuels workshops in La Crete and Calling Lake showcased new opportunities in forestry. Read more about these, a scenario development workshop and the 2012 Growing the North Conference in the pages that follow.
- The NADC continued to support tourism through the Northern Boreal Birding Network and the Deh Cho Travel Connection, and also encouraged communities to enhance their online presence in TripAdvisor. We sponsored social media workshops to help communities increase use of these tools. At the same time, the NADC rolled out its own social media.
- The NADC Bursary high return service rate (83%) continues to retain many needed professionals in health, education, social work, business and technical programs. Our partnership with Alberta Education was renewed to offer return service bursaries to education students. The NADC worked with Alberta Health Services (AHS) to support health care students completing their practicum in the north. AHS also became a major bursary sponsor this past year to attract health care workers to the region.
- Supporting the north's youth is an important element of our future growth. The NADC partnered or provided funding for youth initiatives such as Aboriginal Student Job Shadow Programs, a youth entrepreneurial camp, the Ventures 10, 20, 30 program and a positive youth development project. This report has more details.
- The NADC was pleased to be part of the Government of Alberta's team that supported the Town of Slave Lake as it started its recovery from the 2011 fire.

The Northern Alberta Development Council looks forward to continuing the work already begun and to working with our many partners to advance Alberta's north in the upcoming year.

Thank you to Honourable Robin Campbell for his very able service to NADC and northern Alberta as chair of NADC from 2008 to 2012.


Williard Strebchuk



OVERVIEW of the NADC

COUNCIL



Robin Campbell



Brian Allen

The Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) champions the cause of Alberta’s northern economy and communities by exploring opportunities for growth and working on strategic priorities. For the 2011-2012 year, the Council first reported to the Ministry of Finance and Enterprise and, following the election of a new Premier, to Treasury Board and Enterprise.



Sharon Anderson



Iris Callioux

The Council is made up of nine public members and one elected Alberta Member of the Legislative Assembly. Council membership reflects the geographic, cultural and vocational diversity of northern communities. Robin Campbell, MLA for West Yellowhead, was Chair. The public members for the 2011-2012 year were:



Andre Harpe



David Kirschner

Brian Allen, Grimshaw
Sharon Anderson, Gift Lake
Iris Callioux, Peace River
Andre Harpe, Valhalla Centre
David Kirschner, Fort McMurray

Andy Neigel, Athabasca
Pat O’Neill, St. Paul
Williard Strebchuk, Whitecourt
Eva Urlacher, Cold Lake



Andy Neigel



Williard Strebchuk

The NADC is the only dedicated regional and economic development organization spanning the entire north of Alberta.



Pat O’Neill



Eva Urlacher

NADC’s Vision for northern Alberta

A stronger Alberta through a stronger north.

Mission

The mission of the NADC is to advance northern development through developing and implementing regional strategies and initiatives in partnership with the private sector, community-based organizations, industry, other jurisdictions and ministries.

Core Business

The mandate of the NADC, as set out in the Northern Alberta Development Council Act, is to "investigate, monitor, evaluate, plan and promote practical measures to foster and advance general development in northern Alberta and to advise the Government accordingly." The NADC supports the government's commitment to prosperity by facilitating the development of a thriving and progressive northern economy

MINISTRY BUSINESS PLAN GOALS

As part of the Enterprise Division of our ministry, the NADC supported key goals of the ministry's Core Business:

Goal 1: *Economic, tax and fiscal advice supports strong and sustainable government finances*

Goal 2: *Alberta has a competitive and productive economy.*

NADC'S KEY STRATEGIES

The NADC partners with others to support the Ministry's goals. Partners include other jurisdictions and ministries, northern and Aboriginal communities, business and industry, learning providers, and students. Initiatives fit within the following key strategies:

- Build partnerships among key stakeholders to establish priorities and pursue northern opportunities
- Foster economic strength and diversity by supporting development in transportation, value-added agriculture, tourism, health and other areas
- Support initiatives to increase northern skill levels, in partnership with northern communities, business, industry, learning providers and students
- Increase awareness about Northern Alberta's employment and lifestyle opportunities.

THE NADC REGION

The Northern Alberta Development Council region represents 60% of Alberta's landmass and only nine per cent of the Province's total population. The northern economy and northern employment have been relatively strong in the past fiscal year, despite ongoing global economic uncertainties.



- In 2011, housing starts were 15% higher than the previous year and the number of Employment Insurance benefit recipients fell by 27%.
- The value of forest industry shipments declined slightly by 1% in 2011, as compared to 2010, as a result of lower exports of pulp and paper and low OSB prices. However, GDP for this sector expanded by 10% over the same period on higher lumber and OSB volumes. With increasing demand and prices, some mills are looking at reopening.
- The percentage of Alberta's natural gas that is produced in the north has fluctuated between 35% and 36% over the past five years. An estimated 7 trillion cubic feet (48 billion cubic metres) of natural gas was produced in the north in 2010.
- Oil production in the NADC region for the year ending in 2010 was over 291 million barrels (106 million cubic metres) of oil or 87% of the Alberta total. This is an increase of 10% over last year.
- Bitumen production from northern Alberta's mined oilsands rose from 86.5 million cubic metres in 2009 to 95.8 million in 2010.
- In February 2012 the value of major construction projects (valued at \$5 million or greater) was \$136.9 billion in northern Alberta, and the northern regions accounted for 67% of the total value of Alberta projects.
- The northeast region (Wood Buffalo–Cold Lake) experienced a 0.4% decrease in its unemployment rate (March 2012 rate: 4.6%), making it the third lowest of all the regions in Alberta. The northwest (Athabasca–Grande Prairie–Peace River) recorded a 1.0% drop in its unemployment rate (March 2012 rate: 4.9%). Between March 2011 and March 2012 the northeast experienced an increase of 3,300 in the number employed, while the northwest had a decline of 4,000.



NADC STRATEGY: BUILD PARTNERSHIPS, PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES

Through meetings and consultations, the NADC gains valuable insights into emerging needs in the region. Conferences and workshops are useful opportunities for northerners to build partnerships and share information.

NADC Council meetings

The NADC holds meetings to hear about issues and opportunities in the north. In 2011-2012, Council held one meeting in Fort McMurray and two in Edmonton.

In June 2011, Council travelled to Fort McMurray to meet with the Mayor and Council members of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. Council toured Fort McMurray, and learned about future plans for economic development. They heard presentations from the Oil Sands Developer Group, Port Alberta, the Northeastern Alberta Aboriginal Business Association and the Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce. As each group presented issues that relate closely to the NADC's key priorities, Council committed their support to enhance development in the region.

At the November 2011 meeting, Community Futures St. Paul-Smoky Lake Region introduced Council to a Northeast Alberta Regional Food Branding Strategy, which the recently-formed Northeast Alberta Food Marketers Association is implementing to help local food be easily recognizable and readily available to consumers. The Métis Settlements General Council presented information on a new Métis Apprenticeship Program. Alberta Health Services provided an overview of the Five Year Health Action Plan, including strategies being developed to address health care issues in the north.

In March 2012 Council the Alberta Students' Executive Council provided background information to Council on the organization and an overview of their recently released report on increasing accessibility for Alberta's rural and northern students. Altex Energy presented a company overview and discussed the cost benefits of moving bitumen by rail rather than pipeline. Council also heard from a representative of the RCMP who is working closely with the NADC and other organizations to promote positive youth development initiatives in northern Alberta.





Leading the North Conference

The first Leading the North conference was held January 25-27, 2012 in Fort McMurray. The conference brought together an impressive list of speakers representing business, the media, and government from across North America. Premier Alison Redford provided the keynote address to the 460 assembled delegates, and participated in a bear-pit discussion with twelve government ministers.

Leading the North speakers provided insight and analysis into global events affecting the northern Alberta economy and the state of the region's major industries. The conference showcased the spirited debate surrounding the issue of moving Alberta's bitumen to international markets. It also addressed global perceptions of the region's oil sands and inspired delegates with new approaches to fostering community development in collaboration with industry.

As part of the conference, college and grades 9 to 12 students participated in workshops with Ian Hill, humanitarian and founder of the "Let Them Be Kids" Foundation, to build entrepreneurship skills and inspire students' involvement in community building.

This successful event was a collaboration of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, Northeastern Alberta Aboriginal Business Association, Fort McMurray Tourism, Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce, Oil Sands Developers Group, MD of Peace #135, the Fort McMurray Construction Association and the NADC.

Growing the North Conference and Strategic Foresight Scenarios

The NADC provided funding for both the Growing the North Conference and the development of the Strategic Foresight Scenarios which were featured at the event. In follow-up to the 2011 conference, the Centre for Research and Innovation (CRI) at Grande Prairie Regional College brought regional representatives together to identify possible futures for the Peace Region. The resulting scenarios were later presented to municipalities and organizations in the region as planning tools. The scenarios and vignettes are at: www.gprc.ab.ca/community/cri.



Northern Alberta Elected Leaders (NAEL)

NAEL meetings bring together elected leaders from the region to share information and to discuss common issues. The NADC helped organize meetings in Wabasca and High Prairie. Topics included potable and waste water, updates on Slave Lake's recovery, scenarios and municipal planning, medevacs and EMS, and seniors' transportation. As well, Alberta Environment met with NAEL members in the Town of Peace River to discuss BC Hydro's proposed Site C dam on the Peace River and identify related matters of interest to communities.

Northern Development Ministers' Forum (NDMF)

The NDMF advances the diverse and common interests of northerners while raising awareness among decision-makers and the public about the accomplishments, contribution and the potential of the north. The NADC provides support services for the Forum to the Minister. Ministers met February 6-8, 2012 at their annual Forum in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador. Items for discussion included a review of the Terms of Reference and revised Action Plan, an Evaluation of Strategic Planning in Canada's North, and a report on Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneurship. This report reviewed all business financing programs available to Aboriginal youth entrepreneurs. Ministers discussed other common issues including: housing, low rates of high school completion, recruitment and retention of workers, and transportation. Preparations are underway for the upcoming Forum in Saskatchewan in September 2012. Alberta anticipates hosting the Ministers' Forum in 2013. Various Alberta ministries provide input to support the work of the NDMF. Read more about the NDMF at www.focusnorth.ca.



Bonnyville-Cold Lake Aboriginal Showcase

On June 3, 2011, the NADC partnered again with Genia Leskiw, MLA and representatives of the six First Nations and Métis Communities of the Bonnyville-Cold Lake constituency to host the 2nd Aboriginal Showcase at the Cold Lake Energy Center. The event attracted huge crowds and was widely attended by schools throughout the region. The Showcase was an excellent chance for regional Aboriginal communities to present their culture to a non-Aboriginal audience and a fantastic opportunity for Aboriginal youth to take pride in the accomplishments of their communities.



Communities and Community/Industry Associations

Continued interaction with regional groups allows the NADC to maintain stakeholder relations, disseminate important information throughout the region and be aware of emerging issues of concern to the Government of Alberta.

The NADC has met with a range of groups in the region, such as Alberta Hub, Lakeland Destination Marketing Organization, Northeast Region Service Providers Working Group, the Oil Sands Developers Group, and the Lac La Biche Region Industry Consultation Committee. NADC staff have provided support to the Welcoming and Inclusive Communities group in Lac La Biche, and provided input for the Peace River Local Opportunity Centre steering committee.

NADC staff met with town councils in various communities, particularly in northeast Alberta. These meetings allowed staff to update elected officials in the region about NADC initiatives and programs, and to identify potential areas of collaboration. Since then, the NADC has collaborated with some Chambers of Commerce in the region to facilitate or attend community development seminars and participate in industry trade shows.



Slave Lake Wildfire Response

NADC collaborated with other Ministries in the government's response to Slave Lake residents in the aftermath of the devastating spring wildfires. Assistance was provided for employment and business services to job seekers and employers. NADC staff was recognized for their work in Slave Lake at a private luncheon hosted by Premier Ed Stelmach and again during the 2011 Premier's Awards of Excellence.





NADC STRATEGY: FOSTER ECONOMIC DIVERSITY, SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT

A strong north requires an economy that is diverse and communities that can meet the needs of its citizens. Based on stakeholder input, the NADC undertakes initiatives focussed on a range of areas.

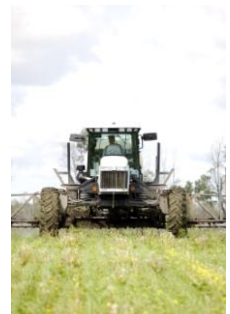
Agriculture

Research in Northern Crops

In 2008 the NADC partnered with Branding the Peace and the Alberta Research Council (now known as Alberta Innovates) to conduct preliminary chemical analysis on “northern vigour” – the premise that northern agricultural products have a superior chemical composition. The initial study pointed to the superiority of Omega 3 content in northern flax seed. Additional analysis currently underway will conclude in March 2013.

Phase two of the study will include a genomics study of Alberta flax seed. This will involve a number of plantings, first at the Alberta Innovates Vegreville Centre, followed by growing tests in the Peace region. Biological testing and analysis will lead to development of a seed that matures faster and earlier, can tolerate the cold weather and maintain the Omega content. The target date for commercialization is March 2016.

Results from this research are expected to lead to a potential new crop for the Peace region, diversification of the crop system, and an increased demand for Alberta flax. Potential new royalties for Alberta Innovates are projected to be \$500,000 per year for ten years.



Transportation

Aviation, rail and highway transportation issues continue to be a major priority for the NADC. The NADC provided planning and advice to the County of Grande Prairie while they continue to work to establish an inland multi-modal facility. A multi-modal facility in northwestern Alberta will allow for reduced transportation costs to local producers and industry, and increase access to foreign markets. Work on northern highway investments is progressing. Transportation of oil is an emerging issue of great importance to the region. NADC is an observer at Enbridge Community Advisory Board meetings.



AMA Seniors Transportation

The NADC has been co-facilitating the Alternate Transportation Options for Seniors committee with the Alberta Motor Association (AMA) to look at possible regional options for senior-friendly transportation. The group was formed following the NW Alberta Seniors Transportation Roundtable hosted by AMA in November 2010. The group meets four times per year to share information, develop education for seniors about transportation options and explore partnerships for enhanced transportation options in the Peace region. Current initiatives include AMA Driver 55+ offered in Grande Prairie, a presentation on aging and driving created for presentation to senior Wellness Clinics in the region, and the research and creation of a Northwest Region Transportation Guide.



Tourism

As part of a centralization of administration for cooperative marketing dollars through Travel Alberta, the Travel Alberta North Tourism Destination Region ended operations in March 2012. The NADC continued as a board member for the transition and will continue until all administrative matters are completed. Tourism continues to be an area of potential growth. The NADC participated in three specific tourism projects this year, as outlined below.



Deh Cho Travel Connection

The Deh Cho Travel Connection aims to attract and extend stays of tourists on a driveable adventure through northwest Alberta, the Northwest Territories and northeast British Columbia. Marketing focuses on both North American and European visitors. The annual “Diamonds in the Rough” campaign offers a Canadian diamond to travelers who collect Deh Cho Passport stamps while they explore communities and stop at visitor information centres on the route. New features were added to the Deh Cho website www.dehchotravel.ca. The NADC continues as the Alberta group lead for this marketing coalition of more than 20 communities, municipal districts, tourism marketing organizations and government agencies.

The Boreal Bird Network

The NADC, in collaboration with the Boreal Bird Centre and Travel Alberta, coordinate this emerging tourism product. Last year’s successful expansion of partners was followed by efforts this past year to increase the information on the website, www.borealbirding.ca. A birding photo contest has been developed and will be launched during the next birding season to help promote birding opportunities in the region.



Trip Advisor

In conjunction with its own social media roll-out, the NADC launched a campaign to encourage communities and businesses across northern Alberta to add their attractions to www.tripadvisor.com. Trip Advisor is a popular online tool that allows travelers to upload pictures and share reviews of places they have visited. Many tourists use the site to plan trips. Prior to the launch of the Trip Advisor campaign, only a handful of northern Alberta communities and businesses had information posted on the site. A growing number are now taking advantage of the site, increasing northern Alberta’s online presence.





Health Care

Shortages of doctors and other health care professionals continue to be an issue in many northern communities. This has been compounded by changes in bus services in the region affecting travel to health appointments. The NADC has continued to work with Alberta Health and Wellness to obtain information that would highlight health-related travel by residents. NADC staff members have also participated in Alberta Health Services Community and Rural Health Planning meetings in three areas of the north and will participate in local initiatives to address health and recruitment concerns. The NADC has worked with the Grande Prairie and District Chamber of Commerce in welcoming medical students and increasing interest in that centre as a residency location.

Rural Alberta Physician Attraction and Retention Conference

The Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP) and the NADC co-hosted the fourth Rural Alberta Physician Attraction and Retention Conference on October 26, 27 and 28, 2011 in Edmonton. The event has grown from 50 to more than 100 individuals from over 60 communities across Alberta. The increase in communities engaging in attraction and retention was reflected in the conference theme “Engage the Community – Retain the Physician” and was supported by a full lineup of speakers. Participants networked, brainstormed, shared stories and took home new ideas. The next conference is scheduled for October 2012 in Edmonton.



Forestry

Forestry is an important part of a sustainable northern economy. This past year the NADC initiated a report on opportunities in the forest industry, with interviews of northern Alberta forest operators, and industry and educational associations.



Biomass Fuels Opportunity Seminars

The NADC lead opportunity seminars on biomass fuels in Calling Lake and La Crete with partners from NAIT, FPIInnovations, the Regional Economic Development Initiative for Northwest Alberta (REDI), the MD of Opportunity, and Mackenzie County. These successful seminars looked at practical uses of biomass fuels and the financials behind their effective operation.

Research and Information

Small businesses, municipalities and other organizations contact the NADC for information on a variety of issues and topics. As examples, the NADC:

- Surveyed small businesses following the Slave Lake fire on assistance required and provided information on disaster recovery
- Researched viability strategies for rural and remote airports
- Analyzed federal regulations to determine how rail lines are deemed grain dependent
- Provided information to an individual wanting to bring in skilled labour from outside Canada
- Provided input to the Conference Board of Canada: Centre for the North about proposals for research on northern issues





NADC STRATEGY: INCREASE SKILL LEVELS

Meeting the needs for skilled professionals is essential to the health and wellbeing of residents, communities and the strength of the economy. NADC Bursaries and a wide range of other initiatives help achieve this.

2011 at a glance

60 NADC Bursaries
14 Medical Bursaries
3 Nurse Practitioner Bursaries
84 Bursary Partnerships
22 Teacher Bursaries

2011 NADC Bursaries

28 Health Care
3 Education
6 Social Services
8 Engineering/Technical
5 Business Administration
10 Agriculture/Environment
1 Esthetics

Educational Levels

3 certificate
16 diploma
41 degree

NADC Bursary Programs

Skilled professionals are in demand by businesses and communities to maintain and improve services. The NADC Bursary helps to attract and retain skilled professionals. Since 2000, the NADC has awarded 2,934 bursaries. The program continues to have a high return service rate.

In collaboration with the Alberta Scholarship Programs office of Alberta Advanced Education & Technology (AE&T), the NADC offered over 203 return service bursaries to Alberta students this year. This number includes the NADC Bursaries, the Medical Bursaries, the Nurse Practitioner Bursaries, the Bursary Partnerships, and the Northern Student Teacher Bursary (including 20 bursaries awarded in 2010 but distributed in 2011). Details on NADC bursaries can be found at www.benorth.ca.

NADC Bursary

The **NADC Bursary** focuses on students training in a variety of professions determined to be in demand by northern employers. In 2011-2012, 281 Alberta students applied and 60 received NADC Bursaries:

- 57 of \$6,000
- 3 of \$3,000

Recipients were enrolled in a wide variety and types of education:

- 3 certificate programs
- 16 diploma programs
- 41 degree programs

Certain programs in demand receive higher bursary values:

- 14 students received \$12,000 **Medical and Dentistry Bursaries**
- 3 students received the \$9,000 **Nurse Practitioner Bursary**

A new \$9,000 large animal **Veterinary Bursary** was created to address demand for this service, and will be available during the 2012-13 round of applications.

NADC Bursary Partnerships

Bursary Partnerships are an excellent opportunity for businesses and community organizations to bring in the skilled professionals that fit their organization. This program encourages sponsors to provide the students they select between \$1,000 and \$3,000, and to apply to the NADC for matching bursary funds. Recipients are obligated to provide return service within the NADC region.

In 2011-2012, 84 Partnership bursaries totalling \$261,875 were awarded, with \$129,300 of this provided through the NADC. Alberta Health Services is a new partner this year, providing \$50,000 to attract and retain health service workers in the NADC region. The NADC is matching their funds of \$50,000 for a total investment in health workers for the north of \$100,000.



NADC Bursary Return Service Rate

Recipients of the NADC Bursary enter into an agreement to live and work in northern Alberta when they complete their education - one year of full-time work for each year of bursary support. The NADC follows up with each recipient. Students who do not fulfill their return service obligations repay their bursaries. Bursary repayments are used to fund additional bursaries to benefit students and northern employers.

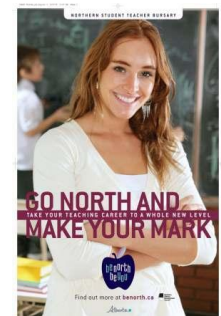
Bursary return service rate

2006-07	81%
2007-08	78%
2008-09	88%
2009-10	87%
2010-11	85%
2011-12	83%

Northern Student Teacher Bursary

Alberta Education collaborates with Alberta Scholarship Programs and the NADC to offer the Northern Student Teacher Bursary (NSTB). This program addresses the recognized demand for teachers due to an increasing population of school age children, increased teacher retirements, and the need for long-term teachers. Teacher attraction and retention in northern, rural and remote Alberta locations is a significant workforce challenge and population projections show that the demand will grow. The NSTB three year return service will help meet the demand.

Superintendents of northern school jurisdictions participated in determining eligibility criteria and selection processes to ensure the most qualified applicants are awarded bursaries. In 2011-2012 applications were restricted to education students who would be qualified to teach high demand subjects such as math and sciences. There were 120 applications with 22 bursaries of \$16,000 awarded.



Northern Health Care Practicum Funding

The Health Care Practicum Funding Program, designed to increase the number of health care practicum students in the north, is a grant administered by the Northern Zone of Alberta Health Services. With \$50,000 in funding from the NADC, student costs for travel and accommodation can be reimbursed for designated locations and practicum positions. This year the grant provided funding to 58 students who completed a health care practicum in northern Alberta.



Initiatives focused on youth



Aboriginal Student Job Shadowing Program

The Aboriginal Student Job Shadowing Program saw continuing success in helping First Nations and Métis youth to develop relationships with employers, gain exposure to careers and to stay motivated to finish high school. The summer program is coordinated by Grande Prairie Regional College with support from employers. Eleven First Nations and Métis students from around the Peace Region completed the program. Students were taught important workplace safety skills and placed in job shadowing positions with a corporate mentor in a career of interest to them. A similar program planned for Slave Lake was, due to the 2011 wildfire, deferred to 2012.

Positive Youth Development

The NADC is an active partner on the Provincial Group for Positive Youth Development. Our partners, the RCMP and Alberta Health Services, with support from Lions Quest Canada (www.lionsquestcanada.ca), have worked with the POWER Group of Whitecourt and a professional evaluator to create an evaluation resource for communities. The Evaluation Toolkit provides communities with a template for evaluating the introduction of positive youth development initiatives and is based on the Whitecourt experience. The NADC continues to work with our provincial partners and Lions Quest Canada to explore options of hosting more train-the-trainer workshops in the region. The training informs participants about positive youth development philosophy, the 40 Developmental Assets and how these can address youth at risk issues and incidents, improve school graduation rates, and increase community and youth involvement.

Youth Achievement Project

The Northern Lights School Division offers the Youth Achievement Project (formerly known as the Youth Apprenticeship Program) to help keep Grades 7 to 12 students in Lac La Biche in school and allow them to explore careers and post-secondary options. The School Division finds YAP promising for increasing school retention and continues to expand YAP-like programs across their schools. The NADC is involved in the Local Advisory Committee that supports YAP. Recently, the NADC assisted with a project that will create an elementary level book outlining oil field jobs to help young children understand the local career opportunities in that sector.



Youth Entrepreneurship

The Ventures 10, 20, 30 program has continued work to expand from the Grande Prairie region to other areas of the north. The program works with Community Futures to offer business training and entrepreneurial skills to youth and is intended to keep youth in school.

Northern Alberta Youth Entrepreneurship Camp

The NADC once again sponsored the Northern Alberta Youth Entrepreneurship Camp (NAYEC), organized and hosted by the northern branches of Community Futures. This one-week business planning camp for northern Alberta youth between the ages of 13 and 15 improves business, academic, and life skills through entrepreneurship. NAYEC uses experiential activities that develop transferable entrepreneurial skills in a summer camp setting.



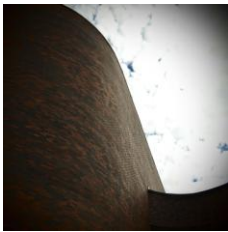
Increasing educational options

Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse

The Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse is a joint initiative of the NADC and northern post-secondary institutions: Grande Prairie Regional College, Keyano College and Northern Lakes College, with Portage College joining this year. The Clearinghouse provides member institutions with labour force and economic information, which helps them identify new training programs or to modify or cancel existing ones. It also serves as a potential forum for further communication and cooperation between the partner institutions. The most recent report, an *Investigation of Rural Colleges' Innovative Models for Social and Economic Development and its Application in Northern Alberta Colleges* was completed in July 2011. Future research will focus on foundational learning and the implications for the north. All past Clearinghouse reports are available on the NADC website: www.nadc.ca.

Support for social work education

The NADC worked with the University of Calgary and northern colleges to host stakeholder meetings in Lac La Biche and Grande Prairie with the new dean for the University's Faculty of Social Work. The meetings discussed upcoming program plans and locations. As well, through funding from Advanced Education and Technology, a one-time offering of a Masters of Social Work for students in northwest Alberta will start in September 2012 in Grande Prairie.



Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC) Environmental Program

The NADC contributed to research to develop an environmental science program relevant to northern Alberta. The intent is to develop a program that trains students to meet the specific needs of industry in the north. GPRC has hired a consultant to design the program and to determine the appropriate level of accreditation that will be conferred to students upon completion.



2012 Awards, Bursaries & Scholarships booklet

The Awards, Bursaries and Scholarships booklet lists funding sources for students interested in pursuing a post-secondary education. The booklet is on the www.benorth.ca website with hyperlinks to post-secondary and funding sites. It is distributed in paper format to Grade 12 students at northern high schools, and to northern Alberta Service Centres and college awards offices.



NADC STRATEGY: INCREASE AWARENESS OF THE NORTH

NADC Communiqué

Communiqués are prepared following Council meetings to report on key discussions, NADC initiatives and upcoming events of importance to northern Albertans. This year's Communiqués were produced in June and November 2011. Communiqués are available on the NADC website and are distributed to northern businesses, industries, Aboriginal organizations, community groups, as well as to municipal and provincial government.



Communications

Efforts this year focussed on rolling out NADC's social media sites as new ways to connect with northerners. The NADC also encouraged social media use in the region by sponsoring three social media workshops for businesses and organizations. NADC's focus has been on Facebook and Twitter. Live tweets were posted during the March 2012 Council meeting and the Leading the North conference. Through the sites NADC shares information about our initiatives as well as others of interest in the region. We invite you to visit our social media sites: Facebook: **Northern Alberta Development Council** and Twitter: **@NADCca**.

NADC.ca

NADC website hits increased by 75% to 92,123 this year. The website provides information on the NADC's activities, northern statistics, publications and news releases.



OpportunityNorth.ca

As a recruitment resource for northern employers, Opportunity North offers a fresh brand for northern Alberta and is an excellent source of information about the region. New Opportunity North materials were produced this past year along with a Brand Guide. The Guide outlines ways the materials can be used by employers. These will be distributed in 2012. The Opportunity North website is a key component of the resource, providing lots of information for individuals wanting to learn more about northern Alberta. Web hits are similar to last year at 44,984.



BeNorth.ca

The NADC bursary programs are marketed through the 'BeNorth' brand and website: www.benorth.ca. Website hits increased again, this year by 46% to 67,928, with continued use of the on-line application process.





LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The 2012-2013 year is shaping up to be one full of many interesting initiatives.

Transportation continues to be a critical issue for northerners, both as a facilitator of economic growth and a support to quality of life of northern residents. *NADC initiatives:*

- Continue to encourage the development of the Grande Prairie Transload site
- Continue to support an improved highway system throughout the north including those connected to the oilsands in northeastern Alberta and an east-west connector route to Prince Rupert BC
- Study the extent that northerners travel for health appointments to support development of transportation options to access medical and other services

Strategic positioning of northern Alberta and its contribution to Alberta's economy is an important way to profile the north. *NADC initiatives:*

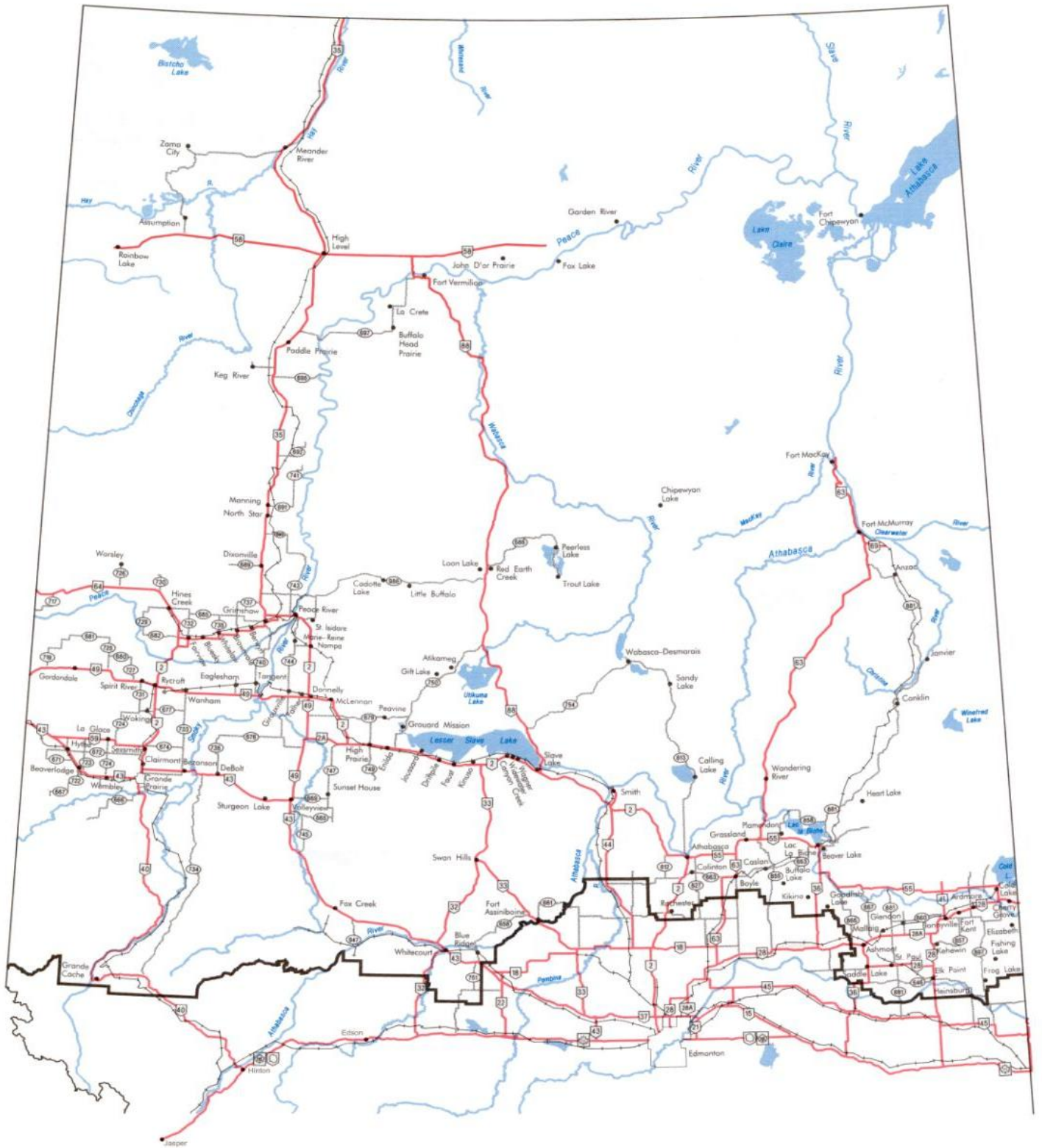
- Release an updated *'The Economic Contribution of the North to Alberta and Canada's Economies'* report
- Host regional workshops to hear from northerners about issues and opportunities
- Work with the Northern Alberta Elected Leaders forum
- Continue support for **Growing the North** (2013) and **Leading the North** (2014) conferences
- Advance understanding of disaster recovery by helping the Town of Slave Lake capture and share the wisdoms it gained in its recovery from the 2011 wildfire

Ongoing skilled labour issues create challenges to northern development and the quality of life for northerners. *NADC initiatives:*

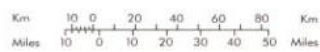
- Support new training opportunities and awareness of careers in the energy and forestry sectors at the High Prairie Training and Development Centre
- Partner to host a Human Resource Management Conference to discuss ways to address today's recruitment challenges, including the cost of housing
- Continue to offer the NADC Bursaries, including a recently created Veterinary Bursary, as an important retention tool, and work with Alberta Health Services to enhance our practicum funding program



We invite you to visit NADC's website, www.nadc.ca, and to follow us on our Facebook page and Twitter for updates of our many activities and events around the region.



NORTHERN ALBERTA DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL AREA



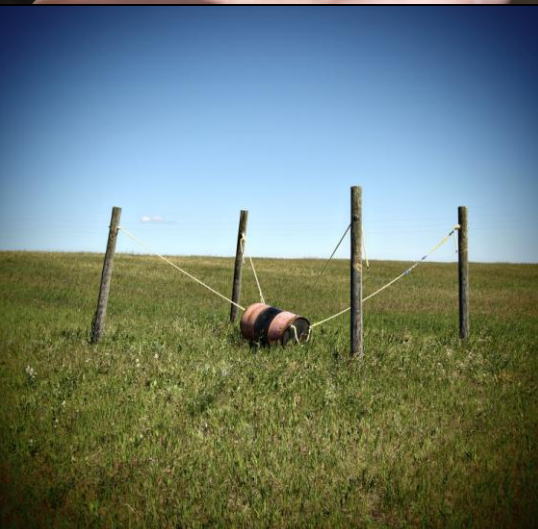
PRIMARY HIGHWAY

SECONDARY HIGHWAY

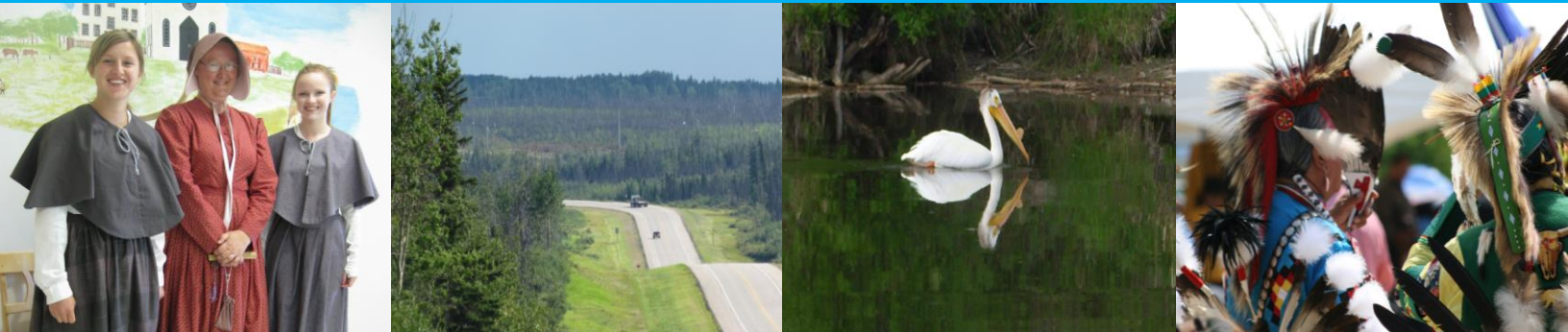
RAILWAY



Produced by Resource Data Division, Alberta Environmental Protection
 Base map provided by Spatial Data Warehouse
 February 1999



We're putting opportunity on the map.



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