



Territorial Premiers Renew a Shared Vision for Canada's North

YELLOWKNIFE (September 4, 2014) – Canada's territorial Premiers renewed their collaborative vision for the North at the Northern Premiers' Forum in Yellowknife today.

A Northern Vision: Building a Better North outlines a vision for the North shared by the governments of the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut. It will help the territories to continue working together to ensure the North is a region of vibrant, healthy communities with sound economies and diverse opportunities, and where the environment is protected for future generations.

"Much has changed in the North since *A Northern Vision* was originally released seven years ago," said Northwest Territories Premier Robert McLeod. "Political changes through NWT devolution and the settlement of modern treaties and self-government agreements mean that northerners are taking greater control of their own destinies. The federal government's *Northern Strategy* has brought greater focus to the North and its potential, while Canada's Chairmanship of the Arctic Council has increased international attention."

Yukon Premier Darrell Pasloski said: "I am committed to working with my territorial counterparts to create a stronger North. We have reinforced this commitment by renewing *A Northern Vision*, a document outlining our shared priorities of energy, infrastructure, governance and productive and engaged citizens. Our priority is to ensure continued economic growth in Canada's North for the benefit of northerners and all Canadians."

Nunavut Premier Peter Taptuna said: "I welcome an updated version of *A Northern Vision* as Nunavut is committed to building a stronger North with healthy and self-reliant residents. Nunavut has grown and evolved since the original document was released seven years ago. I believe a renewed focus on energy, infrastructure, governance and responsible resource development can benefit all three territories, their citizens and the rest of Canada."

The renewed vision is based on four strategic pillars. *Productive and Engaged Citizens* highlights the territorial governments' support for healthy and self-reliant residents, including a strong education system and practical skills training.

Energy speaks to the need for reliable and affordable energy systems in order to reduce the cost of living for residents and businesses, and to unlock the North's substantial resource wealth.

Infrastructure describes the need for robust, reliable infrastructure as the basis for strong communities and resilient economies. Improved transportation systems, including roads, airports, northern ports and coastal access, are essential for improving the quality of life of northern residents.

Governance supports the steps territories are taking to control their environmental, economic, social and political destinies. Partnerships with Aboriginal and Inuit governments and groups are key to this work, as land, resources and self-government agreements continue to be achieved. A significant accomplishment in this area was the devolution of province-like powers to the Government of the NWT on April 1, 2014.

Responsible environmental stewardship supports each of these pillars, recognizing that the land is central to the North's cultural identity.

Northern Premiers originally released *A Northern Vision: A Stronger North and a Better Canada* in 2007. Given changes in the North since then, the Premiers committed at the 2013 Northern Premiers' Forum to review and update the document.

The previous *Northern Vision* resulted in pan-territorial cooperation in the areas of climate change and energy. In 2011, Northern Premiers published *Paths to a Renewable North: A Pan-Territorial Renewable Energy Inventory* and the *Pan-Territorial Adaptation Strategy: Moving Forward on Climate Change Adaptation in Canada's North*, which led to the three territories co-hosting the 2013 Pan-Territorial Permafrost Workshop.

For more information visit www.anorthernvision.ca or contact:

Shaun Dean
Director
Cabinet Communications
Government of the NWT
Tel: 867-669-2304
shaun_dean@gov.nt.ca

Elaine Schiman
Cabinet Communications
Government of Yukon
Tel: 867-633-7961
elaine.schiman@gov.yk.ca

Yasmina Pepa
Press Secretary
to Premier Peter Taptuna
Government of Nunavut
Tel: 867-222-0961
ypepa@gov.nu.ca