

NEWS RELEASE

Resources North Association Launched

October 2, 2007

PRINCE GEORGE – The **Resources North Association** is formally launched today at the same time that the model forest program concludes its 15 year history. Natural Resources Canada Minister Gary Lunn has committed \$1.5 million over 5 years to Resources North, providing core funding intended to be matched from other sources such as industry and the Province.

Resources North is established out of several important new partnerships and a revamped association that used to house the McGregor Model Forest Program.

Resources North will build tools and approaches that improve integration of the needs of resource-dependent northern communities with the activities of the resource sectors. "Whether it's jobs, resources, parks, or cultures, we are all looking for something from our land base; this newly re-focused group's goal is to bring new energy, direction and tools to helping determine how best to balance and integrate as many of our needs as possible," said Doug Routledge, Vice President, Northern Operations, Council of Forest Industries and one of 16 Directors with Resources North.

BC has made several advancements to improving linkages and integration between the various resource agencies, sectors and resource values. We are now in a position to derive additional benefits by developing new approaches and tools for integration. Mining and mineral exploration, tourism, forestry, oil and gas and agriculture are still largely managed as separate entities, often referred to as "silos". Links between these *silos* and to communities need to be strengthened, and working with First Nations communities offers exciting potential opportunities.

Dan Jepsen, CEO and President, Association for Mineral Exploration BC, and Director for Resources North said today, "The proposed work of Resources North is exactly what we need, allowing us to invest the effort needed to understand the issues and develop a new set of tools and approaches that will provide communities and First Nations with the means to meet their social, cultural and economic needs without risking their resource capital".

Over the coming months Resources North will be holding discussions and forums with communities, First Nations, agencies, OBAC and industry in 3 initial areas – the South Peace, Mackenzie, and Vanderhoof-Fort St James areas - to define in more detail the project work that will begin to address critical integrated resource management issues of community and industry importance.

Mayor Len Fox, Chair of OBAC, and Director for Resources North, says "Our efforts to build resilient communities, diversify and rejuvenate our region's economy and improve certainty across sectors will rely upon our wealth of natural resources and the strengths and innovation of our people. OBAC looks forward to working with the members of the partnership to achieve these ends."

Resources North has over 50 member organizations supporting the initiative. The range of members that will be involved in implementing these projects include: Council of Forest Industries; Association for Mining Exploration BC; Mining Association of BC; Geoscience BC; Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers; Omineca Beetle Action Coalition, University of Northern BC; Council of Tourism Associations of BC; the Province of BC; the College of New Caledonia; and local communities.

For more information visit www.resourcesnorth.org, or contact:

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