



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

September 30, 2008

NOACC Annual General Meeting - Kenora, Ontario

The Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of Commerce (NOACC) held their 73rd Annual Fall Meeting & AGM in Kenora, Ontario on September 25, 26, 27, 2008. Area Chambers and business leaders were in attendance representing the region. Special presentations, speakers, interactive sessions, and discussion/debate on resolutions were held on important issues on behalf of the Northwestern Ontario business communities.

"It is very important to ensure that Northwestern Ontario's voice is heard in various government ministries where policy and planning decisions are made" stated Barry Streib, President NOACC. "A number of very focused resolutions were brought forward and approved by the membership, dealing with some of the critical issues affecting our region, including Endangered Species Act, Role of the Northern Development Councils, Building a Policy Institute in the North, Twinning of the Trans Canada Highway, Far North Road Development, Building Opportunity for all in Northern Ontario, Northern Ontario Immigration, Apprenticeship Training, and a Policy Ensuring Fair and Equal Representation in Northern Ontario."

An Executive Summary of the approved resolutions is attached.

In addition to the resolutions/policy process, there were a number of highlights during the two and a half day conference:

- A report was given on Prospect North, a mining conference being hosted by NOACC on October 23 & 24, 2008 in Thunder Bay at the Travelodge Hotel Airline. The NOACC membership is very supportive of this exciting initiative that is also being supported by Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, and the Ontario Mining Association. Mining brings many benefits to the North, including job creation, economic growth, investment opportunities for businesses, and partnerships with First Nations. This conference will educate and create an awareness of the business opportunities in the mining industry, provide information on how to get involved, and what opportunities there are to grow the industry in Northwestern Ontario. The confirmed speakers for the conference to date are: The Honourable Michael Gravelle, Minister of Northern Development & Mines; Chris Hodgson, President of the Ontario Mining Association. More information on Prospect North is available on the NOACC website: www.noacc.ca

- The Fall meeting included a number of special guest speakers: Mayor Len Compton, City of Kenora; Roger Valley, Federal MP - Kenora; John Tory, Leader of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party; and Mike Brown, Parliamentary Assistant to the Ontario Minister of Transportation. NOACC delegates were updated with a report from Jason Scott and Megan Chochla on the Ontario Government's Northern Growth Plan, and Dennis McCaffrey, General Manager, Bell Aliant/KMTS was the Keynote Dinner Speaker.
- During the Annual General Meeting, the NOACC membership elected their 2008/2009 Executive:
 - Barry Streib (Thunder Bay) - President (third term as President)
 - Christine Denby (Fort Frances) - Vice-President
 - Rebecca Johnson (Thunder Bay) - Vice-President
 - Dick MacKenzie (Sioux Lookout) -Vice-President
 - Dennis Buset (Thunder Bay) - Vice-President, Finance

"The Kenora & District Chamber of Commerce did a terrific job in hosting our NOACC Fall event this year," said Barry Streib. "Kenora's spirit and hospitality was evident throughout the two and half days, and Mayor Len Compton, an active participant in the meetings, warmly welcomed the delegates from across Northwestern Ontario and made all of us feel a part of his community."

"We are looking forward to being in Fort Frances for our Fall Meeting in September 2009 as they celebrate their 100th Anniversary." Added Streib. "All are welcome to attend this special event."

NOACC has been the Voice of Business in Northwestern Ontario since 1931, lobbying for progressive solutions that best fit with the needs of our communities. NOACC represents every active Chamber of Commerce stretching from Geraldton and Marathon, to the Manitoba border in twelve communities. The membership includes over 2000 businesses and some of the largest corporations in the region.

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* *Executive Summary attached (5 pages)*

For information, please contact:

Mary Long-Irwin,
Chief Operating Officer, NOACC
Policy Committee
807.624-2626
maryli@tb-chamber.on.ca

Barry Streib
President, NOACC
807.684.3509
barry.streib@tbaytel.com