



**NOACC FALL MEETING  
N.W Ontario Regional Conference**

**Thursday, September 24, 2015  
1:00 pm - 4:30 pm**

**Victoria Inn & Convention Centre – Executive Boardroom  
Teleconference #: 1-866-797-5645  
Participant Code: 134750 followed by #**

1. **CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME**.....N. Lawrence, President
2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA (M)**.....Membership  
*Motion: That the agenda for the 2015 NOACC Fall Business Meeting be accepted as presented.*
3. **DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**
4. \* **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES (M)**.....Membership  
*Motion: That the NOACC Spring Meeting/Annual General Meeting minutes held Friday, April 24, 2015 be approved as circulated.*
5. **NOACC FINANCIAL REPORT**  
\* 5.1 FINANCIALS YEAR AS OF AUGUST 31, 2015
6. **OTHER BUSINESS**
  - 6.1 ONTARIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE – **1:30 pm**  
- Sheldon Leiba (OCC Vice President, Network & Membership Relations) will be calling in for the meeting.
  - 6.2 CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE
  - 6.3 MINING SUPPLY AND SERVICES ASSOCIATION UPDATE
  - 6.4 NOACC ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURING UPDATE
7. \* **NOACC RESOLUTIONS (M)**
  - 7.1 Spring Bear Hunt
  - 7.2 Positioning FedNor to Better Serve Northern Ontario
  - 7.3 Aviation Fuel Tax
  - 7.4 Intercity Bus Service Cancellations
8. **COLLABORATION CORNER**
  - 8.1 FORMAT OF FUTURE NOACC SPRING MEETINGS/AGM
  - 8.2 UPCOMING ACTIVITIES – CHAMBER CHALLENGES/BEST PRACTICES
9. **CONFIRMATION OF NOACC MEETING DATES & LOCATIONS**
  - 9.1 MEMBERSHIP CONFERENCE CALL DATES
10. **ADJOURNMENT (M)**.....Membership

**\* Info attached (M) Motion required**

**NOACC DINNER – CHICAGO JOE'S (Victoria Inn)**  
Reservation made under Hanna (NOACC)



## **NOACC SPRING MEETING/ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Friday, April 24, 2015 2-4 pm**

**Thunder Bay, ON**

**Thunder Bay Chamber Boardroom**

### **Participating:**

**Dryden** – Gwen Kurz (teleconference)

**Fort Frances** – Jennifer Greenhalgh (videoconference)

**Geraldton** – Eric Pietsch

**Kenora** – Carlee Hakenson, Blair Hutchings, Andy Scribilo, Daryl Plummer (teleconference)

**Marathon** – George Macey, Bob Hancherow (videoconference)

**Sioux Lookout** – Suzanne Favot

**Thunder Bay** – Rebecca Johnson, Nathan Lawrence, Michael Nitz, Barry Streib, Charla Robinson,  
Hanna Pattyson

### **Guests:**

Liz Norman, Kenora (MNDM) (teleconference)

Jamie Taylor, FedNor

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The AGM business meeting was called to order at 2:03 pm by Nathan Lawrence, NOACC President.  
The attendance/quorum was confirmed – seven NOACC Chambers in attendance.

#### **2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Moved by: Barry Streib (Thunder Bay)                      Seconded by: Michael Nitz (Thunder Bay)

**That the agenda for the April 24, 2015 NOACC Annual Business Meeting be accepted as presented.  
CARRIED.**

#### **3. APPROVAL OF THE MEETING MINUTES**

Moved by: Levina Collins (Nipigon)                      Seconded by: George Macey (Marathon)

**That the minutes of the 2014 NOACC Spring Meeting/AGM held in Geraldton April 10-12, 2014 be  
approved as circulated.  
CARRIED.**

Moved by: George Macey (Marathon)                      Seconded by: Barry Streib (Thunder Bay)

**That the minutes of the NOACC Fall Meeting held in Thunder Bay September 24-26, 2014 be  
approved as circulated.  
CARRIED.**

Moved by: Rebecca Johnson (Thunder Bay)                      Seconded by: Eric Pietsch (Geraldton)

**That the minutes of the NOAC membership conference call held November 19, 2014 be approved as  
circulated.  
CARRIED.**

#### **4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

None.

#### **5. REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT- N. Lawrence**

Nathan reported that it has been a busy year as NOACC President. He attended the Canadian Chamber  
AGM in Charlottetown, PEI on September 27-29, 2014 with a lot of great ongoing discussion after the

meeting. The NOACC intern worked on a number of things in 2014, including mining readiness with the development of a Mining Supply & Services committee to help companies become more engaged. He also had great opportunities to connect with OCC representatives during the year. A Leaders' Debate (in conjunction with NOMA) was also held in the past year. One big project that has been discussed at the NOACC Executive level is a proposed NOACC restructuring plan, as well as amendments to the NOACC By-laws with a new process to allow us to engage members in different ways in the future.

The OCC AGM is coming up at the end of April in Cornwall, which he will also be attending. There will be a few representatives from Thunder Bay in attendance, and two proxy votes from NOACC Chambers have been received which will help to make our voices heard at the meeting during the policy debate. Will also have opportunities to share thoughts and concerns at the meeting. Charla reported that the Thunder Bay Chamber has submitted one resolution on permanent protection of industrial fibre, and co-sponsored two others for debate at the OCC AGM. Nathan has been asked by OCC to sit on a speaker's panel on best practices for the Young Professionals Network of Ontario at the upcoming OCC AGM.

Will discuss the proposed NOACC restructuring later in this meeting. The NOACC Executive will be making plans to travel out in the region to discuss and get input on NOACC's restructuring proposal.

## **6. FINANCE REPORT**

### **6.1 AUDITED FINANCIALS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2014**

Charla reported that the auditor's Management Report noted some inconsistencies in the HST taken out of the NOACC finances. This has been adjusted, but will affect the HST rebate. Charla reviewed the 2014 audited financials with the membership, including revenue and expenses. NOACC's financial situation was different in 2014 due to the intern contribution and the Mining Supply & Services project. She also noted that miscellaneous revenue was up due to the Leaders' Debate and the N.W. Ontario Regional Conference held in 2014 in conjunction with NOMA, so the revenue was shared. FedNor funding was received for NOACC to do a Mining Supply & Services Association feasibility study. The results of the study showed that industry partners felt an association would be of value, but they were not ready to commit to forming an association, which would require a large number of members to cover the costs of the overhead. An alternative was to form a Mining Supply & Services committee without the overhead costs, ie. office staff, etc. The committee has had a couple of meetings and are working towards developing a cluster in mining supply and services. The schedule of NOACC membership dues was included in the audited financials. NOACC Chamber membership fees need to be paid in order for a Chamber to be a NOACC member in good standing. Charla noted that in the future, Chambers that have not paid their membership dues will not be carried over as a member. OCC will have a round table discussion about member engagement so Charla will bring back the information gathered to NOACC.

Moved by: Eric Pietsch (Geraldton)

Seconded by: Barry Streib (Thunder Bay)

**That the NOACC audited financials statements as of December 31, 2014 be approved as presented.**

**CARRIED.**

A letter of appreciation will be sent to BDO Canada LLP, the NOACC auditors to thank them for their support over many years, including their generous pro bono audit. It was noted that they should also be given recognition in some way for their support of NOACC over about 30 years.

## 6.2 APPOINTMENT OF 2015 AUDITOR

Moved by: Rebecca Johnson (Thunder Bay)      Seconded by: Levina Collins (Nipigon)  
**That BDO Canada LLP (Thunder Bay Office) be appointed as the NOACC Auditor for 2015.**  
**CARRIED.**

## 6.3 2015 NOACC BUDGET

Charla noted that in 2014, we had to increase insurance coverage due to the NOACC intern. We have now gone back to our regular Director Liability insurance coverage, so our insurance costs will be going down in 2015. The telephone/office expenses have been included on one budget line now. The lobbying expense will be shown differently, allotted to the CCC/OCC meeting budget line. \$1,500 will be included for special projects which is for the mining supply/services committee. 1,500 will also be included in the budget for NOACC restructuring costs to enable NOACC representatives to travel out in the region.

Moved by: Eric Pietsch (Geraldton)      Seconded by: Michael Nitz (Thunder Bay)  
**That the 2015 NOACC budget be approved as presented.**  
**CARRIED.**

## 9.1 NOACC BY-LAW CHANGES

It was pointed out that the proposed NOACC By-Law changes need to be dealt with before we proceed with the NOACC Executive nominations/election at this meeting, since the Executive position titles will probably be changing. It makes sense to have a transition plan in place for NOACC to prepare for possible restructuring of the organization. Charla reported that changes are needed in the membership structure, Articles 3B, 3C, as well as titles of officers in Article 4, and in Article 7 for the duties in the By-Laws. The wording has been cleaned up, noting that the By-laws have not been reviewed for about 20 years. Reference to committees is currently made in the By-Laws that have not been operating within NOACC for many years.

Moved by: Eric Pietsch (Geraldton)      Seconded by: Barry Streib (Thunder Bay)  
**That the proposed NOACC By-Law amendments for Articles 3B, 3C, 4 & 7 be accepted as presented.**  
**CARRIED.**

## 7. NOACC EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS/ELECTION

The NOACC Executive nominations/election was dealt with after approving the proposed amendments to the By-Laws, since the amendments include title changes for the Executive positions. Michael Nitz, Immediate Past Chair expressed appreciation to those who served on the 2014/2015 NOACC Executive. Mike reported that he has reached out to incumbents for all Executive positions, and all have confirmed they will let their name stand for another year, except one.

Michael put forward the following slate of names for the 2015/2016 NOACC Executive:

President – Nathan Lawrence; Vice-President – Eric Pietsch  
Secretary – Andy Scribilo; Treasurer – Levina Collins  
Past President – Michael Nitz; Senior Advisors: Rebecca Johnson, George Macey, Barry Streib

Moved by: Geraldton      Seconded by: Kenora  
**That the slate for the 2015/2016 NOACC Executive be accepted as presented.**  
**CARRIED.**

## 8. NOACC RESOLUTIONS REVIEW/DEBATE

Two resolutions have been submitted by the NOACC Executive; no resolutions were received from the NOACC membership, but Charla encouraged Chambers to forward their resolutions, and stressed that resolutions can be dealt with/discussed at the NOACC Fall meeting as well. Policy resolutions stay on the NOACC books for two years.

### 8.1 ENERGY POLICY: NEEDS ANALYSIS PLANNING

This policy was originally adopted by NOACC in 2013, and is sunsetting this year, since NOACC policies remain on the books for two years. The NOACC Executive has decided to resubmit this resolution so it stays on the NOACC books.

Moved by: Barry Streib

Seconded by: Michael Nitz

**That NOACC urge the Ontario government to build the electrical infrastructure required on a needs analysis basis, and further that;**

**NOACC urges that both an east-west and a north-south system be built to service the Ring of Fire so we have the security of a loop system and not a radial transmission system. Adoption of this concept will enable First Nations communities to connect to the transmission system.**

**CARRIED.**

### 8.2 SUPPORT FOR NORTHERN FORESTRY OPERATIONS

Charla noted that there has been a strong, concentrated focus by activist groups targeting companies with forest products harvested from boreal forests. This has been negatively impacting economies, killing jobs, and therefore hurting our communities. This resolution was passed at the NOMA AGM yesterday, which will also go to individual municipalities for their consideration.

Moved by: Levina Collins

Seconded by: Eric Pietsch

- 1. That the Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of commerce express its support for Quebec's Boreal Forest Alliance's objective to inform Greenpeace, the David Suzuki Foundation, ecojustice, Environmental Defense, Ontario Nature and the Wildlands League and other like organizations of the negative effects of their actions and activist campaigns as these campaigns are based on ideology and misinformation and not on evidence based science and sustainability; and**
- 2. That the aforementioned organizations be made aware and held accountable for the impacts of their campaigns that cost Ontario forest companies, their customers, their reputations and their viability as well as the damaging consequences to forestry workers, their families and their communities in Northwestern Ontario; and**
- 3. That NOACC call on the aforementioned organizations to cease and desist all campaigns targeting consumers of renewable forest products sustainably harvested from Ontario's Boreal Forest region as trees are the only renewable building product.**

**CARRIED.**

## 9. NEW/OTHER BUSINESS

### 9.1 NOACC RESTRUCTURING – B. Streib

NOACC needs to consider restructuring to address the challenges that member Chambers are having around resources, finances, etc. We need a new and better way of operating, thinking about what NOACC's role could be for the region. After discussion with a number of individuals, Barry Streib has spent much time putting together a presentation about the proposed NOACC restructuring to move NOACC forward. In 2009, the NOACC developed a strategic plan, including the Mission - Why we exist; Vision – What we want to be; Values – What we believe in and how we behave. This is where NOACC has been, and need to discuss where we are going as an organization. The

presentation includes key initiatives, the value chain, current structure, etc. In 2009, NOACC identified the pros and cons of revamping the NOACC structure, so the membership has been looking at possibilities for the future, and it has been part of the discussion all along. There have been discussions about the future of the organization, but now we need a new approach. Barry noted that there have not been many actions to develop the strategic plan though, since there have been difficulties with engagement and resources, etc. to do the things that we should be doing as an organization.

We need to build a different type of organization that can still represent businesses/communities, and ensure that we provide value to be part of the organization. There have been many challenges due to rising costs and the struggling economy. Local Chambers have been dealing with limited resources, and membership numbers are shrinking. When that happens, the volunteer base also shrinks. NOACC needs to look at opportunities thru collaboration including resource sharing.

If a Chamber decides they want to continue the way they currently operate, that chamber would remain an autonomous member. The new structure will take a new approach with new membership levels including Local member; Local Partner; Regional Partner; and Gold Circle Partner. Nathan explained the membership levels for the new model, and that one board would represent NOACC as an organization. A Chamber would have the option of being a chapter member or continue autonomously.

- The collection of dues, board liability insurance etc. would be handled by the NOACC office. The new structure would give NOACC leverage to do more.
- The operations component would be handled by NOACC and the smaller Chambers/communities could focus on engagement, etc.
- This proposed restructuring plan will be taken out into the communities/Chambers to get their input, but not just to the chambers but the whole community.
- It will need to be a phased approach, one step at a time, since there are many things to take into consideration.
- Will start meeting first with communities without Chambers.
- Concerns have been expressed about optics, and the perceived loss of sovereignty for Chambers. Branding is important.
- If we do not do anything, those communities with Chambers will not be operating before long. With the new structure, even those communities with no Chamber can be involved in NOACC. The new structure will probably be most beneficial to the smaller communities that do not currently have a Chamber.
- A business could also become a member of NOACC if there is no Chamber in their community, but NOACC will not compete with local Chamber membership. If there is an active chamber, the business would have to be a member of their local Chamber.
- A regional partner also needs to be a member of the local Chamber.
- It was noted that last year's Spring Meeting discussion included concerns from Chambers that could barely afford their financial audits, insurance, etc.
- Chambers were encouraged to contact Barry Streib and/or Nathan Lawrence with concerns/input.
- Will coordinate a tour to take this proposed restructuring plan out to the region with more details and for input.
- Also plan on applying for funding to assist NOACC with the transition.

A report will also be brought to the NOACC Fall meeting on what has happened thus far regarding the proposed NOACC restructuring. Chambers were encouraged to review the presentation and forward input

and questions, which will also assist in presenting to communities. We want to hear from communities and get honest feedback.

## 10. MEETING DATES & LOCATIONS

### 10.1 NOACC FALL MEETING/N.W. ONTARIO REGIONAL CONFERENCE

**September 23-25, 2015 in Thunder Bay at the Victoria Inn.** The conference will again be held in conjunction with NOMA & NODN. A session will be planned, specifically for NOACC on the Thursday, with a possible NOACC dinner that evening.

### 10.2 MEMBERSHIP CONFERENCE CALL DATES

Chambers were encouraged to send information on the membership calls to their boards so that they understand what NOACC is working on, and should encourage them to participate in the calls as well. If appropriate, Chambers were encouraged to share information with their board and membership, and not just keep information internal. Will send out dates for future calls as soon as possible.

## 11. FOR INFORMATION ONLY

### 11.1 APEX EVENT – Aboriginal Partnership Exchange – June 4, 2015

Charla reported on this new one day event in Thunder Bay – a draft agenda was provided. The Thunder Bay Chamber is working in partnership with the Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund and FedNor on this event. Have some excellent keynote speakers on the agenda so far. Will talk about success stories, etc. to strengthen networks and build stronger relationships with business community, including fly-in communities, etc. Chambers were encouraged to circulate the information to their membership and regional community. This event would be of value to businesses who are trying to strengthen relationships with First Nations as well as break down barriers/silos.

The Thunder Bay Chamber announced a job skills matching tool that all Chambers should be able to connect as an OCC member. It is called Magnet, an online job/skills matching tool. It is like online dating but for jobs. The OCC is coordinating this with Ryerson University, and is at no charge for employers and job seekers to sign up. Once the search has been narrowed down, the cost is \$10 to look into each opportunity that came up. This is a great opportunity and helps to broaden an employer's search.

Jamie of FedNor was asked for comments. She is interested in having further discussions re the proposed NOACC restructuring. The timing seems right for it. Jamie reported that FedNor funding is supporting smaller communities where CFDC's do not exist to enable them to hire an EDO for three years. Hopefully that will bridge the gap to help get things done. She gave some details on other funding available for communities for youth interns.

Liz Norman, Northern Development & Mines – we are close to the deadline for summer jobs. NOHFC continues to offer programs for our region.

## 12. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Eric Pietsch

**That the NOACC AGM business meeting be adjourned at 4:08 pm.**

**Northwestern Ontario Associated Chamber of Commerce**  
**Balance Sheet**  
**Aug 31, 2015**

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**ASSETS**

**Current Assets:**

Royal Bank	42,752.67
GIC - Short term investments	10,107.57
Accounts receivable	74.60
Prepaid expenses	122.95
	<u>53,057.79</u>

**Fixed Assets**

Long Term Investments	<u>10,055.23</u>
	10,055.23

**Total Assets**

63,113.02

**LIABILITIES & EQUITY**

**Current Liabilities:**

Accounts payable	-
Government remittances payable	-
Deferred Revenue	-
	<u>-</u>

**Equity**

Membership contingency fund	10,000.00
Members' equity	46,919.11
Accumulated Surplus	653.52
Advocacy reserve fund	-
Loss of Revenue over expenses	5,540.39
	<u>63,113</u>

**Total liabilities and equity**

63,113



Northwestern Ontario Associated Chamber of Commerce  
Statement of Earnings  
Eight Months Ended Aug 31, 2015

	Actual To Date	2015 Budget	2014 Budget	2014 Actual
<b>Revenue:</b>				
Corporate memberships	2,442	3,000	3,500	2,500
Memberships	16,848	18,000	20,500	18,678
NOHFC Funding	-		20,625	284
Revenue Meetings / Events	-		-	9,452
Special Projects	-		-	-
Fall Meeting Revenue	-		-	17,283
Intern NOHFC	-			-
Misc Income	-	1,300	2,500	174
Interest Income	80			
FedNor			18,000	
	<u>19,371</u>	<u>22,300</u>	<u>65,125</u>	<u>48,371</u>
<b>Expenses:</b>				
NOACC Administration	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Staff Travel	-	1,500	1,500	-
Insurance	492	1,000	2,200	1,725
Office & Stationary Expenses	-	850	700	145
Interest & Bank Charges	112	150	150	89
Conventions	1,227	3,500	1,700	2,496
Allowance for Doubtful Accounts	-			65
Advocacy Expense	-			5,922
Special Projects	-	1,500	19,800	18,313
Board & Executive Activities	-			-
Intern Expense	-		25,575	23,462
Spring & Annual Meeting	-	500	1,500	1,731
	<u>13,830</u>	<u>21,000</u>	<u>65,125</u>	<u>65,949</u>
<b>Net Gain/Loss of revenue over expenses before the undernoted</b>	5,540	1,300	-	(17,578)
<b>Unrealized Gain/Loss on Investments</b>	-		-	
<b>Net Gain/Loss of revenue over expenses</b>	<u>5,540</u>	<u>1,300</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(17,578)</u>
<b>Operating fund beginning of period</b>	<u>54,984</u>			
<b>Operating fund end of period</b>	<u><u>60,524</u></u>			

## **SPRING BEAR HUNT**

### **Issue:**

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources is reviewing the results of the two-year spring bear hunt pilot program with a view to making a decision on how to proceed.

### **Background:**

In November 2013, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources proposed a spring bear hunt pilot program as a way to enhance public safety and mitigate human-bear conflicts in Northern Ontario. Running from May 1 to June 15 in 2014 and 2015, the pilot program was the first spring bear hunting to take place in the province since it was indefinitely cancelled in 1999. The two-year project focused on the eight wildlife management units (WMUs) adjacent to the North's five largest population centers: North Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, Timmins, and Thunder Bay.

Ontario's black bear management program needs to adhere to the guiding principles laid out in the province's 2009 proposal for enhanced management: "Black bears have an intrinsic value within natural ecosystem and positive socio-economic value when managed by sustainable use principles" (Framework, 2009). Regardless of the economic potential that they possess, black bears need to be managed in perpetuity so that they remain an integral part of Ontario's rich natural heritage.

As outlined in the Northern Policy Institute report "Does the Spring Bear Hunt Make 'Cents'?", the implementation of a spring bear hunt with a non-resident component on a trial basis would generate millions of dollars annually for the province and would be a boon to many communities in northern Ontario where there is a strong outfitting industry.

History has demonstrated that non-resident bear hunting, primarily individuals from the United States, has been big business for outfitters and guides in Northern Ontario, particularly during the spring season (1937-1998). In the wake of the moratorium in 1999, resident and non-resident hunters have participated in extended fall seasons. The most recent data from the Ministry has placed the number of resident and non-resident hunters in 2012 at 16,378 and 4,843 respectively. Based on the cost of licenses for the 2012 season, this amounts to an estimated \$1,825,693 in license sales alone. From 1999 to 2012, resident hunters spent \$6.5 million and non-resident hunters spent \$16.4 million on fall bear hunting licenses. With just a cursory look at licensing sales, it is clear that non-residents are still injecting the most money into the province when it comes to bear hunting.

### **Recommendation**

NOACC calls on the Government of Ontario to immediately implement a spring bear hunt with a non-resident component for a multi-year trial period as it represents a significant economic opportunity for communities in Northern Ontario.

## **POSITIONING FEDNOR TO BETTER SERVE NORTHERN ONTARIO**

### **ISSUE:**

FedNor operates as a program within Industry Canada with minimal operational discretion and autonomy.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Governance of economic development in Northern Ontario needs to become more strategic, collaborative, and transformative in order to improve the region's ability to adapt to the constantly changing currents of a knowledge-driven and globalized economy in the twenty-first century. Key to this governance innovation is the mandate, structure, and approach to program implementation of the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario (FedNor), created, along with other regional development agencies (RDAs), by the federal government in 1987. Although FedNor is often referred to as an "agency," in fact it is not technically an agency in the strict legal and institutional sense of the term, but merely a program delivery unit within Industry Canada. In that sense, FedNor differs from other RDAs in lacking effective financial and policy discretion. As the primary delivery unit of the federal government's economic development initiatives in Northern Ontario, FedNor brings a unique organizational resource to the region by virtue of its external network with a range of federal departments. But FedNor needs to become less tied to Industry Canada (and Ottawa in general) and more locally embedded and responsive to initiatives of the local private sector and community groups.

Increased collaboration between FedNor, the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, and the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund, as well as an adaptation of the goals and priorities set out in the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, would reduce fragmentation and encourage coordination of economic development activities and programs between Federal and Provincial governments.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

NOACC calls on the Federal Government to:

1. Structure FedNor to allow for greater discretion and autonomy from Industry Canada;
2. Adopt formally the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario as FedNor's policy framework for the region; and,
3. Institutionalize a collaborative approach to program delivery through FedNor by developing comprehensive five year formal partnership agreements with the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation for larger investments that support emerging priorities targeted in the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario.

Source: FedNor: It's just got to be Free, Northern Policy Institute

<http://www.northernpolicy.ca/upload/documents/publications/research-reports/paper-fednor-its-just-got-to-be-free.pdf>

## AVIATION FUEL TAX

### ISSUE

The 2014 Ontario Budget announced an increase to Ontario's aviation fuel tax by 1 cent per year for 4 years, commencing in 2014. This tax increase will further reduce Canada's already uncompetitive travel and tourism industry and is an additional burden to Northern Ontario's First Nations fly-in communities.

### BACKGROUND

High fees and taxes on the Canadian aviation industry represent significant challenges for Canada businesses, governments and citizens. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce has listed "uncompetitive travel and tourism strategies" as one of the Top 10 Barriers to Competitiveness for the last two years. We are very concerned that the increase of Ontario's aviation fuel tax by 1 cent per year for the next 4 years will further reduce our already uncompetitive travel and tourism industries and increase costs and fees to Ontario businesses that use these services.

It is especially concerning here in the North, where many First Nation communities are only reachable by air for a large portion of the year. These additional taxes will be passed on to the consumer through higher airfares – increasing the cost of transportation for all goods and passengers, and further negatively impacting the cost of living for our First Nations people.

Small regional airlines such as Wasaya and Bearskin Airlines are already struggling financially due to limited passenger volumes and rising operating costs. Bearskin Airlines has recently undertaken a restructuring that has resulted in a large number of layoffs. This punitive tax will certainly lead to higher airfares, resulting to less demand.

Many of our region's smaller communities depend on tourism revenues generated from US hunters and fishermen. There is already a large price difference between US and Canadian aviation fuel sources. An increase aviation fuel taxes will only aggravate this situation and reduce the competitiveness of Ontario fishing and hunting excursions for the US customer.

It is of particular concern that some members of the Ontario government have suggested that the increase in aviation fuel tax would be used to fund transit projects in Southern Ontario. It is simply wrong that Ontario's remote fly-in communities should be paying for transit infrastructure in the Greater Toronto Area or that one mode of transportation would be used to subsidize another.

### RECOMMENDATION

NOACC calls on the Ontario Government to exempt Northern Ontario aviation fuel from the annual one cent increase in aviation fuel taxes that was implemented in 2014.

## **INTERCITY BUS SERVICE IN NORTHERN ONTARIO**

### **Issue:**

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation is examining how people travel between communities by intercity bus, and this review may result in changes to the regulations that govern the operation of intercity bus services across the province, and in particular in Northern Ontario.

### **Background:**

Even though intercity bus service is an essential service for many residents of Northwestern Ontario, successive governments have allowed the service to be reduced and in some areas eliminated as the regulations moved away from a concept of cross subsidization whereby operators on a particular route used the profits from the more lucrative routes to subsidize the service to the more remote parts of the province.

Only Minaki, Sioux Lookout, Collins and Armstrong have scheduled rail passenger service and only Fort Frances, Kenora, Dryden, Sioux Lookout, Nakina and Thunder Bay have scheduled air passenger service (other than the remote First Nation communities). Residents without a personal vehicle must rely on family, friends or in many cases non-urgent transportation by Emergency Medical Service paramedics for transportation to major centres particularly for health reasons as intercity bus service is either inadequate or non-existent.

The Ministry of Transportation has been conducting an analysis of the multi-modal transportation needs of northern Ontario for the past three years and is approximately one year away from completing the study and recommending a plan for northern Ontario.

The Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association has requested that the Ontario government set aside future infrastructure funds for the implementation of the Multimodal Transportation Study. It would be prudent for the northern Ontario portion of the current study of intercity bus service to be suspended and referred to the Multimodal Transportation Study for incorporation into the long term plan.

### **Recommendations:**

That NOACC call on the Ministry of Transportation to refer all matters related to any reform of the intercity bus transportation regulations applicable to Northern Ontario to the Northern Ontario Multimodal Transportation Study and further that:

The Ministry of Transportation Multimodal Transportation Study pay particular attention to the manner in which all modes of passenger transportation can be enhanced throughout Northwestern Ontario.

## **SPRING BEAR HUNT**

### **Issue**

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources is reviewing the results of the two-year spring bear hunt pilot program with a view to making a decision on how to proceed.

### **Background**

In November 2013, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources proposed a spring bear hunt pilot program as a way to enhance public safety and mitigate human-bear conflicts in Northern Ontario. Running from May 1 to June 15 in 2014 and 2015, the pilot program was the first spring bear hunting to take place in the province since it was indefinitely cancelled in 1999. The two-year project focused on the eight wildlife management units (WMUs) adjacent to the North's five largest population centers: North Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, Timmins, and Thunder Bay.

Ontario's black bear management program needs to adhere to the guiding principles laid out in the province's 2009 proposal for enhanced management: "Black bears have an intrinsic value within natural ecosystem and positive socio-economic value when managed by sustainable use principles" (Framework, 2009). Regardless of the economic potential that they possess, black bears need to be managed in perpetuity so that they remain an integral part of Ontario's rich natural heritage.

As outlined in the Northern Policy Institute report "Does the Spring Bear Hunt Make 'Cents'?", the implementation of a spring bear hunt with a non-resident component on a trial basis would generate millions of dollars annually for the province and would be a boon to many communities in northern Ontario where there is a strong outfitting industry.

History has demonstrated that non-resident bear hunting, primarily individuals from the United States, has been big business for outfitters and guides in Northern Ontario, particularly during the spring season (1937-1998). In the wake of the moratorium in 1999, resident and non-resident hunters have participated in extended fall seasons. The most recent data from the Ministry has placed the number of resident and non-resident hunters in 2012 at 16,378 and 4,843 respectively. Based on the cost of licenses for the 2012 season, this amounts to an estimated \$1,825,693 in license sales alone. From 1999 to 2012, resident hunters spent \$6.5 million and non-resident hunters spent \$16.4 million on fall bear hunting licenses. With just a cursory look at licensing sales, it is clear that non-residents are still injecting the most money into the province when it comes to bear hunting.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

NOACC calls on the Government of Ontario to immediately implement a spring bear hunt with a non-resident component for a multi-year trial period as it represents a significant economic opportunity for communities in Northern Ontario.

## **POSITIONING FEDNOR TO BETTER SERVE NORTHERN ONTARIO**

### **Issue**

FedNor operates as a program within Industry Canada with minimal operational discretion and autonomy.

### **Background**

Governance of economic development in Northern Ontario needs to become more strategic, collaborative, and transformative in order to improve the region's ability to adapt to the constantly changing currents of a knowledge-driven and globalized economy in the twenty-first century. Key to this governance innovation is the mandate, structure, and approach to program implementation of the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario (FedNor), created, along with other regional development agencies (RDAs), by the federal government in 1987. Although FedNor is often referred to as an "agency," in fact it is not technically an agency in the strict legal and institutional sense of the term, but merely a program delivery unit within Industry Canada. In that sense, FedNor differs from other RDAs in lacking effective financial and policy discretion. As the primary delivery unit of the federal government's economic development initiatives in Northern Ontario, FedNor brings a unique organizational resource to the region by virtue of its external network with a range of federal departments. But FedNor needs to become less tied to Industry Canada (and Ottawa in general) and more locally embedded and responsive to initiatives of the local private sector and community groups.

Increased collaboration between FedNor, the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, and the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund, as well as an adaptation of the goals and priorities set out in the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, would reduce fragmentation and encourage coordination of economic development activities and programs between Federal and Provincial governments.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

NOACC calls on the Federal Government to:

1. Structure FedNor to allow for greater discretion and autonomy from Industry Canada;
2. Adopt formally the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario as FedNor's policy framework for the region; and,
3. Institutionalize a collaborative approach to program delivery through FedNor by developing comprehensive five year formal partnership agreements with the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation for larger investments that support emerging priorities targeted in the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario.

Source: FedNor: It's just got to be Free, Northern Policy Institute

<http://www.northernpolicy.ca/upload/documents/publications/research-reports/paper-fednor-its-just-got-to-be-free.pdf>

## **AVIATION FUEL TAX**

### **Issue**

The 2014 Ontario Budget announced an increase to Ontario's aviation fuel tax by 1 cent per year for 4 years, commencing in 2014. This tax increase will further reduce Canada's already uncompetitive travel and tourism industry and is an additional burden to Northern Ontario's First Nations fly-in communities.

### **Background**

High fees and taxes on the Canadian aviation industry represent significant challenges for Canada businesses, governments and citizens. The Canadian Chamber of Commerce has listed "uncompetitive travel and tourism strategies" as one of the Top 10 Barriers to Competitiveness for the last two years. We are very concerned that the increase of Ontario's aviation fuel tax by 1 cent per year for the next 4 years will further reduce our already uncompetitive travel and tourism industries and increase costs and fees to Ontario businesses that use these services.

It is especially concerning here in the North, where many First Nation communities are only reachable by air for a large portion of the year. These additional taxes will be passed on to the consumer through higher airfares – increasing the cost of transportation for all goods and passengers, and further negatively impacting the cost of living for our First Nations people.

Small regional airlines such as Wasaya and Bearskin Airlines are already struggling financially due to limited passenger volumes and rising operating costs. Bearskin Airlines has recently undertaken a restructuring that has resulted in a large number of layoffs. This punitive tax will certainly lead to higher airfares, resulting to less demand.

Many of our region's smaller communities depend on tourism revenues generated from US hunters and fishermen. There is already a large price difference between US and Canadian aviation fuel sources. An increase aviation fuel taxes will only aggravate this situation and reduce the competitiveness of Ontario fishing and hunting excursions for the US customer.

It is of particular concern that some members of the Ontario government have suggested that the increase in aviation fuel tax would be used to fund transit projects in Southern Ontario. It is simply wrong that Ontario's remote fly-in communities should be paying for transit infrastructure in the Greater Toronto Area or that one mode of transportation would be used to subsidize another.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

NOACC calls on the Ontario Government to exempt Northern Ontario aviation fuel from the annual one cent increase in aviation fuel taxes that was implemented in 2014.



## **INTERCITY BUS SERVICE IN NORTHERN ONTARIO**

### **Issue**

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation is examining how people travel between communities by intercity bus, and this review may result in changes to the regulations that govern the operation of intercity bus services across the province, and in particular in Northern Ontario.

### **Background**

Even though intercity bus service is an essential service for many residents of Northwestern Ontario, successive governments have allowed the service to be reduced and in some areas eliminated as the regulations moved away from a concept of cross subsidization whereby operators on a particular route used the profits from the more lucrative routes to subsidize the service to the more remote parts of the province.

Only Minaki, Sioux Lookout, Collins and Armstrong have scheduled rail passenger service and only Fort Frances, Kenora, Dryden, Sioux Lookout, Nakina and Thunder Bay have scheduled air passenger service (other than the remote First Nation communities). Residents without a personal vehicle must rely on family, friends or in many cases non-urgent transportation by Emergency Medical Service paramedics for transportation to major centres particularly for health reasons as intercity bus service is either inadequate or non-existent.

The Ministry of Transportation has been conducting an analysis of the multi-modal transportation needs of northern Ontario for the past three years and is approximately one year away from completing the study and recommending a plan for northern Ontario.

The Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association has requested that the Ontario government set aside future infrastructure funds for the implementation of the Multimodal Transportation Study. It would be prudent for the northern Ontario portion of the current study of intercity bus service to be suspended and referred to the Multimodal Transportation Study for incorporation into the long term plan.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That NOACC call on the Ministry of Transportation to refer all matters related to any reform of the intercity bus transportation regulations applicable to Northern Ontario to the Northern Ontario Multimodal Transportation Study and further that:

The Ministry of Transportation Multimodal Transportation Study pay particular attention to the manner in which all modes of passenger transportation can be enhanced throughout Northwestern Ontario.