

Summary - Northern Labour Market Committee (NLMC) meeting

November 28, 2007 in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan

Mandate

Identify and assess emerging labour market and economic development issues in northern Saskatchewan and recommend or initiate actions that will enable residents to benefit from training, employment, and economic activities in their region.

Chaired jointly in 2007-2008 by

1. Northern Affairs Branch, Ministry of First Nations and Métis Relations, for the provincial government;
2. Athabasca Economic Development and Training Corporation representing Aboriginal training and economic development agencies; and
3. Northlands College, Western Region, representing training agencies/industry.

Attended by

Decision-makers in training, planning, and economic development including representatives from federal and provincial governments, school divisions, training institutions, training funders, economic development agencies, local and Aboriginal authorities, and private industry.

Agenda

1. Education, Training, and Employment Initiatives

- The Northern Apprenticeship Committee (NAC) made a proposal for funding under the federal Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partners (ASEP) Program. The Proposal is a multi-party, multi-year, multi-million dollar training and employment initiative leading to employment for Aboriginal people in the mining, oil and gas sectors. The proposal includes a training plan with 1400 seats over 4 years. Twenty-two companies have made commitments to employ about 700 clients under this program. The federal government is reviewing 55 proposals from across Canada and this one is a strong contender. If approved, the challenge would be communicating the opportunities and recruiting enough clients to fill the training seats and employment positions.
- The Northern Industrial Career Centre (NICC) assists people to find jobs by offering services to employers and to job seekers such as career planning, resume writing, and employment referrals. It is modeled on and managed by Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies Construction Careers project. NICC serves the northern region through the career centre in La Ronge, job coaches who travel to other communities, and school visits. It also serves distant clients via a live chat room on Keewatin Career Development Corp. (KCDC) website and toll free phone lines. The centre provides Construction Safety Training System - the first step to making sure that participants are 'work ready'. For employers, the centre (via KCDC) connects employers with Saskatchewan Construction Association Planroom website for tendering opportunities.
- NorthSask Special Needs, Northlands College, and other agencies are facilitating a Supported Employment project, a range of services intended to help people with employment barriers to get and keep real, paid jobs with employers. They developed a one-month training program to train job developers and job coaches with the skills to develop funding

proposals as well as support the clients in jobs in their communities. The program will start January 7, 2008, at Northlands College. Supported Employment projects employ job developers who work with employers to fill positions with people with disabilities and job coaches who mentor the worker until the job is learned. In another project, northern service agencies for people with disabilities are considering the concept of co-locating all the service providers in a joint facility in the future.

2. Subcommittees' Training and Employment Work Plans

- The Administration Subcommittee sets the working direction of the NLMC. Membership consists of all the chairpersons of the subcommittees. The Subcommittee revised the operating terms to ensure continuity of the 3-way NLMC chairpersonship yet allow some flexibility in recruiting chairs and extension of terms until new co-chairs are selected.
- The Northern Apprenticeship Committee's (NAC) role is to indenture people to apprenticeship trades, support them financially as they proceed through their training, and link them to employment as a way to help them complete their journey person qualifications. NAC has indentured 22 new apprentices since July. Since January, 9 clients achieved journey person status. Since NAC was established in 1993, the average number of people attaining journey person status in the north has increased from 4 to about 13 each year. In projects, NAC completed the Ile a la Crosse Wage Subsidy with Graham Construction on the school/hospital construction project. Twelve received training and 6 received a wage subsidy with 4 continuing in their employment with Graham. Wage Subsidy Phase II runs until January 2008 with 11 people in new apprenticeship positions.
- The Oil Sands Subcommittee was formed in 2000 with a mandate of enabling northern residents to take advantage of employment opportunities in the oil sands sector. The subcommittee administered the activities of the Northern Neighbours/Bridges to Employment followed by Job Horizons project. Those employment referral projects resulted in about 500 residents of the northwest area getting employment in the Fort McMurray area. With the end of the Job Horizons project last spring, a proposal was submitted to a number of funding partners under Northern Development Agreement for a new phase of the project. This new phase would see some changes, starting with a revamped subcommittee to administer the project, increased staffing levels, change in staff's employer, changes to the job referral area to include Saskatchewan oil and gas areas, increased targets for the number of employment referrals, and expansion of the client preference area to encompass all of northern Saskatchewan.
- The province provided funding for 2007-2008 for the Forestry Training Plan, which is administered by the Forestry Training Subcommittee. Although activity in the forest sector is slow, the Subcommittee approved funding for training proposals for trades training at Meadow Lake, sawmill training at Canoe Lake, and forestry training with Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. Regarding the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Domtar, the Government of Saskatchewan News Release of November 30 states that it has notified Domtar that it wants to continue discussions about the reopening of Domtar's mills in northern Saskatchewan, but it will not proceed with the MOU, grants, or financing.
- The Health Sector Training Committee was formed to address today's skill shortages and employment opportunities in the health sector in northern Saskatchewan. Since the last NLMC meeting, the subcommittee procured \$70,000 from federal and provincial

governments to hire a consultant to undertake a project this winter as the initial phase in the development of a multi-party training agreement. The first phase involves collection of health sector human resource data, analysis of workforce demographics, identification of training and education gaps, and recommendations on the development of a business plan for a long-term training strategy. The consultant's report is due at the end of March. The subcommittee hopes to have funds in place to begin training in 2009-2010.

- In the Traditional Economies sector, the Trappers Association assessed the need for training in humane trapping methods as required by the European Union. The Association, with 10 certified humane trapping instructors, requires about \$150,000 to undertake 30 to 60 day training programs including training allowances. The association will submit a proposal to Northlands College. Membership from Saskatchewan Cooperative Fisheries Ltd. (SCFL) continues their plans for a fish processing plant in Prince Albert. The plant requires an export license in order to increase the plant's feasibility by marketing fish outside the province themselves rather than selling through Freshwater Fish Marketing Corp. (FFMC). SCFL studies show that fishers could get more for their product by marketing in-demand fresh product to the northwest American continent whereas FFMC only deals with frozen products. SCFL applied for the license with Department of Fisheries and Oceans in August and is awaiting a decision. SCFL is requesting \$200,000 to do a training plan focusing on fishers under age 30.
- This spring, New North started the two-year Northern Youth Leadership program led by two youth coordinators. Under the program, youth town councils are formed to help youth reduce involvement in crime, get youth participating in their communities, and help them gain leadership skills and self-esteem. The coordinators hosted the first Annual Youth Town Council (YTC) Leadership Conference in La Ronge in October. Approximately 120 people participated in the conference which included guest speakers, community project identification, and entertainment. Coordinators wrote a report on the conference that identified a number of barriers and solutions. The Sandy Bay YTC reported that they are currently putting together a 2008 Sandy Bay calendar that highlights community members. With the proceeds from calendar sales, the youth will be conducting a local cemetery clean-up project this spring. Cumberland House YTC reported that they are doing school canteens and dances to raise funds towards a goal of purchasing gym equipment and opening a fitness centre and an arcade through their school.
- The goal of the Multi-Party Training Plan (MPTP), administered by the Mineral Sector Steering Committee, is to increase the number of northern Saskatchewan residents working at the mines and increase their skill levels. MPTP Phase 3 is in the final year of the 5-year agreement and the Committee is gearing up to negotiate a fourth phase. In Phase 3 (2003-2008), there have been 1506 enrolments in training. Partners have shared in-kind and expenditures of \$15.7M for programs, training allowances and wages, scholarships and awards, jobs for summer students, and other education and business promotion initiatives. 79% of enrolments have been students of Aboriginal heritage. Programs planned for 2007-8 include year 2 of mine technologist, a new intake into radiation technician, pre-employment welding, level 1 cooking, diamond drill helper, and 1A truck driver. MPTP awarded a scholarship to a student from La Ronge/Beauval.
- The Career Services Subcommittee/KCDC has several projects planned for 2007-8. Breaking Barriers is a series of video conferences that allow students to connect live by video conferencing to an array of resource people. These include interviews with industry

representatives about careers and with role models in sports, professions, and entertainment industries. The modules also benefit industry sponsors who are able to promote careers with their corporations. About 40 sessions have been held for about 3,000 students. In another project, KCDC is planning to enhance communication among career offices in the north by installation of video conferencing capabilities in all career-counseling offices. The Subcommittee is also planning a meeting of northern career counselors in January for a discussion of service provision.

3. Economic Development

- The Boreal Regional Development Corporation should be operational by March 2008 to replace the defunct Northwest Development Council. The new corporation has a 9-member board representing communities in the northwest area. The corporation has a strategic plan in place with identified initiatives and it is working on its first year operational plan. The corporation could have a manager hired by spring. The next step is to work with agencies to establish funding.
- The Municipal Capacity Development Program is a joint venture with the province, Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, and Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities. Its role is to encourage and assist municipalities in developing long-term regional capacity building. Benefits of regional planning include more accessible and cost efficient services and ability to attract economic opportunities. There are three development officers in the province who assist in inter-municipal project development, conduct area-wide regional workshops on capacity development, and provide planning material and links to grants.

4. Industrial Sectors' Initiatives

- Cameco Corporation issued a press release November 28 stating that underground activities at the Eagle Point mine at Rabbit Lake operation have been temporarily reduced as a precautionary measure. The mine experienced an increase of water flow at the 90-metre level at the same time as the capacity of the surface water-handling system was reduced due to an equipment upgrade. Cameco estimates increased water inflow at 40 to 50 cubic metres an hour. The mine's designated water storage capacity, primarily in mined out areas underground, is sufficient to hold more than three months of the additional inflow. The planned upgrades to the surface water-handling system are expected to be complete in about one week at which time the mine will return to normal operations. The rock around the area is stable and Cameco's geotechnical engineers have found no evidence of weakness. In education promotion initiatives, Cameco has provided 10 tours of the mines this year, provided work placements for students in postsecondary training, and hired 37 summer students. Cameco anticipates \$3-\$3.5 billion of expansion in the mining industry in the north in the next 5-10 years, including development of Cigar Lake, Key Lake revitalization, and proposed development of the Millennium Mine, which is nearing the end of the feasibility stage. The company, therefore, must address the demand for skilled workers for new projects as well as replacing employees who are retiring and it plans to work with schools, stakeholders, and contractors. Of Cameco's site employees, 53% are Residents of Saskatchewan's North and 45% are of Aboriginal heritage. Of contractors' employees, 59% are Residents of Saskatchewan's North and 40% are of Aboriginal heritage.

- **Oilsands Quest**, an entirely Canadian company, has led the advancement of the oil sands industry in Saskatchewan in the last 2 years. The company holds leases to explore over 700,000 acres in northern Alberta and Saskatchewan. Based on drilling to date, the company has found three main deposits. The company is preparing to enter stage 3 of its first project, Axe Lake, located in an ancient river valley north of La Loche. This winter's work plan in Saskatchewan includes infill drilling in Axe Lake area (up to 70 holes), exploration drilling (up to 27 holes), 60 km of 2-D seismic, and 1300 km of 3-D seismic. In its Alberta leases, it will do 50 km of 2-D seismic, exploration drilling (up to 30 holes), and 500 km of 3-D seismic. The company sees the following timeline for Axe Lake Development. Phase 1: Exploration and Resource Delineation – ongoing; Phase 2: Reservoir Field Test in first half of 2008; Phase 3: Infrastructure Development (roads, power, and pipelines) from mid-2008 to end of 2009. In Phase 4, a Field Pilot production program would be undertaken in 2008 and 2009. Based on results of the Field Pilot Phase, the Commercial Development phase could potentially start up at the beginning of 2012 (subject to regulatory approval, corporate sanctioning, and financing). The company is committed to hire and contract locally where feasible. To encourage local business development, Oilsands Quest breaks up work into smaller contracts whenever possible. The company has spent about \$70M to date, undertaking 20,000 km of electronic surveys, 174 drill holes, setting up a main camp, 2 small camps, a shop, and a temporary airstrip, and building 326 km of roads and trails. Since April 2007, 192 contractors have been employed of whom 85 are from the local northwest area, taking home northern wages of \$1.3M. In the short time it has been in operation, goods and services were purchased from 34 local businesses. They have opened a business office in La Loche with two local employees as business coordinators who will issue their first newsletter this month advertising company contracts and sharing project information. The company also hosts community awareness meetings. To promote oil sector careers to youth, the company established a scholarship program for the region, provides presentations and tours for school students, and is planning to provide some employment for summer students.

5. **Discussion items**

- Northern Lights School Division (NLSD) and some other agencies see the need for a second Education Forum and they came to the meeting share their ideas. (Note: The first Education Forum in June 2001 had over 100 participants. The Education and Training Subcommittee members took on the task of addressing issues raised at the Northern Labor Market Committee by organizing the forum.) NLSD undertook a variety of actions in response to the recommendations made at the first Education Forum but they see a need to get more local input on ways to link students with their goals. Some of the actions NLSD implemented include a guidance program with guidance counselors and social workers in schools. Under this program, counselors develop a student profile with every student from grade 9 onward to identify the curriculum needed to achieve their career/job goals. To ensure students don't fall behind in literacy and numeracy skills, the school division created teacher partnerships to enable teachers in different subject areas to work together to monitor and assist students. During the next year, the division will work with the new community school councils to ensure these parent/youth councils have strong participation in the schools. As well, in the last 2 years, NLSD has been working with Justice Department to reintegrate students back into the school after incarceration. This year, the Division started tracing students who left school early and reconnecting them to school or to classes over the internet

6. Member Agencies and Interested Parties

AGENCY	Community	AGENCY	Community
ABORIGINAL SKILLED WORKERS ASSOCIATION	SPRUCE HOME SK	MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION	PRINCE ALBERT SK
AREVA RESOURCES CANADA INC.	LA RONGE SK		
ATHABASCA ECONOMIC DEV. & TRAINING CORP.	WOLLASTON LAKE SK	MINISTRY OF SOCIAL SERVICES	LA RONGE, MEADOW LAKE, PRINCE ALBERT
ATHABASCA HEALTH AUTHORITY	BLACK LAKE SK	NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA, CAN. FOREST SERV	PRINCE ALBERT SK
AURORA COMMUNICATIONS	AIR RONGE SK		
BEAVER RIVER COMMUNITY FUTURES CORPORATION	BUFFALO NARROWS SK	NEW NORTH - SANC SERVICES INC.	LA RONGE SK
BOREAL REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CORP.	LA RONGE SK	NORTEP/NORPAC	LA RONGE SK
BUFFALO NARROWS ECONOMIC DEVEL CORP	BUFFALO NARROWS SK	NORTHEAST DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION	CHRISTOPHER LAKE SK
BUFFALO NARROWS, VILLAGE/NEW NORTH CHAIR	BUFFALO NARROWS SK	NORTHERN APPRENTICESHIP COMMITTEE NAC	LA RONGE SK
		NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT BOARD CORP.	AIR RONGE SK
CAMECO CORPORATION	LA RONGE SK, SASKATOON	NORTHERN HEALTH STRATEGY	PRINCE ALBERT SK
CENTRAL CREE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP.	WEYAKWIN SK	NORTHERN HUMAN SERVICES PARTNERSHIP NHSP	LA RONGE SK
CLAUDE RESOURCES INC.	SASKATOON SK	NORTHERN LIGHTS SCHOOL DIVISION	LA RONGE SK
CREIGHTON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CORP.	CREIGHTON SK	NORTHERN MINES MONITORING SECRETARIAT	LA RONGE SK
CREIGHTON SCHOOL DIVISION #111	CREIGHTON SK	NORTHERN RESOURCE TRUCKING	SASKATOON SK
CROWN INVESTMENTS CORPORATION OF SASK.	SASKATOON SK	NORTHERN SASK TOURISM INC.	LA RONGE SK
DUMONT TECHNICAL INSTITUTE	SASKATOON SK		LA RONGE, BUFFALO NARROWS, CREIGHTON
FIRST NATIONS UNIVERSITY OF CANADA	PRINCE ALBERT SK	NORTHLANDS COLLEGE	
		OIL SANDS SUBCOMMITTEE	LA LOCHE SK
GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE TRAINING & EMPLOY	LA RONGE, PRINCE ALBERT, SASKATOON	OILSANDS QUEST INC.	ALBERTA
GARY TINKER FEDERATION FOR THE DISABLED	LA RONGE SK	PETER BALLANTYNE CREE NATION	PRINCE ALBERT SK
GOLDEN BAND RESOURCES INC.	SASKATOON SK	PRINCE ALBERT GRAND COUNCIL	PRINCE ALBERT SK
ILE A LA CROSSE SCHOOL DIVISION	ILE A LA CROSSE SK	SAKITAWAK DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION	ILE A LA CROSSE SK
INDIAN AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS CANADA	REGINA SK	SASK. APPRENTICESHIP & TRADE COMMISSION	LA RONGE, PRINCE ALBERT, YORKTON
JIM BRADY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION	LA RONGE SK	SASK. BUILDING/CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL	REGINA SK
KEEWATIN CAREER DEVELOPMENT CORP.	AIR RONGE SK		LA RONGE, PRINCE ALBERT, SASKATOON
KEEWATIN YATHE HEALTH DISTRICT	BUFFALO NARROWS SK	SASK. INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGIES	
KITSAKI MANAGEMENT LIMITED PARTNERSHIP	LA RONGE SK	SASKATCHEWAN COMMERCIAL FISHERIES LTD.	LA RONGE SK
LA RONGE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	LA RONGE SK	SASKATCHEWAN CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION	REGINA SK
LAC LA RONGE INDIAN BAND, EDUCATION BRANCH	LA RONGE SK	SASKATCHEWAN FOREST CENTRE	PRINCE ALBERT SK
MAMAWETAN CHURCHILL RIVER HEALTH DISTRICT	LA RONGE SK	SASKATCHEWAN LABOUR MARKET COMMISSION	REGINA SK
MEADOW LAKE MECHANICAL PULP INC.	MEADOW LAKE SK	SASKATCHEWAN MINING ASSOCIATION	REGINA SK
MEADOW LAKE OSB LIMITED PARTNERSHIP	MEADOW LAKE SK	SASKPOWER CORPORATION	PRINCE ALBERT, REGINA
MEADOW LAKE TRIBAL COUNCIL	MEADOW LAKE SK	SASKTEL, ABORIGINAL UNIT	SASKATOON SK
MINISTRY ADVANCED ED, EMPLOYMENT & LABOUR	LA RONGE, NORTH BATTLEFORD, REGINA, PRINCE ALBERT	SERVICE CANADA	LA RONGE, PRINCE ALBERT, SASKATOON
		SIAS, KELSEY CAMPUS	SASKATOON SK
MINISTRY FIRST NATIONS AND METIS RELATIONS	LA RONGE, BUFFALO NARROWS, REGINA	SIAS, PALLISER CAMPUS	MOOSE JAW SK
		SIAS, WOODLAND CAMPUS	PRINCE ALBERT SK
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE	LA RONGE SK	SKILLS CANADA SASKATCHEWAN	SASKATOON SK
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION	LA RONGE SK	TOURISM SASKATCHEWAN	REGINA SK
MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND RESOURCES	REGINA SK	WESTERN ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION CANADA	SASKATOON SK
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT	REGINA SK	WOODLAND AND WATERWAYS REGIONAL DEV. CORP.	LA RONGE SK
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT- FOREST SERVICES	PRINCE ALBERT SK		AIR RONGE SK
MINISTRY OF HEALTH	LA RONGE SK	WOODLAND CREE ENTERPRISES INC.	
MINISTRY OF HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE	LA RONGE SK	ZELENSKY BROTHERS SAWMILL	LA RONGE SK