

**Northern Alberta
Development Council**

**Annual Report
2005-2006**

2005-2006 Annual Report

Message from the Chair

On behalf of the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC), I am very pleased to present our Annual Report for 2005-2006 highlighting Council's achievements that contribute to the development of the North.

Over the past year, communication with Northern Albertans remained a priority for the Council. In addition to key stakeholder meetings, leaders' roundtables, and seminars, at the Premier's request the NADC undertook a comprehensive survey of local and northern priorities. The *NADC Communiqué* was introduced to share key discussions, directions and events following Council meetings. Northern stakeholders will also have the opportunity to provide input on strategic directions to advance development in the North at the triennial Challenge North conference scheduled for April 5-7, 2006.

The NADC discussed northern opportunities and addressed common challenges through partnerships with northern jurisdictions, communities, business and industry, such as the Northern Development Ministers' Forum and as secretariat for the Alberta-Northwest Territories Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation and Development.

The Northwest Corridor, northern highways, and containerization were identified as northern transportation infrastructure priorities and received significant attention from Council. Progress was made on other transportation initiatives including the retention of air services at the Edmonton City Centre Airport with the continuation of connections for northern airlines.

Increasing northern skill levels remained an NADC priority with another successful year for the NADC Bursary Programs and Northern *LINKS*, a program to encourage students to complete high school and pursue post-secondary education.

The Northern Alberta Development Council remains firmly committed to advancing northern development. Together, with our partners, we will continue to work toward a strong, progressive and prosperous North.

Ray Danyluk, Chair
MLA Lac La Biche-St. Paul

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Message from the Executive Director

The year 2005-2006 has been an exciting one for the Northern Alberta Development Council. A flurry of activity for industry saw many northern communities scrambling to keep up with the pace. With pressures on housing, labour and health services, NADC staff and council were kept busy looking at issues and opportunities created by this rapid development.

Much of the work built on the framework set in place following the NADC Challenge North Conference in High Level. The conference *Today's Promise, Tomorrow's Reality*, saw more than 250 participants attend from across the north. Working groups were formed and strategies on dealing with pressures in northern development were identified.

In addition to the above pressures, transportation issues, land use issues and environmental concerns were all priorities for NADC. Some of these issues were tackled through opportunity seminars, others through the continued work of NADC's Northern Links project and the NADC bursary.

More than 120 return service bursaries were sponsored by NADC, many in conjunction with corporate sponsors. The Northern Links program partnered with school districts to help ensure students completed school and even went on to post-secondary.

With rapid changes happening in the north you can expect NADC to keep up with the pace. We continue to monitor our programs, initiatives and partnerships to ensure our commitment to the north and the province remain strong and progressive.

Dan Dibbelt

NORTHERN ALBERTA DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2005-2006

NORTHERN ALBERTA DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW

The Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) is a council of and for northerners. The NADC works in partnership with northern communities, industry, other jurisdictions and ministries to develop and implement strategies and initiatives to advance the development of northern Alberta. In 2005-2006, the Council was a reporting entity of the Ministry of Alberta Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development.

The NADC consists of nine public members and one elected Member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta (MLA). Council membership reflects the geographic, cultural and vocational diversity of northern communities. In 2005-2006, the Council was chaired by Ray Danyluk, MLA for Lac La Biche - St. Paul. The public members were:

Kim Courtoreille, Wabasca
Helen Henderson, High Prairie
Mike Mihaly, High Level
Gary Pollock, Swan Hills
Harvey Yoder, Lac La Biche

Carmen Ewing, Girouxville
Wendell MacEachern, Fort McMurray
Michael Ouellette, Grande Prairie
Maurice Rivard, Bonnyville

Mission

The mission of the NADC is to advance northern development through regional initiatives in partnership with the private sector, community-based organizations and other government agencies.

Core Business

The mandate of the NADC, as set out in the Northern Alberta Development Council Act, is to "investigate, monitor, evaluate, plan and promote practical measures to foster and advance general development in northern Alberta." The NADC supports the government's commitment to prosperity by facilitating the development of a thriving and progressive northern economy.

The NADC Region

The Northern Alberta Development Council region represents 60% of Alberta's landmass and only 9% of the Province's total population. The region has 100% of the province's mineable oil sands development, 21% of provincial crop production, 10% of provincial livestock production and 75% of the forestry portion of Alberta's Gross Domestic Product. The region contributed more than \$5.8 billion to Alberta Government revenues in 2004-05, almost 20% of the \$29.3 billion in total revenues of the Alberta Government. In the same period, 39% of Alberta Government revenues from non-renewable resource revenues were generated in the North. In 2005, northern exports of \$32 billion accounted for 38% of Alberta's total international exports.

Although the northern economy is booming, the region faces significant challenges for continued and sustainable growth including: inadequate transportation infrastructure; a shortage of skilled workers; a relatively small and sparse population; a lack of diversification and value-added activities; and growth pressures associated with resource development. Accordingly regional priorities include: improving access to markets through better transportation networks; raising skill levels so northerners can take advantage of employment opportunities; adding value to and diversifying northern products; continued exploration of additional resource development opportunities; and raising awareness of what makes the north unique.

BUSINESS PLAN GOAL, STRATEGIES AND MEASURES

GOAL: Provide a strategic leadership and coordination role in identifying and addressing Northern issues.

The Northern Alberta Development Council partners with northern communities, organizations, businesses, industry and other jurisdictions to coordinate, plan for and support the sustainable development of northern Alberta. Initiatives include economic diversification, transportation, infrastructure, tourism development, and improving skills among northern Albertans.

Key Strategies

- Engage northern and Aboriginal communities, businesses, industry and other stakeholders, to identify strategic northern socio-economic priorities, opportunities and challenges.
- Partner with other jurisdictions, other ministries, northern and Aboriginal communities, business and industry, to promote northern opportunities and address challenges.
- Promote awareness of the importance of northern development to the well-being of Alberta.
- In partnership with northern communities, business, industry, learning providers and students, support initiatives to increase northern skill levels.

Performance measures

- Partner satisfaction with Northern Alberta Development Council's contribution in advancing northern interests. The target is an average rating of 8 out of 10 or 80%.
- Northern Alberta Development Council Bursary recipients' return service rate. Target return service rate is 75%.

RESULTS ANALYSIS

ENGAGEMENT AND AWARENESS

Communication continues to be a key priority for the Northern Alberta Development Council in order to listen to Northerners and engage them in discussions about regional priorities, opportunities and challenges.

Leaders' Roundtables

The NADC schedules regular Council and Leaders' Roundtable meetings with northern community and business leaders to provide an opportunity for northern stakeholders to present issues and concerns to Council and identify specific opportunities and/or barriers to development. In 2005-2006, meetings were held in Grande Cache, Swan Hills, Athabasca and Calgary.

Meetings with Key Northern Stakeholders

The NADC meets with northwestern Mayors and Reeves on an ongoing basis to discuss significant issues common to northern municipalities. Presentations on policing, the status of the forest industry, northern tourism opportunities, electric power generation and implications of World Trade Organization discussions were made to the municipal representatives. The NADC also met with the Highway 88 Taskforce to discuss implications of potential development in the Northwest Territories on Northwestern Alberta, as well as made a presentation on opportunities in Northern Alberta to representatives of Canada's Diplomatic Corps.

Challenge North

The NADC worked closely with the Town of High Level to organize the Challenge North 2006 Conference: Today's Promise, Tomorrow's Reality, scheduled for April 5-7, 2006. The NADC hosts a major conference every three years to get input from northern stakeholders on strategic directions to advance development in the north. This is the first time the NADC will hold its major conference in a small community. Speakers, panels, displays and even a component of the entertainment are based on the conference theme of *Vibrant Communities and Effective Partnerships*. Flight arrangements have been made to ensure community, organization and business representatives from across the north will be able to participate in the Conference and provide input to the NADC.

Chair's Northwest tour

Ray Danyluk, MLA and NADC Chair, met with municipalities, individuals, industry, and health, education and recreational authorities and boards, during an in-depth tour of northwest Alberta. Regional priorities and challenges in transportation, health, labour, training, economic development and other topics were discussed.

Premier's Survey on Priorities

At the request of the Premier, the NADC surveyed and compiled information on local and northern priorities as identified by the following northern stakeholders: cities, towns, municipal districts, First Nations, Métis Settlements, school divisions, regional health authorities, and northern provincial constituencies. The results were shared with and reviewed by the Premier, Ministers and Northern MLAs.

Opportunities Seminars

The NADC sponsors two Northern Opportunities Seminars each year. Open to the public, the seminars are targeted at municipal and Aboriginal leaders, industry, businesses and community members who contribute to the growth of the region. Opportunities Seminars were held in Cold Lake and Fairview in 2005-2006. More than 50 people attended the Cold Lake Seminar where speakers provided participants with information regarding employment opportunities in the oil and gas sector in the region, opportunities in value-added agriculture and agro-forestry, and opportunities in the aerospace industry for non-military personnel. The Fairview Opportunities

Seminar focussed on diversifying and adding-value to the local economy by highlighting business development opportunities in ag-tourism and agro-forestry.

Opportunity North

The Opportunity North website, CD-ROM, business cards and brochures continue to be a valuable tool for northern employers and organizations in recruitment and promotional activities. Website hits nearly doubled to 286,437 in the 2005-2006 fiscal year.

NADC Communiqué

The NADC produced and distributed its first *NADC Communiqué*, a one-page report outlining key discussions, directions and events of the NADC following regular council meetings. The report was distributed in September 2005, November 2005, and February 2006 to northern businesses, industries, municipal governments, Aboriginal organizations, and community groups, as well as government departments and all MLAs. It is also available on the NADC website. The *NADC Communiqué* replaces the quarterly newsletter, *Northern Developments*, and the *Northern MLA Update*, which were last published in June 2005.

NADC Website

The Northern Alberta Development Council updated and enhanced its website on a regular basis. The website contains information related to northern student bursary programs and northern-based statistics, as well as publications, newsletters and news releases. Between April 1, 2005 and March 31, 2006, the NADC website received 238,854 hits.

PARTNERSHIPS

Inter-jurisdictional Initiatives

Alberta-Northwest Territories Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation and Development

Honourable Pearl Calahasen, Minister of Alberta Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, and Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Northwest Territories Minister of Health and Social Services and Minister Responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, are co-chairs of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that promotes cooperation and development between the two jurisdictions. As the secretariat for the MOU, the NADC continued to work with the Northwest Territories on transportation, tourism, skill development, resource development, water issues and research/innovation initiatives as identified in the Memorandum.

The Northern Forum

The Northern Forum is an international consortium consisting of northern regional governments with the mandate to promote cooperation and exchange information on northern socio-economic issues and initiatives. The NADC continued to support the Minister's role as North American Vice-Chair of The Northern Forum. In 2005-2006, the NADC participated in the 7th General Assembly of The Northern Forum held in Harbin, Heilongjiang, Peoples Republic of China in June 2005. Additional meetings were held to discuss the following topics: meat exports to China; Chinese oil demand, supply and investment; and cultural exchanges with Alberta.

The NADC also attended the Northern Tourism Marketing Workshop, an initiative of The Northern Forum, in Seward and Anchorage, Alaska in early 2006. The Workshop drew tourism

stakeholders from both the public and private sectors and provided an opportunity to learn about best practices in sustainable northern tourism. Examples of northern tourism with an emphasis on compatibility with local communities, respect for local cultures, and sustainable economic models, were shared with participants. In addition, there was a presentation on the SMART program, a project working on a label for sustainable tourism in the Arctic.

Northwest Corridor Development Corporation

The Northwest Corridor Development Corporation made substantial progress increasing the awareness and use of the Northwest Corridor. Work related to reopening of the rail line between Dawson Creek, British Columbia and Hythe, Alberta is well underway. The Port of Prince Rupert and the governments of Canada and British Columbia have taken significant steps toward establishing a container site at the Port. In addition, efforts promoting the construction of a highway connection between Rainbow Lake, Alberta and Fort Nelson, British Columbia continue. The NADC is an active member of the Corporation.

Northern Development Ministers' Forum

The NADC acts as the secretariat for Alberta's participation in the Northern Development Ministers' Forum. Forum membership is composed of seven provinces, the three territories and the Federal Government. The NADC led priority projects to raise awareness of Canada's North and northern transportation infrastructure issues among decision-makers. The NADC also participated as members of the *Knowledge North* and *Website Development* priority project working groups, and prepared submissions on northern innovation, maximizing the benefits of major projects, and best practices in northern education, training and employment.

Saskatchewan Northern Affairs

The NADC continues to explore areas of potential cooperation with Saskatchewan Northern Affairs. The Council organized and participated in meetings between Buffalo Narrows Economic Development Corporation, Saskatchewan Northern Affairs and Saskatchewan Education with Fort McMurray Regional Community Development Corporation and representatives of the oil sands developers in Fort McMurray. The development of the La Loche road will bring benefits to both provinces from increased tourism, trade, and employment opportunities.

Working with Northern Organizations

Northeast Natural Resource Education Society

The Northern Alberta Development Council assisted in establishing the Northeast Natural Resource Education Society. The Society was created to provide a legacy through education and increased public awareness of the Boreal Forest following the national designation of "Gateway to the Boreal" bestowed on the Town of Lac La Biche and Lakeland County in 2005. The NADC provides organizational, administrative and technical support to the organization.

Cold Lake Coalition for the Recruitment and Retention of Professionals

The NADC supported the development of the Cold Lake Coalition for the Recruitment and Retention of Professionals. Through the Coalition, a collaborative governance structure has been formed for the recruitment of physicians between the City of Cold Lake, Municipal District of Bonnyville, Cold Lake & District Chamber of Commerce, Aspen Regional Health Authority, 4 Wing Air Force Base, Cold Lake First Nations, Elizabeth Métis Settlement, industry and business representatives. As part of the Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP), the Coalition wants to develop an implementation model for the recruitment of physicians and other

professionals to the Cold Lake area. The NADC provides technical support and acts as a liaison with other northern municipalities.

Regional Economic Development Alliances

The NADC continued to work with regional economic development alliances to advance northern resource development, diversification, and value-added activities.

Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative

The Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative (AWPI) is a partnership initiative that is committed to increasing the participation of Aboriginal peoples in the labour market. Both the City of Grande Prairie and Grande Prairie Regional College are in the process of implementing AWPI partnerships. As a member of the AWPI steering committees, the NADC provides information and input into the planning and implementation these initiatives.

Northeast/Northwest Interdepartmental Working Groups

The NADC provides technical support and liaison to these working groups. The Council participated in Employment, Education and Training meetings in St. Paul, with representatives from Blue Quills First Nations College, Alberta Human Resources and Employment, Family and Community Services, and the St. Paul Abilities Network. The mandate of the group is to look at issues and challenges faced in the region, to eliminate overlaps, to ensure that all residents in the St. Paul region, including Saddle Lake, and Good Fish/White Fish Lake First Nations, have access to education and employment.

Regional Issues Working Group

NADC representatives participated in meetings of the Regional Issues Working Group (RIWG) Transportation Committee to increase awareness of transportation infrastructure needs of Fort McMurray.

Grizzly Regional Economic Development Alliance (GROWTH)

The NADC participated on the Grizzly Regional Economic Development Alliance known as GROWTH. GROWTH is made up of eleven partners including, from the NADC region, the Town of Swan Hills, Woodland County and Pembina Hills School Board. GROWTH facilitates regional cooperation through the development and implementation of a five-year strategic plan supporting existing regional economic activities and promoting new investment and tourism opportunities in the area.

Northern Opportunities and Initiatives

Transportation

Road, rail and air services and infrastructure continue to be the most commonly identified priority by northern municipalities and other organizations. Significant progress was made on several transportation initiatives endorsed by the NADC through the Northern Highways Strategy including: completion of a pre-feasibility study on the Fort McMurray to Peace River connector road; approval of the La Loche Road connector; and the paving of Highway 881 from Lac La Biche to Fort McMurray was approved and contracts issued. The NADC promoted Highway 58 development and advocated for additional paving of Highway 88.

The NADC also worked with northern stakeholders to support the establishment of a container site at Grande Prairie, in addition to conducting a study and preparing a report on a public

transportation system for the Town of Peace River. Results generated interest from other communities investigating similar initiatives.

The Council continued to monitor rail and air transportation issues. The Watino Rail Bridge Engineering Study was completed while discussions continued with CN Rail and other stakeholders on the viability of the project. Work is also ongoing with northern stakeholders, including the Northwest Territories, on Hay River-Northern Alberta rail line connection. The NADC lobbied for the retention of air services at the Edmonton City Centre Airport with connections for northern airlines maintained.

Agriculture

The NADC continued to assist the Alberta Natural Health Agriculture Network (ANHAN) in the development of alternative crops by providing industry information and communication assistance, and worked with the Peace agriculture value-added working group and ANHAN which identified several products suitable for northern production. The NADC also assisted the Alberta Beef Team with design and launch of their website.

Forestry

The Northern Alberta Development Council held a panel discussion on forest management issues in Athabasca in November 2005, and as a result of concerns raised by the forest industry, prepared a paper on forest management practices. In addition, the Northern Opportunity Seminar in Fairview was held in light of the closure of the Canfor Mill at Hines Creek and NewPro Mill at Wanham to suggest ways to mitigate the impact of these closures.

Tourism

The NADC is part of the Deh Cho Travel Connection, an inter-jurisdictional tourism marketing group comprised of stakeholders from the Northwest Territories, Northeastern British Columbia and Northwestern Alberta marketing the Deh Cho scenic loop. The group improved its organizational effectiveness and welcomed three new municipalities as contributing partners. It developed a more targeted five-year marketing plan (2006-2011), continued to develop the website, attended consumer shows, and continued to partner with provincial and territorial tourism marketing organizations to promote the route to tourists and tourism operators in Canada, the United States and Europe. The NADC supports the communication and administrative functions of the group.

The Council provided administrative and logistical assistance to Alberta's Lakeland Destination Marketing Organization by organizing workshops to promote tourism in the northeast region. The NADC also participated in Alberta's Lakeland Museum and Historical Societies Conference with representatives from museums and historical societies in the region, which resulted in the formation of a Heritage Association. The Association will work to promote museums and other tourism attractions in central northeast Alberta by leveraging the reach and impact of marketing dollars available. The NADC provides technical support to the association.

The NADC participated on the steering committee for the Northern Alberta Tourism Research Centre. The tourism centre has now been established with a researcher contracted and a research project on tourism service gaps conducted. The NADC also held discussions regarding potential Aboriginal tourism initiatives through the Alberta-Northwest Territories Memorandum of Understanding with Fort Smith tourism contacts.

The NADC provided funding toward the development of a business plan and a feasibility study for the Pipestone Creek Dinosaur Bone Bed Interpretive Facility near Grande Prairie. The Project, now called the River of Death and Discovery Dinosaur Centre, will be developing marketing and fundraising plans in the coming year.

The NADC remains a voting director on the Travel Alberta North Board. The Board took a bold approach to an awareness marketing campaign called "Unwrap the North" for 2006 and is working closely with the Destination Marketing Organizations, The Edmonton Sun, and Pattison Billboards in Edmonton to draw more attention from the Edmonton market to look north as a holiday destination.

Resource Development

The NADC produced profiles of conventional oil and oil sands potential in northern municipal districts. It also monitored the development of improved wind energy technology in British Columbia for possible application in Alberta and supported a study on potential of ethanol production.

Housing

The Northern Alberta Development Council continued to monitor housing issues throughout the year, as it continued to be raised as a priority issue at Leaders' Roundtable meetings and identified in the Premier's survey on northern priorities. The NADC met with the Minister of Seniors and Community Supports in November 2005 to follow-up on the presentation made to the ministry in March 2005 on northern housing issues. The Minister was supportive of NADC's efforts to identify strategies to address these issues. Accordingly, in 2006-2007, following the Challenge North 2006 conference, the NADC will review and assess strategies related to housing identified through the conference working group sessions.

Recycling

The Council continued to provide technical and administrative support to the Northern Coordinated Action for Recycling Enterprises (Northern C.A.R.E.). Membership is comprised of representatives of northern municipalities, First Nations, Métis Settlements, recycling organizations, and government departments. The organization was established to promote and coordinate recycling initiatives in northern Alberta.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

NADC Bursary Programs

The NADC offers bursary programs in collaboration with Alberta Advanced Education. Northern bursary programs include the NADC Bursary, Bursary Partnerships Program and NADC Bursary for Medical Students and Pharmacy Students. These programs require recipients to live and work in Northern Alberta for a period of time upon completion of their studies. The NADC Bursary return service rate is discussed under Performance Measures.

The Northern Student Supplement helps new post-secondary students with the cost of their studies. There is no return service requirement attached to these funds. The Northern Student Supplement encourages first- and second-year students from Northern Alberta to pursue a post-secondary education and reduces their level of student debt. In 2005-2006, 480 students from

Northern Alberta received the Northern Student Supplement. Average funding per student was \$1,182, for a total of \$567,545.

The NADC Bursary Program and the Bursary Partnerships Program encourage students to train in occupations with shortages of northern labour. In 2005-2006, 135 NADC Bursaries were awarded to Alberta students. The total value of the NADC Bursaries for 2004-2005 was \$392,000 (127 Bursaries of \$3,000 each and 8 Bursaries of \$1,500 each). The Bursary Partnership Program (BPP) involves 40 Northern Alberta businesses, community and educational organizations. Funding support for the BPP in 2005-06 was \$283,800 comprising \$158,150 from sponsors and \$125,650 from the NADC. A total of 108 bursaries were awarded from the BPP in 2005-2006. One third of the bursary recipients are enrolled in health care programs and just over a quarter are in engineering and technical programs. Bursaries were also awarded to students in education, social services and other programs.

The NADC Bursary for Medical Students was introduced in 2003-2004. In 2005-2006, the third year of the program, five co-sponsored Medical Bursaries, each valued at \$10,000, were awarded.

The NADC Bursary for Pharmacy Students was introduced in 2004-2005. It matches sponsor bursaries of \$3,000 for a total of \$6,000. Two co-sponsored Pharmacy Bursaries were awarded in the second year of the program.

The Northern Health Care Practicum Funding Pilot Program is offered by the NADC with the three Northern Regional Health Authorities (RHAs): Aspen, Northern Lights, and Peace Country. This program encourages health care students to complete their practicum placements in Northern Alberta. In its second full year in 2005-2006, the Northern Health Care Practicum Placement Pilot program provided funding support totalling \$50,000 to 37 students (an average of \$1,351 per student) completing a practicum placement with one of the three participating RHAs.

Awards Booklet

An Awards booklet was produced and distributed to northern high school students, Alberta Service Centres and college awards offices. This booklet contains information to help those interested in pursuing a post-secondary education find the necessary funding.

Northern LINKS

Northern LINKS is a funding program coordinated by the NADC with the purpose of encouraging students to complete high school and pursue post-secondary education. For the 2005-2006 period, 135 projects were approved allocating almost \$364,000 toward the following projects: campus tours, skills competitions, student liaisons and mentors, career camps and retreats, workshops and speakers.

As part of the *Northern LINKS* program, workshops were sponsored to bring motivational speakers to guide students in their studies and encourage them to complete high school and pursue advanced education. This is important to address lower graduation rates from students in northern Alberta. The NADC sponsored 12 Alvin Law workshops for 2,400 students in junior and senior high schools in the Fort McMurray area. Mr. Law talked about overcoming obstacles

to set and reach goals as well as the importance of staying in school and gaining a post-secondary education.

Northern LINKS also produced a six page brochure showing main course offerings of Northern Alberta Post Secondary Institutions (NAIT-Fairview, Grande Prairie Regional College, Northern Lakes College, Keyano College, Portage College, Blue Quills College, Kayas Cultural College and Athabasca University). The brochures were distributed to all northern schools.

The NADC organized and conducted a *Northern LINKS* Workshop in Lac La Biche with representatives of Métis Settlements, school divisions, colleges, and high schools in attendance. The purpose of the workshop was to review the *Northern LINKS* program and to receive input on criteria and measurements of the program to ensure its effectiveness.

Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse

The Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse is a joint initiative that partners the NADC and the five northern post-secondary institutions. The Clearinghouse provides member institutions with labour force and economic information to help them identify new training programs or to modify or cancel existing ones. It also serves as a potential forum for further communication and cooperation between the partner institutions. Included in this research were: a major initiative involving a wide scale post-secondary survey, analysis and results report; a report evaluating the shortage of skilled workers in Northern Alberta; and an overview of alternative energy sources and the associated education and skills requirements. The NADC coordinates the activities of the Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse.

Woodland Operations Learning Foundation (WOLF)

WOLF is a non-profit, non-government organization striving to establish forest industry standards in training. WOLF has membership across the industry in British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan including contractors, manufacturers, suppliers, educational institutions and government representatives. The NADC acts as an advisor to WOLF. Recent outcomes include the design and delivery of courses in Spill Response, Watercourse Crossing / Water Quality, Log Quality, Equipment Maintenance and Service, and Log Haul Driver Training. In addition, the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA) has announced a grant for \$400,000 to WOLF to develop and deliver courses on Environmental Education.

Youth Apprenticeship Program

The NADC continued to assist and promote the Youth Apprenticeship Project (YAP), a pilot project initiated in 2004 with Grade 7 students in five schools in the Northern Alberta communities of High Prairie, Lac La Biche and Wabasca-Desmarais. YAP is intended to encourage students to stay in school and earn school credentials by enabling YAP students to explore career options and gain valuable work experience in the trades, agriculture, forestry and other occupations in demand, while following the regular academic curriculum. Initial qualitative indicator's to date show an increase in attendance at school for those students participating, and increased academic standings in some of the schools.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND RESULTS

Partner satisfaction with Northern Alberta Development Council's contribution in advancing Northern interests

Performance Measure	Previous Result (2003-04)	Previous Result (2004-05)	Result (2005-06)	Target (2005-06)
3.a Partner satisfaction with NADC's contribution in advancing northern interests.	8.1	8.2	8.2	8.0

Source: 2005/2006 Clients and Partners Survey, AAND

The Northern Alberta Development Council annually commissions an independent party to conduct a client and partner satisfaction survey. The results of the survey are intended to help the council evaluate its progress in meeting its goals and to rate the satisfaction of the people who are involved in its activities. The following question in the survey was used for the performance measure:

“Overall and on a scale of 1 through 10, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 10 being very satisfied, how would you rate your satisfaction of the Northern Alberta Development Council's contribution to advancing northern interests?”

The average rating for this question was 8.2.

Northern Alberta Development Council Bursary recipients' return service rate

Performance Measure	Previous Result (2003-04)	Previous Result (2004-05)	Result (2005-06)	Target (2005-06)
3.b Bursary return rate.	74%	78%	80%	75%

Source: NADC bursaries database

The NADC follows-up with each NADC Bursary recipient to confirm fulfillment of the return service obligation. The return rate of service is based on the percentage of students who have completed their studies in the three calendar years preceding and whose status is either Working North or Obligation Fulfilled. Students in default of return service are required to repay the bursary. The weighted average bursary return rate for the three calendar years ending in 2005 was 80%.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Many communities in Northern Alberta are experiencing unprecedented growth, while others are experiencing difficulties adapting to changes taking place in the northern and rural economy. Whether the challenge is to manage, maintain or stimulate growth, the Northern Alberta Development Council, with our partners, will continue to work toward a strong, progressive and prosperous North.