

# Reporting on Reports 2002 2012

## Contents

INTRODUCTION .....	1
What types of reports are included .....	1
How reports are identified.....	1
NADC ANNUAL REPORTS .....	2
NADC Annual Report.....	2
INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORTATION .....	3
Roads.....	3
Northern Highways Strategy.....	3
Rail.....	3
Submission to the Rail Freight Service Review .....	3
Peace Region Access to Container Transportation.....	3
Utilities .....	4
Electric Power Generation Options for Northern Alberta’s Municipalities, Organizations and Residents .....	4
General.....	5
Northern Infrastructure .....	5
.....	5
Northern Municipal Infrastructure Required Investment Scan.....	5
ECONOMIC SECTORS.....	6
Agriculture.....	6
Defining Quality for Peace Country Agriculture: A Strategic Approach to Global Competition.....	6
Peace Country Initiative: Evaluation of Fatty Acid Composition and Lignan Content of Peace Country Flax Seed .....	6
Transporting Peace Country Grains to Export Position .....	6
Developing the Northwest Corridor .....	7
Forestry .....	7
Northern Alberta Forestry Industry Challenges and Opportunities Report .....	7
Climate Change and Best Management Practices in the Boreal Forest .....	8
Tourism .....	8
Rural Destination Marketing Fund (RDMF) Research Project .....	8
Tourism Potential in Canada’s North – Report on Survey Results.....	9
Environment.....	9
Inventory of Water Studies Relating to Northern Alberta.....	9
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT .....	10
Demographics .....	10
Economic and Demographic Profile of Northern Alberta.....	10
Shadow Populations in Northern Alberta (Part 1) .....	10
Health.....	10
Annual Rural Alberta Community Physician Attraction and Retention Conference Proceedings.....	10
NADC Recommendations on health care in northern Alberta .....	11
The Need for Medical Training in North-Western Alberta: A Community Discussion Paper .....	11

Medical Student Training Symposium – Summary Report .....	12
Exploring the Meaning of the MSW: Spirit, Ceremony and Protocol .....	12
Housing .....	13
Housing Issues in Northern Alberta .....	13
Affordable Housing Analysis: Municipal Approaches, Practices and Implications for the NADC Region (Final Report) .....	13
Youth .....	14
Evaluating the Introduction of Asset Development in a Rural Community.....	14
Evaluation Toolkit: A Guide to Evaluating the Introduction of Asset Development in a Rural Community .....	14
Youth Feedback, Future Directions for the North Peace Youth Support Association .....	14
Northern Alberta Youth Program and Service Review .....	15
<b>SKILL DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION, LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Rural and Remote Education Report .....	16
Professional Workforce Scan, A multi-sector summary of employment trends across Alberta's north .....	16
Awards, Bursaries & Scholarships.....	16
Slave Lake Opportunity Seminar (Slave Lake).....	17
Smoky River Opportunity Seminar (Girouxville).....	17
Recruitment and Retention in Northern Canada: Partnerships for Progress.....	17
Education, Training and Employment – Priority Project Report 2005.....	17
Education, Training and Employment – Priority Project Report 2006.....	18
Initiatives to Maximize Economic and Social Impacts from Major Projects in the North (Activities Report 2005-2006 and Recommendations) .....	18
Northeast Opportunity Seminar: Workforce Planning Workshop (Fort McMurray) .....	19
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and STRATEGIC PLANNING .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Contribution studies .....	20
2012 Northern Contributions Study .....	20
2009 Analysis of the Economic Contribution of the Northern Alberta Development Council Region to Alberta and Canada.....	20
2006 Analysis of the Economic Contribution of the Northern Alberta Development Council Region to Alberta and Canada.....	21
2003 Analysis of the Economic Contribution of the Northern Alberta Development Council Region to Alberta and Canada.....	21
Other reports .....	21
Developing Northern Alberta: Northern Challenges, Assets and Opportunities, A Discussion Paper.....	21
Changing Northern Economies: Helping Northern Communities Build a Sustainable Future .....	22
Initiatives to Maximize Economic and Social Impacts from Major Projects in the North (Activities Report 2007-2008 and Recommendations) .....	22
Scenario Creation Workshop for the Peace Country Final Report .....	23
Growing the North 2011 .....	23
Challenge North 2009 Conference Proceedings (Cold Lake) .....	24
Challenge North 2006 Conference Proceedings (High Level) .....	24
Challenge North 2003 Conference Proceedings (Fort McMurray) .....	25

NORTHERN LABOUR MARKET CLEARINGHOUSE REPORTS .....	26
Aboriginal students .....	26
Report on Aboriginal Labour Force Participation in Alberta .....	26
Aboriginal Training and Education Funding.....	26
Report Investigating the Learning Styles of Aboriginal Students .....	26
Best Practices .....	27
An Analysis of Foundational Learning and Implications for Northern Alberta.....	27
Rural Colleges Innovative Practices Review and Toolkit.....	27
Investigation of Professional Development Utilization in Northern Colleges .....	28
Student Recruitment - Best Practices .....	28
An Evaluation of High School Leavers and Post-secondary Entrance in Northern Alberta .....	28
Research to Evaluate the Shortage of Skilled Workers in Northern Alberta .....	29
Types of Post-secondary Education and Training that Current and Potential Adult Students Want .....	29
Employee Training in Northern Alberta.....	29
Using Technologies to Support Program Delivery for Northern Alberta Colleges .....	30
Employer Provision of Employability Skills .....	30
Special Education in Northern Alberta .....	30
Emerging Best-Practices for Servicing Post-Secondary Students with Disabilities.....	31
Economic Development and Diversification .....	31
Demographic Changes in Northern Alberta and Associated Potential Implications for Northern Colleges.....	31
A Report on the Knowledge-Based Economy .....	31
Changes in Agriculture in Alberta and Associated Potential Programming Implications at Northern Colleges.....	31
Agri-Tourism in Northern Alberta .....	32
Tourism North.....	32
Report on Science and Innovation Centres .....	32
Skill Development and Training Opportunities between Alberta and the Northwest Territories .....	33
Recruitment .....	33
An Evaluation of High School Leavers and Post-secondary Entrance in Northern Alberta .....	33
Reasons for Students Going South .....	34
Specific Training Programs.....	34
Information Technology Related Skills and Training Needs in Northern Alberta.....	34
A Review of Issues Pertaining to the Apprenticeship System in Northern Alberta .....	35
A Diploma of Social Work in Northern Alberta.....	35
Specializations in Public Administration and Business Administration .....	36
Industry Certifications Ideas for Short Course Offerings or Linkages.....	36
Pre-employment Training .....	36
Teacher Assistant Training Options for Residents of Northern Alberta .....	36

## INTRODUCTION

This document is a listing of the many reports from 2002 to 2012 either prepared by the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) or outsourced to consultants, or alternatively prepared by others in collaboration with or through funding assistance from the NADC.

The reports are organized by broad topic area.

Where possible and appropriate, summaries are taken directly from the reports; some may have been modified or shortened to fit the format in this summary. Most reports are available through NADC's website: [www.nadc.ca](http://www.nadc.ca).

### *What types of reports are included*

- The NADC prepares reports in-house, through consultants, or in collaboration with others to gather more information about specific issues or opportunities in the region or to report on project work or events.
- The NADC also provides funds to organizations in the region to pursue topics of interest or concern.
- The Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse Project, under the direction of the NADC, is a partnership of four northern colleges: Grande Prairie Regional College, Keyano College, and Northern Lakes College and Portage College. Each partner contributes funds to undertake collaborative research projects. The colleges then use this information for programming purposes.
- Alberta is a member of the Northern Development Ministers' Forum (NDMF), and the NADC participates on the NDMF Working Group. Each year the Ministers direct the Working Group to undertake research project of interest to northern jurisdictions across Canada.

### *How reports are identified*

The various types of report are identified as follows:



Prepared by the NADC



Prepared by consultants on behalf of the NADC



Prepared by NADC in partnership with others



Prepared by others with funds provided by the NADC and by others



Northern Labour Market Clearinghouse reports



Prepared by and for the Northern Development Ministers' Forum

## NADC ANNUAL REPORTS



### NADC Annual Report

**Date:** 2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

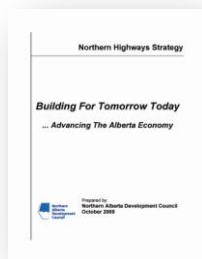
**Purpose:** To annually provide an overview of NADC's key initiatives.

**Summary:** NADC's annual reports provide highlights of the many collaborative projects that the NADC undertakes, plus results of research, and an overview of the NADC bursary programs and communications.

**Follow-up:** Annual reports are distributed widely to northern community and organization representatives, Alberta Ministers and MLAs and to other stakeholders to keep them apprised of NADC initiatives.

## INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORTATION

### Roads



#### Northern Highways Strategy

**Date:** October 2008

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Purpose:** To suggest that Highway #40 be added to the Northwestern Canada Integrated Road Network Plan (NCIRNP), and that the NCIRNP be a priority for the Province of Alberta.

**Summary:** The goal of the NCIRNP is to create an integrated road network in northwestern Canada as a means of advancing economic and social development. Several highways in the NADC region have been identified for inclusion in the NCIRNP, as they provide vital connections to resources, communities and neighbouring jurisdictions. In addition to the road projects identified by the NCIRNP (including Highway 63, La Loche Road and Highway 43), Highway 40 plays a significant role in connecting northern Alberta to the rest of the province and other jurisdictions. The report identifies the NCIRNP as a priority for the province, as the economic activity generated in northern Alberta is only possible if the transportation network is functional. The report contains information on the current status of the projects identified as priorities.

**Follow-up:** Continued promotion of investment in roads highlighted as key connectors. Upgrading on some highways such as 881 are completed, 43 and 88 nearly completed, Highway 40 and 63 are underway.

### Rail



#### Submission to the Rail Freight Service Review

**Date:** November 2010

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Purpose:** To provide input into the Review from a northern Alberta perspective

**Summary:** The submission identified concerns with the draft report including the proposed timing and recommendations in the report. It included recommendations, and identified key priorities such as ensuring competitiveness, investment in new infrastructure and rail's role in potentially reducing greenhouse gases associated with trucking. The report supported market driven approaches rather than more regulation, raised an alternative to the current system i.e. division of operations and ownership of rail routes if the commodity handling and transportation system does not improve.

**Follow-up:** The report was submitted to the Review



#### Peace Region Access to Container Transportation

**Date:** March 31, 2003

**Writer/Researcher:** PROLOG Canada Inc.

**Purpose:** To assess the prospects of extending rail-based container service into the Peace Region, and to provide a discussion on the viability and desirability of Peace region container transportation access.

**Summary:** The study found that the container transportation in the Peace region is primarily used for export from the BC coast, and provided by truck via Edmonton or the Vancouver. Container transportation in the Peace region is viewed as a substitute to highway transport, and may be beneficial for export base-loading as a way to divert long haul trucking. However, it is not sufficiently profitable for CN to provide competitive rates for connecting short lines in the region. The study recommended the creation of a basic

North/East Peace container facility focused on compressed hay exports; a flexible, extended container capability focused on smaller Peace region shippers; and a permanent, full service container for larger shippers in the South Peace region.

**Follow-up:** The report led to the proposed development of the intermodal loading site at Grande Prairie.

## Utilities



### **Electric Power Generation Options for Northern Alberta's Municipalities, Organizations and Residents**

**Date:** March 2010

**Writer/Researcher:** Forte Business Solutions

**Purpose:** To review Northern Alberta's electric power needs; opportunities and challenges regarding power generation and distribution; and possible initiatives that could be undertaken by municipalities, organizations and individuals.

**Summary:** The report outlines the uniqueness of Alberta's electricity system: high percentage of industrial use, winter peak demands and price volatility. It also points to a competitive generation system, and a regulated distribution system. The hourly market, resulting from the Alberta Electric System Operator has experienced increased volatility due to other energy sources. The report examines supply and demand in northern Alberta, the potential for electricity generation from various alternative sources, such as wind, hydro, biomass and landfill gas, geothermal and co-generation. Based on market conditions, it identifies large-scale natural gas combined cycle facilities, most likely in the Fort McMurray area, as the most viable generation option for Northern Alberta. Commercial-scale wind power projects could be marginally economic with an increase in price levels. Other small-scale projects could be viable based on location, carbon offset credits and other inducements. Micro-generation options could be suitable in isolated locations. It offers recommendations for ways to facilitate development of electricity projects in northern Alberta.

**Follow-up:** potential sites identified, forwarded to Ministry and to Legislative Policy Committee.



## General



### Northern Infrastructure

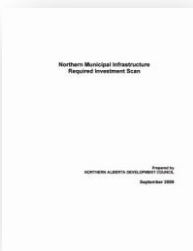
**Date:** August/September 2010

**Writer/Researcher:** Northern Development Minister's Forum Working Group led by Newfoundland and Labrador

**Purpose:** To provide clear indications of the infrastructure development priorities, future trends and challenges in the North, and to identify and determine the effect that infrastructure has on the economic development of the region.

**Summary:** Infrastructure is seen as one of the cornerstones or building blocks for a successful economy. The availability of stimulus funding to bolster economic circumstances have led to greater infrastructure development. This document identified priority needs, challenges, funding sources and models across Canada's northern jurisdictions. Roads and water were the most frequently identified priority, followed by electricity projects and broadband. The best practices included Alberta's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards for the design of new infrastructure, the implementation of Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) BEST certification in major buildings and the use of green electricity in buildings.

**Follow-up:** The report was forwarded to Alberta ministries: Infrastructure, Sustainable Resources Development and Finance and Enterprise.



### Northern Municipal Infrastructure Required Investment Scan

**Date:** September 2009

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Purpose:** To collect information on the current and future municipal infrastructure needs across northern Alberta.

**Summary:** The report begins with an overview of current and future challenges to municipal infrastructure needs and then provides the future estimated costs for infrastructure over the next 20 years as reported by the municipalities. Not all municipalities were able to respond due to the report timelines. Those that were able to reported planned investments of \$491,261,000 in infrastructure over the next three years, \$431,221,000 in three to five years and \$2.6 billion required in municipal infrastructure over the next twenty years. Common challenges included the lack of municipal planning capacity; limited municipal funding sources; uncertain grant schedules, time frames for grants not meeting needs; and the need for greater consideration by Ministries for impact of policies on municipalities. Suggestions by municipalities include: simplification of application processes, better communication about possible funding sources, increased training for municipal councils and employees, increased certainty in future funding and increased Resource Road Program funding, and changes in building codes to encourage conservation.

**Follow-up:** The report was reviewed by Council and made publicly available to heighten awareness of the pending municipal investment requirements..

## ECONOMIC SECTORS

### Agriculture



#### Defining Quality for Peace Country Agriculture: A Strategic Approach to Global Competition

**Date:** April 2009

**Writer/Researcher:** Branding the Peace Country Association

**Purpose:** To identify, define and substantiate the “superior quality” claims associated with the northern growing advantage for agricultural commodities grown in the Peace Country.

**Summary:** The research briefing advocates that local agricultural farmland be dedicated to crops that thrive under Peace Country growing conditions. It advocates investment in comparative bio/chemical research to define “quality” for its agricultural products through its research partnership with the Alberta Research Council.

**Follow-up:** This planning document outlined proposed research such as the Flax Seed analysis report below.



#### Peace Country Initiative: Evaluation of Fatty Acid Composition and Lignan Content of Peace Country Flax Seed

**Date:** March 2009

**Writer/Researcher:** Jian Zhang, Alberta Research Council, Rong Cao, Guelph Food Research Centre Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada for the Branding the Peace Country Association

**Purpose:** To document scientifically the quality characteristics of Peace Country commodity flax.

**Summary:** The fatty acid composition and lignan (SDG, secoisolariciresinol diglucoside) content of collected flax seeds were analyzed at the Alberta Research Council and Guelph Food Research Center, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, respectively. The results showed higher levels of  $\alpha$ -linolenic acid and lignan in flax seeds grown in the Peace Country than in those grown in central Alberta and elsewhere. However, the research team recognizes the limitations of sample size and short study period of this project and therefore recommends a multi-year, multi-location and multi-variety study to confirm the superior quality of Peace Country flax.

**Follow-up:** Continuing work is being done to develop seed appropriate to the north, expected to be commercialized in 2016, creating a new cash crop for the north and royalties to Alberta Innovates.



#### Transporting Peace Country Grains to Export Position

**Date:** October 2008

**Writer/Researcher:** Aylward Research Services (consultant). Funded by the NADC, in partnership with Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada and Northern Sunrise County.

**Purpose:** This report provides information on the production, transportation, and export of food grains (wheat, canola, flax, rye, barley, and field peas) in the Peace Country. The report is intended to assist the Branding the Peace committee with marketing efforts.

**Summary:** 45% of the Peace Country's farmland produces crops, and 66% of the crops produced are bound for export. The most significant challenges facing grain producers in the Peace Country are access to grain elevators, rail line abandonment, railcar access,

increased trucking costs. In order to increase the visibility of grains originating in the Peace Country and to garner higher profits, the report recommends pursuing value-added opportunities, growing new crops, building niche markets and shipping in smaller containers, advocating for ingredient identity in food products, merging the local brand with the national brand, and assessing the viability of shipping product on waterways.

**Follow-up:** Shared amongst Branding the Peace members as a planning document.



### Developing the Northwest Corridor

**Date:** December 23, 2003

**Writer/Researcher:** Mackenzie Municipal Services Agency

**Purpose:** To assess the potential for agricultural development in the Fort Vermilion-Fort Nelson Corridor.

**Summary:** After assessing the climatic conditions and soil quality in the area in the corridor, the study determined that there is a high probability crops such as barley, rye, wheat, canola, flax, field peas and feed oats can be grown in the region. These crops could produce total yearly revenues of \$156 million. The report recommended further scientific study on soil and climate in the region and intergovernmental cooperation.

**Follow-up:** The report proposed releasing Crown land near High Level to agriculture, instead additional land was released near La Crete.

### Forestry



### Northern Alberta Forestry Industry Challenges and Opportunities Report

**Date:** 2012

**Writer/Researcher:** Berry Heinen, BTH Consulting Ltd.

**Purpose:** To examine the current state of the forest industry in northern Alberta and make recommendations to address issues facing the industry

**Summary:** Northern Alberta's forest industry has experienced a decline which started in 2007 due to changes in market demand, and by 2009 resulted in mill closures and loss of employment. The report outlined a number of issues, including increasing costs, labour shortages, and regulatory and consultation processes. The report points to the Forest Products Road Map, infrastructure improvements and access to new markets as opportunities. It makes suggestions of follow-up actions that can be undertaken by the NADC.

**Follow-up:** Provided to NADC Council as background information on the status of forestry in the region.



### Climate Change and Best Management Practices in the Boreal Forest

**Date:** 2010

**Writer/Researcher:** Northern Development Ministers' Forum working group

**Purpose:** To continue sharing information on climate change impacts on northern development and on best practices to address those impacts, update information and to examine best practices related to boreal forest management

**Summary:** The boreal forest cover 30% of Canada's landmass. Climate change is expected to affect northern economies and communities, and will also affect boreal forest management. Climate change is expected to result in Increased costs in planning, measuring and tending, and changes in wood fibre quality and quantity. Changes could have a negative effect on traditional lifestyles while also presenting new opportunities for entrepreneurs. Development of 'green' products and services could create new jobs, while also increasing demand for fibre to produce energy. These could lead to increased reforestation and also use of smaller trees. Alberta has been affected through the spread of the Mountain Pine Beetle, collaborates with agencies across Canada for wildfire management, and works closely with British Columbia for fuel management especially around communities. Alberta identified adaptation actions in its Climate Change Strategy. The report provides recommendations, related to both climate change in general and specifically to boreal forest management.

**Follow-up:** Alberta's views were exchanged with other members of the Northern Development Ministers' Forum, which raised the profile of the impact of the Mountain Pine Beetle, and assisted in obtaining more funding from Canada to address the issue. The final report was forwarded to Alberta Sustainable Resources Development.

### Tourism



### Rural Destination Marketing Fund (RDMF) Research Project

**Date:** January 2009

**Writer/Researcher:** Leger Marketing

**Purpose:** To research the best method of establishing Northern Alberta's first voluntary Rural Destination Marketing Fund (RDMF) to help level the playing field in tourism marketing and product development.

**Summary:** Following research of DMF structures and best practices, and in-depth interviews about other Alberta DMFs, a survey polled interest in northern Alberta. Based on these, seven Critical Success Factors were identified. The survey showed some interest though overall limited support from local travel operators stemming from a minimal understanding of the DMF concept, dominance of Industry based revenue over Tourism based revenue and a lack of a proper marketing strategy. The concept could gain more support if the local travel operators are educated on the concept. A minimum travel operator participation level of two-thirds was recommended prior to moving forward.

**Follow-up:** The report was made available to tourism organizations and communities interested in establishing a DMF.



## Tourism Potential in Canada's North – Report on Survey Results

**Date:** July 2008

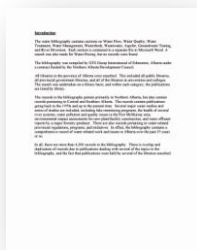
**Writer/Researcher:** Northern Development Ministers' Forum working group with input from Alberta

**Purpose:** To profile current tourism marketing initiatives, products and infrastructure development, and to identify best practices in human resources, opportunities for research, and partnerships with Aboriginal peoples.

**Summary:** The biggest challenges for tourism development in the north are inadequate transportation infrastructure, increasing national and global competition, scarcity of "market-ready" local products, difficulty attracting and retaining skilled labour, and insufficient and uncoordinated marketing resources. Examples of marketing initiatives and best practices identified by Alberta included the interjurisdictional Deh Cho Travel Connection, the Boreal Centre for Bird Conservation on Lesser Slave Lake, and Pow Wows.

**Follow-up:** Provided to Forum members for distribution in their jurisdictions.

## Environment



## Inventory of Water Studies Relating to Northern Alberta

**Date:** 2008

**Writer/Researcher:** GTS Group International

**Purpose:** To collect a listing of all studies on water pertaining to northern Alberta.

**Summary:** The water bibliography contains sections on water flow, water quality, water treatment, water management, watersheds, wastewater, aquifer, groundwater testing and river diversion. All libraries in Alberta were searched. The records range from 1970-2008, and cover issues such as water quality in the Fort McMurray region, lake monitoring programs, and the health of several river systems.

**Follow-up:** The report was provided to all northern municipalities, and has been used by Alberta Environment and consultants

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### Demographics



#### Economic and Demographic Profile of Northern Alberta

**Date:** 2005

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Purpose:** To give a statistical overview of the NADC region's population and demographics; income and education levels; labour force participation; and industry sectors. Most of the information is based on the 2001 Census.

**Summary:** The review of statistics pertaining to the population and demographics of northern Alberta showed that the region is home to 51% of Alberta's Aboriginal population. The population of some areas of the NADC region were growing, while others were decreasing. Northern Albertans have higher income and lower education levels than the provincial average. Northern Alberta has a younger than average population. 90% of Alberta's productive forests and 100% of the oilsands are located in the NADC region.

**Follow-up:** The report was available to municipalities to assist in planning, and was used by the NADC as a basis to respond to requests for statistical information.



#### Shadow Populations in Northern Alberta (Part 1)

**Date:** July 2006

**Writer/Researcher:** Mary Joan Aylward

**Purpose:** To quantify the shadow population in northern Alberta. Part 2 of the report was to address the social impact of shadow populations.

**Summary:** The largest shadow populations were located in the MD of Greenview, MD of Opportunity and Northern Sunrise County. In 11 of the NADC region's 21 rural municipalities, the shadow population was equal to at least 10% of the permanent population.

**Follow-up:** Information shared with municipalities to assist in addressing funding and service delivery issues.



### Health



#### Annual Rural Alberta Community Physician Attraction and Retention Conference Proceedings

**Date:** 2012, 2011, 2010, 2009, 2008

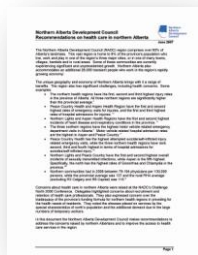
**Writer/Researcher:** The Rural Physician Action Plan and NADC

**Purpose:** To capture the proceedings of the conferences (called workshop in the first few years)

**Summary:** The role of communities in the attraction and retention of physicians is a key focus in each conference. As well, the events often feature panels of medical students and communities with success stories. Medical educators, new physician recruits, cross-cultural training and successful site visits are part of the conferences and information about these presentations are captured in the reports.

**Follow-up:** Reports are shared with delegates and on websites as an ongoing resource in attraction and retention.





## NADC Recommendations on health care in northern Alberta

**Date:** June 2007

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Purpose:** To make recommendations to address the concerns raised by northern Albertans about access to health care in the north.

**Summary:** The residents of the NADC region have unique health needs. At the time of this recommendation paper, the northern health regions had the first, second and third highest injury rates in the province; a high prevalence of cardiac and respiratory conditions; high emergency room utilization rates; higher than average incidences of sexually transmitted diseases; and a high mortality rate from self-inflicted injuries and motor vehicle accidents. The NADC made a series of recommendations related to health care funding, recruitment and retention. These recommendations included: a review of health care funding for rural areas; developing a plan to address the infrastructure needs of northern health care facilities; establishing a \$100 million regional equity fund for recruiting physicians; adding medical seats at the University of Calgary and University of Alberta for medical students with an interest in rural practice; developing a one-year rural training option for third and fourth year medical students; reviewing the licensing process for immigrants with medical credentials; and the development of a differential fee payment that would allow northern physicians to be paid a higher fee for their services.

**Follow-up:** Document presented to the Minister of Health and shared with northern MLAs.



## The Need for Medical Training in North-Western Alberta: A Community Discussion

**Paper Date:** June 2007

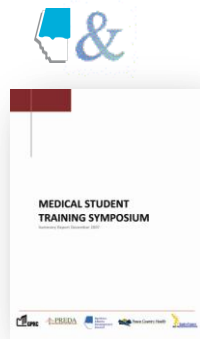
**Writer/Researcher:** NADC, GPRC, PREDA, Peace Country Health, Grande Prairie Chamber of Commerce

**Purpose:** To address the major barriers to the recruitment of medical doctors in rural, northern and remote regions and offer a potential strategy to address the gap.

**Summary:** The report outlines the current physician/population ratios and future needs in the region. It identifies challenges related to recruitment and the inadequate number of current and planned graduates in Alberta-based medical programs. It points to evidence and factors from other jurisdictions for successful recruitment of doctors and proposes steps to develop increased medical training in northern Alberta.

**Follow-up:** The documents was distributed to stakeholders as a basis for discussion for the Medical Student Training Symposium (see below).





## Medical Student Training Symposium – Summary Report

**Date:** December 2007

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC, GPRC, PREDA, Peace Country Health, Grande Prairie Chamber of Commerce

**Purpose:** In follow up to the report “The Need for Medical Training in North-Western Alberta: A Community Discussion Paper” (see above), a one-day Medical Student Symposium was held to gather input from stakeholders and to develop principles to guide the development of further actions surrounding training for physicians in northern Alberta.

**Summary:** Discussion topics at the symposium included barriers to successful physician recruitment, different models of medical education, the level of need for medical professionals in northern Alberta, professional and quality of life concerns for physicians being recruited to the area, and principles that would guide the development and delivery of a medical education program designed to be delivered in the north.

**Follow-up:** The report was used as a basis for ongoing efforts by stakeholders in the Grande Prairie area to encourage medical education in rural areas.



## Exploring the Meaning of the MSW: Spirit, Ceremony and Protocol

**Date:** 2009

**Writer/Researcher:** Ralph Bodor PhD , Nadia Bourque MSW, Meagan Smith-Windsor BA, MSW (Cand.)

**Purpose:** To complete a qualitative review of the meaning and the impact of the Masters of Social Work (MSW) program for students, elders, wisdom holders, instructors, and support staff.

**Summary:** This MSW was offered at Blue Quills First Nations College, a reclaimed residential school. The evaluation captures the perceptions of the students instructors and many community members involved in the program. Relational accountability was one of the strongest and most frequently recognized meanings of the program identified by those interviewed. Witnessing and participating in a sacred learning environment transformed not only the students, but also instructors and support staff. The many formal and informal supports to the students ensured the success of this program and this cohort of students.

**Follow-up:** The report provided a qualitative review of the program to assist the Faculty of Social Work, Blue Quills and stakeholders in plans for further programming.



## Housing



### Housing Issues in Northern Alberta

**Date:** June 2007

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Purpose:** Following up on concerns raised about housing at Challenge North 2003 and 2006 and a survey on housing issues in 2004, this report identifies key northern housing issues and potential solutions.

**Summary:** There were four key housing issues identified: high costs of construction and development; gaps in government housing programs; lack of local awareness and capacity, and; the need for leadership, innovation and a coordinated approach to housing. Possible solutions identified included the development of high density housing, partnering with industry to promote development opportunities and best practices, establishing an endowment fund for affordable housing initiatives, and providing targeted funding for housing in small urban and rural areas, and Métis Settlements.

**Follow-up:** The report was presented to the Minister of Housing and led to follow-up research on housing issues (see Affordable Housing Analysis).



### Affordable Housing Analysis: Municipal Approaches, Practices and Implications for the NADC Region (Final Report)

**Date:** March 2008

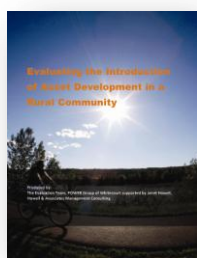
**Writer/Researcher:** NEDIA Consulting Group

**Purpose:** This study examines the challenge of affordable housing supply within the NADC region and explores methods and approaches utilized to facilitate affordable housing.

**Summary:** The study provided examples of successful practices for increasing the supply of affordable housing in communities. From the NADC region, employer assisted ownership in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, public-private partnerships in Slave Lake and regulatory reform, density housing, secondary suites and the waiving of fees in Grande Prairie were examples of successful actions for affordable housing at the municipal level. Several action steps were proposed for municipalities. In order to increase options for affordable housing, municipalities should: explore potential partnerships for the development of regional affordable housing task forces; create local housing committees with a mix of stakeholders; take a leadership role in developing proposals for housing that make the benefits of affordable housing clear; explore options for maintaining partial ownership or control over the rental stock to insulate it from market fluctuations; re-examine current bylaws and policies regarding housing, and; review land use by-laws.

**Follow-up:** The identification of issues led to a series of follow-up workshops in communities across the north.

## Youth



### Evaluating the Introduction of Asset Development in a Rural Community

**Date:** 2012

**Writer/Researcher:** The Evaluation Team, POWER Group of Whitecourt supported by Janet Howell, Howell & Associates Management Consulting

**Purpose:** To provide a sample evaluation of a Asset Development project that would support development of an Asset Development Evaluation Toolkit

**Summary:** Alberta's positive youth development provincial partners (the RCMP, Alberta Health Services (AHS) and the NADC, supported by Lion's Quest Canada) had completed an overall evaluation of the program. Project coordinators felt that communities needed to be able to evaluate their own projects locally. This report outlines the outcome of a pilot project of a community's evaluation of its positive youth and asset development initiative. The report and toolkit (see below) give a detailed description of the process.

**Follow-up:** Released at the Hinton Asset Builders Academy, September 2012. RCMP presented to their Ottawa Headquarters. Currently working on a provincial marketing strategy for the document and other provincial asset development initiatives.



### Evaluation Toolkit: A Guide to Evaluating the Introduction of Asset Development in a Rural Community

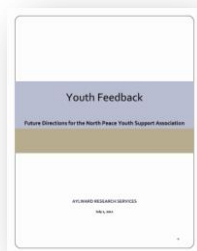
**Date:** 2012

**Writer/Researcher:** The Evaluation Team, POWER Group of Whitecourt supported by Janet Howell, Howell & Associates Management Consulting

**Purpose:** To provide a template for community leaders to assess the implementation of positive youth development in a rural community.

**Summary:** Using the Whitecourt pilot evaluation (see above) as a base, the toolkit gives step-by-step instructions on how to set up an evaluation process for asset development projects. It outlines start-up steps and provides samples and templates of a logic model, an evaluation plan, tracking tools and survey instruments.

**Follow-up:** Same as for report above.



### Youth Feedback, Future Directions for the North Peace Youth Support Association

**Date:** July 2011

**Writer/Researcher:** Aylward Research Services for North peace Youth Association

**Purpose:** To identify ways that the North Peace Youth Support Association can better meet the needs of local youth aged 12 to 19

**Summary:** The report identifies the regional youth population and compares health (addictions, suicide, mental health, self inflicted injuries) for the former Peace Country Health region with other regions. The report points to higher than Alberta averages for many of the health indicators. Crime data comparisons show the high percentage of youth who have not been charged but dealt with through alternative methods in the Fairview area, a common practice in rural communities where enforcement services have stronger community linkages. Focus groups identified programs of interest to youth. Surveys measured youth perceptions on the use of drugs and alcohol, mental health, and the safety of their community. Regional service providers were polled to identify the services available to youth in Fairview and area.

**Follow-up:** Information used by the local committee in planning youth projects.



## Northern Alberta Youth Program and Service Review

**Date:** October 2008

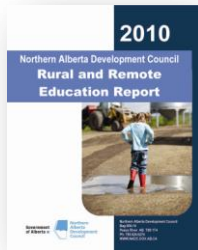
**Writer/Researcher:** Aylward Research Services (consultant) for the MD of Smoky River

**Purpose:** The primary purpose of the report is to collect a listing of programs and services currently available or are in the planning stages for northern Albertans ages 10-16.

**Summary:** Approximately 41 000 youth between the ages of 10-16 live in the NADC region. There are 280 schools, 200 churches, 57 4-H clubs, 10 Youth Connections offices, 50 Family and Community Services offices, and a variety of fee-based activities, such as sports leagues available to youth in northern Alberta. The most commonly cited barriers to accessing recreational opportunities were staffing, funding, transportation and facilities.

**Follow-up:** The report was made available on-line as background information for community programming.

## SKILL DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION, LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION



### Rural and Remote Education Report

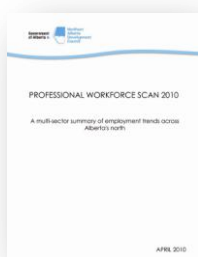
**Date:** 2010

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Purpose:** To identify the challenges facing northern school divisions and possible programming alternatives.

**Summary:** The report summarizes interviews with northern school division superintendents and staff, community survey responses, and a literature review on rural and remote primary/middle school (kindergarten-grade 9) education and includes demographic forecasts for the region. It identifies funding, governance issues, declining enrolment, increased bussing times, student welfare and school closures. The report identifies best practices for rural schools, and offers recommendations including: engaging families in education, cooperation between schools and communities around school use, bursary support and promoting rural communities.

**Follow-up:** The report was presented to the NADC Council and two northern MLAs, and shared with Alberta Education.



### Professional Workforce Scan, A multi-sector summary of employment trends across Alberta's north

**Date:** 2010, 2007, 2005, 2003

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC or various consultants

**Purpose:** To identify current and future workforce trends across northern Alberta.

**Summary:** This scan is completed every two to three years to assist in selection of NADC Bursary recipients. The downturn in the global economy and slow-down of the oilsands have had an overarching downward effect on the demand for skilled professionals in the region in resource-based sectors. The single sector that identified growth was the social services sector, while agriculture and business and law were stable. The report identifies high-need occupations and touches on current and changing recruitment practices.

**Follow-up:** The reports are used in the annual selection of bursary recipients and are also shared with Career Development Centres. Information has also been shared with northern high schools and used in career fair materials.



### Awards, Bursaries & Scholarships

**Date:** Annually

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Purpose:** To provide students a ready listing of sources of post-secondary funding and Alberta colleges and universities

**Summary:** This annually produced booklet provides information about NADC's bursaries, links to the awards offices for all Alberta post-secondary institutions, Students Finance and other funding sources. It also gives an overview of the northern post-secondary institutions, has budgeting advice and a budget worksheet.

**Follow-up:** The booklets are mailed to all northern high schools, colleges and Career Development Centres.



### Slave Lake Opportunity Seminar (Slave Lake)

**Date:** March 2007

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Sponsors:** NADC and Slave Lake District Chamber of Commerce

**Purpose:** To focus on labour issues and the housing shortage caused by the booming economy in the region.

**Summary:** Topics discussed included hiring and retaining Aboriginal workers, hiring foreign workers, the impact of housing on employment in the Town of Slave Lake, and local experiences of finding employees.

**Follow-up:** The report was sent to seminar participants.



### Smoky River Opportunity Seminar (Girouxville)

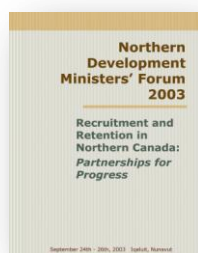
**Date:** March 2007

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Purpose:** To share information on rural entrepreneurship.

**Summary:** A panel of 5 local entrepreneurs shared their experiences of starting a business in rural northern Alberta. The lessons shared by the panel included the need for community support and acceptance, an understanding of business management principles, and the importance of leveraging natural talents and constantly searching for new opportunities.

**Follow-up:** The report was sent to seminar participants.



### Recruitment and Retention in Northern Canada: Partnerships for Progress

**Date:** September 2003

**Writer/Researcher:** Northern Development Ministers' Forum working group

**Purpose:** To follow up on the progress made by participants in the 2002 NDMF conference in Peace River on labour retention.

**Summary:** Skill shortages in the fields of education, health and engineering were identified by most jurisdictions. The report also provided examples of best practices for building relationships with Aboriginal communities. Alberta examples in the report included Syncrude's Aboriginal Development Program, bursary programs in health and education, Careers: the Next Generation and the Registered Apprenticeship Program.

**Follow-up:** Report shared with interested Ministries in each jurisdiction.



### Education, Training and Employment – Priority Project Report 2005

**Date:** 2005

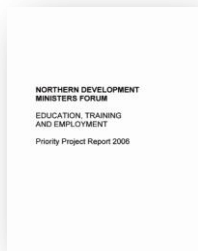
**Writer/Researcher:** Northern Development Ministers' Forum working group working group (Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada) with input from Alberta

**Purpose:** To compile statistics from participating jurisdictions on educational attainment, employment, and best practices related to high school completion, post-secondary access and job training programs.

**Summary:** Northern residents, particularly Aboriginals, have lower high-school and post-secondary education completion rates compared to provincial and territorial averages. Labour force participation rates for northern communities in Alberta, however, were higher than the national and provincial average. Best practices submitted from Alberta for high-school completion included apprenticeship programs and Northern LINKS. The NADC bursary program, NAIT, eCampus Alberta and Alberta North were submitted as best practices for encouraging post-secondary access and completion. The Woodland

Operations Learning Foundation (WOLF) was submitted as a best practice for training programs. The NADC Bursary Partnership Program (BPP) was an example of a best practice for linkages between education, training and employment, alongside the Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative (AWPI).

**Follow-up:** Based on information in the report, further research was undertaken on best practices to address the issues (see below).



### **Education, Training and Employment – Priority Project Report 2006**

**Date:** 2006

**Writer/Researcher:** NDMF project working group (Manitoba, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada) with input from Alberta

**Purpose:** To provide an overview of best practices for increasing access to education, training and employment opportunities in northern communities, with a focus on Aboriginal initiatives.

**Summary:** Best practices for encouraging high-school completion included career education, dual credit courses, parental involvement and early intervention. For improving access to post-secondary education, the submitted best practices included relevant content in course offerings, distance education, availability of a range of programs, and partnerships between post-secondary institutions and with their communities. Training initiatives included industry partnerships, community capacity building, and bringing training programs to northern communities. Best practices for linkages between training, education and employment included industry partnerships and programs that actively seek and encourage Aboriginal participation.

**Follow-up:** Released to the provincial and territorial ministers of education, and to the Canadian Council on Learning and the Society of Advancement of Excellence in Education.



### **Initiatives to Maximize Economic and Social Impacts from Major Projects in the North (Activities Report 2005-2006 and Recommendations)**

**Date:** 2007

**Writer/Researcher:** Northern Development Ministers' Forum working group (Quebec, NWT, Saskatchewan, BC, Yukon) with input from Alberta

**Purpose:** To assess how Canadian governments will take advantage of major investments in the north, including resource extraction, to the benefit of northern inhabitants and all Canadians.

**Summary:** The report provides the background context for the project and an overview of the initial research conducted into the number of major projects in northern jurisdictions. During 2005-2006, the working group completed a reference framework, and developed a monitoring system for social and economic impacts of major projects in the north. Alberta provided two examples of maximizing impacts of major projects: the emphasis placed on community sustainability in the oil sands, and the forest management task force.

**Follow-up:** Presented to the Ministers; the information has contributed to ongoing work.



## **Northeast Opportunity Seminar: Workforce Planning Workshop (Fort McMurray)**

**Date:** September 19, 2006

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Partners:** Government of Saskatchewan, Northern Apprenticeship Committee

**Purpose:** To focus on topics related to employee recruitment in northern Alberta and Saskatchewan and training and development of northern employees.

**Summary:** This opportunity seminar was organized in anticipation of the La Loche connector road. In anticipation of Wood Buffalo becoming connected to Saskatchewan, this conference focused on issues of labour mobility between the two provinces, specifically for apprentices. Speakers included an expert on urban-rural policy, recruitment managers from oil companies operating in Fort McMurray, representatives from apprenticeship programs (including the Youth Apprenticeship Program), northern colleges and regional business associations. Common themes were the need for interprovincial cooperation in areas such as economic development and quality of life initiatives and the tradespeople required for oil sands operations.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and STRATEGIC PLANNING

### Contribution studies



#### 2012 Northern Contributions Study

**Date:** 2012

**Writer/Researcher:** Nichols Applied Management

**Purpose:** To provide an overview of the NADC region's population and economy, identify the pathways through which the NADC regional economy is linked to the rest of Alberta and Canada through job creation, capital investment, gross domestic product, interprovincial trade, and government revenues at provincial and national levels.

**Summary:** The report highlights information about the population, income, investments, GDP, trade and revenues to government. The NADC region population is 9.5% of Alberta's total population; overall there is low unemployment and a high labour force participation rate. 23% or residents are of an Aboriginal background; the on-reserve population has low labour force participation and high unemployment. Resource extraction is a key employment sector. There are 55,000 mobile workers (half Albertans) with \$3 billion in wages paid to these. The region produces 17.1% of Alberta's GDP, half of this coming from the oil and gas sector. Forestry and agriculture contribute 80% and 20% of provincial output. The region contributes 25% of Alberta's exports and 10% of imports. Capital expenditures for large construction projects benefit Alberta and Canada considerably. Personal income taxes benefitted Alberta, Canada and the home provinces of the mobile workers. Provincial royalties from oil sands, oil and natural gas are estimated to be \$5 billion or 17% in 2011-12 and are expected to rise to \$30% in 2014-15. The report identifies future opportunities to upgrading and refining, education, expansion of support industries and diversification of forestry.

**Follow-up:** The report will be widely released to highlight the impact of the north on Alberta's and Canada's economies, to gain more recognition of the significance of the region.



#### 2009 Analysis of the Economic Contribution of the Northern Alberta Development Council Region to Alberta and Canada

**Date:** May 2009

**Writer/Researcher:** GTS Group International Inc.

**Purpose:** To identify how the NADC region affects the economy of the rest of the province and Canada.

**Summary:** From 2000-2008, the NADC region's population grew by 27%. In 2007, 25% of Alberta's international exports originated in the region. In 2008, 32% of the province's total private and public investment was invested in the region. In the 2007-2008 fiscal year, the NADC region contributed 24% of the province's total revenues. In some parts of the NADC region, most notably Fort McMurray, the median household income was significantly higher than the provincial average.

**Follow-up:** The report was widely released to highlight the impact of the north on Alberta's and Canada's economies, to gain more recognition of the significance of the region.





## 2006 Analysis of the Economic Contribution of the Northern Alberta Development Council Region to Alberta and Canada

**Date:** July 2006

**Writer/Researcher:** GTS Group International Inc.

**Purpose:** To identify how the NADC region affects the economy of the rest of the province and Canada.

**Summary:** In 2005, 29% of Alberta's exports originated in the NADC region. Private and public investment in the region reached \$13 billion. Manufacturing firms in the region spent \$1.3 billion on materials and supplies. In the 2004-2005 fiscal year, 19.9% of Alberta's total revenues came from the region. The NADC region represented 23.9% of Alberta's GDP. The overall finding of the 2006 Contribution Study was that the per capita contribution of the region to the economy of Alberta exceeded that of the rest of the province due to strong resource sectors.

**Follow-up:** The report was widely released to highlight the impact of the north on Alberta's and Canada's economies, to gain more recognition of the significance of the region.



## 2003 Analysis of the Economic Contribution of the Northern Alberta Development Council Region to Alberta and Canada

**Date:** September 2003

**Writer/Researcher:** GTS Group International in association with Activation Analysis

**Purpose:** To identify how the NADC region affects the economy of the rest of the province and Canada.

**Summary:** In 2001-2002, the NADC region contributed \$3.7 billion to Alberta's total revenues. The region also contributed 13% of Alberta's total contribution to federal revenues. 25% of Alberta's interprovincial exports and 33% of the province's international commodity exports originated in the region. The region produced 52% of the province's oil, 37% of its natural gas, and 75% of its forest products. The NADC region produced 19% of the province's total crops, and 5% of its livestock.

**Follow-up:** The report was widely released to highlight the impact of the north on Alberta's and Canada's economies, to gain more recognition of the significance of the region.



## Other reports



## Developing Northern Alberta: Northern Challenges, Assets and Opportunities, A Discussion Paper

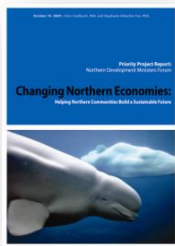
**Date:** July 2009

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Purpose:** To outline the importance of the northern economy and actions to be undertaken by the NADC to address priorities identified by northern business and community leaders.

**Summary:** The report outlines the economic context in northern Alberta as a result of the 2009 global downturn. While oilsands investment have dropped, overall northern Alberta still has a strong economy with investment in this and other sectors still underway. Alberta could experience economic decline, if the American economy does not recover. Northern businesses and industry contacts were surveyed to determine the needs in northern Alberta during the economic downturn. Key recommendations relate to reducing regulations and increasing consultation about these, better communications, importance of investing in infrastructure and transportation, the cost and availability of utilities, access to





financing, availability of land, global forces and export issues. The report also captures the challenges and priorities raised at the NADC's 2009 Challenge North Conference.

**Follow-up:** Led to a background paper and study on electric power generation options.

### **Changing Northern Economies: Helping Northern Communities Build a Sustainable Future**

**Date:** October 2009

**Writer/Researcher:** Chris Southcott, PhD. and Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox, PhD. for the Northern Development Minister's Forum

**Purpose:** To identify the opportunities and challenges created by changing northern economies and the importance of partnerships in increasing capacity in northern communities and innovative resource management in promoting sustainable community economic development

**Summary:** The main northern growth areas will likely continue to be the traditional resource industries, though there will be new value-added innovations. Geography and resource dependence remain obstacles to growth. Good relations with the region's Aboriginal peoples were identified as important.

Policies and programs based on new partnerships with regional populations, and in particular, Aboriginal communities are seen as most successful in dealing with the challenges. Alberta's multi-stakeholder planning processes were referenced, as were the continued investments in oilsands and challenges in the forestry industry.

**Follow-up:** The report was forwarded to the Alberta ministries of Infrastructure, Sustainable Resources, and Finance and Enterprise



### **Initiatives to Maximize Economic and Social Impacts from Major Projects in the North (Activities Report 2007-2008 and Recommendations)**

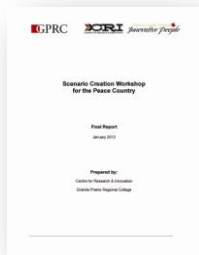
**Date:** 2008

**Writer/Researcher:** Northern Development Ministers' Forum working group (Quebec, Saskatchewan, BC) with input from Alberta

**Purpose:** To update information on initiatives aimed at maximizing the economic and social impacts of major projects in the north. The report also evaluates if the reference framework and monitoring system developed by the working group in 2003-2004 is being used.

**Summary:** There are seven components of the framework used to assess if major projects are having a positive impact on northern communities: mobilization of resources, intention of the promoter, state intervention, community involvement, capacity building in the community, integration of innovative projects and a monitoring system. Alberta submitted information on the development of the Athabasca Oil Sands. Oil sands development is an example of a project where there is good cooperation between governments and ministries, good cooperation between industry and government, and a high degree of transparency. Development in the oil sands was used as an example of a major project that has a strong impact on economic and infrastructure development. New indicators for the monitoring system were developed in this report.

**Follow-up:** The report was tabled before Ministers and sent to participating companies. This is an ongoing topic of discussion. Saskatchewan is leading the team to look at specific Impact Benefit Agreements between communities, industry and government to be presented in 2013.



## Scenario Creation Workshop for the Peace Country Final Report

**Date:** January 2012

**Writer/Researcher:** Grande Prairie Regional College - Centre for Research and Innovation (CRI)

**Purpose:** To gain new insights about forces and factors likely to shape the social and economic future of the region.

**Summary:** Workshops in Grande Prairie brought together 40 participants from across the Peace Country to first identify what the region needed to offer to be socially responsible and economically prosperous, and then to review four possible scenarios for the future: 1) Era of Enlightenment (with favourable geo-economics and relevant/appropriate knowledge and skills); 2) Boom and Gloom (favourable geo-economics but without relevant/ appropriate knowledge and skills); 3) Smart People Dynamic Times (geo-economic conditions are unfavourable and relevant/appropriate knowledge and skills are); 4) Coping with Underachievement (geo-economic conditions are unfavourable and relevant/appropriate knowledge and skills are not available). Implications and recommended actions for each scenario were identified. During the second workshop the following major recommendations and actions emerged: 1. Provide motivation for people of all ages to continue and expand education. 2. invest in transportation infrastructure; and 3. develop a global company headquartered in the Peace, aligning trade east-west in addition to north-south. Branding high-value products from the Peace Country for global markets was also identified as important.

**Follow-up:** CRI presented scenarios at the 2012 Growing the North Conference and to communities in the region interested in scenario-based planning.



## Growing the North 2011

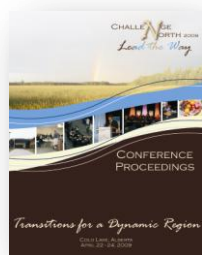
**Date:** 2011

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC for the Growing the North steering committee

**Purpose:** To capture the presentations of the 2011 Growing the North Conference

**Summary:** Growing the North 2011 was an opportunity to bring government and industry experts together to achieve the common goal of creating and maintaining a prosperous North. Expert speakers agreed with the need to diversify and adapt government and industry practices so the North can adjust favourably to the changing business environment. Recurring themes from speakers included sustainability, research, innovation, alternative energy sources, and making the move to global markets.

**Follow-up:** The report is available online as a reference for delegates and others



### Challenge North 2009 Conference Proceedings (Cold Lake)

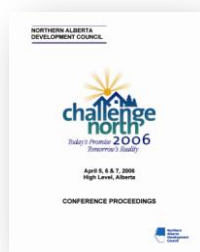
**Date:** April 22-24, 2009

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Purpose:** To bring stakeholders from across northern Alberta together in order to identify priorities for northern Albertans.

**Summary:** The theme of the 2009 Challenge North conference was “Lead the Way.” For the first time at Challenge North, a scenario planning process was used in the discussion groups. Presenters at the conference spoke about the volatile economic situation, the merging of economic, social, demographic, technological, and environmental factors which are changing the north, the value of scenarios in understanding the future, and the challenges facing northern communities during times of economic growth or decline. Three concurrent sessions were held for participants, focusing on governance, community and culture, and economy and environment. These topics were explored using six themes: re-tooling communities for the 21<sup>st</sup> century; sustainability planning; planning for populations; exploring opportunities for northern and rural community sustainability through education, health and community development policy; perspectives on policy, and; opportunities for balancing energy and the environment. In the scenario planning session, two different scenarios were presented to participants – ‘firing on all cylinders’ and ‘diverging paths.’ The scenarios required participants to think about northern Alberta in 2015, and how these two different scenarios would affect the economy, environment and quality of life in the region. Through the scenario planning process, delegates were able to identify policy areas of interest, including municipal funding, housing, health, energy, transportation, energy and leadership. The conference closed with a question and answer session with cabinet ministers and MLAs.

**Follow-up:** The report is available online as a reference for delegates and others. The scenarios and resulting discussions were shared with communities as a potential model for local planning processes.



### Challenge North 2006 Conference Proceedings (High Level)

**Date:** April 5-7, 2006

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Purpose:** To bring stakeholders from across northern Alberta together in order to identify priorities for northern Albertans.

**Summary:** The theme of the conference was “Today’s promise, tomorrow’s reality.” A combination of presentations from speakers and working group discussions was used to determine the major concerns of northern Albertans in priority policy areas. Speakers presented on a variety of subjects related to community development, including rural diversification through tourism, creating effective partnerships, welcoming temporary foreign workers, and community development tools. Several policy areas were identified as priorities to be discussed by the working groups: economic development and tourism, education, post secondary training, human resources, housing, transportation, infrastructure, environment, health and protective services were on the agenda. Key priorities established by the working groups included recruiting and retaining healthcare professionals, determining the impact of climate change on northern Alberta, advocating for funding for the Northern Roads Strategy, prioritizing an east-west highway in northern Alberta and retaining northern residents.

**Follow-up:** The report is available online as a reference for delegates and others. Information from discussion groups helped determine NADC priority projects.



### **Challenge North 2003 Conference Proceedings (Fort McMurray)**

**Date:** April 9-11, 2003

**Writer/Researcher:** NADC

**Purpose:** To bring stakeholders from across northern Alberta together in order to identify priorities for northern Albertans.

**Summary:** The three day conference was a combination of presentations from speakers and group discussion pertaining to priority policy areas. Presentation topics included the NADC's focus areas, oil sands development, challenges to northern development, northern rail transportation, and developments in other northern regions, including the Northwest Territories and Labrador. A cabinet minister/MLA forum was held during the conference, where rural development, regionalization, infrastructure projects and the softwood lumber dispute were discussed. In small group discussions, delegates were asked to discuss and then rank issues in NADC priority policy areas. The delegates identified the following issues: lack of value-added agriculture opportunities, communities work in isolation towards common ends, shortage of skilled labour, inadequate environmental policies and enforcement, inadequate health care funding models, lack of infrastructure for community growth, lack of funding for municipalities, the need for value-added opportunities in the forestry sector, need for tourism development, and northern highways.

**Follow-up:** The report is available online as a reference for delegates and others. Information from discussion groups helped determine NADC priority projects.

## NORTHERN LABOUR MARKET CLEARINGHOUSE REPORTS

### Aboriginal students



#### Report on Aboriginal Labour Force Participation in Alberta

**Date:** March 2003

**Writer/Researcher:** Dr. Wendy Doughty and Jim Klinge, Partners, Emerging Directions Consulting Ltd.

**Purpose:** To describe Aboriginal participation in the Alberta labour market.

**Summary:** According to the 2001 Census, 16% of Canada's Aboriginal people live in Alberta. The most recent available statistics on Aboriginal labour force participation at the time of this report's release indicated that 66% of Aboriginals in Alberta were in the labour force, and 17% were unemployed. During this time, non-Aboriginals in Alberta had an unemployment rate of 7%. Aboriginal labour force participation was greatest in sales and service occupations, trade, transportation and equipment operator occupations, and business, finance and administration. Aboriginals in Alberta were also self-employed in a wide range of sectors. To address the gap in Aboriginal and non-aboriginal rates of high-school completion and labour market access, several programs have been developed. To encourage further educational and skills development Aboriginals in Alberta, the report recommended that northern colleges work with Aboriginal communities, offer entrepreneurship oriented programs, focus on labour market training initiatives for Aboriginal women and youth, and market success stories of Aboriginal graduates from northern post-secondary institutions.



#### Aboriginal Training and Education Funding

**Date:** January 2003

**Writer/Researcher:** Beverly A. MacKeen PhD and Associates

**Purpose:** To provide an overview of funding available for programs that would target Aboriginal students and to identify gaps where colleges could provide assistance.

**Summary:** The primary sources of Aboriginal training and education initiatives identified were Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreements (AHRDA), Alberta Human Resources and Employment (AHRE), the Métis Nation of Alberta's Labour Market Development Division and the Métis Settlements General Council (MSGC). Funding for most initiatives comes from AHRDA. One of the most significant weaknesses with AHRDA is that the agreements are for employment programs, when high-school completion and low literacy rates are a major issue in some Aboriginal communities. Neither AHRDA or AHRE cover capital expenditure, and both initiatives require labour intensive reporting and follow up. Program promotion is also an issue. AHRDA holders, including the MSGC, have formed a caucus and believe that it would be beneficial for the northern colleges to interact on a regular basis with AHRDA holders to increase linkages with Aboriginal stakeholders.



#### Report Investigating the Learning Styles of Aboriginal Students

**Date:** January 2003

**Writer/Researcher:** Jim Klinge, Partner, Emerging Directions Consulting Ltd.

**Purpose:** To describe the cultural and environmental factors that influence Aboriginal learners. It makes recommendations to northern colleges for designing and delivering effective distance education programs aimed at Aboriginal learners.

**Summary:** The major features of learning for Aboriginal children include the use of legends



and stories as the primary method of instilling values, the use of symbolism, learning through watching, and a strong desire for independence and exploration. The importance of non-verbal communication, the role of the teacher and the importance of kinship relationships were also noted. These cultural touchstones translate to strong preferences in Aboriginal students for visual aids, learning by observation, frequent student-teacher interactions, hands-on experience and a desire for collaborative learning. The needs of the student's community and family tend to take precedence over educational priorities. In addition to unique learning style preferences, Aboriginal students face barriers to accessing education. These barriers include difficult economic and social conditions, limited success of government-run schools, the need for family supports, and less access to Internet resources. In order to design and deliver successful distance education programs for Aboriginal students, northern colleges should: obtain input from Aboriginal communities into program choices; incorporate the multinational character of Aboriginal peoples into the program design; design specialized curricula for Aboriginal students; provide Aboriginal focused supports and content; develop a northern college consortium on Aboriginal education, and; encourage faculty to develop their knowledge of Aboriginal culture and traditions.

## Best Practices



### **An Analysis of Foundational Learning and Implications for Northern Alberta**

**Date:** 2012

**Writer/Researcher:** Steven Lakey, MBA, CMC

**Purpose:** To identify gaps in foundational learning, explore possible models to improve access and develop a cost-benefit analysis of increased funding.

**Summary:** This report explored models, programs, opinions and trends in foundational learning at the college level in northern Alberta. The findings were captured through a comprehensive literature review, stakeholder interviews and the analysis of Government of Alberta data on high school completion and the skilled labour workforce. In the near-term, the recommendations focus on curriculum design and delivery, planning and administration, linkages within the elementary and secondary systems, addressing gaps and program funding. The longer-term recommendations consider a paradigm shift in funding concepts and the ever-evolving relationships considered in the nearer-term.

**Follow-up:** The report will be posted on the NADC website Nov 30. The topic aligns with an NADC focus area and may provide information for further collaborative work with the colleges.

### **Rural Colleges Innovative Practices Review and Toolkit**

**Date:** 2011

**Writer/Researcher:** Toma and Bouma

**Purpose:** To assess innovative models and best practices of rural resource-based colleges for application to northern Alberta colleges in regard to their economic, social, community and business needs.

**Summary:** The report investigated innovative models and best practices related to the northern colleges' economic, social, community and business needs. The research focused on rural specific, resource-based institutions and their communities. The information was then compiled into a "toolkit". The toolkit was intended to stimulate new ideas surrounding engagement and the colleges' role in the community. It was also meant to provide guiding principles for innovative change to improve regionally based service



delivery and impacts.

**Follow-up:** The report and toolkit are posted on the NADC website. There is a potential partnership with Portage College to implement some of the toolkit ideas within the college.

### Investigation of Professional Development Utilization in Northern Colleges

**Date:** March 2010

**Writer/Researcher:** Russell Sawchuk, Steppingstones Partnership, Inc.

**Purpose:** To assess use of professional development and educational technologies in Grande Prairie Regional College, Keyano College and Northern Lakes College.

**Summary:** The study undertook an environmental scan of the college populations and a literature review of professional development best practices. The report touches on the many forces influencing use of technology in instruction and the need for professional development to adjust accordingly. College staff participated in a survey as part of the study to assess professional development priorities and interests, and preferred delivery methods. The report makes recommendations on ways to improve and enhance the planning, administration and operation of professional development programs and activities and offers suggestions on how to encourage and advance the use of learning technologies.

### Student Recruitment - Best Practices

**Date:** 2009

**Writer/Researcher:** Aylward Research Services

**Purpose:** To provide a literature review of best practices for student recruitment, to analyze target markets for post-secondary education, and outline target market profiles and potential recruitment statistics for the partner colleges in northern Alberta.

**Summary:** The report gives an overview of the five colleges in northern Alberta, and outlines the economic contribution and post-secondary needs of the region. It analyzes the post-secondary market in Canada, by age and from a psycho-economic perspective, important for recruiters. It then presents thirty recruitment best practices and offers benchmarks against which the colleges can assess their current recruitment efforts. The report recommends a realignment of recruitment efforts to match the demographics of their catchment areas, and program services and schedules to reflect the target markets. It also identifies the detrimental effect of some of the brokered programs on local offerings and suggests re-assessment of these.

### An Evaluation of High School Leavers and Post-secondary Entrance in Northern Alberta

**Date:** March 2007

**Writer/Researcher:** Steven Lakey, MBA, CMC

**Purpose:** to gain a better understanding of the number of northern Alberta high school graduates and non-graduates who continue on to postsecondary studies; the number of grade 12 graduates who enter the workforce directly following completion of studies; and some of the best practices with respect to high school to postsecondary education transfer programs.

**Summary:** The percentage of high school students continuing on to postsecondary studies is lower in northern Alberta. Non-high school diploma holders who continue on to postsecondary studies is about 3% to 5% of the total number of grade 12 students. The number of students who will enter the workforce directly (rather than continue on to postsecondary studies) is estimated to be 42.5% to 63.0% province-wide and 48.2% to 65.3% for Northern Alberta. The report pointed "Middle College"; "Early College" and





“Tech Prep” as programs of most relevance to Clearinghouse stakeholders, outlined principles of the programs and recommended working to implement similar programs.

### Research to Evaluate the Shortage of Skilled Workers in Northern Alberta

**Date:** 2006

**Writer/Researcher:** Steven Lakey, MBA, CMC

**Purpose:** Identify industries/occupations with a shortage of skilled workers and clarify concerns about this shortage; identify training or upgrading opportunities for new forms of production, changes in technology and/or emerging opportunities and help to focus and orchestrate the concerted efforts of the post-secondary institutions, industry, business and government to address the issues.

**Summary:** Based on a literature review, Census and other data, the report selects 30 occupational categories for further review of skills and training requirements. Technological changes and other factors are considered and provincial and federal strategies reviewed. The report concludes that there are considerable differences in population growth rates, and composition of the population and labour force that will may need unique solutions. A series of recommendations focus on short-term, medium and long-term actions.

### Types of Post-secondary Education and Training that Current and Potential Adult Students Want

**Date:** 2006

**Writer/Researcher:** Emerging Directions Consulting Ltd.

**Purpose:** To research the types of post-secondary education and training programs and courses current and prospective students express interest in taking or need for their career goal, are willing to enrol in, including e-learning and credit/ non-credit programs or courses.

**Summary:** The report reviews literature related to the project’s focus areas, incorporates data from the 1996 and 2001 Census data that reflect trends in a variety of career preparation/training/education programs, including: literacy and basic education, high school and general equivalency diploma, career certificate or diploma, university, and those employed who are in need of or desire upgrading or advanced/continuing education. The report outlines the results of survey data gathered from students currently enrolled in academic and career programs in the partner colleges as well as a sample of Northern Alberta residents accessing career services.

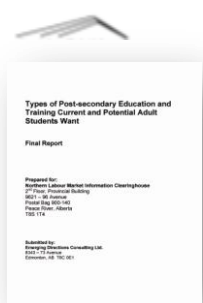
### Employee Training in Northern Alberta

**Date:** October 2004

**Writer/Researcher:** Joan Aylward-Heffernan

**Purpose:** to identify the employee training needs of the employers within the northern region, and 2) to identify who is providing this training.

**Summary:** The report survey a wide range of northern organizations and companies to determine training needs and interest in college-provided programs. Respondents were mostly in small private businesses. Expertise in a subject matter was seen as the main reason for selecting a trainer. The report makes recommendations to capture the private training market, including offering training coordination services and working with professional associations to bring in experts.





### Using Technologies to Support Program Delivery for Northern Alberta Colleges

**Date:** April 2004

**Writer/Researcher:** Beverly A. MacKeen, Ph.D. and Associates

**Purpose:** To provide information that will assist the colleges in making the transition to technology based instruction in a manner most beneficial to potential students in small and remote communities.

**Summary:** The report describes Alberta's SuperNet and then outlines general principles for electronic instruction. It reviews information on distance learning related to Aboriginal students and highlights best practices. It compares the cost of delivering on-line and then provides sources of information and funding.



### Employer Provision of Employability Skills

**Date:** March 2003

**Writer/Researcher:** Beverly A. MacKeen PhD and Associates

**Purpose:** To investigate methods of improving adult literacy and other employability skills on the job.

**Summary:** There are several ways for employers and colleges to define the essential skills workers need in various occupations. Built around the definition of essential skills promoted by Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), the Test of Workplace Essential Skills (TOWES) has been used across the country to assess the skills of the workforce. In Alberta, the Framework for Essential Competencies to Working, Learning and Living (ECF) has been developed. It defines minimum workplace competency standards. The Conference Board of Canada's report on Employability Skills, released in 2000, includes behavioural competencies. Several colleges have developed specific programs for teaching essential skills. One example is the Keyano College Effective Reading in Context (ERIC) program, which increases critical reading skills for workers in the oil and gas industry. Its companion piece Working in Numeracy (WIN) is tailored to workers in the construction industry. There are also sectoral initiatives through the Alberta Workforce Essential Skills Steering Committee (AWES). Industry organizations have worked with groups like AWES to develop on-the-job training programs for their workers in industries such as forestry and construction.



### Special Education in Northern Alberta

**Date:** June 2002

**Writer/Researcher:** Joni Heffernan

**Purpose:** To provide the demographic information needed to ensure that Teacher Assistant curriculums are on target to the needs of potential employers.

**Summary:** This report covers the different types of disabilities and special needs recognized by Alberta Learning. The prevalence of each category of differentiated learner is provided in the paper so that Teacher Assistant curriculums can be designed to address the needs of different learning needs. The need for well-trained Teacher Assistants in the NADC region is strong; of the total provincial students with a severe disability, 21% attend school in northern Alberta.



### **Emerging Best-Practices for Servicing Post-Secondary Students with Disabilities**

**Date:** March 2002

**Writer/Researcher:** Joni Heffernan

**Purpose:** To summarize the emerging best practices for serving students with disabilities at post-secondary institutions.

**Summary:** Best practices include providing students with academic accommodations, adaptive technologies, recognizing multiple categories of disabilities, providing psycho-educational assessments through the institution, and making the campus physically accessible.

## ***Economic Development and Diversification***



### **Demographic Changes in Northern Alberta and Associated Potential Implications for Northern Colleges**

**Date:** April 2004

**Writer/Researcher:** Steven Lakey

**Purpose:** To complete an analysis of demographic changes in northern Alberta, both past and future, and unique challenges and opportunities for Clearinghouse colleges and the NADC.

**Summary:** Data from the 1996 and 2001 Census were compiled and analyzed as these related to immigration, literacy, need for English as a second language, under-employed groups, and age-wave trends. For the latter, projections were based on a medium growth scenario. Information is presented by the Census Divisions included in northern Alberta.



### **A Report on the Knowledge-Based Economy**

**Date:** March 2004

**Writer/Researcher:** Jim Klinge, Partner, Emerging Directions Consulting Ltd.

**Purpose:** To identify the implications of a knowledge-based economy for northern Alberta colleges

**Summary:** This Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse Report focuses on the topic of the knowledge-based economy. It defined what the knowledge-based economy is, offers an overview of the research done on the knowledge-based economy, and identifies some of the key findings of the research. It then discusses the responses of the federal government, Alberta government, and the Canadian business sector to the evolving knowledge-based economy. The implications of the knowledge-based economy on Canadian urban and rural areas are then examined. This leads to a discussion of knowledge based workers, the skills required in the knowledge-based economy, and the situation facing low skilled workers in an increasingly knowledge-based economy. The report examines the Alberta SuperNet in terms of providing an overview of the project, describing the major benefits it offers, and discussing training implications.



### **Changes in Agriculture in Alberta and Associated Potential Programming Implications at Northern Colleges**

**Date:** January 2003

**Writer/Researcher:** Steven Lakey, MBA, CMC

**Purpose:** The 2001 Agricultural Census brought several new trends and changes to agriculture in Alberta to light. This report provides more in-depth information on these changes so that the members of the Clearinghouse can best evaluate what programs



should be offered to best serve Albertans.

**Summary:** This report provided an overview of current agricultural trends as reflected in the 2001 Agricultural Census. Growth potential and potential issues were identified in a wide range of agricultural sectors: opportunities were identified for the greenhouse industry, functional foods and nutraceuticals, non-timber forest products, certified organic farming, transgenic (genetically modified) foods, agri-tourism, non-traditional livestock, and other miscellaneous sectors, including potatoes, pulses, value-added and game birds.



### **Agri-Tourism in Northern Alberta**

**Date:** September 2002

**Writer/Researcher:** Beverly A. MacKeen, PhD and Associates

**Purpose:** Building on the Tourism North report published in July 2002, this report provides more insight on the development of agri-tourism.

**Summary:** Information was gathered from employees of Agriculture and Rural Development on a new agri-tourism initiative. At the time of the report, there were seven recognized agri-tourism operators north of Edmonton. Agri-tourism is a growth industry; tourists to rural areas are interested in nostalgia, rural lifestyles, the business of agriculture, and home-grown food. Opportunities for agri-tourism include farm tours, outdoor festivals, fruit and vegetable “u-pick” operations, hunting, wildlife viewing and photography. Agriculture and Rural Development has made materials on agri-tourism available online.



### **Tourism North**

**Date:** July 2002

**Writer/Researcher:** Beverly A. MacKeen, PhD and Associates

**Purpose:** To investigate relevant issues pertinent to the tourism industry in northern Alberta.

**Summary:** In 1999, northern Alberta attracted 7% of total person visits into Alberta. The majority of these visitors were Albertans, and over 50% were from northern Alberta. Two potential areas for diversifying northern Alberta tourism are ecotourism and Aboriginal tourism. The report provided examples of successful Aboriginal tourism projects, including Fort Chipewyan Lodge and the Narrows Cultural Resort. It was noted that it is important to market tourism in northern Alberta to the right markets. For example, Americans spend the most in outdoor tour adventures, while Canadians prefer “dual track” packages that include both outdoor and cultural activities. Challenges in attracting tourism to the north were identified as a lack of infrastructure, lack of awareness of the value of tourism and a lack of regional tourism planning and partnerships.



### **Report on Science and Innovation Centres**

**Date:** April 2002

**Writer/Researcher:** Emerging Directions Consulting Ltd.

**Purpose:** To examine the purpose and function of science and innovation centres, particularly as they relate to, or are part of, post-secondary institutions.

**Summary:** Three examples of science and innovation centres in Alberta are provided. The Edmonton Research Park, Olds College for Innovation, and the University of Calgary Research Park are examples of different models that promote research and technological

development. These centres are also used for research in the social sciences and business incubation. Post-secondary institutions that successfully launch science and innovation centres attract entrepreneurial faculty, strong graduate students, build connections with private industry, and contribute to the economic development of the region. Although there are significant benefits to housing a science and innovation centre, the resources required are substantial. The Clearinghouse partners were encouraged to consider the benefits and drawbacks of a centre, and to link their resources together if a science and innovation centre project is to be pursued.

### Skill Development and Training Opportunities between Alberta and the Northwest Territories

**Date:** February 2002

**Writer/Researcher:** Emerging Directions Consulting Ltd.

**Purpose:** Following up on the need identified at an Alberta-NWT MOU meeting, this study identifies opportunities for training and skill development between the two jurisdictions.

**Summary:** Alberta and NWT have similar training and labour market needs. However, Aurora College in NWT can only accommodate long-time northerners. There is an opportunity for colleges in northern Alberta to provide programs to residents of NWT who have only lived there a short time. In turn, northern colleges could train Albertans for positions that are difficult to recruit for in NWT and offer study or work placements in the Territory. Northern colleges should consider offering mining programs to capitalize on the need for labourers in the NWT's diamond mines. Northern colleges and Aurora College should be in regular contact, and should share success stories and best practices. The NADC was encouraged to work with NWT Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development to find northern colleges that would be interested in offering the "Introduction to Prospecting Course."

### Recruitment

#### An Evaluation of High School Leavers and Post-secondary Entrance in Northern Alberta

**Date:** March 2007

**Writer/Researcher:** Steven Lakey, MBA, CMC

**Purpose:** to gain a better understanding of the number of northern Alberta high school graduates and non-graduates who continue on to postsecondary studies; the number of grade 12 graduates who enter the workforce directly following completion of studies; and some of the best practices with respect to high school to postsecondary education transfer programs.

**Summary:** The percentage of high school students continuing on to postsecondary studies is lower in northern Alberta. Non-high school diploma holders who continue on to postsecondary studies is about 3% to 5% of the total number of grade 12 students. The number of students who will enter the workforce directly (rather than continue on to postsecondary studies) is estimated to be 42.5% to 63.0% province-wide and 48.2% to 65.3% for Northern Alberta. The report pointed "Middle College"; "Early College" and "Tech Prep" as programs of most relevance to Clearinghouse stakeholders, outlined principles of the programs and recommended working to implement similar programs.



### Reasons for Students Going South

**Date:** September 2002

**Writer/Researcher:** Wendy M. Doughty, PhD

**Purpose:** To investigate why students graduating from high schools in northern Alberta choose to pursue post-secondary education outside of the region.

**Summary:** This report gathered information on where students attending high schools in northern Alberta intended to go to college or university through surveys and Alberta Learning's *Common Information System*. Students from several school boards showed a strong preference for attending northern institutions, and several showed a strong preference for southern institutions. Focus groups for students who graduated from northern high schools were organized on campuses outside of the NADC region. Students who chose to go to school outside of the NADC cited lack of program access, perception of lesser quality or program of study and a desire to move away from home as their primary reasons for leaving. The report contained several recommendations for encouraging students to study in northern Alberta, including the lower cost of living and strong linkages to career paths.

## Specific Training Programs



### Information Technology Related Skills and Training Needs in Northern Alberta

**Date:** June 2007

**Writer/Researcher:** Steven Lakey, MBA, CMC

**Purpose:** To assess employment opportunities and trends in use and adoption of IT in key industries in Northern Alberta; to assess satisfaction with graduates from IT programs provided by northern colleges and where programs might be improved or new programs introduced; and to focus efforts to address issues and opportunities arising from the study.

**Summary:** The report outlined the most common hardware and software uses and core skills needed amongst IT users and concluded that college-level (vs. university level) programs were most suitable to meet these needs. Few of the respondents were aware of northern college programs. The report offered suggestions of new programs to specific colleges and some general suggestions. It provided estimates of new IT positions expected over the next three years and touched on strategies to attract and retain IT workers. Recommendations focused on increasing awareness of the colleges' programs, and including the core skills in programs as identified by respondents.



### Alternative Energy Sources and Associated Education and Skills Requirements

**Date:** 2006

**Writer/Researcher:** Steven Lakey, MBA, CMC

**Purpose:** To gain a better understanding of alternative energy sources and their associated educational and skills requirements.

**Summary:** The report reviews the following alternative or renewable energy sources: wind, solar, fuel cells, small scale hydro, earth energy, co-generation, biomass and biogas. For each it provides an overview of the technology and infrastructure requirements, history, advantages, disadvantages and costs. It also reviews the global, Canadian and Alberta markets and trends. It identifies public policies and strategies, and regulatory or business issues and concerns. Finally it reviews the implications for training including direct and related occupations, knowledge requirements, and existing and planned educational programs in Canada and elsewhere and makes recommendations for each technology.





### **Heavy Equipment Operators Opportunity Report**

**Date:** May 2004

**Writer/Researcher:** Jim Klinge, Partner, Emerging Directions Consulting Ltd.

**Purpose:** To propose recommendations to northern Alberta colleges about training of heavy equipment operators.

**Summary:** The report defines heavy equipment operators and the work they do. It describes the characteristics, skills, and knowledge required and the industry requirements. It then identifies the current and future demand and supply in northern Alberta and concludes that operators will continue to be in high demand. The report recommends college-industry partnerships, shared curriculum with the Alberta Road building and Heavy Construction Association and career and training awareness amongst high school students.



### **A Review of Issues Pertaining to the Apprenticeship System in Northern Alberta**

**Date:** April 2003

**Writer/Researcher:** Steven Lakey, MBA, CMC

**Purpose:** To review completion rates for apprenticeships in northern Alberta and to provide an overview of the issues and challenges in Alberta's apprenticeship system.

**Summary:** The report provided an overview of the current apprenticeship system, an analysis of pre-apprenticeship essential skills training programs, alternate models for apprenticeship delivery and delivery models in other jurisdictions, methods of enhancing the perception of apprenticeship programs and linkages between Canadian jurisdictions, and tuition fee equity between apprenticeships and other programs of study. At the time of this report, there were 40 000 registered apprentices in over 50 designated trades. Additionally, there is an apprenticeship program for Aboriginals in Edmonton, Fort McMurray, and at the time of this report, High Level. In 2001, 3 256 apprentices were certified according to provincial standards, and another 2 828 received Red Seal certification. Northern Alberta had a high completion rate for apprentice electricians, welders, carpenters and heavy equipment technicians. Completion rates were lower for parts technicians, millwrights, steamfitters and gasfitters, and auto service technicians. Students were more likely to complete an apprenticeship if they completed a pre-entry program first. It was recommended that northern colleges encourage apprentices to take pre-apprenticeship training.



### **A Diploma of Social Work in Northern Alberta**

**Date:** October 2002

**Writer/Researcher:** Joni Heffernan

**Purpose:** To provide information on the development of a diploma program in social work in northern Alberta.

**Summary:** Agencies in northern Alberta often hire social work professionals that do not hold a DSW or BSW. However, the report showed that there is strong support among northern social service providers to develop a DSW program, as well as a BSW program. Several universities offer the BSW as a distance education program, and at the time of this report, the University of Calgary-Access program offered the BSW program in Peace River, Slave Lake, Grande Prairie and High Level. Due to the popularity of distance education options, it was recommended that the Clearinghouse partners explore the possibility of offering DSW programs online.



### Specializations in Public Administration and Business Administration

**Date:** May 2002

**Writer/Researcher:** Beverly A. MacKeen, PhD and Associates

**Purpose:** To investigate the requirements for program offerings in the field of business and public administration.

**Summary:** Training options for public administration professionals include the University of Alberta's Faculty of Extension. Provincial and federal employees can take programs offered through their employer, often in conjunction with a post-secondary institution. Other programs discussed included Banff Centre programs targeted to Aboriginal leaders and the Aboriginal Leadership Institute. Needs identified in stakeholder interviews included expansion of the Alberta Blue Seal program, and articulation from college to university.



### Industry Certifications Ideas for Short Course Offerings or Linkages

**Date:** April 2002

**Writer/Researcher:** Joni Heffernan

**Purpose:** To offer ideas to the Clearinghouse partners on the types of short course industry certifications they could offer.

**Summary:** Short course offerings are generally less than a week in length, and represent a significant opportunity for skills upgrading. The report has suggestions for possible short term courses in several industries, including: computer technology, glass making, agriculture, construction, environment, human resources, hospitality, economic development, oil and gas, and steam and compressed air.



### Pre-employment Training

**Date:** March 2002

**Writer/Researcher:** Beverly MacKeen, PhD

**Purpose:** To investigate industry requirements for pre-employment training programs in northern Alberta, and to identify possible partnerships between northern colleges.

**Summary:** There is a lack of knowledge among northern residents about pre-employment training programs. Colleges have such programs for the oil and gas and construction industries, but are reluctant to market these programs as enrolment may be low. Pre-employment programs may an effective way for Aboriginal residents to join the workforce; unemployed oil and gas industry workers are also strong candidates.



### Teacher Assistant Training Options for Residents of Northern Alberta

**Date:** January 2002

**Writer/Researcher:** Joni Heffernan

**Purpose:** To describe and critique the Teacher Assistant programs that are accessible to northern Albertans.

**Summary:** Six institutions offered Teacher Assistant programs through distance education. Four had complete programs (University of Calgary, Red Deer College, Grant MacEwan College and the Saskatchewan Institute of Technology), while and two had partial programs (Medicine Hat College and Grande Prairie Regional College). On-campus programs were offered at Keyano College, Lakeland College, Northern Lakes College (with Grant MacEwan) and Portage College. Although northern colleges offer TA programs, the report found that and two had partial programs.





# *Experience Northern Enlightenment*

Investing in the future of the north hinges on having access to quality, timely data and information. Our partners come to us for information about northern demographics, economic data and statistics, as well as for input on priorities for development in the north. Reports are often an integral part of larger or long term initiatives.

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