

Northern Alberta Development Council
Helping deliver on the promise of the future

2012
2013





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Many photographs in this report were selected from amongst the excellent submissions in NADC's photo contests



MESSAGE from the CHAIR



I am pleased to present the 2012-2013 Annual Report on behalf of the Northern Alberta Development Council. The report highlights Council's achievements and the support of its many partners.

Here are the highlights:

- The new *Contribution of the NADC region to the Alberta and Canadian Economies* report once again highlights the importance of the north to the province and Canada. We have distributed this report widely as a tool to support the socio-economic needs of the region.
- With respect to economic development and diversity, transportation issues remain key – investment is required for roads, rail and air, as well as sea port access. Such investment would support all other areas of our economy, including agriculture, forestry, tourism and health care.
- The NADC Bursary program continues its vital role to attract and retain skilled professionals in the north, offering over 220 return service bursaries to students this past year. Its success was confirmed by the Bursary Longitudinal Study, completed after 10 years of data collection. It found that 73 per cent of bursary recipients remained in northern Alberta, a surprisingly high number.
- I am pleased that the NADC has taken many steps to make the north more inclusive. We have helped develop a transportation options guide for seniors and examined car-sharing in rural communities. We have supported a community guide to positive youth development, and inclusive community projects.

Lastly, the NADC helped collect wisdom gained by the Town of Slave Lake in its recovery from the 2011 wildfire. The Council and Town hope that it assists other communities to prepare for and recover from major calamities. This is exactly what the NADC is about: "A stronger Alberta through a stronger north."

Yours truly,

Pearl Calahasen
MLA for Lesser Slave Lake



OVERVIEW of the NADC

COUNCIL



Pearl Calahasen



Brian Allen

The Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) champions the cause of Alberta's northern economy and communities by exploring opportunities for growth and working on strategic priorities. It currently reports to the Ministry of Enterprise and Advanced Education.



Ken Noskey



John Brodrick

The Council is made up of nine public members and one elected Member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. Council membership reflects the geographic, cultural and vocational diversity of northern communities. In 2012-2013, Pearl Calahasen, MLA for Lesser Slave Lake, chaired the Council. Williard Stebchuk of Whitecourt was Vice Chair. The other members were:



Andre Harpe



David Kirschner

Brian Allen, Grimshaw
 Ken Noskey, Peavine
 John Brodrick, Manning
 Andre Harpe, Valhalla Centre
 David Kirschner, Fort McMurray

Andy Neigel, Athabasca
 Pat O'Neill, St. Paul
 Williard Stebchuk, Whitecourt
 Eva Urlacher, Cold Lake



Andy Neigel



Williard Stebchuk

The NADC is the only mandated regional and economic development organization spanning northern Alberta.



Pat O'Neill



Eva Urlacher

NADC's Vision for northern Alberta

A stronger Alberta through a stronger north.

Mission

To identify and implement sustainable measures that will advance northern development, and advise government on opportunities and issues for the benefit of Albertans.

Core Business

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

MINISTRY BUSINESS PLAN GOALS

The NADC supported the following goals of Enterprise and Advanced Education:

Goal 4: *Alberta has a stronger and more competitive economy*

Goal 5: *Alberta has a skilled labour force that contributes to economic prosperity*

NADC'S KEY STRATEGIES

The NADC partners with others to support the goals of the ministry. Partners include other jurisdictions and ministries, northern communities, business and industry, learning providers, and students. Initiatives fit within the following key strategies:

- Build partnerships among key stakeholders to establish priorities and pursue northern opportunities
- Foster economic strength and diversity by supporting development in transportation, value-added agriculture, tourism, health and other areas
- Support initiatives to increase northern skill levels, in partnership with northern communities, business, industry, learning providers and students
- Increase awareness about Northern Alberta's employment and lifestyle opportunities.



THE NADC REGION

The Northern Alberta Development Council region represents 60 per cent of Alberta's landmass and only 9 per cent of the Province's total population. It contains 100 per cent of Alberta's oil sands deposits; 86 per cent of its forests; 28 per cent of its farmland; and 30 per cent of the province's conventional oil and gas.

Economic strength

The northern economy and northern employment have been relatively strong in the past fiscal year:

- The value of forest industry shipments increased by 14 per cent in 2012, as compared to 2011, as a result of strong domestic demand and rising prices for wood products such as lumber and oriented strand board. GDP for this sector rose 11 per cent over the same period on higher lumber and OSB volumes.
- The percentage of Alberta's natural gas that is produced in the north has fluctuated between 34 per cent and 35 per cent over the past five years. An estimated 1.6 trillion cubic feet (45 billion cubic metres) of natural gas was produced in the north in 2012.
- Oil production in the NADC region for the year ending in 2012 was over 750 million barrels (119 million cubic metres) of oil or 83 per cent of the Alberta total. This is an increase of 12 per cent over last year.
- Crude bitumen production from northern Alberta's oil sands rose 10 per cent in 2012 to 112 million cubic metres. This represented \$54 million from mining and \$58 million from in-situ. SCO production (part of bitumen production) rose 4 per cent in 2012 to 52.3 million cubic metres. In-situ bitumen production rose 16 per cent in 2012 to 58 million; mined bitumen production rose 4 per cent to 54 million.

OVERVIEW of the NADC

- In March 2013 the value of major construction projects (valued at \$5 million or greater) was \$125 billion in northern Alberta, and the northern regions accounted for 61 per cent of the total value of Alberta projects.
- Housing starts (for areas with population 10,000+) in 2012 rose less than 1 per cent over the previous year.
- The region has a \$70,000 annual average individual income compared to a provincial average of \$54,000, though many households had incomes comparable to the profile of the rest of Alberta.
- In 2012, investment in the oil sands totaled \$25.2 billion, an increase of 11 per cent from 2011. In 2012, the oil sands accounted for 30 per cent of total non-residential investment in the province.

Socio-economic challenges

While the region's economy is strong, there are challenges associated with this¹.

- The region is quite focused on resource extraction, particularly the oil sands and also agriculture and forestry. It is therefore more subject to volatility than diversified economies, and to global policies and markets.
- Labour force participation rates are high and workers need to be imported from outside the region.
- The resource industry accounts for a very high percentage of the labour force.
- While average income is high, there is a disparity between those who have the skills to participate in the economy and residents of the region who do not.



¹ Nichols Applied Management and Northern Alberta Development Council, "Contribution of the NADC Region to the Alberta and Canadian Economies." www.nadc.ca, p. 18-20



NADC STRATEGY: BUILD PARTNERSHIPS, PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES

Through meetings and consultations, the NADC gains valuable insights into emerging priorities in the region. Conferences and workshops are useful opportunities for northerners to build partnerships and share information.

NADC Council meetings

The NADC met four times in 2012-2013:

- At the June meeting in **Edmonton**, Council heard about the Forest Products Roadmap developed by the forest sector and the Government of Alberta, which charts the course for the Alberta forest sector. Council also reviewed the outcome and recommendations contained in a study on the challenges and opportunities facing Alberta's forestry industry.
- At the September meeting in **Athabasca**, Council and staff met to develop NADC's strategic framework, which will help guide NADC activities for the next five years. NADC staff also presented an overview of Alberta's agriculture and livestock industry, and a comparison of northern Alberta farms to the rest of the province. Other topics included proposed legislation for an arbitration process for commercial negotiations between rail shippers and railways, and the recommendations outlined in NADC's Contribution of the NADC Region to the Alberta and Canadian Economies Study.
- At the November **Edmonton** meeting, Council heard from Providing Assistance Counselling and Education (PACE) about its services to individuals and communities dealing with crisis and trauma in northwest Alberta. The PACE representative pointed to the need for therapists trained to address all types of trauma and for a coordinated approach to delivery of services. Also, Red Arrow provided information on a new passenger bus network that includes scheduled bus services and new routes to Alberta communities through www.albertabus.com. Alberta bus companies have come together to provide an on-line booking centre. Finally, the Northwest Corridor Development Corporation presented the research report Accessing the Corridor – Benefiting from Northwest Alberta's Proximity to Canada's Shortest Route to the Asia Pacific, which was partially funded by the NADC.



NADC STRATEGY: BUILD PARTNERSHIPS, PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES

- At the February meeting in **Grande Prairie**, Council heard about Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society (STARS) operations in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. STARS provided statistics on the number of northern Alberta patients flown in 2012, and shared information on the new Edmonton base at the International Airport. The Executive Director of Alberta Health Services (AHS) Emergency Medical Services introduced the new air ambulance operations facility located adjacent to the new STARS base. Council also heard about the Off-Highway Driver Training Project. This collaboration of the Woodland Operations Learning Foundation (WOLF), Alberta Human Services, Grande Prairie Regional College and the NADC addresses the shortage of off-road truckers for the forestry and oil and gas industries.



Northern Development Ministers Forum (NDMF) 2013 in Fort McMurray

Alberta and Saskatchewan are co-hosting the 2013 Northern Development Ministers Forum in Fort McMurray. The NADC provides the Minister with support services for the Forum. In preparation for the 2013 forum, Alberta is contributing to research on priorities identified at the 2012 forum, including information and communications technology; impact benefit agreements; and housing.



Northwest Territories and Alberta discuss energy and market access

The Northwest Territories and Alberta Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation and Development provides a forum for the two jurisdictions to discuss issues and to share information on diverse topics of mutual interest. The MOU co-chairs met in November 2012 in Yellowknife. The Ministers discussed a range of topics, including the environment, the economy and the 2013 renewal of the MOU. Of great interest was a discussion on market access and the energy industry.





Northern Alberta Elected Leaders (NAEL) focus on health and transportation

NAEL meetings provide a forum for elected leaders from northwestern Alberta to share information and discuss common issues. There was one meeting this year, held in Grande Prairie. Topics focused primarily on health: a presentation by the EMS Foundation on the Human Patient Simulation Training Unit, as well as updates on health advisory councils, medevacs and emergency medical services. Transportation solutions for the east/west corridor were also presented by the Northwest Corridor Development Corporation.

NADC supports guide to positive youth development

Adopting a positive philosophy toward youth development in one's community can create a welcoming and engaging environment for youth, improve school participation, and increase community and youth involvement. The NADC was an active partner in the Provincial Group for Positive Youth Development. Our partners, the RCMP and Alberta Health Services, with support from Lions Quest Canada (www.lionsquest.ca), worked with the Power Group of Whitecourt and a professional evaluator to create an evaluation resource for communities, which was distributed throughout Canada as a guide for other communities.



Growing the North 2013 attracts 450 participants

The Growing the North Conference has evolved into a major event coordinated by communities and stakeholders in the Grande Prairie region. The NADC was pleased to be a sponsor for this event, which attracted over 480 registrants representing a wide range of sectors. Twenty-two prominent speakers from across Canada shared information and insights about issues and opportunities relevant to the region.

Housing workshop results in regional group

Limitations in housing options continue to challenge the economic well-being of northern communities. They constrain the recruitment and retention of young professionals who are often burdened with student debt. They make life difficult for low-income earners who are trying to participate in the economic growth of the region as well as for those seniors on fixed incomes.

The NADC engaged 45 housing stakeholders – developers, municipal planners, elected leaders, and Family and Community Support Services directors – in a St. Paul housing workshop. Presenters identified the need and shared information on housing initiatives, policies and practices with the aim of inspiring community-industry collaboration and investment in affordable housing. As a result of this workshop, the Lakeland region formed a regional development group to advance their housing agenda.



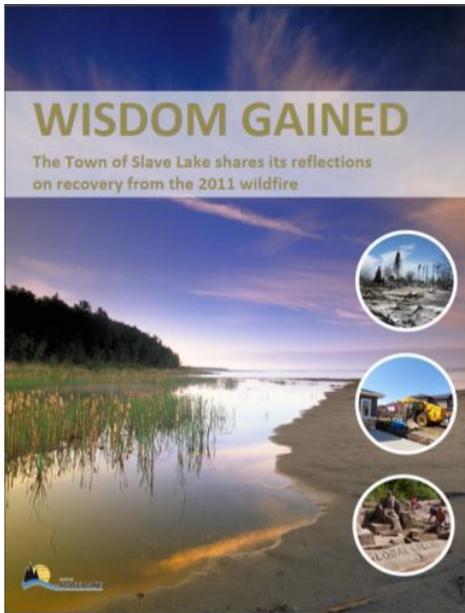
Welcoming and Inclusive Communities (WIC) support Alberta's quality of life

Like every other area in Alberta, northern Alberta relies on newcomers to fill some of its labour gaps. The capability of a community to integrate newcomers is key to supporting its quality of life. In several communities, Welcoming and Inclusive Communities (WIC) committees help newcomers settle in – socially, culturally and economically.

With support from the NADC, along with Alberta Human Services and not-for-profit and private sector groups, three of these committees in Lakeland region (i.e., Cold Lake, Bonnyville and Lac La Biche) received federal funding of almost \$ 140,000 in October 2012 towards a shared inclusion project. It entails assessing needs and then training service providers.

Reporting on Reports 2002-2012 highlights research on important northern topics

The NADC compiled a summary of the many reports over the last ten years that were either prepared by the NADC, outsourced to consultants, or alternatively prepared by others in collaboration with or through funding assistance from the NADC. The reports are grouped by topic: Infrastructure and Transportation, Economic Sectors, Social Development, Education and Labour Force Participation, Economic Development and Strategic Planning. The report is available at www.nadc.ca.



Wisdom Gained: Slave Lake reflects on its recovery from the 2011 wildfire

Slave Lake Mayor and Council asked the NADC to compile information about Slave Lake's recovery from the 2011 wildfire to assist other communities prepare for and recover from major calamities. Working from a municipal perspective, NADC staff interviewed close to 60 people, including town council, town staff, businesses, the MD of Lesser Slave River, Sawridge First Nation and area stakeholders. The resulting report, **Wisdom Gained, The Town of Slave Lake shares its reflections on recovery from the 2011 wildfire** (www.nadc.ca and www.slavelake.ca) covers 18 topics, including council considerations, governance, communication, community and staff wellness, waste management, helping residents rebuild, donations and government support.



NADC STRATEGY: FOSTER ECONOMIC DIVERSITY, SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT

A strong north requires an economy that is competitive and diverse. In response to stakeholder input, the NADC has undertaken a range of initiatives.

Report demonstrates Northern Alberta's contribution to Alberta and Canada's economies

The 2012 edition of the **Contribution of Northern Alberta to Alberta and Canadian Economies** was released and is available on www.nadc.ca. This is the fourth in a series prepared in 2003, 2006 and 2009. Highlights of the report show that the north contributed:

- an estimated \$41 billion or 17 per cent of Alberta's GDP
- 17 per cent of the total tax and royalty revenue collected by the provincial government
- over \$5 billion of provincial royalty revenue from northern oil sands, natural gas and conventional oil in 2011
- \$820 million in provincial and \$2 billion in federal northern personal tax revenue
- corporate taxes of approximately \$611 million provincially and \$922 million federally in 2011
- 55,000 jobs for mobile workers: 47 per cent coming from southern Alberta, 44 per cent from the rest of Canada, four per cent from outside of Canada, and five per cent from within the region
- an estimated \$3 billion in wages paid to mobile workers from outside of Alberta but within Canada
- 30 per cent of public and private capital investment in Alberta from 2005 to 2012
- 80 per cent of forestry output and 20 per cent of agriculture output



Transportation

As the bulk of northern products is exported, transportation infrastructure and services continue to be northern priorities. The NADC conducts research and facilitates stakeholder discussion on these priorities, raising the importance of:

- Enhancing access to western ports for northern products.
- Maintaining an efficient and cost-effective rail transportation and commodity handling system. The NADC is monitoring the progress of the Rail Freight Review Panel recommendations and the impact of changes to the Canadian Wheat Board.
- Fostering the use of Prince Rupert Port facilities, particularly the Prince Rupert Grain and Ridley Coal Terminals. Concern continues on the possible reduction of grain transport through Prince Rupert Grain Terminal, thus affecting northern producers' ability to capitalize on its advantages.
- Improving aviation facilities and services. Convenient and cost-effective air services contribute to the attractiveness of the north as a place to invest, work and live.
- Investment in northern highways – to increase roads to resources, build east-west connectors, and improve high-use highways such as Highways 43 and 63 and bridges. The NADC participated on the Athabasca Oil Sands Area Transportation Coordinating Committee to address that regions' priorities.

Following are several examples of how the NADC is working with other organizations to address northern transportation priorities.

Grande Prairie Multi-Modal Logistical Centre planned



In March 2013, the County of Grande Prairie No. 1 entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Side Management Group to develop a Multi-Modal Logistic Centre for rail and truck transloads. This site will enhance rail service to the Peace Country and, therefore, its business competitiveness. The NADC contributed planning and advice to this initiative.

Providing input regarding Enbridge Pipeline

The NADC participates as an observer on the Enbridge Community Advisory Board Peace Region. In addition to discussing updates of Enbridge plans for building a pipeline to the west coast, participants heard presentations on media perspectives, impacts on trapping, First Nations and Métis consultation, leak detection technology, emergency response planning, and pipeline operations.

The Northwest Corridor Development Corporation (NCDC) continues advocacy

NCDC was officially established as a federal not-for-profit organization in 1998 to raise awareness of the advantages of Canada's underused northern transportation corridor to Prince Rupert. Members include utilities, transportation companies, shippers, labour groups, and municipalities. The NADC continues as a member and advisor, and participated in NCDC's Northern Ports Symposium and Annual General Meeting held in Prince Rupert. Participants heard about rail and port operations, and the potential for new pipelines and an oil terminal.

NADC STRATEGY: FOSTER ECONOMIC DIVERSITY, SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT

Presenters at a January meeting in Yellowknife discussed the potential development of a rail corridor from Alberta to Alaska, learned about cargo handling services at the Port of Prince Rupert and opportunities in transportation in the Northwest Territories as well as the Ports-to-Plains Alliance - the 2300 mile corridor between Texas and Alberta. The NCDC also co-hosted the Land to Sea Symposium which heard presentations on the Canadian Supply Chain Council, role of labour in handling products exported via BC ports and how rail lines handle northern products. More information on NCDC's activities and becoming a member is at www.nwcorridor.com.

Presenting transportation options for seniors

The NADC has been co-facilitating the Transportation Strategies for Seniors Committee with the Alberta Motor Association (AMA). The group meets four times per year to share information, develop educational materials, and explore partnerships for transportation options for seniors. This year, the committee released a Seniors' Transportation Guide for Grande Prairie and area, similar to other AMA publications in southern Alberta. The guide is available online at www.nadc.ca.

Presenting vehicle sharing as an option

The NADC completed a report on vehicle sharing – its premise, examples of different programs across Canada, and an example of a rural vehicle-sharing cooperative. The report is available online at www.nadc.ca.



Agriculture

Continued research into potency of flax

Chemical analysis in 2012-2013 has confirmed that northern flax seed has desirable compounds and dietary fibres in addition to high content omega-3 fatty acid. Quantities of some compounds are nine to 66 per cent higher in Peace Country flax seed compared to that grown in central Alberta. The NADC has committed funds to Alberta Innovates and the University of Alberta to continue research in northern flax seed.

The next step is to develop early maturing flax with high content of these desirable compounds. Using visible screening of a non-GMO mutant seed, a field trial of high omega-3 content seed was carried out in 2012 with daily recording of flowering time, overall plant appearance and seed pod development. Selected harvested seed lines will be further screened in the greenhouse and planted in 2013. The target for commercialization remains 2016.

Success could have a significant impact on northern agriculture. Current value of flax production is about \$300 million in Canada, and some forecast it could be as much as \$1.5 billion by 2015 given the opportunities in seed, meal and fibre applications. Some advocates predict that this new flax seed potentially could be more profitable than canola to northern producers. Growing flax seed would also serve as a significant alternative choice in crop rotation.



Tourism

Tourism has significant potential for growth in northern Alberta. The NADC wound down its involvement in the Deh Cho and Boreal Birding projects this year, and is beginning to explore ways to support development of other opportunities. The NADC participated in an advisory capacity to one of the assessments of tourism investment opportunities being completed by Tourism Parks and Recreation.



Deh Cho Travel Connection

Deh Cho Travel Connection offers diamonds to drive the northwest. Visitors who venture to drive through northwest Alberta, the Northwest Territories and northeast British Columbia are eligible to win a Canadian diamond or other prizes as they collect Deh Cho Passport stamps at information centres on their trip. The continuing annual “Diamonds in the Rough” campaign is sponsored by the Deh Cho Travel Connection, a marketing coalition of more than 20 communities, municipal districts, tourism marketing organizations and government agencies, including NADC. Its intended audiences are North American and European visitors. Details are found at www.dehchotravel.ca.

Northern Bird Network develops sample tours

To attract birders to the north, the Northern Bird Network developed some sample travelling tours for its website: www.borealbirding.ca. The Network is a collaboration of communities across the north that highlights the many birding opportunities in northern Alberta. The Boreal Bird Centre, Travel Alberta, and the NADC have supported this tourism initiative.

Health Care

Access to health care services

Access to health is an important topic in northern Alberta:

- The NADC continued to support the Grande Prairie District Chamber of Commerce's work to welcome medical students and increase their interest in that centre as a residency location.
- The NADC gathered information about patient support services and transportation of the deceased from non-health care settings. There were topics raised at Community and Rural Health Planning meetings held by Alberta Health Services northwest Alberta. The NADC also participated in similar meetings in Athabasca and Beaverlodge.
- The NADC continues to look at ways to improve transportation options to health care. In addition to receiving presentations at Council meetings, the NADC has analyzed data received from Health and Wellness on in- and out-patient records and physician claims to help determine travel patterns outside of the region. A community template has been developed and an analysis to determine travel patterns for the NADC region as a whole is planned for the near future.

2012 Alberta Community Physician Attraction and Retention Conference attracts 125

This year's conference, "Physician – Community Connections," included presentations on physician training issues, clinic ownership, medical students' experiences, and the physician locum program. Over 125 participants from more than 50 communities across Alberta came to network, sharing ideas to enhance attraction, recruitment and retention strategies within their own communities. The NADC works collaboratively with the Rural Physician Action Plan (RPAP) to host this annual event. The next conference will be in early 2014.



Forestry

Northern Alberta Forestry Industry Challenges and Opportunities report

The NADC commissioned this report to examine the current state of forestry in northern Alberta. The report identified challenges and opportunities and made recommendations to the NADC for potential follow-up.



NADC STRATEGY: INCREASE SKILL LEVELS

NADC Bursaries and a wide range of other initiatives supported development of the skills needed for strong and vibrant communities.

2012 at a glance

71 NADC Bursaries
14 Medical Bursaries
1 Nurse Practitioner Bursary
5 Pharmacy Bursaries
1 Veterinary Bursary
78 Bursary Partnerships
29 Teacher Bursaries

NADC Bursary Programs

NADC bursaries help to attract and retain the skilled professionals in demand by businesses and communities. Since 2000, the NADC has awarded 3,134 bursaries, and the program maintains a high return-service rate of over 80 per cent. Demand for skilled professionals in the north and for the bursaries far exceeds available funding.

In collaboration with the Alberta Scholarship Programs office of Alberta Enterprise and Advanced Education, the NADC offered 199 return service bursaries to Alberta students this year. This number includes the NADC Bursaries, the higher-valued specialty bursaries, the Bursary Partnerships, and the Northern Student Teacher Bursary offered in collaboration with Alberta Education. Details on NADC bursaries can be found at www.benorth.ca.

2012 NADC Bursaries

28 Health Care
3 Education
6 Social Services
8 Engineering/Technical
5 Business Administration
10 Agriculture/Environment
1 Esthetics

Educational Levels

3 certificate
28 diploma
31 degree
9 masters

NADC Bursary

The **NADC Bursary** focuses on students training in professions determined to be in demand by northern employers. In 2012-2013, 274 Alberta students applied and 71 received NADC Bursaries:

- 68 of \$6,000
- three of \$3,000

Recipients were enrolled in a wide variety and types of education: three certificate programs, 28 diploma programs, 31 degree programs and nine masters programs.

Higher valued NADC Bursaries for specialty programs

Certain programs in demand receive higher bursary values:

- 14 students received \$12,000 **Medical and Dentistry Bursaries** – eight in Medicine and six in Dentistry
- one student received the \$9,000 **Nurse Practitioner Bursary**
- five students received the \$6,000 **Pharmacy Bursary**
- one person received the \$6,000 **Large Animal Veterinary Bursary**

NADC STRATEGY: INCREASE SKILL LEVELS

NADC Bursary Partnerships support 78 students

Bursary Partnerships are an excellent opportunity for businesses and community organizations to bring in the skilled professionals that fit their organization. In the program, sponsors provide the students they select between \$1,000 and \$3,000, and then apply to the NADC for matching bursary funds. Recipients are obligated to provide return service within the NADC region, based on one month of fulltime employment for every \$500 of total bursary support received.

In 2012-2013, 78 partnership bursaries totalling \$253,750 were awarded, with \$125,800 provided through the NADC. The NADC also partnered with one business and one community organization for matching funds for medical and dentistry bursaries in the amount of \$12,000 each. New sponsorships are accepted on an ongoing basis; potential sponsors can contact the NADC.



NADC Bursary Return Service Rate

Recipients of the NADC Bursary enter into an agreement to live and work in northern Alberta when they complete their education - one year of full-time work for each year of bursary support. The NADC follows up with each recipient. Students who do not fulfill their return service obligations repay their bursaries. Bursary repayments are used to fund additional bursaries to benefit students and northern employers.

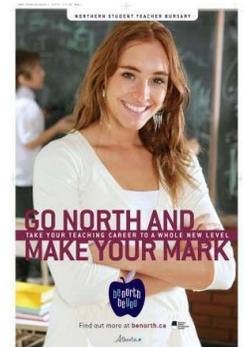
Bursary return service rate

2006-07	81 per cent
2007-08	78 per cent
2008-09	88 per cent
2009-10	87 per cent
2010-11	85 per cent
2011-12	83 per cent
2012-13	82 per cent

Northern Student Teacher Bursary awarded to 29

Teacher attraction and retention in northern, rural and remote Alberta locations is a significant workforce challenge. Population projections for school-age children as well as teacher retirements show that the demand for teachers will only grow.

Alberta Education collaborates with Alberta Scholarship Programs and the NADC to offer the Northern Student Teacher Bursary (NSTB), which requires a return-service obligation from recipients. Superintendents of northern school jurisdictions participate in determining eligibility criteria and selection processes to ensure the most qualified applicants are awarded bursaries. In 2012-2013 applications were restricted to education students who would be qualified to teach high demand subjects such as math and sciences. There were 158 applications, and 21 bursaries of \$16,000 and eight of \$8,000 were awarded.



Northern Health Care Practicum Funding helps 58 students

The Northern Zone of Alberta Health Services administers the Health Care Practicum Funding Program, designed to increase the number of health-care practicum students in the north. Thanks to \$50,000 in funding from the NADC, 58 students who completed a health care practicum in northern Alberta received reimbursement for travel and accommodation to designated locations and practicum positions.



Bursary Longitudinal Study finds more recipients stay in northern Alberta

A comprehensive review of the outcomes for NADC Bursary recipients between 2001 and 2011 was completed this year. The NADC was able to collect and analyze information online from over 150 past recipients about the status of their occupations and northern residency. The NADC determined some of the reasons past recipients choose to either stay or leave northern Alberta once they had completed their return service. Past recipients who are still living in northern Alberta reported a strong connection to their family, good employment opportunities and high wages as reasons for staying. Those who have left indicated that their spouse or partner found work outside of the region, they were offered opportunities for training or employment outside of northern Alberta, and that the communities they lived in were isolated. The NADC also found that 73 per cent of past recipients still live in northern Alberta, which is significantly higher than what might be expected based on a literature review. The Bursary Longitudinal Study is available at www.nadc.ca.



2013 Professional Workforce Scan identifies trends

NADC's Professional Workforce Scan identifies trends in the workforce – which academic credentials employers are searching for and which programs are in high demand. It highlights challenges and opportunities for various sectors across northern Alberta. The newest edition of the scan was completed with a total of 133 participants from 14 sectors providing information. This helps in the selection of recipients for the NADC bursary.



Support for other educational initiatives

Information Clearinghouse supports the northern labour market

Northern post-secondary institutions require labour force and economic information to help them identify new training programs, modify existing ones, or possibly cancel them. The Northern Labour Market Information Clearinghouse, a joint initiative of the NADC and Grande Prairie Regional College, Keyano College, Portage College and Northern Lakes College, provides such information. The Clearinghouse also serves as a forum for communication and cooperation between the partner institutions. The Clearinghouse's most recent report, Analysis of Foundational Learning and Implications for Northern Alberta, documents best practices, funding paradigms, cost-benefit analysis and recommendations for the future of foundational learning in northern Alberta. All past Clearinghouse reports are available on www.nadc.ca.



Job shadowing for Aboriginal Youth

NADC provided \$20,000 to Portage College to support an Aboriginal job shadowing program in 2012 in Lac La Biche. Twelve Aboriginal youth aged 15 to 17 participated in a seven-week summer program which included two weeks of life skills and safety ticket training, followed by hands-on work experience.

NADC STRATEGY: INCREASE SKILL LEVELS

High Prairie Training and Development Centre allows for learning locally

In the High Prairie Training and Development Centre, students – particularly youth and Aboriginal residents – can access the skills training they need to participate in the local economy without leaving their home communities. Northern Lakes College works in partnership with the Tolko Mill site to provide innovative dual credit programming at the high school level, and the NADC assisted in development of this program.

Forestry and driver education

Woodlands Operations Learning Foundation (WOLF) is a non-profit business established by forest resource stakeholders and Northern Lakes College. It delivers woodland environmental, operational and business and other training to educators, agencies and workers. The NADC has continued participation in meetings of WOLF as it works to expand its course offerings. Read more at www.w-o-l-f.ca.

Masters of Social Work degree

In September 2012, a group of 30 students enrolled in a one-time offering of a Masters of Social Work by the University of Calgary in collaboration with Grande Prairie Regional College. The NADC participated in a support group for these students as part of its past work to further social work education in the north.

Young entrepreneurs

Schools in the Grande Prairie region are working with Community Futures to offer business training and entrepreneurial skills to youth through the “Ventures 10, 20, 30” program. A summer entrepreneurial camp offers youth a fun way to develop business skills. The NADC has provided funding in support of these initiatives.



Environmental programming

The NADC provided funding support to Grande Prairie Regional College to assess the need for environment-related training and development. Environmental Programming at GPRC: Research Report helped identify which programs would be viable. The College is pursuing an Indoor Environment Technician program.

Aboriginal entrepreneurship and community meetings

NADC compiled a list of Aboriginal programs and services related to entrepreneurship development which were used by EAE's Entrepreneurship and Regional Development branch as a resource in the toolkit for First Nation and Métis entrepreneurs. Meetings between the NADC and community groups identified barriers such as a lack of program funding for Aboriginal initiatives, isolated communities, challenges with engaging Aboriginal communities, and lack of northern champions and potential partners.



NADC STRATEGY: INCREASE AWARENESS OF THE NORTH

The potential of the north can be limited by a lack of awareness of all it offers. The NADC supported many initiatives to improve awareness of the north and its many lifestyle options.

NADC News highlights key Council activities

The NADC News is prepared following the NADC Council meetings, about four times per year. It provides updates on the meetings as well as key NADC activities. Copies are sent to stakeholders across the north and the rest of Alberta.



NADC.ca

NADC website hits increased by 18 per cent to over 109,000 this year. The website provides information on the NADC's activities, northern statistics, publications and news releases.



OpportunityNorth.ca

Opportunity North offers a vivid overview of northern Alberta. The NADC has worked closely with Alberta Human Services in the past year to feature Opportunity North as a source of information for individuals wanting to learn more about the life and work options in northern Alberta. Web hits increased by 34 per cent to just over 60,000.



BeNorth.ca

Students learn about the NADC bursary programs through the 'BeNorth' brand and website www.benorth.ca. With continued use of the on-line application process, website hits increased by 17 per cent to over 79,600.

Using social media to celebrate 50 years of NADC

This year the NADC played a key role in bringing all branches of the Economic Competitiveness Division online through the use of the social media. As part of NADC's 50th anniversary celebration, historical posts from each year of the NADC's history have been added to its Facebook timeline. Currently, NADC has 120 friends on Facebook, 409 followers on Twitter, and several posts on YouTube.



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

In the year ahead the Northern Alberta Development Council will focus on four priority areas, as identified in its 2013-2016 Strategic Framework.

Transportation and Infrastructure – This area is vital to the economic growth and quality of life of northerners. The NADC will continue to identify and support transportation options related to roads, rail, air, and seaport access. NADC will support:

- initiatives aimed at ensuring Alberta’s competitiveness and sustainability
- the development of connector routes to sea ports to help move commodities efficiently

Workforce Development – Ongoing skilled labour issues create challenges to northern development. The NADC will:

- promote employment and lifestyle opportunities to attract and retain skilled labour to the north
- support initiatives to increase northern skill levels, in partnership with northern communities, post-secondary institutions, business, industry, learning providers and students
- encourage economic growth and community development by fostering entrepreneurship, economic diversity, investment and technological innovation
- Continue to offer NADC bursaries and practicum funding as an important northern attraction and retention tool

Human and Health Services – It is essential that northerners have access to timely and essential human and health services. The NADC will support:

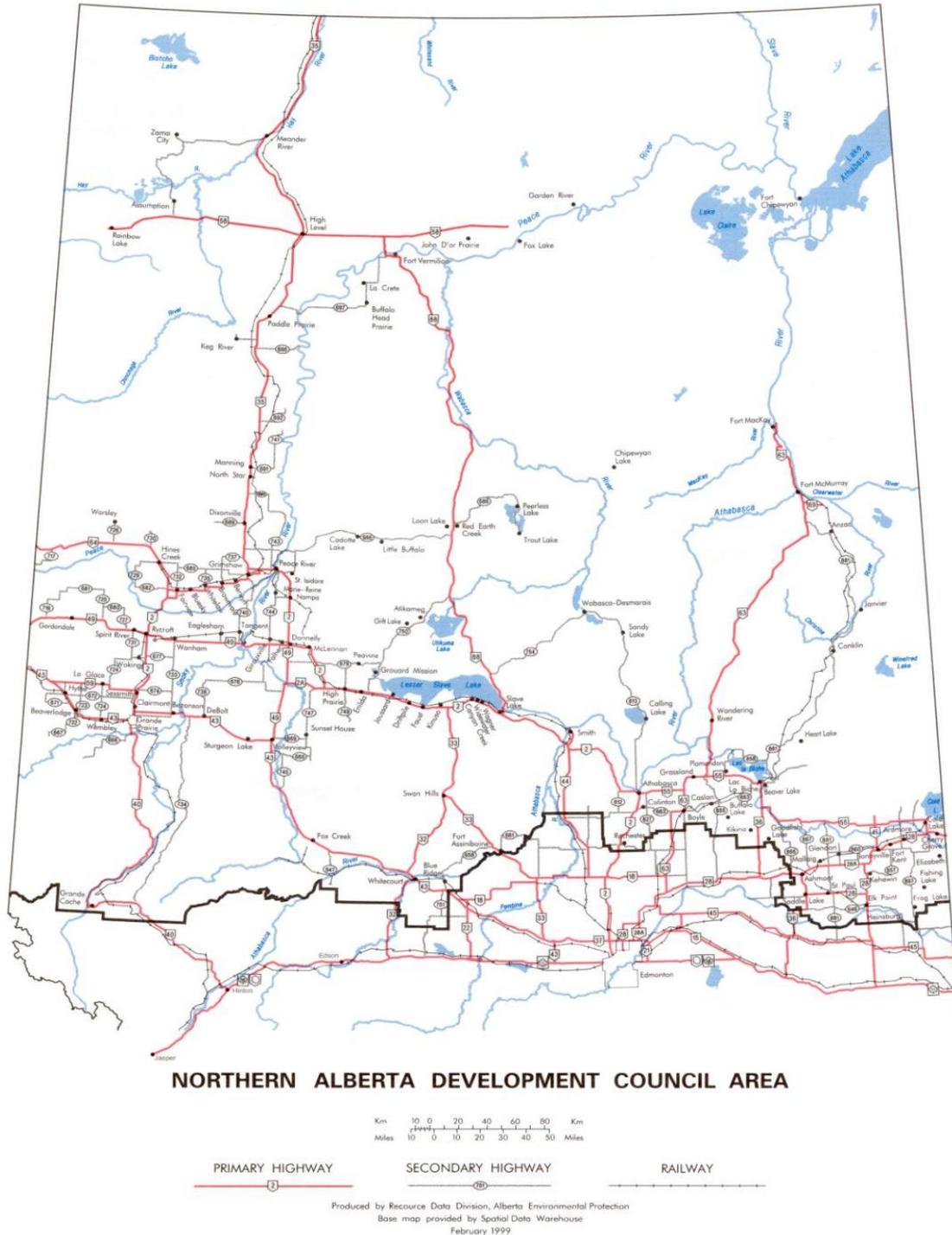
- development of transportation options to access medical and other services
- efforts to attract health professionals to the north
- youth through partnerships with other organizations including industry, police, and primary and post-secondary schools

Resource Management – A strong north depends on responsible management of resources – agriculture, forestry, water and energy. The NADC will:

- gather and provide economic and demographic data to stakeholders promoting regional economic development opportunities
- contribute to the development of comprehensive regional infrastructure sustainability plans
- continue to partner with Alberta Innovates on research that will lead to potential new crops, diversification of the crop system, and increased demand for Alberta flax
- participate in tourism-related initiatives that attract tourists to the north

The Northern Alberta Development Council also will continue to serve as secretariat to the Northern Alberta Elected Leaders Forum, the Northern Development Ministers Forum and the Alberta-Northwest Territories Memorandum of Understanding.

For more information, please go to our website, www.nadc.ca, or visit our Facebook and Twitter pages.



We're putting opportunity on the map.



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