



Indian and Northern
Affairs Canada

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et du Nord Canada



Indian and Inuit Services Directorate
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Success Stories



Canada

Aboriginal people and Northerners in the NWT share a common vision: a thriving, prosperous and sustainable territorial economy. Together, they are making that vision a reality.

By **reviving community opportunities** that support local economic growth, **improving policies** to make organizations more effective and providing skills training for local workers, Northerners and Aboriginal people are ensuring they are **ready for opportunities** that arise.

They are **fostering Northern talent** by investing in arts and culture, and creating demand for Northern events, goods, and services by **marketing the North** across the globe.

By planning ahead, combining strengths, and thinking outside the box, Aboriginal people and Northerners are contributing to a successful, thriving NWT.



Indian and Inuit Services Directorate

The Indian and Inuit Services Directorate (I&IS) is part of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). The directorate supports the unique connection between the Crown and Aboriginal people by working with community members to build relationships, understand and meet the diverse needs of people and organizations, and create opportunities for successful personal and community development.

I&IS offers a number of programs and services and provides a variety of funding programs to help build self-reliant and sustainable communities, increase participation in economic development, and enable Aboriginal people and Northerners to achieve their visions and aspirations.



Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development (SINED)

SINED is a suite of initiatives designed to promote economic development in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon. The goal is to strengthen the territorial economies and increase economic participation by Northerners.

Originally launched in 2004 as a five-year program, SINED funding was renewed at \$90 million over five years in the Government of Canada's Budget 2009: Canada's Economic Action Plan.

Programming for the funding under renewed SINED continues to focus on the following objectives:

- Strengthening the driver sectors of the territorial economies
- Broadening the economic base of each territory
- Strengthening Northerners' abilities to take advantage of economic opportunities
- Increasing co-ordination among partners and programs

Four different programs are offered under SINED:

Targeted Investment Program (TIP)

TIP investments focus on strengthening the economic base of specific sectors or geographic areas within each territory to help create economic opportunities at the local level.

Innovation and Knowledge Fund (I&K)

I&K investments focus on assisting territorial residents to participate in and benefit from innovation and the knowledge-based economy. The program's priority is to help Northerners to seize opportunities in the new economy and to further science and technology.

Partnership and Advisory Forums (PAF)

PAF investments focus on supporting stakeholder groups at the regional, territorial or pan-territorial levels to develop and implement common positions and strategies with regard to economic development issues.

Pan-Territorial Fund (PTF)

PTF is an opportunity-driven fund that provides targeted support to multijurisdictional investments that meet the eligibility criteria for one or more of the other SINED investment programs.



Exploring the Extreme

For the past three years, the Rock and Ice Ultra Race has tested the physical and mental fortitude of participants from around the globe. The ultimate in extreme winter endurance racing, the annual Yellowknife event takes place in March and consists of four aptly-named foot races of varying lengths, including the five km Frozen Toe Trail Break, 55 km Cold Foot Classic, 135 km K-Rock Ultra, and 250 km Diamond Ultra. Though still in its early years, the event has already attracted athletes and media attention from as far away as the US, Europe, Asia, Australia and Africa.

“During the Rock and Ice Ultra Race, several hundred participants come up and bring their family, friends and support crews. They use northern airlines, stay in northern hotels and purchase goods such as local arts and crafts to take home. That, in itself, contributes tremendously to the economy,” says Gerry LePrieur, Executive Director of NWT Tourism.

But for LePrieur and his staff, the real advantage is the international press coverage the event generates. Having quickly recognized the Rock and Ice Ultra Race as a unique opportunity to showcase the territory and its natural assets on the world stage, NWT Tourism jumped on board to boost the event’s international marketing with funding from the Government of Canada’s Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development (SINED) program.

“We certainly appreciate the support of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada,” says LePrieur. “They always go out of their way for us...and they recognize that tourism is pure economic development. These are brand new dollars that come into the community and that is the ultimate economic development. Funding from SINED and other major sponsors like the GNWT’s Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment

and BHP Billiton, provides security for new tourism projects and gives other sponsors the confidence to step up.”

The Rock and Ice Ultra Race is one of the best tourism products to have come along in the last five years, says LePrieur. “In Europe, extreme sporting events are very big. Writers and photographers come from all over the world to review the Rock and Ice Ultra Race, and these are the same people that review other world-class extreme sporting events like the race in the Gobi Desert. That’s the calibre of this event. And [Rock and Ice Ultra] may be even more extreme than running in the heat. It has really put us on the map.”

The Race’s international success also opens up opportunities for other tourism-related events to flourish. With recent cuts to the cost of air travel, LePrieur is predicting a resurgence of tourism activity in the NWT in the next few years. For those considering starting their own event in the North, he recommends forming partnerships with other organizations to make the event larger and longer, and packaging it so people can purchase tickets, flights, accommodation and even some meals all at the same time.

“We forget that it is exotic up here,” adds Ron Ostrom, NWT Tourism’s Director of Marketing. “It’s just as exotic as going on a tropical vacation. In some countries in Europe, wherever you stand you can see a building or some sign of human activity. What we have, these amazing open spaces, is unique.”





Reviving Community Opportunities

Jean Marie River sees the forest for the trees; the surrounding region is rich with white spruce and other species well-suited for forestry. The community once had a sawmill that supplied logs all across the Northwest Territories, says Arnold Gargan, Jean Marie River's Economic Development Officer, but the mill burned down many years ago.

However, following the completion of a Community Sawmill Opportunities Study, funded in part by the Government of Canada's Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development (SINED) program, the sawmill is once again in operation. Existing equipment was found to be in good shape and, with a few procedural improvements, the revived sawmill has already begun producing material to supply the community. "People have lots of firewood, lots of rough lumber," says Gargan. "They are building sheds and cabins on their land."

"Jean Marie River has had a long interest in this industry," says Tom Lakusta, Manager of Forest Resources for the Government of the Northwest Territories' Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR). Lakusta's department and the community

worked with the Government of Canada's First Nations Forestry Program (FNFP), a program jointly-funded by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Natural Resources Canada, to get the operation going again.

The Community Sawmill Opportunities Study was supported by \$26,500 in funding through SINED and \$24,000 from the Government of Canada's First Nations Forestry Program (FNFP). As part of the study, FPIInnovations – Fortintek was contracted to train community members how to operate the equipment safely and establish new procedures. Small sawmill specialist Denis Gagne was instrumental to the project's success, says Lakusta; now, sawmill employees or "sawyers" not only produce lumber and firewood, they also track and record costs associated with sawmill operation. This helps the sawmill, JMR Log Homes Ltd, work toward increased profitability.

"After having done the project, the community is better positioned to maintain and operate a more efficient, productive sawmill," says Natural Resources Canada's Forest Liaison Manager, Lorne West. "In

future, more can be provided from local products as opposed to imported from down south. The project [also] demonstrates collaboration between INAC, FNFP, and the GNWT for the benefit of the community."

And that, according to Lakusta, just scratches the surface. "The development of sustainable resources in a community like Jean Marie River transcends the dollar value," he says, pointing out that while there are a lot of ways to invest in larger cities, even small investments go far in smaller communities. The project's success, says Lakusta, makes it an ideal "blueprint" for other potential sawmill operations in the NWT.

Though the sawmill is closed during the winter months – the equipment's hydraulics require shutdown when the temperature dips below -15°C – Gargan is keeping permits and licences up to date so the sawmill can be up and running again in the summer. In the meantime, Gargan is looking to the future. "I'd like to see the sawmill operation covered and heated so it can run year-round," he says. "I'd also like to see [us] getting into bio-energy [like] wood pellets." As the need for alternatives to fossil fuels grows, the community of Jean Marie River will be ahead of the game.

Fostering Northern Talent

There is a lot of talent in the North, and for 29 years and counting, Folk on the Rocks has been fostering it. Northern performers whose careers began at the festival have gone on to succeed at the national and international levels, including Jesse James (Diga), Tanya Tagaq Gillis, and Leela Gilday. Originating as the Society for the Encouragement of Northern Talent, Folk on the Rocks provides a venue for Northern performers to work together and to showcase their gifts alongside musicians from the south and across the world.

“In all these communities, everyone is doing their own thing, but Folk on the Rocks provides a venue where they can measure themselves and partner with others,” says Lynn Feasey, Folk on the Rocks’ Executive and Artistic Director.

There is no doubt of Folk on the Rocks’ success. The annual, four-day festival has become one of the premier entertainment and cultural events in the NWT. However, it had become apparent that the organization had outgrown its current operational model. “The festival grew incredibly within a short period of time and the organization

needed a plan to move forward. In addition to providing a strategic direction for the future of the festival itself, we wanted to address how to grow into a more year-round organization.” explains Feasey.

Last year, Folk on the Rocks received funding from the Government of Canada’s Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development (SINED) program for the creation of a strategic business and capital plan, with contributions from the City of Yellowknife and the Government of the Northwest Territories’ Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment. This year, \$125,000 in SINED funds are being invested to put the plan into action.

This year’s SINED dollars will go towards infrastructure improvements and repairs to the festival site in order to continue delivering a high calibre of programming, host a wider audience while ensuring safety. The funds will also be used to build portable structures that will reduce annual rental costs, helping the festival to become more self-sustaining. Part of the funds will also be used to develop a fundraising and membership strategy, which will allow Folk on the Rocks to go into

fundraising in a stronger position. “We will be able to attract other partners with this INAC funding standing behind us,” says Feasey. “The strategic plan [also] shows we’re a serious business, looking to become more sustainable and less reliant on government funding.”

SINED funds will also allow the organization to develop into a year-round presence. Year-round events leading up to the festival itself will allow the organization more opportunities to acknowledge those who contribute to the festival’s success. “We want to be able to thank [festival sponsors year round] because without them, we couldn’t do this,” says Board of Directors’ president, Paul Andrew.

Andrew also wants the organization to become more inclusive and approachable. He hopes the new direction will help other communities and organizations feel welcome to partner with the festival to promote their culture in innovative ways, even as Folk on the Rocks continues to build on the wealth of culture in Yellowknife. “Yellowknife owns this festival,” says Feasey, quick to credit the city with its success to date. “From volunteers to sponsors, to various staff throughout the years — that’s something everyone can be proud of.”





Promoting the North

It is unusual for an organization to be known by its acronym, but the Conseil de développement économique des Territoires du Nord-Ouest (CDETNO) is an exception to the general rule. "Say-Det-No," pronounces Executive Director Sylvie Francoeur. It flows from the tongue more easily than the lengthy title, particularly for Anglophone partners.

Brightly coloured art by Northern Francophone artist Diane Boudreau gives her small office a cozy feel as she discusses CDETNO's success in promoting the territory to Francophones, both in Canada and abroad. The 2008-2009 marketing project received \$125,000 through the Government of Canada's Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development (SINED) program. As CDETNO began to target this untapped market, a clear link between tourism and Northern recruitment came to light.

"Marketing tourism was having an impact on people moving to the North," says Francoeur. As a result, the organization has changed its focus to capture both targets. "If we attend a tourism show, we bring employability and

location information. If we go to a job fair, we bring in the tourism aspect."

Marketing the NWT to French tourists and potential employees benefits everyone in the NWT. "Tourists that come will spend their money in our stores, shops and restaurants, which impacts the general economy," says Francoeur. But new residents also benefit the economy, she points out. Each new resident equals \$22,000 for the GNWT coffers that can be put toward health care, infrastructure and other services that will benefit the territory as a whole.

Although limited funding has been a challenge, by forming strong partnerships and pooling resources CDETNO is seeing results. Francoeur credits a positive relationship with NWT Tourism for much of the project's success to date, and is especially pleased with how the relationship has evolved into a partnership. "They are the official Destination Marketing Organization for the NWT [and] they've recognized our expertise with the French markets and designated it to CDETNO." A Memorandum of Understanding has allowed them to

share templates and tools, which means the organizations now give a more unified, consistent image of the NWT on an international stage.

Francoeur also credits a good working relationship with other funding partners for CDETNO's success. "Staff from INAC were, and still are, driving forces. If they weren't around, this wouldn't have gotten off the ground. The relationship isn't just administrative. If I have any questions, [staff] is always available." CDETNO also prides itself on forging positive relationships with NWT businesses, by including their contact information in its products, helping with French translations of websites and referring clients.

Although it is premature to get a true measure of the project's success, Francoeur points to last year's tourism numbers as early evidence: the NWT has seen 50% more Francophone tourists than it had the previous year. Immigration numbers will also be used to measure the project's success in future years.

Ready for Opportunities

In a territory where industry interest has increased over the years, Northerners need to be able to take advantage of the growing number of job opportunities. *Ready to Work North* is a program designed with Northerners and Northern industry in mind. Offered through Aurora College, it fosters job readiness skills, helping to ease participants' transition into the workplace.

"Anyone can teach someone a job," explains Barb Curtis, Aurora College's Coordinator, Third Party Initiatives. "What we hope *Ready to Work North* can bring to the forefront are the skills that are necessary to understand the expectations of the workplace, and to keep the jobs."

The *Ready to Work North* curriculum was designed by the Government of the Northwest Territories' Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Other industry stakeholders have also provided input and leadership into its development. The textbook features recognizable Northern communities and people, and addresses workplace expectations in terms of attitudes,

skills, and industry knowledge. Many of Aurora College's programs of study, including the Underground Mining training, require students to complete the program.

Creation of the program was a response to industry and what they were looking for in employees, such as responsibility, accountability, and team work. "These are not really being focussed on in a training setting," explains Barb Curtis. "When you have such a high demand for entry level and trades people as we're experiencing in the North, it was hard to get individuals to focus on the needs of the workplace and the industry."

Ready to Work North is not only offered as part of a 12 week series of courses at the college, it is also travelled to the communities as a two week, full day course through community learning centres. The course mirrors, as much as possible, the work environment: the class runs from 8:30 until 5:00, and attendance is mandatory. In some cases, it is even conducted in remote locations, so participants get a feel for a mine site rotation.

"We want people to do some career development, and really understand the industry they are getting into. So when we mirror a work environment, it's because we want people to know what to expect," says Barb Curtis. "The industry benefits because they are getting good, trained participants – not just trained in academics, but in life skills." A particular benefit for participants is that these skills are not exclusive to their field of training. "What we deliver in *Ready to Work North* can be transferred to any industry, and we've seen that in the programs we've offered," she goes on to say.

Like Barb Curtis, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada believes in the strength of this program, and this year, it was pleased to invest \$55,000 toward its continued success through the Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development (SINED) program. Since it was piloted in 2006, over 200 participants have successfully completed *Ready to Work North* alongside other Aurora College programming. Another 15 participants have taken a new "Train-the-Trainer" course, and can now offer the *Ready to Work North* program in their home communities. As Aurora College is able to expand *Ready to Work North* and build on its successes, the North, its economy, and its workforce will only continue to grow and strengthen.



Your Career Starts Here!



Aurora College Underground Mining Equipment Simulator

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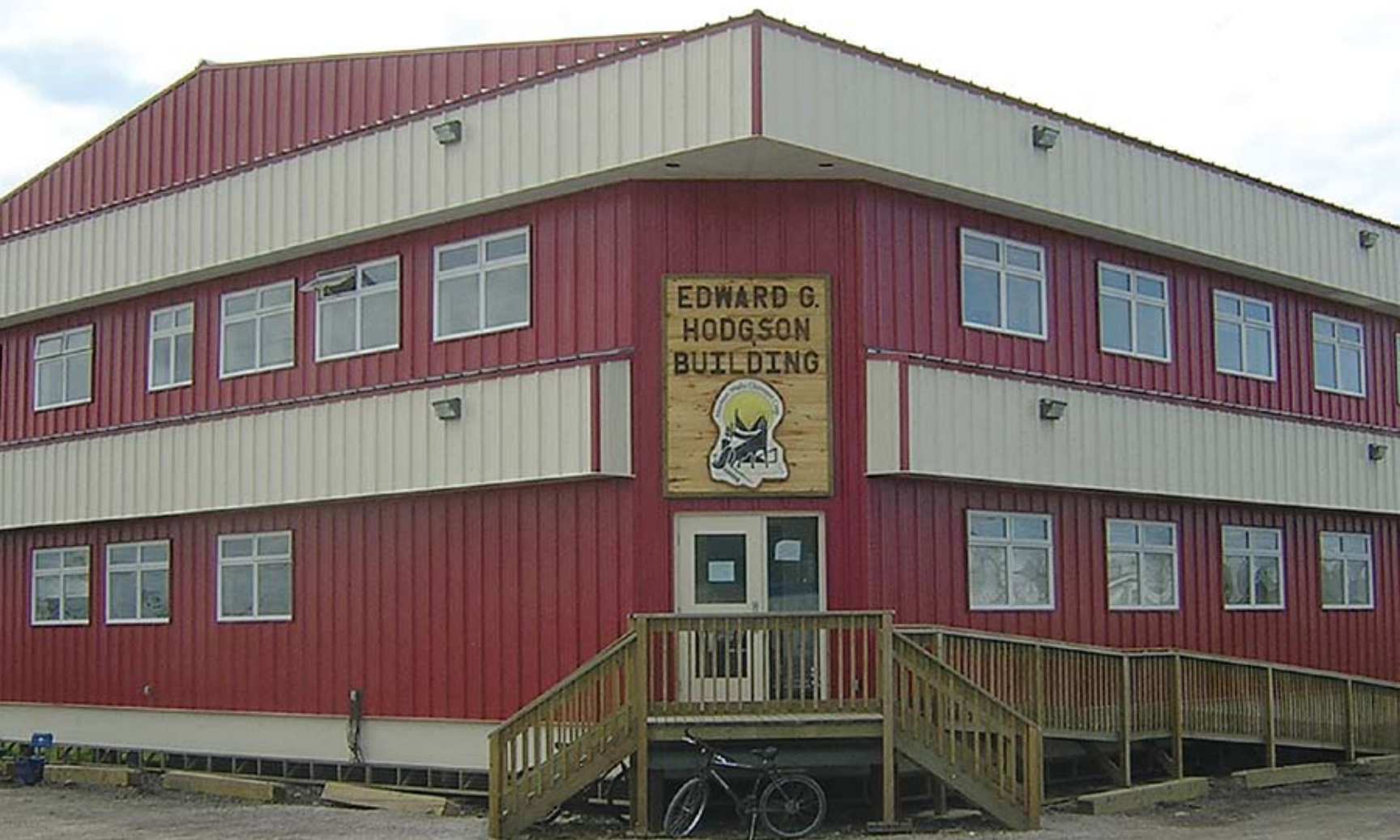
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Improving Policies

Any organization's success depends largely on its ability and willingness to identify roadblocks and make necessary changes. With funding support from the Government of Canada's Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development (SINED) program, the Norman Wells Land Corporation (NWLC) is planning for future success by identifying risks, prioritizing goals and doing what it takes to strengthen the organization.

The Norman Wells Claimant Corporation (NWCC), the economic development arm of the NWLC, is directed to invest in business opportunities that benefit both members and the community-at-large. The NWCC's ventures provide economic benefits and other intangible benefits that support the social and cultural programs of its parent land claim organization. However, the organization realized that a lack of clear and detailed policies was impacting the effectiveness of its decision-making and impacting its financial growth. In addition, as the NWLC is expected to receive Public

Foundation (i.e. tax-free) status in 2010, the corporation recognized a need to strengthen its financial policies to ensure revenues received and expenditures made would not conflict with the Income Tax Act – a potential threat to the organization's new tax-free status.

With a pioneering spirit – and \$23,000 in funding from SINED – the organization embarked on an ambitious two-part project to address these concerns by overhauling its policy regime. In the first phase, policies were developed to address strategic planning, financial accounting, Human Resources, internal and inventory control, facilities maintenance, risk management, media communication, and investments. In the second phase, structured policies for budgeting, financial planning and information systems were created.

"The SINED program has helped us to solidify our Organization's foundations for future generations to come," says NWLC President, Rodger Odgaard. "After fifteen years of implementing the Sahtu Dene Metis

Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement, developing ongoing Self Government initiatives and building our Economic Corporation, we have benefited greatly from the SINED program's resources to complete our Policies and Programs review. We can now move ahead and develop our Organization with the confidence that we are on the right road and have a solid foundation for our membership."

Funding from SINED has helped the NWLC to develop new and better policies that will enable the organization to deliver programs more efficiently; ensure consistency in management practices, evaluation and decision-making; and ensure financial compliance with its new Public Foundation status. This project will benefit the NWLC and its members both now and into the future by providing planning and activity guidance for the next five years. The project's results also add to the general body of knowledge and have the potential to substantially benefit other organizations who wish to follow in the NWLC's footsteps.

Did You Know?

CDÉTNO

Founded in 2003, the *Conseil de développement économique des Territoires du Nord-Ouest* (CDÉTNO)'s mission is to contribute to and stimulate the economic development of the NWT's Francophone and Francophile community. CDÉTNO assists new and existing businesses with business planning and development, financing templates, feasibility and marketing studies, exports, recruitment of bilingual employees, and training.

Aurora College

Aurora College has offered education and training since 1969. The College currently operates 23 learning centres in communities throughout the NWT, and serves an average of 1,100 full-time equivalent students every year. The student body is almost entirely made up of Northerners, about three-quarters of which are of Aboriginal descent.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources

The GNWT's Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) is spearheading the identification and further understanding of green energy sources. Its goal is to assist forest industry development and create sustainable local economies in smaller forest-situated communities. The use of forest biomass to create wood pellets for local markets has been identified as having potential for commercial viability, along with non-timber forest products such as botanicals, edibles, medicines and craft products.

Folk on the Rocks

Now in its 29th year, the Folk on the Rocks music festival originated as the Society for the Encouragement of Northern Talent. This was – and continues to be – a non-profit society dedicated to organizing professional development and performance opportunities for Northern musicians. More than 4,000 people attended the festival in 2008, not including performers, volunteers, vendors or artisans.

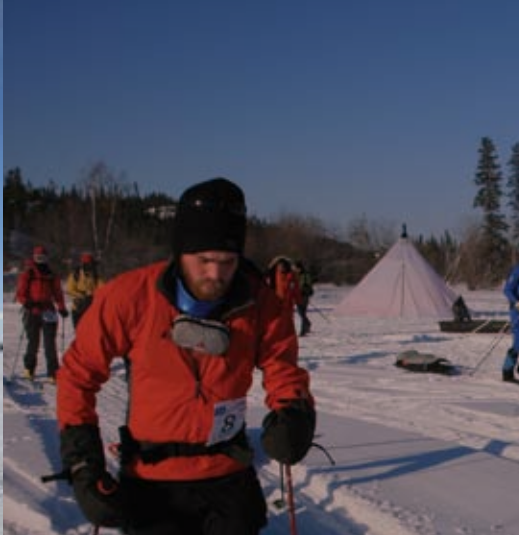
Norman Wells Land Claimant Corporation

The Norman Wells Claimant Corporation (NWCC) is the economic development arm of the Norman Wells Land Corporation, a designated Sahtu Organization. The NWCC promotes the socio-cultural and economic well-being of its membership by investing in business opportunities that develop the local economy and create employment. In fulfilling its mandate, the NWCC has successfully developed and managed real estate, undertaken construction projects, and acquired service contracts.

NWT Tourism

Tourism's annual contribution to the NWT economy is currently estimated at just under \$137 million. It is the territory's largest under-developed resource: the NWT's natural tourism assets are second-to-none in the world, but among the least visited. However, by 2010, the tourism industry is projecting an annual income of \$145 million, an annual increase of about 8.5%. The Rock and Ice Ultra Race, one of the annual events NWT Tourism promotes, has also continued to contribute to the economy. In 2007 and 2008 combined, participants in the Rock and Ice Ultra numbered 300 and contributed over \$500,000 to the local economy. More than 500 participants are expected in 2010.





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