



“IN THE CORRIDOR”

December, 2008

**A monthly publication of the Northwest Corridor
Development Corporation (NCDC)**

Alberta Notes

- This month, a joint panel of the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB), Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) and Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) determined a proposed hydroelectric project for the Peace River in northwest Alberta is in the public interest. As such, the project proposed by Glacier Power Ltd., was deemed unlikely to result in significant adverse environmental effects. The project is for a 100-megawatt, low head, run-of-river hydroelectric project on the Peace River to be located about 2 kilometers west of the Dunvegan Bridge in Alberta’s Peace Country. A run-of-river facility produces power from the flow of the river without significant storage of water, and does not regulate the downstream flow. The facility would include a spillway, a powerhouse with 40 turbine units, a headpond, boat lock, ramp fishways, a 4.3 kilometer, 144 KV transmission line, and a plant substation. The panel concluded it would add a stable and reliable source of green electric power to the Province of Alberta of net benefit to the region. Included in the decision report are twenty one recommendations for minimizing/managing potential impacts, in addition to the commitments made by Glacier Power Ltd. For those interested, you can view the full decision report, posted on the websites of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency; <http://www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca>, the Natural Resources Conservation Board; <http://www.nrcb.gov.ab.ca>, or, the Alberta Utilities Commission; <http://www.auc.ab.ca>
- The Province of Alberta announced a \$50,000 grant to the Athabasca Landing Trail Steering Committee for initial work on a conceptual master plan (for completion by July 2009) for the trail. The steering committee is a partnership between municipalities, recreation and heritage organizations for developing and promoting the historic Athabasca Landing Trail. Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation, Cindy Ady, said, “We are proud to support the collaborative approach the committee is taking to explore recreation and tourism opportunities in the region.” Beginning in December, the initial, 1st phase, project work includes research, community consultation, assessment of existing trail route, and recommendations for improving/enhancing trail opportunities
- Communities across the Province of Alberta can now plan for their long-term infrastructure needs, through an investment of more than \$798 million over four years from 2010 to 2014 from the Federal Gas Tax Fund. This funding is made possible by an extension agreement announced in December by the Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta. Minister of State (Transport), Rob Merrifield, and Minister of Labour, Rona Ambrose, along with Alberta Minister of Transportation, Luke Ouellette, made the announcement. The range of eligible projects includes public transit, community energy, local roads, water, wastewater and solid waste infrastructure improvements, and long-term planning. Municipalities may also borrow against future Gas Tax Funding, allowing them to move forward on eligible projects right away. Further information about Federal and Provincial Gas Tax infrastructure initiatives can be found by visiting the following websites: www.infrastructure.gc.ca, www.buildingcanada.gc.ca, or www.transportation.alberta.ca
- Premier Ed Stelmach appointed long-term civil servant, Mr. Gary Boddez as Deputy Minister of Alberta Transportation this month. Prior to this appointment, Boddez has held a variety of positions in government, having joined the Alberta Public Service in 1974. Most recently he was responsible for the Alberta Transportation Safety Board, a position he had held since 2002

Federal Notes

- Canada's Transport and Infrastructure Minister, John Baird, together with Minister of State (Transport) Rob Merrifield, met in Vancouver this month with provincial colleagues from Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia for discussions on accelerating infrastructure project funding



Photo Source: Infrastructure Canada

(Pictured from left to right): Hon. Ron Lemieux, Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation (MB); Hon. Wayne Elhard, Minister of Highways and Infrastructure (SK); Hon. Kevin Falcon, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure (BC); Hon. John Baird, Federal Minister of Transport and Infrastructure; Hon. Rob Merrifield, Federal Minister of State (Transport); Hon. Blair Lekstrom, Minister of Community Development (BC); Hon. Luke Ouellette, Minister of Transportation (AB); & Hon. Bill Hutchinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs (SK)

- The Government of Canada's Community Development Trust Fund will allocate \$1.5 million over three years (2008-2011) to Alberta. Some of this funding will be used in our Northwest Corridor region for infrastructure upgrades on a portion of the Trans Canada Trail at the historic Old Peace River Trail north of Athabasca. The project will provide opportunities for workers and enhance tourism development in rural regions
- Prorogation of the first session of the 40th Parliament occurred on December 4th. The second session of the 40th Parliament is scheduled to open January 26, 2009. An explanation on prorogation of Parliament can be found online by visiting: http://www.parl.gc.ca/compendium/web-content/c_d_prorogationparliament-e.htm

Manitoba Notes

- CentrePort Canada Inc., Manitoba's new inland port, saw appointment of their first ever Board of Directors. A private-sector focused corporation, it will market/operate the port and attract/coordinate business investment. The board can have up to 15 members with expertise in areas including rail, air and truck transportation, international business, labour, infrastructure and construction, law and financial management, and marketing. Inaugural board members are Kerry Hawkins (Chair), Art Mauro (Vice-chair), Maureen Prendiville, David Fung, Chris Lorenc, Gord Peters, Joan Hardy, Don Streuber, Bob Silver, Tom Payne, Barry Rempel, Robert Ziegler, Eugene Kostyra and Ryan Craig
- Figures released by Statistics Canada in December indicate Manitoba has incurred its strongest two year population growth in thirty six years. As of October 1st, the Province's population was 1,210,500 persons

Industry Notes

- A new agreement remains to be negotiated between the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 514 and British Columbia Maritime Employers Association (BCMEA) despite bargaining efforts made this month. Negotiations, however, were continuing. After meeting in late December in the presence of two federally appointed mediators, the parties were meeting again early in the New Year. The BCMEA and ILWU Local 514 have been bargaining since April 2008 for a renewal of the Collective Agreement that expired on March 31, 2007. The parties will be in a legal strike/lock-out position, effective January 2, 2009
- The Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) issued combined interim and final payments to farmers for wheat, durum wheat and designated barley delivered to the CWB during the 2007-08 crop year, as well as feed barley delivered into Pool B. The payments represent the balance of money owing to farmers after their grain has been marketed through the CWB and after operating costs have been deducted. For an entire list of these payments, visit: www.cwb.ca

British Columbia Notes

- The Province announced a grant of \$50,000 to the College of New Caledonia in Prince George for upgrading its planer mill and developing imaging technology. Mountain pine beetle-attacked timber has a limited shelf life for use in dimension lumber. It becomes more difficult to process as it dries out and cracks, limiting the amount of useful lumber. Terahertz imaging technology is being investigated for its potential to maximize beetle-wood's economic value. The mill upgrade, combined with researching terahertz rays in processing, will serve to train future millwrights and planer technicians on yielding more lumber in sawmill processing. Such will assist in capturing more economic value from beetle-affected logs
- Contracts were awarded this month for pavement marking services. Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Kevin Falcon said, "Painting road lines and markings is an important service because the markings define safe traffic patterns and help drivers see roadways at night and in rainy weather." Lafrentz Road Marking has been awarded two five-year contracts totaling \$2.1 million in the first year, to paint lines on highways in northwest and northeast B.C. These contracts are for painting road markings, including lane and shoulder lines, and intersection and ramp lines. Approximately 3,100 kilometers of primary roadway will be painted on an annual basis, while an additional 2,600 kilometers will be painted every two to three years. The northern service areas include Highway 37 from the B.C.-Yukon border southward to Kitimat, and Highway 16 from the Queen Charlotte Islands eastward to Mount Robson Park. The service area also stretches from Highway 97 at the 83.5 mile marker in northeast B.C. to just past Avola on Highway 5 in the southeast. Some roads in the Fort Nelson area are also included
- Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources Minister, Richard Neufeld, announced the December sale of oil and gas rights resulted in a total of over \$91.7 million in bonus bids. The sale brought the 2008 calendar year total to a record high \$2.66 billion and fiscal year record to \$2.38 billion. The sale included parcels near Fort Nelson, Fort St. John and Tumbler Ridge



Photo Source: BC Ministry of Forests and Range

College of New Caledonia President, John Bowman (centre) receives a \$50,000 cheque for planer upgrade and terahertz ray research from Prince George-Mount Robson MLA Shirley Bond and Pat Bell, Minister of Forests and Range

- The British Columbia Government approved, through Order-in-Council in December, a new form of community governance for the northern community of Atlin. Minister of Community Development, Blair Lekstrom said, "This is the final step in approving a governance solution that meets needs of the community of Atlin, without municipal incorporation." Atlin is a community of about 500 people in northwestern B.C. It is located approximately two-and-a-half hours from Whitehorse. The community is unique as it is neither a municipality, nor is it located within an incorporated regional district. In the past, the Atlin Improvement District (AID) provided basic services such as fire protection, landfill and street lighting while the Atlin Advisory Planning Commission (AAPC) provided advice to provincial agencies and the Ministry of Community Development on local land issues. The Order-in-Council combines responsibilities of the two organizations into one enhanced Improvement District. "This change represents a first in the Province of British Columbia," said Dennis MacKAY, MLA for Bulkley Valley-Stikine. "It will give the residents more local control. They will be better able to consider both servicing and local land use when making decisions on what is best for their community." The newly combined organization, called the Atlin Community Improvement District, will enhance community decision-making, and reduce ministerial approvals

North West Territories Notes

- The Hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk and Government of the North West Territories (GNWT) Department of Transportation (DOT) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in early December. The MOU is working toward an all weather road to a gravel pit 22 kilometers southeast of the hamlet, located along the proposed Tuktoyaktuk to Inuvik highway. The project will cost \$15 million, with \$12 million coming from the Building Canada Fund and \$1 million from the Hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk. Sources for the remaining \$2 million are still to be determined but hopes are for construction to start February, 2009. The MOU was signed by Tuk Deputy Mayor Lena Kotokak on behalf of Mayor Merven Gruben with the hamlet holding an official ground breaking and community supper later in December. "This is a great Christmas present for Tuk, and I truly hope you all have a wonderful and Merry Christmas and all the best in the New Year" said Mayor, Merven Gruben



Photo Source: M. Gruben

Participating in the December 22nd ground breaking ceremony, from left to right: Nunakput MLA Jackie Jacobson, Transportation Minister Michael McLeod, Tuktoyaktuk Mayor Merven Gruben, Tuktoyaktuk Community Corporation Chair Robert Gruben and NWT Premier Floyd Roland

- GNWT DOT now uses ice spray technology to build ice crossings in the Beaufort Delta. Crossings made by ice spraying achieve full strength/thickness faster, enabling large commercial vehicles to cross sooner in the season, so lowering freight costs for residents

Yukon Notes

- The *Whitehorse International Airport* was renamed in December to the *Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport*. Mr. Nielsen passed away September 4th at the age of 84. Reportedly dubbed "Yukon Erik" by many of his constituents over the years, he was the elder brother of comic, Leslie Nielsen. First elected as a Member of Parliament in 1957, when resigning his seat in 1987, the Honourable Erik Nielsen was Yukon's longest standing MP, reaching the highest ranking federal political position ever attained by a Yukoner. Nielsen served as Minister of Public Works (1979-1980); Leader of the Opposition (1983); Deputy Prime Minister (1984-1986) and President of the Queens Privy Council of Canada (1984-1985). In renaming of Whitehorse's airport, Yukon Premier Dennis Fentie said of him, "His positive impact and many contributions to the North will not be forgotten and today we honour Mr. Nielsen and his family with this dedication"

NCDC Organizational Notes

- Harmonization of policies and regulations in the transportation sector (all modes) both within Canada and with North American trading partners is a stated high priority of our Provincial and Territorial Premiers. They've directed their individual transportation ministries to review, for the purposes of resolving, unjustifiable differences causing barriers to trade. In this regard, ensuring all barriers are identified is important. Some of our members may have participated in related processes over the past year. Others, including beyond our membership, may have yet to do so. Your comments on the following specific aspects would be appreciated. They will be compiled and related to authorities undertaking this important work. Comment on:
 - Impediments to efficient transportation in all modes within Canada and internationally due to differences in regulations, policies or practices by Provincial, Territorial or Federal Governments
 - The nature of the impacts these impediments have on your business
 - Barriers at international borders that impede trade flow

Saskatchewan Notes

- The new Board of Directors for the Saskatchewan Centre of Excellence for Transportation and Infrastructure held their first official meeting at the University of Saskatchewan in December. Regarding the new Board, Highways Infrastructure Minister, Wayne Elhard said, "I have no doubt that this group will very ably lead the centre in its mission to become a North American leader in the application of new highway and road construction technologies." Individuals on the new Board include:

- Dr. Janusz Kozinski, Dean, College of Engineering, University of Saskatchewan (Chairman);
- Dr. Grant Isaac, Dean, Edwards School of Business, University of Saskatchewan;
- Mr. Murray Totland, P.Eng., Engineering Executive Director, City of Saskatoon;
- Mr. John Law, Deputy Minister, Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure;
- Mr. John Lee, President, Communities of Tomorrow;
- Mr. Erwin Seimens, President Kindersley Transport;
- Dr. Dallas Little, P.E., International Technical Lead, Materials and Pavements Division, Texas Transportation Institute, The Texas A&M University System;
- Dr. Susan Tighe, P.Eng., Civil & Environmental Engineering Department, University of Waterloo;
- Mr. Alan Migneault, CEO, Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority Inc.;
- Mr. Clare Kirkland, Director of Strategic Development, Regina Regional Economic Development Authority; and
- Mr. Engin Ozberk, Vice President, Innovation and Technology Development, Cameco Corporation.

- A December sale of Crown oil and gas rights featured 24 petroleum and natural gas exploration licenses selling for a total of \$10.8 million and 295 lease parcels for \$36.7 million. The sale pushed already record breaking revenues on the year to a total of \$1.12 billion

- Highways and Infrastructure Minister Wayne Elhard announced a Rolling Five-Year Capital Plan for Saskatchewan's transportation infrastructure. The five-year plan consists of five main components; gateway corridors, urban highway connectors, a rural highway strategy, a northern transportation strategy and a continuing focus on system stewardship. Elhard made special reference to the Rural Highway Strategy, a cornerstone piece to the rolling five-year capital plan. "Our Ministry engineers and planners constructed the Rural Highway Strategy using a comprehensive, consultative and strategic process," Elhard said. "They assessed more than 10,000 kilometers of provincial highways utilizing specific factors that will dictate how projects are prioritized. These factors include engineering economics, highway function and traffic, highway safety, alignment with the provincial economy, potential partnerships and the local economy that each road serves." The strategic factors are used to constantly reassess and re-evaluate the prioritization process. And the plan is updated and adjusted annually providing the opportunity to include new and emerging priorities. "We are not just reacting to road and highway problems," Elhard said. "We have a proactive and visionary plan to build the infrastructure we need to handle our current and future economic growth." Elhard added the provincial budget will dictate the pace of the work but at all times planning will be transparent allowing industry, local communities and the construction and road building communities to plan for the future



Northwest Corridor
Development Corporation

**IN 2009, HEALTH & HAPPINESS TO ALL
WHILE SHARING IN A SEAMLESS
CORRIDOR OF OPPORTUNITIES!**

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