

Final Report

**Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) Annual Summit, Anchorage, Alaska
July 22-26, 2007**

Overview:

On July 22-26, 2007, 10 Alberta MLAs attended the PNWER Annual Summit held in Anchorage, Alaska. The delegation included the Minister of Environment, Associate Minister of Tourism Promotion, six government member MLAs, and two Liberal MLAs. The meeting, open to the public, was well attended (600) and allowed MLAs and government officials the opportunity to network with legislators, officials, private citizens, institutions and companies from across the PNWER region. Delegates participated in 16 working group sessions and exchanged ideas on issues important to the economic prosperity of the region in a bi-partisan manner.

Mission Objectives:

1. Represent Alberta's interests at the PNWER Summit.
2. Ensure that Alberta has a strong voice in regional matters through PNWER.
3. Build contacts with U.S. decision makers, and promote Alberta's objectives on transboundary issues

Results:

Alberta MLAs addressed a variety of issues relevant to the province's interests, including bio-fuels, the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), enhanced drivers licenses, border security, the Alaska gas pipeline proposal, transportation, workforce development, tourism, and environment.

Each working group session was co-chaired by a public and private sector representative. The Summit allowed PNWER members to explore courses of action to benefit the region's economy and to recommend new policy directives to the PNWER Executive Committee for consideration.

July 22

Alberta PNWER chair Dave Coutts, MLA Livingstone-Macleod, participated in the Executive Committee meeting on behalf of Alberta. Attendees were given overviews on PNWER initiatives and an overview of the objectives of the Summit meeting. At the opening Summit reception Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski and MP Ted Menzies, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International trade and to the Minister of International Cooperation, gave opening remarks citing the value of PNWER and its accomplishments.

July 23-25

Members of the delegation attended working group sessions to discuss issues and develop action items for final resolutions. During these meetings, members of the delegation identified key areas where regional governments and the private sector could collaborate more effectively.

Highlights of note from these meetings were:

- **Energy sessions:** discussed the proposed Alaska gas pipeline, opposition that it is receiving, and predictions that the pipeline is unlikely to be built before 2019. In addition, the group reviewed the difficulties all jurisdictions are having in terms of siting electric power transmission lines.
- **Border session:** reviewed the enhanced driver's license pilot project initiative in Washington State, which will allow U.S. citizens to use a driver's licenses to cross the border between Canada and the U.S. in lieu of a passport. The project is important to the region as the outcome of this pilot will have bearing on how the Department of Homeland Security develops an ID passport equivalent card. The group recommended that the Canadian and U.S. federal governments extend the hours of the border crossing at Wildhorse, Alberta to 24-hour status.
- **Sustainable Development session:** recommended PNWER explore the development of a showcase at the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics to promote sustainable development successes in the region.
- **Agriculture session:** brought to light the differences in perspectives that U.S. and Canadian jurisdictions have towards bio-fuels. The U.S. view is largely positive and optimistic, while the Canadian view is more guarded in their assessment of the role the bio-fuels industry can play in the greater energy picture.
- **Tourism session:** reviewed the efforts that are underway to promote the PNWER region as an ideal location for Olympic teams to train their athletes prior to, and leading up to the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics.
- **Workforce Development group:** recommended that PNWER develop a 15-20 year strategic plan projecting workforce development needs in the region. The plan would include the sharing of best practices, retention of older workers in the workforce and certification between jurisdictions to allow movement of workers.
- **Homeland Security:** discussed emergency preparedness efforts in the various jurisdictions and how joint exercises have proved useful in identifying weaknesses in planning efforts.
- **Trade and Economic Development group:** discussed the harmonization of rules allowing workers to move around the PNWER region. This would be beneficial, but needs coordination between the two national governments. TILMA was profiled and held up as an excellent example of what can be done between jurisdictions.

- **Water Policy working group:** recommended that PNWER establish a permanent group on water issues.
- **Transportation working group:** explored the challenges facing the PNWER region in developing and integrating infrastructure to meet the growing demand and pressures resulting from the growing Asian-Pacific market (China and India). Canada's Pacific Gateway project is one effort aimed at addressing this challenge. The joint Alaska-Yukon rail study was discussed. The study determined that connecting Alaska by rail to the rest of the continent would cost approximately US\$7-10 billion, but would open up economic activity in the region to the tune of US\$1 trillion, mostly from increased mining activity.
- **Healthcare working group:** recommended PNWER create an internet portal to encourage international collaboration and knowledge exchange of best practices in healthcare, as well as an advisory committee to assist in developing a high-tech innovation network and the exchange of research and development.
- **High-Tech working group:** recommended the region work together to identify sources of capital, share best practices, and share facilities where possible. Research institutions and universities will be encouraged to focus their research efforts in a non-duplicative manner to integrate activities with other institutions to share development costs and leverage resources where possible.
- **Telecommunications:** the group recommended that PNWER lead a stakeholder process to develop a strategy for seamless wireless communications across the region.
- **Environment working group:** recommended promoting the sharing of best practices within the region on climate change technologies and on keeping the channels of communication open with California by sharing information and discussing legislation on climate change.

The meeting closed with an Executive committee meeting at which MLA Dave Coutts, Alberta Chair of PNWER, represented Alberta. The next PNWER Annual Summit will be held in Vancouver July 20-24, 2008.

July 26

Executive members of PNWER, along with some legislators, government officials and invited guests were hosted by BP on a tour to Prudhoe Bay to view their operations and mile "0" of the Alaska pipeline.

Delegation:

Hon. Rob Renner, Minister of Environment, MLA Medicine Hat
 Hon. Cindy Ady, Associate Minister of Tourism Promotion, MLA Calgary-Shaw
 David Coutts, PNWER Chair, MLA Livingstone-Macleod
 Richard Marz, MLA Olds-Didsbury
 Len Mitzel, MLA for Cypress-Medicine Hat
 Clint Dunford, MLA Lethbridge-West
 LeRoy Johnson, MLA Wetaskiwin-Camrose
 Barry McFarland, MLA Little Bow
 Bruce Miller, MLA Edmonton-Glenora
 David Swann, MLA Calgary-Mountain View

**Conference Agenda
 17th Annual PNWER Summit
 July 22 - 26, 2007**

Sunday, July 22

8:00 am - 4:00 pm	Registration (Aft Deck Ballroom, Captain Cook Hotel)
12:00 pm - 5:45 pm	PNWER Executive Committee Meeting (<i>Quarter Deck Tower One, 10th Floor, Captain Cook Hotel</i>)
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm	Welcome Reception (Captain Cook Hotel) US Senator Lisa Murkowski, Alaska
9:00 pm - 11:00pm	Hospitality Suite (Crow's Nest Suite I, Tower 3, 19 th Floor)

Monday, July 23

7:30 am - 4:00 pm	Registration (Captain Cook Hotel)			
7:30 am - 9:00 am	Breakfast Opening Ceremonies: Hon. Jim Kenyon, PNWER President Keynote Address: Lieutenant Governor Sean Parnell, Alaska (Fore Deck Ballroom, Captain Cook Hotel)			
9:15 am - 11:30 am	Energy I <i>(Fairbanks Ballroom, 2nd level Marriott)</i> <i>Chair: Hon. Mel Knight (AB)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline • Natural Gas Supply and Demand • Meeting the Energy Needs of Rural Communities: Alaska Alberta British Columbia Yukon • Action Items 	Border Issues <i>(Aft Deck Ballroom, Captain Cook)</i> <i>Co-Chairs: Len Mitzel, MLA (AB), Jim Philips (NY)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perimeter Clearance • WHTI BC-WA Drivers License Pilot Project • PACT Act • Trusted Traveler Programs • Family Nexus • Action Items 	Sustainable Development <i>(Haines Room, 2nd level Marriott)</i> <i>Chair: David Coutts, MLA (AB)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can sustainability principles be applied to resource extraction? • The Red Dog Experience – Nana Corporation and Tech Cominco partnership story • Nova Gold – A BC partnership with First Nations in west central BC • Action Items 	Agriculture <i>(Endeavor Room, Lower Level Captain Cook)</i> <i>Co-Chairs: Gary Fuhrman (ID), Richard Marz, MLA (AB)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of Agriculture Issues in AK • “Biofuels – The Changing Face of Agriculture – Opportunity or Challenge?” • Action Items
11:45 am - 1:15 pm	Luncheon Keynote Address: Hon. Gordon Campbell, BC Premier (<i>Fore Deck Ballroom, Captain Cook Hotel</i>)			

1:30 pm - 5:45pm	Energy I <i>(Fairbanks Ballroom, 2nd level Marriott)</i> <i>Chair: Hon. Mel Knight (AB)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure Constraints and Planning in the Pacific Northwest • Energy Policy Act Update • Transmission Policy • Regional Interties • Action Items 	Tourism <i>(Aft Deck ballroom, Captain Cook)</i> <i>Co-Chairs: Sen. Lesil McGuire (AK), Lorne Whyte (BC)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making the 2010 Winter Olympics a Regional Success • NorPass Rail & Sail Initiative • Regional Tourism Promotion Roundtable discussion • Action Items 	Sustainable Development and Natural Resource Management <i>(Haines Room, 2nd level Marriott)</i> <i>Chair: David Couitts, MLA (AB), Steve Borell, (AK)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Practices of Alaskan Native Corporations: Providing jobs and economic development for First Nations and aboriginal peoples • Update on the 2010 Sustainability Showcase • Action Items 	
6:30 pm	Reception at Alaska Native Heritage Center (Coach Departing from Captain Cook, 5 th Ave Entrance)			
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Alaska Reception; Anchorage Mayor Mark Begich (Alaska Native Heritage Center)			
9:00 pm - 11:00pm	Hospitality Suite (Crow's Nest Suite I, Tower 3, 19 th Floor)			

Tuesday, July 24

7:30 am - 8:30 am	Breakfast Keynote Address: Anil Mathur, President and CEO, Alaska Tanker Company (<i>Fore Deck, Captain Cook Hotel</i>)			
8:45 am - 11:45 am	Workforce Development <i>(Fairbanks Ballroom, 2nd level Marriott)</i> <i>Co-Chairs: Rep. Deb Wallace (WA), Neil Windsor (AB)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PNWER Workforce Mobility Taskforce • Regional forecast for workforce supply-demand • Addressing workforce gaps • Action Items 	Homeland Security <i>(Aft Deck Ballroom, Captain Cook)</i> <i>Chair: Bill Bishop (ID)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancing regional disaster resilience partnerships/projects • Alaska model for regional resilience • Pacific Northwest Emergency Management Arrangement • Action Items 	Trade & Economic Development <i>(Haines Room, Marriott)</i> <i>Co-Chairs: Don Brunel (WA), Clint Dunford, MLA (AB)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel discussion of state and provincial Chamber CEOs. • How can we facilitate and support greater regional cooperation. • Action Items 	
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm	Luncheon Keynote Address Ambassador David Wilkins, US Ambassador to Canada (<i>Fore Deck, Captain Cook Hotel</i>)			
1:30 pm - 5:30 pm	Energy II <i>(Fairbanks Ball room, Marriott)</i> <i>Chair: Rep. George Eskridge (ID)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating New Technologies and Alternative Sources of Energy • Accessing the Region's Research Labs and Energy Institutions • Action Items 	Policy Tour: Elmendorf Air Force Base (NORAD) <i>(Departs at 11:45 am from Captain Cook Lobby)</i> Base Tour, C-17 simulator Alaskan NORAD Region (ANR), Air Operations Center, AWACS, Agency Briefings	Transportation <i>(Haines Room, Marriott)</i> <i>Co-Chairs: Ron Tenove (AB), Sen. John Goedde (ID)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing infrastructure for increasing port traffic • Alaska-Yukon Rail Study • Action Items 	Water Policy <i>(Endeavor Room, Captain Cook Lower Level)</i> <i>Co-Chairs: Dennis Fitzpatrick (AB), Sen. David Nelson (OR)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water policy-global context • Climate change and water resources • Case studies in promoting water conservation • Review of South Saskatchewan River Basin Water Policy • Action Items
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm	Government of Canada Reception (Marriott Hotel, Foyer 2 nd Level)			
9:00 pm - 11:00 pm	Hospitality Suite (Crow's Nest Suite I, Tower 3, 19 th Floor)			

Wednesday, July 25

7:30 am - 8:30 am	Breakfast Keynote Address: Ben Erulkar, Dep. Asst. Sec. of Commerce for Economic Development (Captain Cook Hotel)		
8:45 am - 11:45 am	Environment <i>(Fairbanks Ballroom, Marriott)</i> <i>Chair: Joan McIntyre, MLA (BC) John Shivley, (AK)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC's Leadership in Climate Change Collaboration • Review Regional Climate Change Policy • Marine air quality issues • Action Items 	High Tech <i>(Haines Room, 2nd level Marriott)</i> <i>Chair: Rep. Glenn Anderson (WA)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied Research & Entrepreneurship • R&D: Collaboration or Competition? • PNW Innovation Network: A look ahead • Action Items 	Healthcare <i>(Aft Ballroom, Captain Cook)</i> <i>Chair: John Sproule (BC), Sen. Fred Dyson (AK)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Health: Addressing Needs of First Nations/Native Communities • Leveraging Technology: Advancing Healthcare Delivery and Access • Action Items
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm	Luncheon Keynote Address: Hon. Dennis Fentie, Yukon Premier (Captain Cook Hotel)		
1:30 pm - 3:30 pm	Ocean and River Energy <i>(Fairbanks Ballroom, Marriott)</i> <i>Co-Chairs: Dr. Gouri Bhuyan (BC),</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentives for new technology adoption • In-Stream Flow power • Forming a regional trade association • Action Items 	Telecommunications <i>(Haines Room, 2nd level Marriott)</i> <i>Co-Chairs: Don Pumphrey (YK), Rep. Mike Schaufler, (OR)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Issues and Policy Discussion • Broadband access and infrastructure • Action Items 	Policy Tour: Port of Anchorage Site Visit <i>(Departs from Captain Cook Lobby)</i> First-hand look at port operations and marine trade facilities
3:45pm - 5:45 pm	PNWER Executive Committee Meeting (Aft Ballroom, Captain Cook)		
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	PNWER Presidential Dinner – British Columbia Banquet (Hilton Hotel)		
9:00 pm - 11:00pm	Hospitality Suite - Captain Cook Hotel Suite (Crow's Nest Suite I, Tower 3, 19 th Floor)		

Thursday, July 26

5:30 am - 8:30 am	Breakfast (Captain Cook Hotel)
6:00 am – 7:00 pm	Prudhoe Bay Policy Tour (Invitation Only)
9:00 – 6:00pm	Talkeetna, Tour