

Northwest Territories Tourism Marketing Plans

Mr. Speaker, tourism brings over \$100 million in new spending into our territory each year. Today I will highlight the development of two key marketing activities that will strengthen the Northwest Territories tourism sector and attract even more visitors to enjoy this beautiful land we call home.

Supporting the tourism industry is one of the key activities the Government of the Northwest Territories is pursuing as part of its Maximizing Opportunities Strategic Initiative. Through these efforts, we continue to work towards the Assembly's goal of diversifying our economy and supporting the development of sustainable local economies through community-based industries like tourism.

The Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes tourism as a valuable renewable resource. It is critical that we market the Northwest Territories outstanding range of tourism products and that we continue to invest in research, products, training and infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, with these goals in mind, I am extremely pleased with the development of *Tourism 2015: New Directions for a Spectacular Future*. This plan will guide investment by the Government of the Northwest Territories in the tourism industry over the next five years. The second plan is the Northwest Territories Tourism's 2011/12 Marketing Plan, which outlines marketing initiatives for this fiscal year. Later today, at the appropriate time I will table these documents.

Mr. Speaker, while the recent global recession drove down travel numbers throughout the world, there is some good news to relate. Travel from Canada's international markets is up significantly in this past year following the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in Vancouver. Our own campground numbers were up over 5%, and current

reports from our aurora operators indicate a significant increase in Japanese visitors over last winter.

However the tourism industry is extremely competitive and we need to continually position ourselves as a travel destination of choice. The Northwest Territories Tourism's 2011/2012 Marketing Plan and Tourism 2015 will help us accomplish this. Both the marketing plan and the investment plan are about building on our achievements to realize our growth potential by targeting priority markets and products for increasing tourism revenues within the Northwest Territories.

We are also excited about the recent announcement of an investment of almost \$3.5 million by the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency for "Canada's North Marketing Campaign", a pan-territorial tourism marketing initiative to promote and position Canada's North as a unique and dynamic place to visit. We have already had great success working in partnership with the territories on Canada's Northern House, and we anticipate this funding will continue to help us bring more tourists North.

Partnerships continue to be the cornerstone of our tourism marketing efforts and I would like to thank all of the tourism operators who provided input, for their invaluable contribution to drafting Tourism 2015 and to Northwest Territories Tourism and the Tourism Marketing Advisory Committee for the leadership they have shown in developing the 2011/2012 Marketing Plan.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.