

Fur Institute of Canada Awards

I wish to extend our congratulations to Mr. Robert Alexie Senior of Fort McPherson and Mr. Glen Guthrie of Norman Wells. These gentlemen were recently acknowledged by the Fur Institute of Canada for their commitment of effort, outstanding achievements and valued contributions in the areas of wildlife management, conservation and trapping in Canada.

Mr. Robert Alexie Senior of Fort McPherson was presented the Jim Bourque Award for his devotion to the principles of sustainable use of wildlife resources, improved animal welfare, the furthering of indigenous people's cultures and the vital stewardship role that trappers play in the conservation of our wildlife resources.

Mr. Glen Guthrie of Norman Wells was awarded the Lloyd Cook Award, recognizing his commitment to excellence in trapping, trapper education and public understanding of wildlife management. Mr. Guthrie facilitates and coordinates school projects with elders and trappers that focus on traditional wildlife economy, helping to ensure that young people maintain ties to the region's wildlife resources and to their Dene and Métis culture.

Mr. Speaker, it is the dedication of people such as Mr. Alexie and Mr. Guthrie that helps to ensure the future of the traditional economy in the Northwest Territories. That, and the hardiness and skill of the more than 800 people actively trapping in the Northwest Territories this past year.

Partnerships, such as our partnership with the Fur Institute of Canada, also help ensure the viability of the fur industry. A national non-profit organization, the Fur Institute of Canada has acted as a round table for fur trade, animal welfare and furbearer conservation issues since 1983. The Fur Institute of Canada is the coordinator for the

overall implementation of the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards in Canada. The Government of the Northwest Territories has been an active participant, sitting on the Board of Directors and the Executive of the Institute for many years.

Harvesting of fur is an essential part of the Northwest Territories Aboriginal culture and of our traditional economy. Having options like this allows us to weather economic storms. This has been important for this Territory's economic health in the past year.

Mr. Speaker, it is a priority of the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment to provide all communities and regions with opportunities and choices. Our support to the trapping and fur industry is an important part of achieving this commitment.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is, in fact, one of very few governments in the world that actively supports harvesting and marketing of wild fur as a fundamental component of a modern and thriving economy. Fur from the Northwest Territories is now recognized as some of the finest wild fur in North America.

Mr. Alexie Senior and Mr. Guthrie have shown remarkable commitment and leadership in the support of the Canadian Fur Industry and the traditional lifestyle of Aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories. We are thankful for their contributions.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.