

International Water Policy Forum Supports Draft NWT Water Stewardship Strategy

YELLOWKNIFE (NOVEMBER 30, 2009) - A prestigious international water policy forum supports the direction and key elements contained in the Northwest Territories (NWT) Draft Water Stewardship Strategy.

The Rosenberg International Forum on Water Policy facilitates the exchange of information and experience in the management of water resources. The Forum held a regional Rosenberg Workshop in Yellowknife in June, 2009 to review the discussion paper on the development of a NWT Water Stewardship Strategy.

"The Government of the Northwest Territories invited the Rosenberg Regional Workshop to review the direction and key elements being considered in a NWT Water Stewardship Strategy," said Environment and Natural Resources Minister J. Michael Miltenberger. "The Forum was asked to identify potential barriers to implementation of a Strategy and recommend examples from other jurisdictions which could help us integrate the strategy into larger governance structures."

The draft NWT Water Stewardship Strategy was released on November 4, 2009. It identifies a watershed management approach to water stewardship. This principle is strongly supported by the Rosenberg Forum because it recognizes the relationships between land and water and terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.

The Rosenberg Forum also recognized the waters of the NWT as a world-wide resources and emphasized the Mackenzie River Basin's natural water-ice-climate system helps stabilize the Earth's climate. It also recognized the potential for ecological and water-related implications for the entire continent if the Mackenzie River Basin system changes too much.

"This review by the Rosenberg Forum not only supports the draft Strategy, it also echoes many of the concerns raised in the recent Watered Down report produced by seven environmental organizations about the federal role in oil sands development regulation," added Miltenberger. "We appreciate the efforts of the Rosenberg Forum in helping the governments and residents move forward with a plan to protect the integrity of our water resources for current and future generations."