

FOR RELEASE

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MINISTER ELECTED TO LEAD PNWER

WHITEHORSE – Economic Development Minister Jim Kenyon has been elected as the upcoming president of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region.

At this year's annual Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) meeting in Seattle, there were about 450 delegates representing legislators, governments and businesses from the Yukon, British Columbia, Alberta, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington.

Kenyon, who takes over as Vice-President for Canada from Pelly-Nisutlin MLA Dean Hassard, will move into the president's role at the next annual meeting in Edmonton, Alberta in July 2006.

"This is the first time in the 16-year history of PNWER that a Yukoner has been elected president," Kenyon said. "That's a big step for us and it allows us to showcase the North, by bringing various northern issues to the table even more than we have in the past."

This year's meeting assembled a number of working groups tasked with examining issues of transportation, energy, ocean technology, tourism, border crossings, and homeland security.

"It was a very productive meeting," Kenyon said, who later joined some of the other delegates in touring new X-ray facilities for the inspection of containers being transported across the US-Canada border at Blaine, Washington.

"When you look at what comes into the Yukon and Alaska by way of containers, border security becomes a major issue," Kenyon added.

PNWER, whose members represent a population of 18 million and a combined annual gross regional product of \$697 billion, strives toward economic growth and environmental protection, while initiating legislation, research, teleconferences and forums to the mutual benefit of its member jurisdictions.

For more information, visit the PNWER website at: <http://www.pnwer.org/>

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Contact:

Peter Carr
Cabinet Communications Advisor
(867) 667-8688
peter.carr@gov.yk.ca

Barbara McLeod
Communications Officer
(867) 456-3913
barbara.mcleod@gov.yk.ca