

Press Release

UPSTREAM UPDATE FORUM A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

December 1st, 2015

For Immediate Release

Delegates at the Northeast BC Resource Municipalities Coalition (Coalition) Upstream Update Forum (Forum) say it was a resounding success by every measure. The event was held in Fort St John on November 25th, 2015 and was attended by over 100 delegates from industry, business, government, First Nations and communities.

Fort St John Mayor Lori Ackerman stated "It was very rewarding to hear speaker after speaker congratulate the Coalition for hosting the Forum and involving the Chambers of Commerce from Dawson Creek, Fort Nelson and Fort St John as well as having representatives from Energy Services BC and the Northern BC Trucking Association outlining the challenges and opportunities of the service sector. The resounding success of this Forum has made it easy to conclude that the Coalition can play a vital role influencing government policy and business decisions related to resource development in Northeastern BC."

The morning keynote address was delivered by Dr. Charles Jago former President of UNBC and current Chair of the Northern Health Authority which included "As the inhabitants of this region with a personal vested interest in its development you can grant or withhold "social license" and thereby help to shape economic, social, and environmental outcomes. But if your voice is not singular but multiple, a cacophony rather than a harmony, its meaning is lost in babble. You need, to the extent possible, to speak with a single voice."

Garry Oker of Doig River First Nations in his welcoming remarks said "Our ancestors spoke of coming together to hear our voices so that each voice in our community can be heard and that any benefit, anything we do is for the people...that is what this is about how are we able to improve the quality of life for everyone?"

Taylor Mayor Rob Fraser stated "We had participation from delegates representing every community and business interest in Northeastern BC." Mayor Fraser added "Going forward it is going to be more important than ever that we find ways to forge improved cooperation and understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our communities, so that we can speak with a unified voice."

The Mayor of the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality Bill Streeper stated "It was very rewarding to hear from our industry, business and government partners that the work of our Coalition is needed more today than ever before. Our Coalition has undertaken several major studies and economic projections on which we can start to plan for future resource development in northeastern BC and we will be continuing our focus on research and analysis of all resource development issues that will better help us have a more meaningful influence on future resource development challenges facing Northeastern BC."



Title Sponsor:

Stewart Muir, the Executive Director of Resource Works posted this comment in his recent newsletter. “Thanks to the North East BC Resource Municipalities Coalition for giving me and Resource Works a platform on Tuesday to address the NEBC Upstream Update Forum in Fort St. John (via Skype). I was privileged to also be a speaker at their debut event just over one year ago. Since that time, their comprehensive study of the region’s economy has brought new understanding of what needs to be done to ensure that the benefits of the resource economy are shared equally and widely”.

Colin Griffith, Executive Director, NEBC Resource Municipalities Coalition stated “Our 1st Upstream Update Forum exceeded our expectations for attendance and participation by people from every community in the Northeast. The keynote address by Jas Johal of the BC LNG Alliance highlighted that worldwide demand for natural gas will continue for decades as we slowly transition to wind and solar and slowly diminish dependence on fossil fuels such as coal.”

Colin Griffith added “The Coalition appreciates the Province of BC signing on as the title sponsor for the forum and the outstanding sponsorship support we received from industry and business. It is obvious that the Province and industry place a high value on being attentive to the challenges and issues faced by the communities and citizens in Northeastern BC.” Griffith concluded “A clear distinct and unified voice for Northeastern BC local governments and citizens will play an integral role and can influence government policy and industry planning to reflect the needs of our communities going forward.”

Photos from the 1st Upstream Update Forum will be available on the Coalition website soon at www.nebccoalition.com

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