



Fall 2010

explorer

The Importance of Flight: Airline Transportation to the North

From float planes delivering guests to lodges, to chartered and scheduled flights transporting people and goods, aviation has long been an essential partner of the Athabasca Basin. In a land where the clouds and birds are in constant motion in the vast sky, the air transport industry is also on the move.

The region's air travel industry saw new growth in the mid-80s when the Eikel brothers, of Points North Group of Companies, felt that an airport at road's end could greatly help the region. In those days, George Eikel (VP Marketing at Points North Group) says, "there were airstrips at all northern communities with scheduled air service but no roads beyond the Points North location." Transporting people and supplies was difficult, and even though it wasn't a good time to be in the aviation business, the Eikels saw a need that they could fill. They carved a 2,000-foot airstrip out of the rock, bush and trees and started a Truck & Air service.

"Having an airport at Points North virtually cut the cost of freight into these communities by 50 percent," George said. Cutting costs boosted tourism and the mining industries and this growth made it possible to expand the runway to its current length of nearly 6,000 feet. Now aircraft, like the 19 passenger Beech 1900, operate in and out of Points North with ease making it possible to transport more people and cargo to the region.

But it's not just Points North that's seeing the air travel take off; the entire Athabasca Basin is bursting with aviation activity. Float planes go in and out of the lodges, charter airplanes and helicopters are always on the go and two airlines, Pronto Airways and Transwest Air, provide scheduled service to handily transport mining and exploration industry workers, cargo, and visitors to the Athabasca region.

"Given the unique geographic dynamics of the North, getting to and from work would be a long and painful process if the airlines did not exist," says Debbie Wrightson, Customer Relations and Sales Manager of Transwest Air. "To travel by road from Saskatoon to Points North would take the better part of 15 hours. To travel by aircraft takes 1.5 hours. In business, time is money and safety is number one; all the statisticians will tell you it's safer to travel by plane!"

Airplanes also plays a vital role in the tourism industry delivering tourists from all over the world to the region. World-class fishing is the main draw, but ecotourism, where tourists enjoy the beauty of the Athabasca region while canoeing or kayaking the river system, is growing.

Opportunities abound in the region for people who want to pursue careers in the ever-growing aviation industry. Airlines, charter companies, and airports all need trained people for jobs that range from pilots to administrative to ground support to mechanics. And Dennis Baranieski, Vice President and General Manager of Pronto Airways and member of the Saskatchewan Aviation Council, is excited to note that within the next year students pursuing their Aircraft Maintenance Engineer certification will be able to train at the Saskatchewan Institute of Technology's new Aviation Learning Center at the Saskatoon Airport. Commercial pilot training is also available in the province at the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology, also located in Saskatoon.

Though industry will grow and change, the importance of air travel to the Athabasca Basin promises to be as constant as the beauty of Saskatchewan's ever-changing skies.



Message from ABDLP Board, Chair

The quest that was started in 1998 seems a long way from being completed. Constructing an all-weather transportation infrastructure into the Athabasca Basin, in order to lower the cost of living for the region and provide attractive economic investment opportunities, has been set aside in order to make room for negotiations, studies, discussions between Provincial and Federal Governments, inadequate budgets, party changes, advisory committees, and more studies.

Despite the slow momentum of the all-weather road projects, the Athabasca Basin

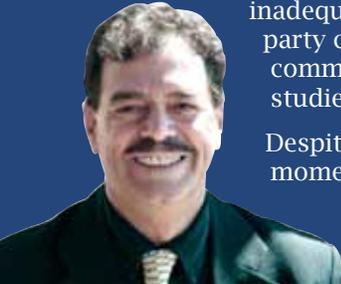
Development Limited Partnership is capitalizing on the opportunities that are available. The Road Services Division has increased their work fleet to five local contractors, each maintaining different sections of the road. The all-important Safety Programs, which we have learned from our partners and industry, are being implemented into the contractor's daily schedule. A local workforce of experienced equipment operators is being built and training programs are being allocated to the region.

The Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association is to begin looking at the possibility of having Equipment Operator registered as a Certified Trade and develop an Apprenticeship Program. The new Certified Trade

Construction Craft Labourer will allow us to indenture Labourers as Apprentices in order to become Journey Persons. Both of these considerations will help the Athabasca Basin move closer to the goal of becoming a world recognized work force.

I want to extend warm greetings to everyone as we move closer to our winter season. Love one another. Remember to pack survival gear when travelling, plan a fire escape route from your home, and drive carefully on our roads and ice.

Glen Strong
ABDLP, Chairman



Sandy McCallum: Recipient of Athabasca Basin Security's First Service Award

July 12, 2010 marked the date of the first service award ever presented to an Athabasca Basin Security employee. Sandy McCallum celebrated his fifth year of service with the company and was honoured in a recognition ceremony to celebrate the milestone.

"When Basin Security first began, we often had difficulty keeping employees for more than 3 or 4 months. We worked hard at changing this, and honouring our first employee to reach 5 years of service means a lot to us. There will be many more employees soon following in Sandy's footsteps", says Ron Hyggen of Athabasca Basin Security.

Sandy first began with Basin Security working as a guard in Patience Lake and moved around to other mines, to where he now works as a Shift Supervisor at McClean Lake. He says he was first attracted to obtaining employment with the company when he saw a job posting for a Athabasca Basin Security....with a passion to get himself back to the North, he knew this was the opportunity for him. You see, he had been a long time resident of Uranium City and while there he fell in

love with living in the Athabasca. When things started slowing down in U City, he moved South but a part of him was always left behind. "The past five years have allowed me to reconnect with my love of the Athabasca and I cannot think of anywhere else I would like to spend my time", says Sandy.



Sandy McCallum Receives a certificate of recognition for 5 years of Service.

"Not only do I love the beauty and peacefulness of the Athabasca, but I enjoy the people that I work with up there as well. There is such diversity, and I enjoy this opportunity to meet new people and create new friendships", continues Sandy. "I enjoy the fact that this company has a dedication to continued growth and education. Our guards are now labeled Industrial Security Officers (ISO) and all of our staff takes part in training courses to improve ourselves and our service. I like that.

Athabasca Basin Security has always treated me and my peers very well, and receiving this great honour is just one more thing that shows their dedication to all of us."

His history goes a lot further back than Uranium City. Sandy was born and raised in Scotland, but has lived in Canada for the past 43 years....instead of seeing Scotland as his homeland, it is the Athabasca that he calls his home.

ABDLP sends students to Aboriginal Entrepreneur Camp

The First Nations University of Canada held their second annual Aboriginal Youth Entrepreneur Camp on August 15th to 20th, 2010. This event brings in grade 11 and 12 students from all over the Province (as well and parts of Alberta) to learn essential business skills while having fun in the process. Up until now, there had been no representation of students from the Athabasca region

of Saskatchewan so the Athabasca Basin Development Limited Partnership located two willing participants and provided them with the opportunity to be part of this exciting event. Ronelda Robillard and Julia Benoanie of Wollaston Lake were selected to take part in the 5 day camp in Regina, SK.

At the camp, students learn about

marketing, advertising, and all other aspects of formulating a business plan. Additionally, they learn about networking, leadership, and the professional attributes of running their own business. ABDLP is encouraged by the program put on by the First Nations University and feel that this type of training is an essential training tool for today's Aboriginal youth.

The Northern Road: An Interview With the Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways

The Northern region of Saskatchewan is vast and beautiful, but it is also a place where the elements can work against her inhabitants. There are certain necessities essential for survival and growth. As with any other locale, we would be hard pressed to survive if not for the roads and airports that connect us with the greater province and world.

Making sure these connections work in this Province, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure strives to keep the transportation system up and running, works on improvements and forms partnerships to help ensure a strong future for the entire area...including the Athabasca region.

Throughout Saskatchewan, the Ministry of Highways oversees more than 26,000 kilometers of highways, almost 800 bridges, 17 airports, and more. Whether maintaining roads or planning new construction, the Ministry is hard at work making sure travelers can get around Saskatchewan safely.

In the Athabasca Basin region, the provincial transportation network serves the communities of Sturgeon Landing, Kinoosao, Stony Rapids, Uranium City, Wollaston Lake, the Hatchet Lake First Nation, Fond-du-Lac, Camsell Portage and the Black Lake First Nation. The system is comprised of five provincial airports, about 56 km of all-weather roads, 235 km of seasonal roads, 175 km of ice roads and the Wollaston Barge on Wollaston Lake.

"This network," says Kirsten Leatherdale, Manager of MHI's Communications Branch, "is essential to safely move people, goods and supplies in the Athabasca Basin, while also serving the mining, tourism, commercial fishing and service industries."

In addition to the infrastructure already in place, the new Wollaston Lake All-Season Road is being built. When done, this 102 km all-weather gravel road will cut through dense bush and muskeg east of Highway 905 towards the communities of Wollaston Lake and the Hatchet Lake Denesuline First Nation. The new road, the first of its type built in decades, promises greater access to the rest of the province and new opportunities for employment and business.

With all they have to build and maintain, the Ministry has its hands full. Fortunately connections once again come into play and northern companies, like Athabasca Basin Road Services, sub-contract their talents and services to the Ministry. Instead of sending their employees and equipment to the northern reaches of Saskatchewan, the Ministry has a multi-year agreement with Athabasca Basin Road Services for the annual maintenance of several of the roads and ice roads.

"We greatly appreciate the close and productive working relationship we have with the Athabasca Basin Development Limited Partnership in providing road services on behalf of the provincial government in the Athabasca Basin," said Highways and Infrastructure Minister, Jim Reiter. "The services provided by the ABDLP and its sub-contractors are vital to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout northern Saskatchewan."

In a land where connections are key, it's a win-win situation when companies like Athabasca Basin Road Services and Saskatchewan's Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure work together. It's the kind of partnership that works for everyone, the kind that can help the Athabasca region thrive and grow.

CEO's Message

I would like to congratulate the Athabasca Enterprise Region Corporation (AERC) on its recent start-up. To communicate this information a press release was issued with the announcement of a new website (www.athabascaenterprise.ca) and staff members. Many of you know that AERC is formerly Athabasca Economic Development & Training Corporation, and until recently I held a position within that entity. The AERC is a welcome addition in the Athabasca region as it will involve more resources to coordinate economic development activity in the region. There is no doubt that inadequate transportation infrastructure will be a major focus of the AERC and I wish them the best as they work to stimulate the Athabasca economy.

In my current role as CEO of Athabasca Basin Development LP, we are taking

a look at the transportation sector through the investment lens. As transportation in the region involves air, water, and land, I feel there are many opportunities that exist for investment, particularly in the air and land based transportation sector. With new roads required to connect mines and communities, our group of companies is uniquely positioned to capitalize during and after construction. If one considers longer term, it is exciting to think that all of the uranium mines in Canada could be in close road proximity to Points North. One must also consider that as the communities continue to grow, more and more of their goods will be hauled from southern Saskatchewan. This very well could be another significant area in which to invest in over the long-term. There are also major projects being planned in close proximity

to the communities. Athabasca Basin Development LP is ready for investment and the transportation sector is one of many sectors where we will continue to look for opportunities.

In keeping with this month's transportation theme, I would like to personally thank our various contractors and companies that provide essential transportation services within the region. You are working in one of the most challenging regions in Canada and your work is appreciated.

Geoff Gay
ABDLP CEO





Athabasca Happenings

October is IWALK and In Motion Month

October is International Walk to School (IWALK) and in *motion* Month. IWALK is a program developed to increase time spent walking and physical activity in northern communities and schools. IWALK encourages community programming at the local level that meets community-specific needs and interests while at the same time allowing an opportunity for partnership building. Physical activity programs and initiatives are community based, implemented by community schools, organizers/groups, or workplaces. IWALK encourages programs and policies that support walking for physical activity such as: Walking School Bus programs, busing policies, recess policies, bike policies, etc. that support physical activity.

Please join in by committing to IWALK this October.

Key Lake's Largest Major Equipment In Place

The Key Lake Acid Plant recently had its largest major equipment set in place as part of this years \$250 Million Dollar revitalization program at the Cameco site. Points Athabasca played a key part in this monumental event as on June 24th, their staff and crane operator strategically placed the converter, which is the largest and the most important piece of equipment in the Sulphuric Acid Plant project. Bob Barbaros Gunel, Resident Engineer at the Key Lake-Stream/Acid/Oxygen Plant Project was very happy with the procedure and went on to say "I'd like to thank our contractor, Points Athabasca for their safe and precise work, and for accomplishing this major milestone in our project". Points Athabasca completed the work on schedule and this is part of \$40 Million Dollars in work that they will do for the project this year..



For a list of ABDLP's corporate social responsibility please visit www.athabascabasin.ca.

ATHABASCA BASIN REDEVELOPMENT
ABDLP Watch for our next newsletter - February, 2011.
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HooNayNa Tribe competes in Exile Island

ABDLP, Team Drilling, and Points Athabasca took part in the 2010 Exile Island put on by the Children's Wish Foundation this past May.

Our team, named the ABDLP HooNayNa Tribe (the Dene translation for "Champion"), raised and contributed over \$10,000 to this event and was able to grant the wish of Jayden. Jayden is the wish child we competed for in the Exile Island event and it was an honour to spend the day with him and the other wish children. Jayden is a young man from La Loche, SK, who has been in and out of hospitals his whole life. His medical journey began with the diagnosis of an enlarging heart; a diagnosis that would eventually lead to a kidney transplant, a heart transplant and a double amputation above the knee. Jayden's long and difficult road lead him to doctors and hospital visits in

La Loche, Saskatoon, and Fort McMurray while he waited for a bed to open up at a Children's Hospital in Alberta.

In honour of his new home in Saskatoon, Jayden wished for a home entertainment centre. The big screen TV and PS3, among other things, will help create the sort of fun and carefree environment that this teenager truly deserves. ABDLP and the HooNayNa Tribe are so happy they could help make Jayden's wish come true.

Each year, thousands of Canadian children between the ages of three and 17 are diagnosed with a life-threatening illness. The Children's Wish Foundation of Canada is dedicated to granting an exceptional wish to every child. Since its inception, Children's Wish has granted more than 15,000 wishes for children and their families and fulfills more than 950 wishes annually.

Automated Weather Observation Station Update

AXYS Technologies has just recently completed an update on the automated weather observation station (AWOS) at Points North Landing. After a few initial bugs AXYS was able to fix most of the difficulties and now the AWOS system is running smoother than ever. The original installation was done on two of the coldest days in January so it is perhaps understandable that a few problems have appeared.

Pilots and customers are able to get current weather conditions for the Points North Landing area via the internet at www.pointsnorthgroup.ca (click Weather) or by phone at (306)633-7727. Pilots flying in the area can also hear the weather conditions on the radio frequency 122.55. Please note that this information is given with pilots in mind so some of it may be hard for a non-pilot to decipher.

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