

David Tilson MP ? Supporting Canada's North is a priority for the federal government



Canada's North is a fundamental part of our national identity and is vital to our future.

This is why our government is delivering real results that are helping the North grow and develop, while better protecting its environment and sovereignty.

As a part of his eighth annual tour of Canada's North, Prime Minister Stephen Harper recently outlined our government's latest efforts to support economic development in the region. In particular, he outlined measures aimed at skills training and responsible resource development, while reaffirming our government's commitment to our northern sovereignty.

As a result of the rapidly growing resource industries located in Canada's Arctic communities, there is a high demand for local skilled workers. This is why the Prime Minister announced support for a new skills training program, focused on the mining sector, in the Northwest Territories and in the Kitikmeot region of Nunavut. This 25-month program will train 400 Aboriginal participants in essential mining sector skills that will help them land quality jobs.

In addition to the new skills training program, the Prime Minister also announced the creation of a new Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining at Yukon College. This Centre will support research and job creation in the North and is expected to generate up to 520 trades, mining and apprenticeship graduates within five years.

While skills training is an important aspect when it comes to developing Canada's North, we must not forget that Northerners also need to benefit from their abundant natural resources. This is why our government is focused on implementing our plan for Responsible Resource Development.

During his tour of the North, the Prime Minister announced that one of the ways we're supporting responsible resource development is through the innovative use of geo-mapping. Geo-mapping will help Northerners make informed decisions about land use and preserve our Northern environment by providing better information to industry investors and other stakeholders conducting resource exploration.

Finally, Prime Minister Harper reiterated our government's commitment to exercising Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic. During his tour of the North, the Prime Minister participated in an Arctic military exercise. This exercise was undertaken by the Gjoa Haven Patrol of the Canadian Rangers as part of Operation NANOOK 13.

Our government has expanded the role of the Canadian Rangers due to their local knowledge and considerable expertise. We have no doubts that these brave men and women will continue to protect our country's interests safely and effectively.

Thus, with the Prime Minister's eighth tour having come to an end, it's clear that our government has a solid plan help spur further economic growth, job creation and prosperity. Though these measures, our government is helping ensure that Northerners and all Canadians benefit from the tremendous natural resources in the true north.