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GNWT Enters Scientific Research Partnership with Wilfrid Laurier University

WATERLOO (MAY 26, 2010) – The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has entered into a scientific partnership with Wilfrid Laurier University (Laurier) in Waterloo, Ontario. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources J. Michael Miltenberger signed the partnership agreement with the university today in Waterloo.

“The Canadian Aquatic Laboratory for Interdisciplinary Boreal Ecosystem Research (CALIBER) program based at Wilfrid Laurier University and in the Northwest Territories will develop leading-edge scientific studies essential for making water resource management decisions that will ensure the sustainability of northern ecosystems, including those in the Northwest Territories,” said Minister Miltenberger. “This partnership will support and enhance the work being done through the NWT Water Stewardship Strategy, and provide some of the vital information needed to protect our water resources and address critical issues such as the current and future impacts of rapid development and climate change.”

“This agreement is a reflection of Wilfrid Laurier University’s significant research expertise in water resources and northern environments,” said Laurier President Dr. Max Blouw. “We are delighted to partner with the Government of the Northwest Territories to engage in the science needed to make effective policy decisions involving water-resource management and the sustainability of northern ecosystems.”

Under the partnership agreement, the GNWT will provide two million dollars over five years, which completes the \$6.3 million CALIBER program. This will allow the GNWT to participate as an active member of the program’s Science Committee as it sets research agendas and associated studies for the NWT and to develop mentor and training opportunities for NWT residents.

“We know there is an urgent need to increase our understanding of our northern aquatic ecosystems given the increased resource development pressure and impacts of climate change,” added Minister Miltenberger. “This partnership will also help us train the next generation of water scientists and managers.”

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The partnership includes scientific and technical training and mentorship components, professional development for government, industry and other organizations as well as outreach activities to promote interest in water science and the boreal ecosystem in communities and schools.

The partnership agreement supports the GNWT's Managing This Land strategic initiatives and the 16th Legislative Assembly's goal of realizing an environment that will sustain present and future generations and protect our water supply and quality.

Other funding for the CALIBER program comes from The Canada Foundation for Innovation, Wilfrid Laurier University and donations from the private sector.

For more information, contact:

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(867) 669-2302

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