



# *Alternatives North*

## **Road to Ruin: McCrank Report on NWT Regulatory Regime**

**Yellowknife, Northwest Territories (August 27, 2008)**— Alternatives North released today a detailed response to the report by the DIAND Minister’s Special Representative, Neil McCrank. Called “Road to Improvement,” the report was supposed to make recommendations to improve the NWT regulatory system.

Alternatives North is concerned about apparent bias in the report. Submissions made by non-governmental organizations and northern boards are not listed in the report yet several industry submissions are cited, as well as reports by the Conference Board of Canada and the Fraser Institute, two well known promoters of unfettered resource development.

“McCrank’s review appears to be motivated largely in reaction to the recent Ur Energy drill program environmental assessment and dissatisfaction on the part of some parties about the timeliness of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project,” stated Doug Ritchie on behalf of Alternatives North.

“McCrank’s recommendations do not address the real issues with the northern environmental management system such as the failure of the federal government to fully implement and resource the process. There is no mention of the need for participant funding or to properly support the boards. Northerners are at great risk of losing the integrated environmental management system that Aboriginal peoples and northerners fought for so hard at the negotiating table.”

McCrank’s review is based on what he calls an “ideal” regulatory model. But his model does not value public participation and claims to be “neutral” about protecting the environment and promoting sustainable communities rather than supporting those important goals.

“The analysis is not based on any statistics, case studies or examples,” Ritchie said. “The recommendations are imprecise, with no timelines and no one responsible for implementation. The report contains no indications of associated costs, financial or otherwise. Plain and simple,” Ritchie said, “the report is fundamentally flawed and should be shelved.”

“It’s our view that Northerners don’t want the uncontrolled and unsustainable development that is happening in Alberta, and that’s the model put forward in Mr. McCrank’s report. We think that the efforts spent on Mr. McCrank’s review would have been more wisely invested in a federal response to, and action on, the findings of the 2005 NWT Environmental Audit,” Ritchie said.

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For more information, please contact Doug Ritchie at 867- 873-8897

The original submission to Mr. McCrank by Alternatives North is available at [www.alternativesnorth.ca](http://www.alternativesnorth.ca)