

Mining opportunities boost local economies

Thirty-seven new mineral exploration projects representing \$17.1 million in total investment are now underway with the help of funding through the **Mineral Exploration Assistance Program (MEAP)**. The program is designed to encourage exploration that may result in the discovery and development of mineral deposits and mines.

There have been several successful MEAP-assisted projects in the past year. **International Curator Resources Ltd.** has reported a new gold discovery at Assean Lake and **Bema Gold Corporation** continues to explore and add to their gold resource in northeastern Manitoba. In addition, **Rare Earth Metals Corporation**, another MEAP recipient, has discovered heavy rare earths at Eden Lake, 35 km northwest of Leaf Rapids.

MEAP provides financial assistance of up to 35% of eligible expenditures, to a maximum of \$400,000 per recipient each fiscal year. Funding of \$2.5 million is allocated annually through two offerings that accommodate the spring/summer and fall/winter mineral exploration phases.

Hometown program

The Province recently launched the *Hometown Manitoba Program* that will help northern and rural communities

improve meeting and public spaces with financial support. Projects will be eligible for matching contributions to support beautification efforts and to promote community identity. Under the program, a total of \$500,000 will be allocated annually to main street enhancements and hometown meeting places. The first intake will start in winter, 2003.

Lake Winnipeg clean-up

The Province recently announced the composition of the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board. This Board will be chaired by the former Mayor of Gimli, **Bill Barlow**, and includes other municipal friends such as former councillor **Gary Brown**, Councillor **Chris Pawley**, Councillor **Bev Smith**, and Reeve **Garry Wasylowski**.

Flood proofing

On August 18, the two senior levels of government announced that they would each be contributing an additional \$40 million to the already \$160 million allocated to Winnipeg's floodway. This money has been directed from the 'national priority project' component of the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund.

WNV arrives in Manitoba

August saw the first probable cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) in Manitoba. Stony Mountain, Virden and Deloraine have all

been affected by health orders under the *Environment Act* to begin 'adulticiding.' WNV is transmitted by Culex mosquitoes, which can be managed by the West Nile Virus Program. Please see the summer issue of *The Leader* for more information.

BSE issue info

The AMM has been lobbying hard for short-term relief and a long-term solution to the BSE (*Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy*) crisis. This issue is changing daily. Please monitor it through the following website: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture>.

Welcome new staff

The AMM staff has grown by three. **Julia Green** is filling the newly created position of Administrative Assistant. As well, **Erin Boutang** and **Janna Switzer** are our two new Policy Analysts. In further staffing news, **Tyler MacAfee** has been named Director of Policy and Communications.

Welcome Julia, Erin and Janna, and congratulations Tyler.

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UCN takes flight

A new steering committee and an expanded implementation team have been announced to support the development of the University College of the North (UCN).

The UCN implementation team, headed by chair **Don Robertson**, now includes long-time Aboriginal educator **John Burelle**, **Traci Reid** (Manitoba Labour and Immigration), **Veronica Dyck** (Aboriginal Education Director-

ate), **Gina Guiboche** (Opaskwayak Health Authority, Opaskwayak Cree Nation), and **Peter Geller** (Inter-Universities North).

The Province also released its report, *University College of the North: Recommendations and Action Plan*, prepared by Professor **Verna Kirkness**, following public consultations last fall. The report is available on the UCN's new website at www.ucn.mb.ca.

The AMM fax number is 204-856-2370