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PRESS RELEASE

IRC RESPONDS TO THE MACKENZIE GAS PROJECT JOINT REVIEW PANEL REPORT

INUVIK, NT (January 8, 2010) – Despite major concerns with the extended period of time it has taken the JRP to produce their report, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation supports their overriding opinion that the Mackenzie Gas Project would provide the foundation for a sustainable northern future.

While recognizing that many of the panel's recommendations may lead to the establishment of detailed plans and procedures to support the ongoing health of the communities and environment of the Beaufort Delta region, IRC Chair and Chief Executive Officer Nellie Cournoyea noted that the scope of the panel's recommendations may at times have stretched the limits of their mandate, particularly in the areas of cumulative impact monitoring and land use planning.

“In our review of the report we must ensure that those recommendations relating to the restructuring of existing regulatory processes do not, over time, infringe upon current initiatives and the authority or role of those established specifically for the Inuvialuit Settlement Region and under the Inuvialuit Final Agreement.

In reviewing the recommendations it is important to recognize that we have not been sitting idle these past four years waiting for the report to tell us what needs to be done. Although we have brought our concerns to the panel for their consideration we have also been busy advancing several socio-economic and environmental planning and cumulative impact initiatives in preparation for not only this project but other on and offshore hydrocarbon development projects under consideration.

Caution must be given to the panel's observation relating to employment opportunities following the initial project construction period. While the project will likely lead to additional developments and associated employment opportunities, apart from limited ongoing pipeline O&M manpower requirements, the bulk of the economic opportunities, in a territorial wide sense, will occur during the three to four year construction period.

..... more on Page 2

While we are currently undertaking a detailed review of the panel's recommendations and supporting documentation and will be providing our comments to the National Energy Board within the next two weeks, we are also eager to see the responses to the many recommendations directed at the federal and territorial governments. Included in these are the recommendations to implement pre construction preparatory measures, including those related to the MGP Impact Fund, and the need for the GNWT to commit to play a leading and pro-active role in many impact planning and impact monitoring initiatives”.

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