

AUGUST 8, 2007

NAHANNI EXPANSION 'A HARPER HALF-LOAF' SAYS NDP

YELLOWKNIFE – NDP leader Jack Layton and Western Arctic MP Dennis Bevington questioned Prime Minister Stephen Harper's announcement today on the partial expansion of Nahanni National Park.

"The Harper Conservatives have chosen an arbitrary portion of land rather than protecting the entire watershed," said Layton. "This is a missed opportunity."

Last summer, Layton, along with Bevington and fellow NDP MP Olivia Chow (Trinity-Spadina), promoted the park expansion during a six-day guided tour on the Nahanni.

"We must understand the impacts of this partial expansion on the people, cultures and lifestyles of the Dehcho and the Northwest Territories," said Bevington. "We need to now evaluate whether it's enough to protect the Nahanni ecosystem."

"We have to identify the benefits for the people of the region in the form of sustainable economic development such as boosting the tourism industry and creating new jobs," said Bevington.

For more information, please contact:

Laura Colella, Jack Layton's Office: 613-295-6278

Tara Kearsey, Communications Assistant, Dennis Bevington, MP: 867-669-8817