



From a Provincial Point of View

July 28, 2011

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Constituency Office*

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SASKATOON TO HOST BI-NATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE IN 2012

The Government of Saskatchewan has announced that Saskatoon will host the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) Annual Summit from July 15-19, 2012.

The conference is expected to attract some 500 legislators, government officials and business leaders from across the northwestern United States and western Canada. The PNWER Summit will be an opportunity to discuss major issues ranging from natural resources extraction, energy usage and water policy to agriculture, transportation and border issues. The conference provides a unique platform for businesses to connect with one another, as well as with elected leaders.

PNWER is the only partnership of its kind in North America and represents a regional combined GDP of \$986 billion (\$1 trillion USD). The partnership's mission is to promote greater regional collaboration, enhance competitiveness, achieve continued economic growth, and reduce trade and regulatory barriers. PNWER encompasses Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and the Yukon and Northwest Territories in Canada, and Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington in the United States.

The general membership meets annually, with the 2011 conference taking place in Portland, Oregon from July 19-22. Premier Brad Wall will attend the opening day of the 2011 summit, inviting members to Saskatoon and telling the Saskatchewan story at an evening reception.

The Portland conference will be attended by a Saskatchewan delegation that includes provincial Cabinet Ministers, MLAs, business leaders and government officials from across the province.

[Read more . . .](#)

RETAIL SALES IN MAY ALMOST DOUBLE NATIONAL AVERAGE

Saskatchewan consumers were ringing up sales in May as retail trade in the province almost doubled the national average.

Retail sales were up 7.6 per cent in May 2011 (seasonally adjusted) when compared with the previous year.

That is almost double the national average of 4.0 per cent for the same period, and just below the 7.8 per cent recorded by Alberta.

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ANOTHER LARGE DROP IN EI RECIPIENTS

The number of Saskatchewan people receiving Employment Insurance took another significant drop in May, decreasing by 2,310 compared to same month last year (seasonally adjusted). This is the 14th consecutive month of year-over-year decreases.

May 2011 saw 10,520 beneficiaries receiving regular EI benefits in Saskatchewan. The province's year-over-year decrease of 18.0 per cent was above the national average decline of 15.1 per cent.

When expressed as a percentage of the total labour force population, Saskatchewan has the second fewest number of people receiving EI benefits in Canada at 1.3 per cent. Alberta is the lowest at 1.1 per cent.

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FIRST QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORT SHOWS THE BUDGET REMAINS ON TRACK

The First Quarter financial report shows the province remains on track for a balanced budget in spite of significant flood relief costs.

Overall expenses are expected to be up \$107 million from budget, mainly because of flooding costs and an anticipated wage settlement with teachers, while revenues are expected to be up \$64 million, mainly on the strength of higher federal transfers earmarked for flood relief and own-source revenue.

Overall, costs associated with flooding and extreme weather are expected to be about \$60 million. A wage settlement along the lines of a recent mediator's report should result in increased costs to Education of approximately \$51 million.

Both tax revenue and non-renewable resource revenue remain stable and the Growth and Financial Security Fund (GFSF) is expected to finish the year with a balance of \$717 million, up slightly from budget.

The GFSF balance includes a debt reduction payment of \$325 million, which reduces General Revenue Fund debt to \$3.8 billion, down from \$6.8 billion three years ago and the lowest debt level in Saskatchewan since 1987/1988.

[Read more . . .](#)

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

“You will come to know that what appears today to be a sacrifice will prove instead to be the greatest investment that you will ever make.”

Gordon B. Hinkley

JUST THE HEADLINES – www.gov.sk.ca/news

Jul. 26, 2011 - [LABOUR STANDARDS IN SASKATCHEWAN USES FEDERAL LEGISLATION TO RECOVER UNPAID WAGES](#)

Jul. 21, 2011 - [WEEKLY PROVINCIAL HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION UPDATE](#)

Jul. 21, 2011 - [SASKTEL EXTENDS 4G WIRELESS COVERAGE TO 13 MORE LOCATIONS](#)

Jul. 20, 2011 - [SASKATCHEWAN LEADS THE COUNTRY IN WHOLESALE TRADE](#)

Jul. 18, 2011 - [SASKATCHEWAN TO HOST NORTH AMERICAN WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS CONFERENCE](#)

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“From a Provincial Point of View” is a weekly message from Ken Cheveldayoff, MLA Saskatoon Silver Springs. Your opinions are important and your letters, emails and phone calls on any issues relating to the provincial government are welcomed. Contact Ken by calling (306) 651-7100, emailing ken.cheveldayoff.mla@sasktel.net or writing Ken Cheveldayoff, MLA Saskatoon Silver Springs, #9 – 415 – 115th St. E. Saskatoon, SK S7N 2X9. **To subscribe or be removed from this newsletter, please send an email message.** This newsletter is produced with the assistance of the Saskatchewan Party Caucus Office.