



## Media Release

### Snap Lake Mine Ramps Up Production and Northern Underground Mine Training

**YELLOWKNIFE (December 3, 2009)** - De Beers Canada is pleased to announce the commencement of a production ramp-up at the Snap Lake Mine that will see the mine reach full production levels by the end of 2012 and a new training initiative with educational partners that will enable NWT residents to be trained and certified to a nationally recognized standard in underground mining.

The production ramp-up has commenced and will result in 175 additional operations positions at the mine site by the end of 2010. Along with the production ramp up, the construction project to complete the employee permanent accommodation complex is also proceeding. The camp's construction was put on hold in 2008 as part of the company's response to the economic slowdown. This construction project will see an additional 30 construction workers assemble the newly constructed modular units at Snap Lake between February and October 2010.

"Our decision to increase production is consistent with our business strategy to align production with global demand," said Jim Gowans, President and CEO. "Although our industry might not see the same sales levels in the next few years that we enjoyed in 2007 and early 2008, we anticipate a steady growth in demand over the next three or four years, and the long term looks bright."

Building on the company's commitment to train and develop a skilled northern workforce, and aiming to increase its own hiring of NWT residents, De Beers is pleased to announce its recent accreditation to certify underground mine employees at the Snap Lake Mine to the Ontario Common Core standard. With this new certification ability, De Beers is now partnering with the Mine Training Society, Aurora College and the GNWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment to advance and enhance the current underground mine training program in the NWT.

"We used the curtailed production period this year to build on our investments and develop a strategy for the NWT," said Brad Corrigan, Mine General Manager, speaking to approximately 70 members from the NWT Business Community this morning at the company's annual Business Opportunities Charity Breakfast. "Our 2010 ramp up will commence immediately in all areas of the operation. We have budgeted to ramp production to four times the levels we are currently operating by 2012. This will include additional investments such as the new accommodation complex and a long term recruitment and training strategy."



De Beers is offering a new component for underground mine training to our education and training partners. Students that are coming through the NWT underground mine training programs in 2010 will now have a component whereby they do a practical 12 week work experience as an employee of De Beers under the guidance of De Beers trainers who will train, test and certify them to the Ontario Common Core standard.

“Offering training and certification that includes nationally recognized standards will give NWT residents who come through this training program increased recognition of their skills from mines across the country,” said Hilary Jones, General Manager for the Mine Training Society. “This partnership is something that is going to put the NWT on the map as a great place to live and work as a miner and as a great place for underground mine training.” She notes the first intake of students that will include this new certification aspect in the program will take place in January 2010.

De Beers Canada currently employs 440 people at the Snap Lake mine, of which 44% are NWT residents. The Snap Lake Mine officially opened in July 2008 and will employ 634 people at full production by 2012.

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