

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**Contact:**

Mark Stayton, Media and Communications  
Coordinator, PNWER

360-607-8173

Mark.Stayton@Pnwer.org

July 2015

**Idaho Sen. Curt McKenzie elected as PNWER President for 2015-2016**

(BIG SKY, MONTANA) – Idaho State Sen. Curt McKenzie was sworn in as president of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) at the organization’s 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Summit, held at Big Sky Resort.

McKenzie has been deeply involved with PNWER since 2009 as the co-chair of multiple working groups and has served as vice-president of PNWER since 2012. He has served on the Idaho State Senate since 2002, is currently chair of the Senate State Affairs Committee and is the founding member of McKenzie Law.

“I am excited to be here and to have the chance to serve as the president of PNWER,” McKenzie said. “We exist to improve the economy of the place in which we live and thereby make people’s lives better, while being stewards of our environment.”

McKenzie said his term will focus on studying and advancing public-private partnerships as a means to build the economy and build necessary infrastructure in the region and to support PNWER’s core mission to develop and implement policy through our working groups and major programs.

“The Pacific NorthWest Economic Region is thrilled to have such a capable and experienced senate leader like Curt taking the helm of our organization for the next year,” said Matt Morrison, executive director of PNWER. “I’m excited to work with him on the goals he set out at our annual meeting.”

McKenzie earned his bachelor’s degree in physics and history from Northwest Nazarene University and earned his degree in law from Georgetown University. His term follows a successful presidency of Hon. David Ramsay, minister of Justice and Industry, Tourism and Investment, Northwest Territories.

Dan Ashton, MLA for Penticton, British Columbia and Representative Mike Cuffe of Montana were elected as vice presidents during the summit. The PNWER Executive Committee is comprised of the president, immediate past president, two vice-presidents from PNWER’s Canadian jurisdictions and two vice-presidents from PNWER states.

Representative Bob Herron of Alaska was elected as Chair of the PNWER Arctic Caucus. The Arctic Caucus is a working group comprised of a partnership of public and private sector members from Alaska, Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

The partnership aims to provide a forum to share information, discuss issues of mutual concern, identify areas for collaboration between the three jurisdictions, and provide Arctic-relevant input to other PNWER working groups.

### **ABOUT THE PNWER SUMMIT**

Held in alternating member jurisdictions each year, the annual PNWER summit draws hundreds of key business leaders, legislators and community leaders from PNWER's 10 states, provinces and territories in the Pacific Northwest. At the summit, participants meet in "working groups" to develop action items on policy issues in the following categories: agriculture, Arctic caucus, cross-border livestock health, border issues, disaster resilience, energy, environment, health care, innovation, invasive species, sustainable development, trade and economic development, transportation, tourism, water policy and workforce development. For more information on the summit, visit [www.pnwer.org/2015Summit](http://www.pnwer.org/2015Summit).

### **ABOUT PNWER**

The Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) is a public/private non-profit created by statute in 1991. Member jurisdictions include Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Montana and Washington, and the Canadian provinces and territories of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories and Yukon. PNWER's mission is to increase the economic well-being and quality of life for all citizens of the region; identify and promote "models of success;" and serve as a conduit to exchange information.