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For Immediate Release

“Road-building coalition upset by government’s plans to play a new and larger role in the industry”

HALIFAX – A broad coalition of Nova Scotia road-building companies is asking the provincial government to reverse its decision to start its own road building and quarry operations.

“Government documents that came to light Thursday reveal that bureaucrats have been secretly working for almost a year to create a Government Road Company,” said Grant Feltmate, the Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Road Builders Association (NSRBA). “The documents clearly show that the government has based its decision on dated, flawed and incomplete information that misrepresents our industry and how it operates. We don’t believe this plan will save the taxpayer any money.”

The documents also indicate government will open pits and quarries on Crown lands as an essential part of its business plan. “Our members have invested millions of dollars in their pits and quarries. We were shocked to discover the government plans to open pits and quarries on Crown lands. As the road-building industry is our largest Nova Scotia customer, this threatens our very livelihood,” says Scott Hoeg of the Mining Association of Nova Scotia (MANS).

The documents also state the Government Road Company would ignore its own rules for hiring local independent truckers. In Nova Scotia, all provincial road-building contractors are required to use local truckers for 80 per cent of the work. This is designed to ensure there is a vibrant independent trucking sector throughout the province. “For many of our members, road-building work is essential for us to survive. This plan cuts us out of road-building work we are now doing,” says Wayne Onda, Executive Director of the Trucking Association of Nova Scotia.

Ron Dunn, the President of the NSRBA, says the industry is willing to work with government to meet its stated goal of getting maximum value for public money. "If the government's goal is really to save the taxpayer money, we have lots of ideas that can help make this happen."

The Nova Scotia Road Builders Association represents 151 member companies comprised of heavy civil, marine, sewer and water contractors and their industry suppliers. These members are responsible for employing more than 7,500 people annually, with an estimated payroll of \$375 million.

The Mining Association of Nova Scotia represents more than 100 companies and supports approximately 6,300 jobs, mostly in rural parts of the province. It contributes about \$490-million to the provincial Gross Domestic Product.

The Trucking Association of Nova Scotia represents 600 independent trucking businesses throughout the province. Its members play a crucial role in the construction and road-building industries.

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