



## FLORIDA'S Great Northwest

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Florida's Great Northwest  
Media Contact: Cristie Kedroski  
Vice President, Marketing & Communications  
850.337.3410 (Direct)  
850.337.3469 (Office)

### FLORIDA'S GREAT NORTHWEST STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR NORTHROP GRUMMAN - EADS CONTRACT

**Destin, Florida (May 15, 2008)** - Florida's Great Northwest is pleased to support the Northrop Grumman-EADS contract recently awarded for the assembly of next-generation aerial refueling tankers. The Mobile assembly location as selected by Northrop Grumman and its partner EADS represents a tremendous economic boost that extends well beyond Mobile and its surrounding counties. The assembly plant location becomes as major a catalyst as NASA's presence in Houston and Cape Canaveral and helps to cement the Gulf Coast as the emerging aerospace capital of the United States.

Prior to the U.S. Air Force's contract award, Florida's Great Northwest refrained from endorsements. The critical issue regarded the Air Force's selection of the most capable aircraft that provides the best solution to the Air Force's current and future needs. Post-decision, Florida's Great Northwest congratulates Mobile, Northrop Grumman-EADS and Alabama as well as the multi-state economic opportunity presented by the partnership's location decision.

The Northrop Grumman-EADS contract award positions Northwest Florida in the center of two aerospace and defense assembly operations – the KC45-A tanker in Mobile County, Alabama, and Piper, a general aviation manufacturer in Vero Beach, Florida. These assembly operations combined with the synergies of the new Panama City-Bay County international airport and the Center of Excellence for Very Light Jets in Tallahassee and cutting-edge research and development in aerospace and defense, composite materials, power systems, avionics, electronics and robotics, present Northwest Florida a unique opportunity to support and engage this industry cluster.

Florida's Great Northwest is a regional economic development organization serving 16 counties in Northwest Florida from Pensacola through Tallahassee. Its primary mission is the creation of high-wage, high-skill jobs, branding and marketing, as well as support of the local economic and workforce development organizations in the region.

###