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Headline **New Report Emphasizes the Benefits of Coordinating Poverty-Reduction Efforts**

NEWS RELEASE

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**POVERTY IN THE NORTHWEST REGION IS DIFFERENT, SAYS NEW
STUDY
SOLUTIONS ALSO MUST BE INNOVATIVE FOR LONG-TERM BENEFIT**

*Coordination, alignment, recommended for programs addressing
the complexities of poverty.*

Detail

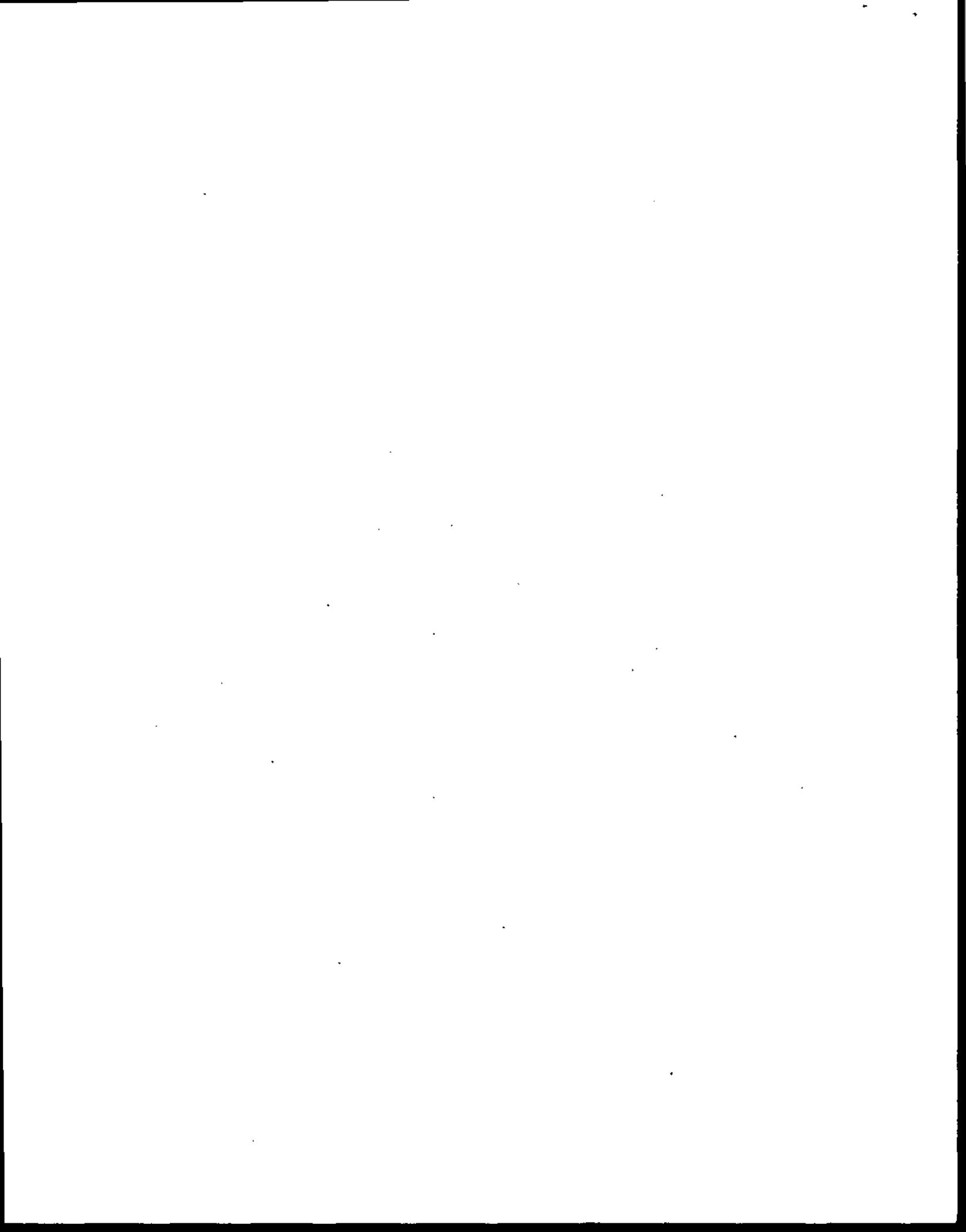
ST. PAUL, Minn. (March 8, 2005) – The Northwest Area Foundation today released a study that examines the causes of poverty and reviews the programs designed to alleviate its effects on people. “On Getting Out – and Staying Out – of Poverty: The Complex Causes of and Responses to Poverty in the Northwest,” emphasizes the complexities of poverty and suggests that poverty-reduction efforts be integrated to be successful for the long term.

The report analyzes data from the Northwest region served by the Foundation, including Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota and South Dakota. Its key argument is that the multiple factors causing poverty too often are overlooked by well-intentioned poverty-reduction programs, and that such programs would have more success in addressing these complexities if the programs were better integrated.

“Successful efforts acknowledge the multi-dimensional nature of poverty, addressing the human capital needs as well as economic, demographic and geographic realities,” said David Harrison, lead author of the study and senior lecturer at the Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington. “For example, community-based programs that cluster private investments, government assistance and worker training are far more effective than individual efforts that avoid partnerships,” said Harrison.

In addition to the state-specific findings, regional highlights include:

- Nationwide, senior citizens (9.7 percent poverty rate) are less likely to live in poverty



than the general population (12.4 percent poverty rate). (2000 U.S. Census Bureau)

- Poverty in the Northwest region varies from the rest of the nation in that poverty in the central cities is lower and poverty in suburban areas is higher. In much of the Northwest, higher urban property values have driven people who are poor to search for lower cost housing in outlying areas. This emergence of suburban poverty is requiring new approaches to poverty-reduction that better connect to opportunities in the metropolitan areas.

- The poverty rate in the Northwest region is highest in the mostly rural states of Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota. Poverty rates are lowest in Minnesota, Iowa and Washington.

- The current Federal Poverty Level standard is severely deficient; alternative measures suggest that a more accurate gauge would double the current estimate of people living in poverty.

The study was compiled after researchers examined data from government and private sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau, National Research Council, Northwest Policy Center, National Science Foundation and Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

“While the poverty data is daunting, this report is essentially a report of hope in that it describes how governments and nonprofit organizations can have greater positive impact on alleviating poverty and the pain it inflicts on people,” said Karl Stauber, president of Northwest Area Foundation. “Ultimately, solutions can be found when people and programs coordinate their efforts toward a common goal.”

The Northwest Area Foundation, headquartered in St. Paul, Minn., helps communities reduce poverty in its eight-state region: Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Washington and Oregon. The Great Northern Railway, founded by James J. Hill, served this region from 1889-1970. Hill’s son, Louis W. Hill, established the foundation in 1934. Today, the Foundation brings technical assistance and financial resources that help identify, share and advocate community-focused strategies for long-term poverty reduction. The Foundation has approximately \$437 million in assets (as of March 31, 2004). For additional information or a copy of the complete study, see www.nwaf.org or call 651-224-9635.

