



P R E S S R E L E A S E

NORTHWEST HIGH YIELD BOND TRUST FILES PRELIMINARY PROSPECTUS

TORONTO, January 3, 2006: Northwest Mutual Funds Inc. (the “Manager” or “Northwest”) is pleased to announce that it has filed a preliminary prospectus dated December 22, 2005 for the initial public offering of units (the “Units”) of Northwest High Yield Bond Trust (the “Trust”).

The Trust is a closed-end investment trust whose investment objectives are: (i) to provide holders of Units (“Unitholders”) with monthly distributions; (ii) to enhance the long-term total return within the Trust’s portfolio; and (iii) to return to Unitholders upon the termination of the Trust at least the original issue price (\$10.00 per Unit) of the Units.

AmerUs Capital Management Group Inc. (“AmerUs”) will be the sub-advisor for the Trust. The Trust will invest in an actively managed portfolio consisting primarily of U.S. high yield debt securities.

The Trust will annually determine and announce an indicative distribution amount for the following year based upon the prevailing market conditions and the estimate by the Manager and AmerUs estimate of distributable cash flow for the year. The indicative distribution for the first 12 months of the Trust is \$0.675 per Unit representing a yield of 6.75% per annum based on the \$10.00 per Unit issue price.

Northwest was established in 1997 and is one of the fastest growing boutique investment fund companies in Canada. As of November 30, 2005, Northwest had approximately \$1.8 billion in assets under administration.

A syndicate of agents is being co-led by CIBC World Markets Inc. and RBC Dominion Securities Inc. and includes Scotia Capital Inc., BMO Nesbitt Burns Inc., Desjardins Securities Inc., HSBC Securities (Canada) Inc., Blackmont Capital Inc., Canaccord Capital Corporation, Dundee Securities Corporation, Raymond James Ltd. and Wellington West Capital Inc.

A preliminary prospectus relating to these securities has been filed with securities commissions or similar authorities in each of the provinces and territories of Canada but has not yet become final for the purpose of a distribution to the public. This press release shall not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy, nor shall there be any sale or any acceptance of an offer to buy these securities in any province or territory of Canada prior to the time a receipt for the final prospectus or other authorization is obtained from the securities commission or similar authority in such province or territory.

A copy of the preliminary prospectus may be obtained from CIBC World Markets Inc., 161 Bay Street, BCE Place, P.O. Box 500, Toronto, ON M5J 2S8.

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