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## OVER \$2 MILLION ANNOUNCED FOR WATAYNIKANEYAP TRANSMISSION PROJECT FIRST NATIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

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**SIoux LOOKOUT, ONTARIO** (July 26, 2017) – Wataynikaneyap Power is pleased to announce a major federal investment from the office of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) in the amount of over \$2 million in support of the Wataynikaneyap Power’s First Nations training program.

Today’s announcement now brings the total amount available for capacity building and training to over \$4 million. The funding announcement will ensure the communities are prepared to provide an experienced and trained up labour force to be project-ready with transferable and accredited certification. The training project is fifty per cent funded by the federal contribution and fifty per cent by Wataynikaneyap Power.

“The vision of our leaders is to create opportunities and build capacity for our people today and into the future, through meaningful involvement and participation in the project,” says Margaret Kenequanash, Chair of Wataynikaneyap Power GP. “This investment enables us to take that step forward.”

There are three streams of training to increase employment readiness of the 22 First Nations communities who are part of the project - Power and Electrical Essential Skills; Line Crew Ground Support Program; and Technical and Non-technical certifications.

The training partners that have been engaged for the programs are Oshki-Pimache-O-Education and Training Institute ("OSHKI"), PowerTel and Infrastructure Health and Safety Association (IHSA).

“This investment from the federal government reaffirms the commitment to training and long-term employment for the First Nations communities, which is a key component of the Wataynikaneyap Transmission Project”, says Glen King, CFO Wataynikaneyap Power, LP and VP, Finance, FortisOntario.

In preparation for the training program, the First Nations team completed a gaps analysis and an assessment of each First Nation through the Remote Electricity Readiness Program (“RERP”), which is on-going and would not have been possible without funding support from the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (“MIRR”).

Wataynikaneyap Power is an unprecedented First Nations-led project that will connect 17 remote First Nations communities to the provincial power grid. 51% of the project is owned by 22 First Nations who have partnered with an experienced industry leader, FortisOntario.

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