



## **Wataynikaneyap Power Announces Start of Construction on the Pikangikum Power Line Project – Constructor Selected**

**THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO** (Marketwired – November 30, 2017) – Wataynikaneyap Power announced today the selection of PowerTel Utilities Contractors Ltd. (“PowerTel”) as the contractor to build the 117 km Pikangikum Power Line Project, which will connect Pikangikum First Nation to Ontario’s power grid in Red Lake.

Like so many remote First Nations communities in Northwestern Ontario, Pikangikum First Nation has relied on diesel fuel to power its community. Without access to an adequate supply of reliable power, basic community needs, from education and health services to safe drinking water and the ability to connect new homes and build other critical infrastructure, have been hampered. Over 80% of existing homes in Pikangikum are without water and sewer service. The fuel-intensive diesel generating station has been operating at capacity since 2010, leaving the community to struggle with constant power outages and several catastrophic generator failures. The connection to the provincial power grid was made possible with the Government of Canada committing up to \$60 million towards the project.

“There is a silent excitement in Pikangikum and we need to move forward to honour our commitment to the community of Pikangikum that we will get them connected to a reliable power source,” says Margaret Kenequanash, CEO for Wataynikaneyap Power. “I’m very excited, especially seeing the training that has started in Pikangikum, but I’m particularly happy with the work we did with the community elders and leadership to get to this point.”

With the selection of the contractor, construction is now underway on the 117 km power line, which Wataynikaneyap expects to be completed in late 2018. With minor upgrades in the future, the power line will be used to connect other remote First Nations communities north of the community in the future.

“Today’s announcement of the selection of PowerTel as the contractor is a major step forward for the Pikangikum Power Line Project,” says Scott Hawkes, President and CEO of FortisOntario Inc. and Wataynikaneyap Power PM Inc. “As Project Manager we are pleased for the Pikangikum First Nation community, as the project now enters into the construction phase. We look forward to working with PowerTel.”

The Pikangikum Power Line Project is the first stage of the larger 1800km Wataynikaneyap Power Transmission Project to connect 17 First Nations to the Ontario power grid, an unprecedented First Nations led project. The partnership of Wataynikaneyap Power is equally owned by 22 First Nation

communities (51%), who partnered with experienced industry leader, Fortis (49%). These communities are currently living off the grid, relying on very expensive diesel to power their homes and businesses – a situation that has become financially unsustainable, environmentally risky, and inadequate to meet community needs.

“PowerTel is very honoured to be trusted again to bring power to a Northern Ontario First Nation Community,” says Adnane Rakib, PowerTel President. “PowerTel will work closely with the local First Nations communities, Wataynikaneyap Power and Northern Ontario skilled resources to deliver this important project on time and on budget.”

#### **About Wataynikaneyap Power:**

Wataynikaneyap Power is a licensed transmission partnership equally owned by 22 First Nation communities (51%), and Fortis Inc. (49%). Wataynikaneyap Power PM Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of FortisOntario Inc., acts as project manager. To connect remote First Nations communities to the electrical grid, Wataynikaneyap Power will develop and operate approximately 1,800 kilometers of 230 kV, 115 kV, and 44 kV lines in northwestern Ontario. When complete, the project is expected to save over \$1 billion over the next 40 years compared to continued diesel generation. The project will also result in over 6.6 million tonnes of avoided CO2 greenhouse gas emissions, increase economic development opportunities and improve the social and living conditions for remote community residents. More information about Wataynikaneyap Power can be found at [www.wataypower.ca](http://www.wataypower.ca)

#### **About FortisOntario:**

FortisOntario Inc. is an electric utility, which owns and operates Canadian Niagara Power Inc., Cornwall Street Railway Light & Power Company Ltd. and Algoma Power Inc., serving a combined 65,000 customers. FortisOntario Inc. also owns regulated transmission assets with approximately 3,430 km of distribution and transmission lines. FortisOntario is a subsidiary of Fortis Inc., a leader in the North American regulated electric and gas utility industry. For further information visit [www.fortisinc.com](http://www.fortisinc.com).

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