



Historic First Nations-led Transmission Project Gets Major Boost from Ontario's Long-Term Energy Plan

Wataynikaneyap Power Welcomes Government's Recommitment to Connect Remote First Nations Communities in Ontario

TORONTO, ONTARIO (Marketwired – October 26, 2017) – One of the largest and most transformative transmission projects in Ontario's history got a major boost today when the Ontario Government reinforced its support for the project, known as Wataynikaneyap Power, in its 2017 Long-Term Energy Plan.

The project was first outlined by the Ontario Government in its 2013 Long-Term Energy Plan when it identified the need to connect remote First Nations communities to the electricity grid as a priority. The Ontario Government designated Wataynikaneyap Power as the transmission company to complete the project in 2016, amending the Rural Remote Rate Protection (RRRP) to help fund the project.

"We are incredibly encouraged by the Ontario Government's ongoing support for the project and look forward to the day when we can tie into the provincial electricity grid and provide our communities with safe, reliable and clean energy," says Margaret Kenequanash, CEO for Wataynikaneyap Power. "Connection to the grid will open the door for us to start building the infrastructure we so desperately need."

Wataynikaneyap Power is a First Nations-led project that will revitalize 22 remote First Nations communities in northwestern Ontario. Seventeen of these communities are currently off the grid, relying on very expensive diesel to power their homes and businesses – a situation that has become financially unsustainable, environmentally risky, and unable to meet community needs. This project will enable communities to move away from relying on expensive and undependable diesel plants that produce significant GHG emissions with no capacity to keep up with growth.

With 1,800 kilometres of transmission lines to be built at a cost of roughly \$1.35 billion (2015), it's a partnership on a massive scale that has the ability to define the very future of these communities. Without access to reliable power, everything from education, health services, to safe drinking water and the ability to connect new homes and build other critical infrastructure has been hampered.

The 2017 Long-Term Energy Plan anticipates construction of a new line to Pickle Lake by 2020 to support these connections, with the first phase of work scheduled to start in January 2019. In the meantime, work has already begun to connect Pikangikum First Nation, one of the 22 First Nations who are part of Wataynikaneyap Power, to Ontario's power grid after a \$60 million funding announcement earlier this summer by the Government of Canada.

Wataynikaneyap Power PM, a wholly owned subsidiary of FortisOntario Inc., is the Project Manager (PM) for Wataynikaneyap Power.

“This is a positive development for the project and assists in advancing Wataynikaneyap Power through the next regulatory and permitting milestones,” says Scott Hawkes, President and CEO of FortisOntario Inc. and Wataynikaneyap Power PM. “It’s now critical that the Federal Government and the Ontario Government reach a timely agreement on the larger funding framework so the project can file its leave to construct in a timely manner with the Ontario Energy Board to ensure the project remains on schedule.”

About Wataynikaneyap Power:

Wataynikaneyap Power is a licensed transmission company equally owned by 22 First Nation communities (51%), in partnership with Fortis Inc. (49%). FortisOntario Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Fortis Inc. and an electricity transmission and distribution utility holding company based in Ontario, acts as the project manager. To connect remote First Nations communities to the electrical grid, Wataynikaneyap Power will develop and operate approximately 1,800 kilometres 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

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 kilometres 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.

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