



Poplar Hill First Nation Energized by Wataynikaneyap Power

The 'line that brings light' connects Poplar Hill First Nation to the provincial power grid

(January 29, 2025 - Fort William First Nation, Ontario) Wataynikaneyap Power is pleased to announce the energization of Poplar Hill First Nation. The northern Ontario community was energized on March 12, 2024, and connected to the provincial power grid on December 17, 2024.

Poplar Hill Chief Alvin Owen remarked, "For too long, Poplar Hill has been reliant on diesel generators, which did not meet the needs of our growing community. Thanks to the connection to the grid, Poplar Hill First Nation has reliable power to all members of our community. In the past, power outages were common in the winter. We want to thank our former Chiefs that started this big project - Jacob Strang and Howard Comber. We look forward to further opportunities that reliable power will bring for our new housing and future projects. We thank everyone involved in this project that has finally brought us reliable power."

Wataynikaneyap Power is majority-owned by an equal partnership of 24 First Nations, in partnership with Fortis Inc. and other private investors, to build and operate the 'line that brings light', a \$1.9 billion dollar infrastructure project. The 1,800 km Wataynikaneyap Power transmission system will ultimately connect 17 remote First Nations to the Ontario power grid, removing their reliance on diesel-generated electricity. Many of these generators are at capacity and not able to connect to new infrastructure.

Poplar Hill is the 13th First Nation energized by the provincial power grid through the Wataynikaneyap Power transmission system. As of May 2024, all Wataynikaneyap Power assets are energized. Three First Nations are working through their Independent Power Authority processes before they can be connected.*

Margaret Kenequanash, CEO of Wataynikaneyap Power, remarked, "Congratulations Poplar Hill on your connection to the power grid! I want to acknowledge that, along with the other IPA communities, Poplar Hill First Nation's vision for their Independent Power Authority is ownership, capacity building, and becoming self-reliant in their power distribution services. Unfortunately, due to costs and lack of recognition of this vision in the regulatory system, Poplar Hill First Nation was required to work with a regulated power distributor to become grid connected." She continued, "We must advance the vision of First Nation ownership, capacity building, and meaningful participation in all areas. Finally, I would like to acknowledge Poplar Hill Elders Emma and Albert Wassaykeesick for their guidance throughout the development of the transmission system. Emma was a valuable member of the Elder Advisory Committee, before her well-earned retirement."

"This is another huge accomplishment for the community, and all 24 First Nation majority owners of the transmission system," said Frank McKay, Board Chair for the Wataynikaneyap Power General Partnership (WPGP). "The vision of the People is to maintain and grow First Nation ownership of major infrastructure on the Homelands. We need to keep moving towards that goal, so our future generations can thrive."

* Wataynikaneyap will continue to work with McDowell Lake First Nation, the 17th community, with the goal of becoming grid connected in the future.

Poplar Hill First Nation is located about 570 km northwest of Thunder Bay, Ontario. The community is accessible only by air, or ice road during the winter. The Wataynikaneyap Power transmission system connects the Poplar Hill community distribution system to the Ontario grid through a total of 190 km of transmission line and four substations, originating from its Red Lake Substation located in Red Lake, Ontario. Poplar Hill will now be served by Hydro One Remote Communities Inc. for the community's local distribution of electricity.

On January 29, 2025, Poplar Hill invited Wataynikaneyap Power, Opiikapawiin Services, government, and other stakeholders to celebrate this momentous occasion in the community.

"We are so pleased to be celebrating with Poplar Hill First Nation today. This has been a remarkable journey, which started over 20 years ago," Eliezar Mckay, First Nation LP Board Chair, remarked. "The work continues for a brighter future for all."

"Fortis is proud to join Poplar Hill First Nation in celebrating their connection to the Wataynikaneyap Power transmission system," said David Hutchens, President and CEO, Fortis Inc. "Congratulations to Chief Alvin Owen and the entire Poplar Hill community. This milestone is a testament to our shared commitment to a brighter, more sustainable future. Together, we are ensuring reliable and affordable energy for generations to come."

"The partnership that we are celebrating today is part of the largest First Nations-led grid connection infrastructure project in Canada. Congratulations to Poplar Hill First Nation and Wataynikaneyap Power on this significant milestone," stated the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor), who was in attendance. "Today's celebration marks the end of the community's reliance on diesel-generated electricity, thanks to their efforts and leadership. This is an example of what's possible when all levels of government collaborate with First Nations partners, so more communities can benefit from the development opportunities that come from access to sustainable, reliable power."

About Wataynikaneyap Power

Wataynikaneyap Power is a licensed transmission company majority-owned by a partnership of 24 First Nations in partnership with Fortis Inc. and other private investors, regulated by the Ontario Energy Board. FortisOntario Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Fortis Inc., acts as the project manager through its wholly owned subsidiary, Wataynikaneyap Power PM Inc. The 24 First Nations also established Opiikapawiin Services to lead the community engagement and participation for Wataynikaneyap Power LP. To connect remote communities to the electrical grid, Wataynikaneyap Power is developing, managing construction, and operating approximately 1,800 kilometres of transmission lines and 22 substations in northwestern Ontario. For further information, please visit: www.wataypower.ca.

Wataynikaneyap Power recognizes that the land on which Wataynikaneyap has its head office is in the Homeland of Animikiii Wajiw. Gitchi Gami Anishnabek are signatory to Robinson-Superior Treaty of 1850.

About First Nation Limited Partnership

First Nation Limited Partnership (FNLP) is a partnership of 24 First Nations in Northwestern Ontario working together to connect 17 remote communities currently powered by diesel generation stations. FNLP was established in 2015 to be the ownership and control of the participating First Nations' interest in Wataynikaneyap Power LP. The 51% interest in Wataynikaneyap Power LP is equally owned by each of the 24 First Nation communities and FNLP will maintain their ability to increase their ownership to 100% over time.

About Fortis

Fortis is a well-diversified leader in the North American regulated electric and gas utility industry with 2023 revenue of \$12 billion and total assets of \$70 billion as of September 30, 2024. The Corporation's 9,600 employees serve utility customers in five Canadian provinces, ten U.S. states and three Caribbean countries. Fortis shares are listed on the TSX and NYSE and trade under the symbol FTS. Additional information can be accessed at www.fortisinc.com, www.sedar.com, or www.sec.gov.

About Opiikapawiin Services

Opiikapawiin Services LP (OSLP) was established by a partnership of 24 First Nations in Northwestern Ontario. OSLP is primarily responsible for administering projects and programs for Wataynikaneyap Power PM through a service agreement, relating to community engagement, community readiness, education & training, business readiness, stakeholder engagement, communications, and capacity building. OSLP also supports the First Nation Partnership in the management of its investment in Wataynikaneyap Power. For additional information, please visit: www.oslp.ca

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