



Wawakapewin First Nation Energized by Wataynikaneyap Power

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

(September 29, 2023 - Fort William First Nation, Ontario) Wataynikaneyap Power is pleased to announce the energization of Wawakapewin First Nation. The northern Ontario community was connected to the provincial power grid on August 16, 2023. Upon grid connection, the community turned off the diesel generators which had previously provided them primary power.

Wawakapewin Chief Anne Marie Beardy states, "This is a big day for our little community. Lack of reliable power meant not being able to grow. It limited the amount of community members who could stay in Wawakapewin all year long, instead of just seasonally. We are proud to majority own this power system on the Homelands, bringing reliable power to First Nations."

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 Line will ultimately connect 17 remote First Nations to the Ontario power grid, removing their reliance on diesel-generated electricity.

"Congratulations to Wawakapewin First Nation for their connection to the grid," remarks Margaret Kenequanash, CEO of Wataynikaneyap Power. "Wawakapewin has struggled with their diesel generators and essential services the last 25 years. Many thought this wouldn't be possible, but on August 16, Wawakapewin First Nation was connected. The people can go home now. Congratulations! Now Wawakapewin needs an airport."

The Wataynikaneyap Power transmission system connects the Wawakapewin community distribution system to the Ontario grid through a total of 635 km of line and five substations, originating from its Dinorwic Substation. Wawakapewin will be served by Hydro One Remotes Communities Inc. (HORCI) for the local distribution of electricity.

Wawakapewin First Nation is located over 570 km north of Thunder Bay, Ontario. The community is accessible by ice road in the winter season and by float plane in the summer.

Wawakapewin is the fifth First Nation energized by the provincial power grid through the Wataynikaneyap Power transmission system. 11 further First Nations are planned to be energized in 2023-2024.*

Eliezar Mckay, First Nation LP Board Chair, states, "The power transmission line doesn't just bring light, it brings hope. Our youth can now think about what they can do for their community, their families, and for themselves - without power restrictions."

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

“Congratulations Wawakapewin First Nation! I’m proud to be a part of this historical life changing initiative, directed by the people through mandate. It is great to celebrate the continued progress of this unprecedented project,” remarks Frank Mckay, Board Chair for the Wataynikaneyap Power General Partnership (WPGP).

“Fortis extends congratulations to Wawakapewin First Nation Chief Anne Marie Beardy and community members on this special occasion,” said David Hutchens, President and CEO, Fortis Inc. “The new connection to the Ontario electricity grid provides reliable, secure power to the people of Wawakapewin. Our team looks forward to additional Wataynikaneyap Power Project communities receiving reliable power in the coming months.”

On September 29, Wawakapewin invited Wataynikaneyap Power, Opiikapawiin Services, government, and other stakeholders to celebrate this momentous occasion in Thunder Bay.

“The partnership that we are celebrating today is part of the largest First Nations-led grid connection infrastructure project in Canada. Along with economic benefits for the community, connecting Wawakapewin First Nation to the provincial power grid brings clean, reliable, and expandable electricity to community members. Significant work continues to connect diesel-dependent First Nations to Ontario’s power grid, and we look forward to celebrating the remaining upcoming connections of the Wataynikaneyap Transmission Project,” states 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.

The Honourable Todd Smith, Minister of Energy, remarks, “Congratulations to Wawakapewin First Nation and Wataynikaneyap Power on this historic achievement – bringing reliable, clean, and affordable electricity to the community. Our government is proud to support this First Nation-led project that is connecting communities to Ontario’s grid, lighting the way for new opportunities in community development.”

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 will develop, manage construction, and operate approximately 1,800 kilometres of transmission lines in northwestern Ontario. For further information, please visit: www.wataypower.ca.

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 2022 revenue of \$11 billion and total assets of \$64 billion as of June 30, 2023. The Corporation's 9,200 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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