



Deer Lake First Nation Energized by Wataynikaneyap Power

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

(September 16, 2024 - Fort William First Nation, Ontario) Wataynikaneyap Power is pleased to announce the energization of Deer Lake First Nation. The northern Ontario community was connected to the provincial power grid on April 16, 2024.

Deer Lake Chief Leonard Mamakeesick states, “Deer Lake is so proud to be an owner of the infrastructure that allowed us to replace diesel-generation as our primary source of power. Not only will grid connection bring us cleaner, more reliable power, but it opens up the possibility to connect new houses and buildings within the community; for example, Deer Lake has been able to build and connect six new homes, a fitness centre, and install a refrigeration system at the arena.”

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 new infrastructure.

Deer Lake was the 11th First Nation energized by the provincial power grid through the Wataynikaneyap Power transmission system. As of May 2024, all Wataynikaneyap Power assets are energized, with four communities awaiting grid connection.¹

“Congratulations to Deer Lake First Nation on their energization! Reliable energy will open many doors to improve quality of life and essential services. Elders have been very important to this project, and we could not have accomplished all this work without their guidance and support,” remarks Margaret Kenequanash, CEO of Wataynikaneyap Power. “I want to acknowledge Saggius and Elizabeth Rae of Deer Lake for always being with us on our journey!”

Deer Lake First Nation is located approximately 600 km north of Thunder Bay, Ontario and approximately 80 km east of the Ontario Manitoba border. It is accessible only by air or ice road during the winter season. The Wataynikaneyap Power transmission system connects the Deer Lake community distribution system to the Ontario grid through a total of 270 km of transmission lines and five substations, originating from its Red Lake Substation located in Red Lake, Ontario. Deer Lake will continue to be served by Hydro One Remote Communities Inc. for the local distribution of electricity.

Eliezar McKay, First Nation LP Board Chair, states, “Congratulations to the team on this achievement! We will see that reliable power allows for opportunities in remote First Nations that others may take for granted, and I look forward to seeing what opportunities our People take on now that there is adequate power.”

¹ Wataynikaneyap will continue to work with McDowell Lake First Nation, the 17th community, with the goal of becoming grid connected in the future.

On September 16, Deer Lake First Nation invited Wataynikaneyap Power, Opiikapawiin Services, government, and other stakeholders to celebrate this momentous occasion in the community.

“The Wataynikaneyap Power transmission system is the largest First Nations-led infrastructure project in Canada. First Nation ownership will ensure responsible development of infrastructure on our Homelands and maximize benefits to communities. We are not just bringing light, Wataynikaneyap Power is bringing improvements to the Peoples’ quality of life,” remarks Frank Mckay, Board Chair for the Wataynikaneyap Power General Partnership (WPGP). “Congratulations Deer Lake First Nation!”

“We are proud to join with our First Nations partners, government, and community to celebrate the energization of Deer Lake First Nation,” said David Hutchens, President and CEO, Fortis Inc. “Congratulations to Chief Leonard Mamakeesick and the entire Deer Lake community. This is a significant achievement made possible through unwavering commitment and collaboration. We’re honoured to be a part of this journey.”

“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 Deer Lake First Nation to the provincial power grid brings clean, reliable, and expandable electricity to community members. Significant work continues to reduce diesel dependency, and we look forward to celebrating the remaining upcoming connections of the Wataynikaneyap Power Transmission Project,” states the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Indigenous Services and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario (FedNor).

“Congratulations to Wataynikaneyap Power and Deer Lake First Nation on this extraordinary achievement in bringing clean, reliable, and affordable electricity to the community,” said The Hon. Stephen Lecce, Minister of Energy and Electrification. “Our government is proud to support this Indigenous-led project that is connecting communities to Ontario’s clean grid and unlocking new opportunities for the next generation.”

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.

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 \$69 billion as of June 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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