



NEWS **UPDATE**

INFORMATION FOR NISICHAWAYASIHK CREE NATION MEMBERS JUNE 2005

Project Development Agreement (PDA) Negotiations Continuing

NCN and Hydro continue to negotiate the *Wuskwatim Project Development Agreement* (PDA).

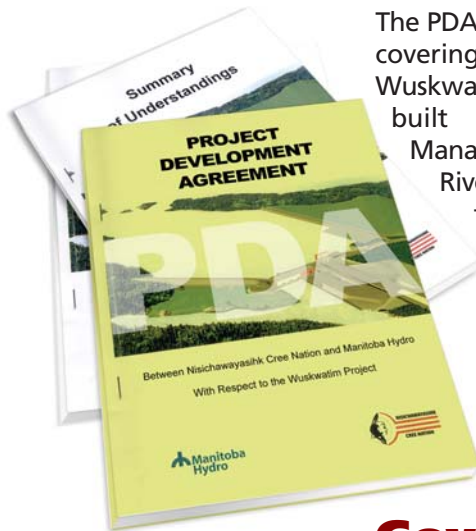
The PDA will be a detailed legal agreement covering every aspect of the proposed Wuskwatim hydroelectric project, to be built in Nelson House Resource Management Area on the Burntwood River at Taskinigup Falls. Because of the size and complexity of the PDA, it is taking longer than originally expected to complete.

The PDA will be a public document, based on the *Summary of Understandings* (SOU). Although the PDA is a

complex document, you will understand most of its important aspects if you understand the SOU, which was released to the NCN Members in 2003.

When the PDA is ready later this year, it will go to NCN voters, who will have the final say. NCN Members will have access to the whole PDA, and will receive newsletters and summaries of the agreement.

There will also be meetings to explain the PDA before the vote, which may be in the late summer or fall. If NCN voters don't ratify the PDA, the proposed project won't go ahead. If construction begins in late 2005, the project may be complete in about 2011.



Governments Yet to Grant Licences and Regulatory Approvals

Manitoba's Clean Environment Commission (CEC) issued a public report about the proposed project after holding public hearings in 2004. The CEC recommended the provincial government approve the project. The provincial government is now considering the report and will likely make its decision later this year.

The federal government also has to consider the project and will issue a Comprehensive Study Report (CSR), in the near future.

The CSR will be a public document, commenting on the effects of the project

from a federal perspective. The public will be able to send comments about the CSR to the federal government. The government will then make its final decision, likely later this year.

If governments issue their approvals, confirming their confidence in the project before the PDA vote, it won't mean the project is a "done deal". Regardless of when governments make their decisions, NCN voters will have the final say and decide in a secret-ballot vote if the project goes forward or not.



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Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre of Excellence is nearing completion and should be ready to open this summer.

ATEC Training Centre Nearing Completion

Construction of the Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre of Excellence is nearing completion and should be ready to open this fall. ATEC has already trained dozens of NCN Members, including Members from South Indian Lake. Over 40 students are currently enrolled in programs. More are expected to enroll this fall when

the programs offered by ATEC will expand to include other programs, not necessarily related to jobs on the Wuskwatim project. Regardless of whether the Wuskwatim project goes ahead, ATEC will continue to provide training opportunities to NCN Members and other northern Manitoba residents.

Catering Jobs for NCN Members

After a lot of hard work NCN has completed discussions with Sodexo, a major international catering firm. The contract provides for catering job opportunities for NCN Members at the Wuskwatim work camp. It is also expected that NCN Members will have other job opportunities in security,

road construction and cross-cultural training. There will be more job opportunities during the busy summer construction season than during the winter. Experience gained at Wuskwatim will put NCN Members in a good position to secure jobs at future projects in northern Manitoba or elsewhere.

SIL Independence Closer Than Ever

South Indian Lake is closer than ever to achieving its dream of independence.

O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation (OPCN) at South Indian Lake is now closer than ever to achieving its dream of independence after decades of trying. OPCN leaders, who have their own lawyers and advisors, have worked hard to make their dream come true as soon as possible. The timing of OPCN's recent drive to fast-track independence has come from OPCN's own

leaders, who have taken the initiative in this area. NCN Members who live at SIL are being asked if they want to be Members of the new OPCN, or to remain Members of NCN. NCN has always supported OPCN's right to independence in principle. OPCN's independence has no connection at all to the proposed Wuskwatim project.



NCN FUTURE DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation
Nelson House, Manitoba R0B 1A0
Phone: (204) 484-2414
Band Office (204) 484-2332
Fax: (204) 484-2494
email: ncninfo@ncncree.com
Visit our website: www.ncncree.com