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**PROVINCE ANNOUNCES FUNDING FOR  
NISICHAWAYASIIHK CREE NATION'S TRAINING PLAN**

NELSON HOUSE—Premier Gary Doer has announced funding of \$371,700 to support the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation's (NCN) annual training plan as part of the province's commitment to the Hydro Northern Training Initiative.

The premier and Advanced Education and Training Minister Diane McGifford made the announcement today while meeting with Chief Jerry Primrose and the NCN council in Nelson House.

"The Manitoba government is committed to strengthening social and economic prosperity in northern Manitoba and the training initiative is the largest human resources strategy introduced in the North in decades," the premier said. "This investment will help build a skilled northern Aboriginal workforce for planned and proposed hydroelectric developments that will create jobs in the North and contribute to Manitoba's economic growth. The training initiative will also ensure a strong skill base to support other northern economic activities."

Manitoba Hydro has proposed two new hydroelectric generating stations including Wuskwatim on the Burntwood River and Keeyask on the Nelson River. Pre-project training for northern Aboriginal residents, organizations and communities will result in a target of 800 job placements on the proposed projects if the projects proceed. Training plans are being developed by other organizations and agreements will be announced as details are finalized.

"We are pleased to support the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation's plans for a prosperous and sustainable future for the community, especially youth, who currently make up 60 per cent of band members," the premier said. "This training plan, which is designed, managed and delivered by First Nations, is part of NCN's vision to train more than 200 members in occupational areas so they are ready for employment opportunities when they become available in northern Manitoba."

Manitoba Hydro has made significant commitments to the training of northern Aboriginal people to optimize participation in the new hydroelectric developments currently being planned. In total, \$60.3 million has been committed by the Province of Manitoba, the Government of Canada and Manitoba Hydro to pre-employment training for new hydro projects.

The province and Manitoba Hydro are working closely with northern First Nations in the vicinity of the proposed projects—Nisichawayasihk, Tataskweyak, York Factory and Fox Lake Cree Nations, War Lake First Nation and other Aboriginal organizations such as Manitoba Keewatinook Ininew Okimowin (MKO) and the Manitoba Métis Federation—as they develop multi-year training plans and deliver training. The total contribution to NCN’s multi-year training plan to date is \$4,087,286 from the Manitoba government and Manitoba Hydro.

A comprehensive training process including educational upgrading, life skills training, technical training and work experience is being delivered. Student supports such as child care, transportation, training allowances and retention services such as counselling and tutoring are also being provided.

“The partnerships NCN has formed with post-secondary institutions, unions and professional associations will help to ensure trainees complete programs and achieve success,” McGifford said.

Post-secondary and industry partnerships formed to date include the University College of the North, Assiniboine Community College, Winnipeg Technical College, Specialized Workers’ Union, Carpenters’ Training Institute and Sigfusson Northern.