

# Training and Employment Update

# NCN

# UPDATE

March 2003

INFORMATION FOR NISICHAWAYASIIK CREE NATION MEMBERS

## A Message From Chief Jerry Primrose



Tansi,

The new Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre of Excellence is one of our community's most important new initiatives. It has the potential to train our members for jobs on proposed Hydro projects and to take

advantage of other northern economic opportunities. It will help develop and support entrepreneurial talents and skills of our NCN Members.

The potential of this centre for our members, particularly our youth, is enormous, and the benefits for our community will be felt almost immediately and long into the future. It is an accomplishment we can all be proud of.

Your council and the Future Development Team have worked hard to negotiate and develop this project over the past several months. The result is a training centre that we believe respects our community's vision and meets the needs of our members for the future.

We are committed to making ATEC accessible and effective to ensure as many members as possible have access to the opportunities the centre will offer.

With this important component in place, all our energies will be directed towards creating and assuring meaningful long-term employment and careers that are the basis of a strong future for our community.

Now it is up to all of us to provide the community support and encouragement that will help our youth, families and friends take full advantage of the centre's programs for their, and our, future success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Primrose", written over a horizontal line.

Chief Jerry Primrose

## A Message From Councillor William Elvis Thomas



*Future Development Portfolio Holder*

This newsletter is provided to give NCN members important information about ATEC – one of the most significant training initiatives ever undertaken by our First Nation.

The new \$6.5 million Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre of Excellence, and the related long-term training funding has come about after months of planning and development. This work included the assessment of our community needs, long-term planning and negotiations with Indian Affairs and Northern Development, The Province of Manitoba, Manitoba Hydro, and our educational partners.

The vision and scope of the centre, along with the training and support programs offered, have, with your input, been planned and developed through the efforts and dedication of the entire council, the Future Development Team and our key advisors. We believe the result of this hard work will be one of our community's most significant and important accomplishments – a legacy for our youth that will be felt many years into the future.

Many NCN members have already been trained through programs arranged by NCN Human Resources – and the momentum is building. When completed, the new centre will be a local and regional training centre offering a wide range of designated and undesignated trades and job skills.

I hope this newsletter will help you get familiar with what ATEC has to offer you, your friends and family.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wm Elvis Thomas", written over a horizontal line.

Councillor William Elvis Thomas

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INFORMATION FOR NISICHAWAYASIIHK CREE NATION MEMBERS



## A New Centre of Excellence for Training and Employment

*NISICHAWAYASIIHK CREE NATION IS FINALIZING NEGOTIATIONS WITH CANADA, MANITOBA AND MANITOBA HYDRO FOR THE ATOSKIWIN TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT CENTRE AND RELATED TRAINING PROGRAMS. THE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE WILL BECOME AN IMPORTANT INSTRUMENT FOR THE FUTURE PROSPERITY OF NCN PEOPLE AND ASSURE MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION IN THE WUSKWATIM HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT, SHOULD THAT PROJECT GO AHEAD. WITH OR WITHOUT WUSKWATIM, THE CENTRE WILL DEVELOP AND DELIVER TRAINING AND SKILLS TO MEET THE EVOLVING NEEDS OF MEMBERS. THIS NEWSLETTER PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF THE CENTRE AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU AND THE COMMUNITY.*

Since 1999, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation's Chief and Council have been in discussions with Manitoba Hydro regarding the Wuskwatim/Notigi Hydroelectric development projects. A 2000 opinion survey of NCN Members identified development of training and employment initiatives in Nelson House as a critical issue related to these projects. Since then, the community has consistently told Chief and Council that training and employment opportunities are among the most important benefits to be pursued in future hydro development. The concept for the Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre (ATEC) is based on Members' priorities and concerns.

### COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

In the winter of 2001, NCN undertook a community consultation process for an Agreement in Principle (AIP) on the Wuskwatim project, which was ratified by a significant majority of NCN Members on May 10, 2001 and signed, by NCN and Hydro in September 2001. The AIP was intended to guide further discussions for a Project Development Agreement. Article 6 of the AIP contains provisions for



***Recent graduates of NCN's Human Resources heavy-equipment-operator training program.***

training, employment and business opportunities and Article 7 relates to ATEC. Chief and Council negotiated both articles to ensure NCN Members benefit from development of new hydro projects within our territory.

### NEGOTIATIONS AND FUNDING

In June 2001, Chief and Council began negotiations for funding with Manitoba Hydro, the Province of Manitoba and the Government of Canada (including Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Western Economic Diversification, Human Resources and Development). This four-party negotiations process is continuing.

## DEVELOPING THE CONCEPT

Near the beginning of negotiations, NCN developed a “Concept Paper” for training that initially estimated it would cost \$16.25 million to build ATEC and fund training initiatives, including \$4.7 million for training unrelated to Wuskwatim. It was presented to the potential funders in January of 2002 and, while the concepts were well received, the funders requested additional detailed information to support the concepts and funding request as well as more precise estimates.

Chief and Council and the Future Development Team developed and submitted a detailed training plan in June 2002 that explained and justified NCN’s request for funding for ATEC construction and for training programs for its Members.



***The Agreement in Principle contains provisions related to Training, Employment and Business Opportunities***



**PROPOSED TRAINING FACILITY (ARTISTS CONCEPT ONLY, SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

Since then, Chief and Council and the Future Development Team have had many discussions with representatives of Hydro and the two levels of government, both locally and in Ottawa. Funding estimates have been refined.

On February 26, 2003, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Robert Nault approved the training plan, with funding for ATEC construction subsequently announced. The training funds, once confirmed, will be distributed annually based on NCN’s training needs as contained

in annual training plans. Funding commitments have been received for up to \$16.5 million for ATEC and Wuskwatim related training. In the future, Chief and Council plan funding for other types of post-secondary education for its members.

# Current and Future Training Plans

## THE ATEC VISION

The Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre is envisioned as the community's main training and employment agency, and will offer courses in many different areas depending on the community's needs. In the short term, ATEC will serve as a local education, training and employment centre, mainly related to employment on the Wuskwatim project. The centre will also operate as the NCN human resource referral agency for jobs related to Wuskwatim.

The centre will also be a training and business incubation centre to promote and develop business relationships and opportunities to take advantage of a number of hydro and resource development projects planned in the region over the next 20 years.

The ATEC campus will include the 15,300 square-foot training and employment centre, a 6,400 square foot dormitory to house 24 students from outside Nelson House, three duplexes to house instructors and a 1,500 square-foot day-care centre.

The facility will have three classrooms, a science lab, a computer lab, as well as industrial shops to provide hands-on training for trades programs. Capacity for the centre is expected to be about 100 students at a time.

## ATEC CONSTRUCTION TO BEGIN THIS SPRING

In some respects, ATEC construction has already started with soil samples and environmental testing completed several months ago and construction of a temporary classroom nearing completion. Once the ATEC facility is constructed, the temporary classroom will be converted to a residence for instructors who will teach at the ATEC.

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***THE ATEC CAMPUS IS EXPECTED TO INCLUDE THE 15,300 SQUARE-FOOT TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT CENTRE, A 6,400 SQUARE FOOT DORMITORY TO HOUSE 24 STUDENTS FROM OUTSIDE NELSON HOUSE, THREE DUPLEXES TO HOUSE INSTRUCTORS AND A 1,500 SQUARE-FOOT DAY-CARE CENTRE.***

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Selection of a contractor may be decided soon with construction starting as early as May 2003. If construction proceeds as scheduled, occupancy could occur as early as this fall.

## A LOCAL AND REGIONAL TRAINING CENTRE

NCN Members along with members of other First Nation communities seeking employment on the proposed Wuskwatim Project will have opportunities to participate in related courses.

Over time, ATEC is envisioned to continue operating as a key educational institution in the community and will become a regional centre with the Province of Manitoba's new college expansion initiative.

## EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

ATEC will offer adult education courses and partner with the NCN high school to offer trades education for students. Several different educational groups are expected to play a part in developing and administering courses and training to be offered through ATEC. An agreement was recently signed between NCN and the Keewatin Community College (KCC). In return for annual funding to NCN, KCC will provide educational programs through ATEC to NCN Members in the community.

# Training and Employment Questions and Answers

## **Q: WHAT TRAINING HAS BEEN OFFERED TO DATE?**

**A:** NCN Human Resources has already offered several training and educational programs in conjunction with various training providers. During 2002, NCN undertook an outreach program to provide Members with realistic information about Wuskwatim pre-project training and potential employment, along with help to identify career goals and explain the training process and opportunities available.

In all, 450 NCN Members in Nelson House and 150 Members in South Indian Lake have been pre-registered for training. In addition, 300 Members from Nelson House and 50 Members from South Indian Lake completed Canadian Adult Achievement Tests and developed career plans based on the results.

Following the educational assessments and career plans, 50 Members participated in academic upgrading courses in 2002. Several graduates have registered in the carpentry apprenticeship program and others have decided to take further upgrading.

In addition to the above initiatives, the following training has recently taken place:

- Eight Members completed their level-one carpentry classroom training in December 2002.
- 26 Members completed training as trades helpers under Advanced Education and Training's Aboriginal Apprenticeship Training Initiative. The program alternated one week of training with one week of work experience building eight new homes for the NCN Housing Authority.
- 11 Members graduated from a 12-week heavy-equipment-operator training course where they received experience in backhoes, loaders, crawlers, graders and rock trucks.
- Seven Members graduated from a four-week truck-driver training course in Winnipeg and are now gaining work experience.

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***EDUCATION UPGRADING  
WILL ALLOW INDIVIDUALS  
TO IMPROVE THEIR  
CURRENT EDUCATION  
LEVEL TO PREPARE THEM  
FOR FUTURE TRAINING  
AND EMPLOYMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES.***

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### **Q: WHAT TRAINING IS PLANNED FOR 2003?**

**A:** Members already in training programs are expected to continue their courses and upgrading. The following training is also expected to be available:

- 450 Members from Nelson House and 150 Members from South Indian Lake are pre-registered for training as well as completing Canadian Adult Achievement Tests.
- Life skills training will be provided for individuals scheduled for enrollment in the following employment-training courses: heavy equipment operator, truck driver, catering and food preparation, construction labourers and carpentry.
- Education upgrading will allow individuals to improve their current education level to prepare them for future training and employment opportunities.
- An eight-week, level-two carpentry-training course will be offered as well as level-three training together with work experience in Nelson House.
- A 14-week trades-qualification program will be offered to enable long-time, but uncertified carpenters to obtain their journeyman trade ticket. Two courses will be offered, one in Nelson House and one in South Indian Lake with up to 30 people expected to participate in the course.



***Wuskwatim pre-project training and potential employment outreach program has already pre-registered 450 NCN Members in Nelson House and 150 Members in South Indian Lake.***

- Level-one classroom training together with related work experience will be offered to those interested in the electrician trade.
- Simulated training for heavy-equipment-operators together with related work experience will be offered to upgrade the skills of previous employees.
- Truck driver skill development will be provided to enable students to obtain their class-one driver's licenses with air brake endorsement. Also included will be sections on "S" endorsement for stabilizer as well as transportation of dangerous goods and use of tie-downs.
- Catering and food preparation training with related work experience is expected to be available for Members interested in employment in the

construction camp as a chef, cook or other catering-related positions.

- Security guard training for up to three Members in a six-week program is expected to be offered in Portage la Prairie or Thompson.

### **Q: HOW DO PEOPLE REGISTER FOR TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES?**

**A:** NCN Members interested in training should immediately contact NCN Human Resources to learn more about training programs and schedules. Depending on qualifications, members may be required to participate in a preliminary assessment to determine appropriate training levels. Training has already started and some Members are already gaining valuable work experience!!

***“DESIGNATED TRADES”,  
SUCH AS CARPENTERS,  
ELECTRICIANS AND  
PLUMBERS, MAY TAKE UP  
TO 4 YEARS OF TRAINING  
AND WORK EXPERIENCE TO  
BECOME FULLY QUALIFIED  
AS A JOURNEYMAN.***

***FOR “NON-DESIGNATED  
TRADES” SUCH AS  
CERTAIN CATERING  
POSITIONS, LABOURERS,  
HEAVY EQUIPMENT  
OPERATORS AND TRUCK  
DRIVERS, THE TRAINING  
PERIOD IS MUCH SHORTER  
AND MAY BE COMPLETED  
IN ONLY A FEW WEEKS.***

**Q: WHAT IF PEOPLE ARE ALREADY  
QUALIFIED TO WORK IN  
CERTAIN AREAS?**

**A:** Valuable work experience may be available for people in the community or on other projects. Being listed in the NCN database is important to ensure they can be properly referred for employment once the hiring process begins.

**Q: HOW LONG DO PEOPLE HAVE TO  
TRAIN TO BE QUALIFIED FOR  
CERTAIN JOBS?**

**A:** It depends on the position, one’s level of education and previous training experience. For positions classified as “designated trades”, such as carpenters, electricians and plumbers, it may take up to 4 years of training to become fully qualified as a journeyman. For positions classified as “non-designated trades” or “construction support”, such as certain catering positions, labourers, heavy equipment operators and truck drivers, the training period is much shorter.

In addition to training directly related to the trade or occupation, it may also be necessary to participate in educational upgrading and life skills training.

As well as training, it will be important for people to obtain as much work experience as possible to be qualified for work on the Wuskwatim project. Experience on commercial and industrial projects throughout the Province can improve job qualifications. Joining a union as soon as possible may assist in gaining valuable work experience – and unions have hiring halls that refer people to work on various projects.

**Q: WHAT IS A DESIGNATED TRADE?**

**A:** A designated trade is an occupation that has been formally recognized through provincial or territorial legislation for apprenticeship training and certification. Requirements for in-school and on-the-job training as well as level and certification examinations are outlined in regulations. The Wuskwatim project expects to offer employment in the following designated trades:

- Rebar Worker
- Mechanic
- Millwright
- Pipe Fitter
- Electrician
- Painter
- Tile Layer
- Insulation Mechanic
- Cement Mason
- Carpenter
- Iron Worker
- Plumber
- Glazier
- Roofer
- Sheet Metal Worker

**Q: WHAT IS A NON-  
DESIGNATED TRADE?**

**A:** A non-designated trade is a skilled occupation not defined by regulation as a trade. The Wuskwatim project expects to offer employment in the following non-designated trades:

- Driller/Blaster
- Serviceman
- Equipment Operator
- Utilityman/Groundman
- Teamster
- Lineman

**Q: ARE THERE OTHER  
JOB CATEGORIES?**

**A:** Yes, there is a category of construction support that includes:

- Technical
- Catering
- Labourer
- Clerical
- Security

**Q: WHEN WILL EMPLOYMENT ON THE WUSKWATIM PROJECT START?**

**A:** Employment opportunities may start as early as December 2003 for those employed as general labourers, truck drivers and heavy equipment operators. Early employment opportunities are expected to be in the non-designated trades. Employment opportunities in most of the designated trades will start approximately two years after construction starts.

**Q: WHERE WILL COURSES BE OFFERED?**

**A:** NCN hopes to have ATEC offer as many courses as possible so that training can occur in the community. However, ATEC may not offer certain courses because enrollment may be too low or providing the course may be too expensive because of the cost of training equipment required.

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***NCN HOPES TO HAVE ATEC OFFER AS MANY COURSES AS POSSIBLE SO THAT TRAINING CAN OCCUR IN THE COMMUNITY.***

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**Q: WHAT HAPPENS IF PEOPLE WANT TO TAKE A COURSE NOT OFFERED AT ATEC?**

**A:** NCN will be provided funding to send Members to courses in other locations. Funding for training allowances, meals, transportation and room and board is also available to Members who may be required to take training outside of Nelson House.

**Q: WHO WILL BE DOING THE TRAINING?**

**A:** For designated trades, only qualified instructors through certified training programs and colleges will provide training. Keewatin Community College or one of the other major colleges in Manitoba is expected to provide training in these areas in conjunction with ATEC. NCN hopes to offer as much training as possible in the community.

Training in non-designated trades and construction support jobs will be offered through a variety of other training institutes. Again, NCN hopes most training will take place at ATEC or elsewhere in the community.

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***FOR DESIGNATED TRADES, ONLY QUALIFIED INSTRUCTORS THROUGH CERTIFIED TRAINING PROGRAMS AND COLLEGES WILL PROVIDE TRAINING AT THE ATEC TRAINING CENTRE.***

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***MAJOR COLLEGES IN MANITOBA ARE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE TRAINING IN CONJUNCTION WITH ATEC.***

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# NCN UPDATE

**IT IS EXPECTED THAT  
TWENTY-FIVE  
PER CENT OF FUNDING  
WILL BE AVAILABLE TO  
TRAIN MEMBERS OF OTHER  
FIRST NATIONS IN  
NORTHERN MANITOBA.**

**Q: IS FUNDING AVAILABLE TO TAKE  
COURSES NOT RELATED TO  
EMPLOYMENT ON A  
HYDRO PROJECT?**

**A:** Not at this time. The present funding is for training and employment opportunities related to the Wuskwatim project. However, it is expected that other types of courses and training will eventually be provided through ATEC.

**Q: IS FUNDING AVAILABLE TO HELP  
STUDENTS WITH FAMILIES?**

**A:** Yes. Funding may be available to assist with childcare needs so that people with children can take advantage of training opportunities.

**Q: ARE OTHER FIRST NATIONS ALSO  
RECEIVING FUNDING?**

**A:** Yes. It is expected that twenty-five per cent of funding will be available to train Members of other First Nations in Northern Manitoba.

**Q: WHO IS IN CHARGE OF ATEC AND  
TRAINING PROGRAMS?**

**A:** The Future Development Committee and NCN Human Resources are responsible for making decisions related to training and employment opportunities. NCN recently hired Ezra Bogle as the ATEC Director. We encourage NCN members to ask Ezra, about training opportunities.

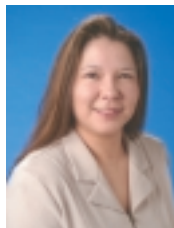
## NCN CHIEF AND COUNCIL



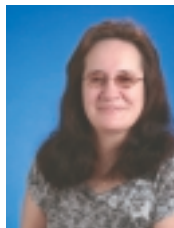
Jerry Primrose,  
*Chief*



D'Arcy Linklater,  
*Councillor*



Shirley L. Linklater,  
*Councillor*



Agnes M. Spence,  
*Councillor*



David M. Spence,  
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