



## NEWS RELEASE

### ***For Immediate Release***

## **Manitoba Hydro and Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation formally sign Wuskwatim Project Development Agreement**

NELSON HOUSE, Manitoba – *June 26, 2006* – Manitoba Hydro officials and Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN) chief and council formally signed the Wuskwatim Project Development Agreement at a historic ceremony held today in Nelson House.

The signing follows a positive ratification vote held June 7 and 14 where 62 per cent of NCN Members who voted authorized chief and council to sign the agreement with Manitoba Hydro to share in the ownership and development of the 200-megawatt Wuskwatim generating station.

“This is a wonderful and landmark occasion in the long history of Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation that I believe will usher in a new era of economic development and prosperity for our members along with greater independence,” NCN Chief Jerry Primrose said. “The project truly represents a 21st century opportunity for our First Nation to continue to live off the land – but in a new way – by developing and using our water resources sustainably and with minimal environmental impact.”

“Through this ground-breaking partnership, today we enter a new era of developing clean, renewable hydropower resources in a true partnership with aboriginal people,” Manitoba Premier Gary Doer said. “With its exceptional environmental performance and leading edge partnership with the First Nation, Wuskwatim is a world class project. Wuskwatim is the largest construction project in Manitoba in decades, and will provide jobs, training and business opportunities that will benefit NCN, the north and all of Manitoba.”

“We are delighted to be partnering with NCN in developing the Wuskwatim generating station. This partnership is a good deal for NCN, for Manitoba Hydro, for Manitobans and for our environment.” said Bob Brennan, Manitoba Hydro President and CEO. This agreement will be a model for First Nations peoples to benefit from natural resource development projects in Canada.”

The Wuskwatim hydroelectric generation project, estimated to cost \$1 billion, will see a 200-megawatt hydroelectric generating station built at Taskinagahp Falls about 40 kilometres downstream of Nelson House in NCN’s resource management area. The Wuskwatim Project Development Agreement creates a partnership between Manitoba Hydro and NCN. It provides for NCN to own up to 33 per cent of the project and related revenues once project loans are repaid, along with job opportunities for qualified NCN members and business opportunities for NCN businesses and joint-venture business partnerships during construction.

## Wuskwatim PDA Announcement

Construction is expected to take six years to complete, with work on the access road expected to begin this summer.

Manitobans looking for work on the Wuskwatim project will need to register with the Province of Manitoba's Employment and Training Services (ETS). ETS has offices throughout Manitoba and can be reached toll free at 1-866-322-5077 or visit [www.gov.mb.ca/jobreferral](http://www.gov.mb.ca/jobreferral).

*Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation is based in Nelson House, Manitoba, about 800 kilometres north of Winnipeg and 80 kilometres west of Thompson. NCN has around 4,000 members living in Nelson House, South Indian Lake, Leaf Rapids, Thompson, Brandon and Winnipeg. More than 60 percent of its members are between 13 and 30 years of age.*

*Manitoba Hydro is a provincial Crown Corporation providing electricity throughout the Province and natural gas services to southern Manitoba. Nearly all of Manitoba Hydro's electricity is generated from self-renewing waterpower.*

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**For more information or interviews, please call:**

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