



W u s k w a t i m NEWS **UPDATE**

INFORMATION FOR NISICHAWAYASIIK CREE NATION MEMBERS AUGUST 2006



Councillor
W. Elvis Thomas

Tansi,
Now that the flurry of activity leading up to the referendum on the Wuskwatim project has passed, I'd like to extend a personal thanks to all NCN Members for their participation in the final round of

Wuskwatim consultations, the high turnout at the polls and a solid yes vote. The turnout and results demonstrate the high interest and importance Members place on the Wuskwatim project and our future.

Since the June 26 signing ceremony, the Future Development Office has had inquiries about what has been happening to move the project ahead.

We trust this Wuskwatim News Update will help bring you up-to-date on the project. It provides a recap of the comprehensive measures taken to ensure an informed vote, an assessment of the referendum results, information on Wuskwatim jobs and other useful information.

We will continue to keep you informed with newsletters when required.

Wishing you all the best for the remainder of the summer.

Councillor W. Elvis Thomas
Future Development Portfolio Holder

Extensive Consultation Process Ends With Strong Ratification Vote

When NCN began formal negotiations with Manitoba Hydro about eight years ago to negotiate an agreement to become partners in developing the Wuskwatim Generation Project, we committed to a community-driven process to ensure Members understand what is happening and have a voice.

This focus allowed us to set up the Future Development Office and hire Members as community consultants to coordinate and conduct consultation activities with our membership. Over the years, about 60 Members were employed as consultants.

MANY OPPORTUNITIES WERE AVAILABLE TO CONSULT

Our consultation process was very thorough and provided many opportunities for Members to be contacted and consulted at different stages. These opportunities included: community-consultant visits to Members' homes, meet and greet dinners, public meetings with NCN advisors, open houses, a new NCN website, and opportunities for Members to phone or visit the Future Development Office if they needed information. We also produced a wide range of information including newsletters, brochures, summaries of important documents, Q&As to answer

questions Members had raised and copies of the complete Project Development Agreement (PDA). Information was available in different formats including print as well as audio cassettes and CDs in English and Cree of key information. In the end, the community consultation process was probably one of the most comprehensive ever undertaken in Canada.

We provided specific opportunities through referendums for Members to formally voice their preferences, with specific votes on the Agreement in Principle (AIP) in 2001 and the recently held vote on the Wuskwatim Project Development Agreement in June 2006 that ratified the agreement. After the AIP vote, we issued the Summary of Understanding (SOU), which outlined the major structure and principles of the final PDA. It was designed to help Members understand the project's structure and highlights, well in advance of the final details of the PDA being negotiated and put to a vote.

MEMBERS VOTE BY ALMOST 2 TO 1 TO PROCEED WITH WUSKWATIM

Our extensive community-driven consultation process resulted in 64 percent of Members giving Chief and Council approval to sign the PDA with Manitoba Hydro.



Voter Turnout Suggests Wuskwatim Very Important to NCN Members

An assessment of the referendum results show that in the six communities where most Members live, voter participation was about 83 percent and ranged from 75 percent in Thompson to 100 percent in Leaf Rapids, with 85 percent of registered voters in Nelson House participating. This is much higher than the total overall voter turnout of 70 percent, which was influenced by the small participation in the vote by only one percent of the 368 registered voters who live outside of the six communities.

While the overall vote results showed 63.5 percent of Members voting yes, support was highest in Thompson at 77 percent. Support was lowest in South Indian Lake with 41 percent voting yes, reflecting similar support shown in the 2001 referendum on the Agreement in Principle. In Nelson House, 59 percent of Members voted yes.

What's Been Happening With Wuskwatim Since June 26 Signing Ceremony

Since the signing ceremony, several activities have taken place:

- Chief and Council sent a thank you message to all Members for their participation in the vote. This was distributed to all homes.
- ATEC is accepting applications for work on the project, and our Future Development Team has been canvassing the community to ensure Members know that if they are interested in working on Wuskwatim, they must register with ATEC.
- Work is underway to finalize a date for the official sod turning for the access road to the Wuskwatim site

which will kick off the start of the six-year construction project.



(Left to right) NCN Councillors D'Arcy Linklater and W. Elvis Thomas, Chief Jerry Primrose, Manitoba Hydro CEO and President Bob Brennan and Manitoba Premier Gary Doer at the June 26 PDA signing ceremony.

Results of PDA Ratification Vote by Community

	ELIGIBLE VOTERS	VOTERS VOTING	% VOTING	NUMBER OF YES VOTES	% YES	NUMBER OF NO VOTES	% NO
NELSON HOUSE	1,156	982	85%	569	59%	401	41%
SOUTH INDIAN LAKE	48	46	96%	19	41%	27	59%
LEAF RAPIDS	50	50	100%	24	48%	26	52%
THOMPSON	323	241	75%	184	76%	57	24%
WINNIPEG	299	233	78%	178	77%	53	23%
BRANDON	27	24	89%	18	75%	6	25%
OTHER* (MB & Away)	368	4	1%				
TOTAL	2,271	1,580	70%	992	63.5%	570	36.5%

* In the final vote count, the four "Other" registered voters who voted had their registrations and votes counted with Nelson House. "Other" includes registered voters living elsewhere in Manitoba besides the six designated communities, as well as out-of-province Members.

Note 1: The vote produced eight spoiled and 18 discarded ballots. Spoiled ballots were not included in the vote totals and neither spoiled nor discarded ballots were included in tabulating the percentage results.

Note 2: All percentages subject to rounding

Note 3: Some members registered on the voters list in one community actually voted at a polling station in a different community.

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NEWS UPDATE

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Transition from Future Development to Wuskwatim Implementation Underway – New Positions Available

Following the signing of the PDA, the major role of the Future Development Office has concluded, with most positions being wound down. However, the PDA creates a number of new administrative and management positions that are available, and eligible Members are invited to apply. To facilitate the transition to implementing the PDA, Council has named Norman Linklater as interim implementation manager.

The new positions that will be available and are open for applications include:

- Wuskwatim Implementation Manager

- Wuskwatim On-site Counsellor (2 positions)
- Wuskwatim Social and Cultural Coordinator
- Wuskwatim Financial Administrator

The original July 14 deadline for applications for these jobs is being extended, although a new deadline has not been announced. The intent is to make all positions open for competition by all Members who feel they meet the qualifications. An independent selection committee will be appointed to review the applications and award the positions to the best-qualified candidates.

Heritage Resource Committee Issues Remain

Concerns by the Heritage Resource Committee, spearheaded by Councillors D’Arcy Linklater and Agnes Spence, which were unresolved before the signing of the Project Development Agreement, are still being negotiated involving NCN, Manitoba Hydro and the Province of Manitoba. These issues have delayed the official start to construction, which will be rescheduled once they are resolved.

Referendum Appeals Filed

NCN Members have filed two appeals related to the June referendum on the Project Development Agreement, which are being arbitrated under rules set out for the referendum. Retired Queen’s Bench Justice Ruth Krindle has been selected as arbitrator to hear the appeals. She has ruled that she will resolve the appeals by written submission and has set Friday, August 4 as the deadline for submissions, after which she will review the information and announce her decisions.

Wuskwatim Projected Milestones/Activities & Dates

Jun-2006	Site Ceremonies
Jun-2006	Project Development Agreement Signed (PDA)
Aug-2006	Start of Construction (Sod-Turning Ceremony)
Jun-2007	Site Start-Up Camp
Oct-2007	Award General Civil Contract (GCC)
Apr-2008	Mobilize General Civil Contractor (GCC)
Jul-2008	Start Stage 1 Cofferdam Construction
May-2009	Begin First Concrete Pour
Jul-2010	Service Bay Concrete Ready for Superstructure Steel
Jul-2010	Start Installing Turbines
Aug-2010	Start Stage 2 Cofferdam Construction
Apr-2011	Start Installing Generators
Jul-2011	Stage 2 River Closure
May-2012	First Power (Unit 1 online)
Aug-2012	Unit 3 online
Oct-2012	Unit 2 online
Dec-2012	Generating Station Complete

Supplied by Manitoba Hydro, July 2006. Dates are subject to change. Projection only.

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ATEC is The Only Place to Register for Wuskwatim Jobs

The Atoskiwin Training and Employment Centre has been designated as the official agency for registering NCN Members interested in employment on the Wuskwatim project. So, any Members interested must register with ATEC. As part of the registration process, applicants' skills and work experience

will be assessed to determine if they meet needs for available positions. If there's a good match, applicants will be eligible for available jobs. If applicants lack the skills and/or work experience, training opportunities are available to provide the skills necessary for Wuskwatim-related jobs.

Thanks for a Job Well Done



As Future Development Portfolio Holder, I want to extend my sincere appreciation to all Members of our team – past and present – for their dedication and hard work over the past few years in bringing Wuskwatim negotiations to a successful conclusion with a positive ratification vote. As we all move on to new

endeavours, I wish you success in your careers and hope the skills learned with the Future Development Team serve you well in the future. Thanks for a job well done!

Sincerely,
W. Elvis Thomas

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