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Construction progressing on Wuskwatim Generating Station

Construction is progressing well on the 200-megawatt Wuskwatim Generating Station on the Burntwood River in northern Manitoba. The project's \$8.3 million construction power substation was recently commissioned and with electricity from the provincial grid now available, the diesel generators used to supply construction power to this point will be phased out.

Over \$200 million of contracts have been awarded for the Wuskwatim project, including a number to First Nation joint ventures for construction and service activities. Some of the larger contracts are:

- a \$39.4 million contract to the Nisichawayasihk Construction Limited Partnership for building the 48-kilometre access road to the project site. The first phase of construction on the road was completed in early spring, allowing limited all-weather access to the site. Work will continue on the road with completion scheduled for early 2008;
- a \$46.3 million contract to the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation / Sodexho joint venture for provision of catering services to the construction camps until 2012, and a \$7.2 million contract to the same group for the provision of security services at project sites;
- a \$46.2 million contract to General Electric Hydro for the design, manufacture and supply of the station's three hydroelectric turbines and generators;
- a \$2.2 million contract to the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation for the provision of cross-cultural training, counselling and retention services for all project and contract employees;
- contracts totaling over \$54 million to a number of suppliers for the development and construction of various work camps to be used over the life of the project, including the 650-person main camp. Construction of this camp will commence later this summer following installation of site infrastructure facilities, including roads, power, and water and sewage systems. The main camp - featuring offices, bunkhouses, kitchen, dining, and recreational facilities - will be ready for occupancy in early 2008.

The main camp, construction power substation and access road are critical components of the initial development phase of Wuskwatim. These components must be in place so that construction of the generating station itself can begin in about one year.

About 300 workers are currently employed on the Wuskwatim project, with Aboriginal workers making up 73 per cent of the workforce. Additional Aboriginal workers are being trained for future project employment through the Hydro Northern Training and Employment Initiative.

The Wuskwatim Power Limited Partnership, involving Manitoba Hydro and the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, is developing the Wuskwatim Generating Station. This marks the first time a First Nation and Manitoba Hydro have entered into a formal partnership arrangement to develop a hydroelectric project. Manitoba Hydro is providing construction and management services to the partnership in accordance with the Project Development Agreement signed in June 2006.

The Wuskwatim Generating Station and associated transmission components are scheduled for completion in 2012, at a total cost of \$1.3 billion.

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