



Grand Council Treaty #3

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Grand Council Treaty #3 Makes Progress on Territorial Internet Connectivity Project

Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh and Grand Council Treaty #3 are pleased to announce the approval of the \$51 million Treaty #3 Territorial Internet Connectivity Project. This announcement comes on the news of a joint investment by the Federal and Provincial governments of \$148 million in Northwestern Ontario.

This funding announcement will provide the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 and its partners with the tools to connect 21 First Nations to high speed fibre Internet. The Treaty #3 Territorial Internet Connectivity Project (TIC) is a joint effort of the Social and Economic Chiefs Committees at Grand Council Treaty #3. Originally conceived as a project of Health Transformation in Treaty #3 communities, the TIC Project has expanded to become one of the most important projects of Grand Council Treaty #3 due to educational and economic connectivity needs that significantly expanded during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“This project has been years in the making and it is a relief to see significant progress being made,” said Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh. “The issues facing our Nation throughout the COVID-19 pandemic were made significantly worse when our lack of connectivity meant that in many cases travel restrictions and aging telecommunication infrastructure left us cut off from the outside world. I applaud all leadership and staff that worked to see this project become a reality.”

"Although it will take a few years to complete this project the result will be that our citizens can access healthcare services in their community, attend school and work from home when necessary and participate in the internet economy in ways not currently available without high speed internet" said Chief Brian Perrault of Couchiching First Nation and member of the Treaty #3 Social Chiefs Committee.

“The approval of the application for broadband connectivity in Grand Council Treaty #3 is a huge accomplishment in the long-term as it will allow for greater access to business development, promotes safe and reliable internet connections and allows our citizens to participate in the global economy while maintaining the customs and identity as Anishinaabe peoples.” Chief Derrick Henderson of Sagkeeng First Nation and Chair of the Treaty #3 Economic Chiefs Committee.

Grand Council Treaty #3 also acknowledges the collaborative efforts of individual First Nation connectivity projects. In cooperation with the TIC Project, the aim is to see all 28 First Nation communities in Treaty #3 achieve reliable Internet connectivity by 2025.

QUOTES FROM PARTNERS:

"Our government is taking another step forward in its bold plan to bring high-speed internet to every community in the province by the end of 2025 and this includes Grand Council Treaty # 3 communities. This investment will bring high-speed internet accessible to more homes and businesses and make a positive difference in the lives of countless families and individuals in Northwestern Ontario. By working together with our federal partners, we've achieved another important milestone in building a stronger, more connected, Ontario."

- The Honourable Kinga Surma

Ontario's Minister of Infrastructure and Member of Provincial Parliament for Etobicoke Centre

"Bell's priority is to connect more people in more places, and the Treaty #3 Territorial Internet Connectivity Project will provide broadband fibre Internet access in communities throughout Northwestern Ontario. We're proud to work with Grand Council Treaty #3 to deliver enhanced high-speed connectivity for these communities as part of this historic initiative."

- Bruce Furlong, Senior Vice President, Bell Canada

"The Rainy River Future Development Corporation is pleased to have supported Grand Council Treaty #3 in their effort to bring fiber optic service to the communities they serve and to adjacent non-indigenous communities of the area. This project is a significant step towards a more connected region."

- Gord Armstrong, Chair, Rainy River Future Development Corporation

Background

Communities to benefit from the GCT3-TIC project.

Animakee Wa Zhing 37 First Nation, Anishinabe of Wauzhushk Onigum, Anishnaabeg of Naongashiing, Big Grassy First Nation, Couchiching First Nation, Grassy Narrows First Nation, Lac Des Mille Lacs First Nation, Lac La Croix First Nation, Migisi Sahgaigan First Nation, Naicatchewenin First Nation, Naotkamegwanning First Nation, Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation, Northwest Angle #33 First Nation, Washagamis Bay First Nation, Ojibways of Onigaming First Nation, Rainy River First Nations, Seine River First Nation, Shoal Lake #40 First Nation, Wabaseemoong Independent Nations, Wabauskang First Nation, Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation, Devlin/LaVallee, Eagle River, Emo, Minahico, Mine Centre, Morson, Nestor Falls, Sioux Narrows, Stratton, Upsala, Vermilion Bay, Wabigoon, Wabigoon/Dinorwic

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