



**NISHNAWBE ASKI**  
**DEVELOPMENT FUND**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**Wednesday, February 8, 2012**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Northern Ontario First Nations and Independent Power Authorities (IPA) Sign A Memorandum Of Understanding To Facilitate Reliable Community Electricity**

**Thunder Bay, ON** - Recognizing that affordable electricity is a catalyst to economic development in the north, Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund (NADF) has facilitated the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between eight northern Ontario First Nations to work collectively to pursue long and short-term goals to work cooperatively toward providing affordable electricity in their communities. The parties to this agreement include:

Eabametoong First Nation  
North Spirit Lake First Nation  
Weenusk First Nation

Muskrat Dam First Nation  
Poplar Hill First Nation  
Wunnumin Lake First Nation

Nibinamik First Nation  
Wawakapewin First Nation

Chief Joshua Frogg of Wawakapewin First Nation was on hand to witness the progress made and had this to offer, "This is a huge step forward we are taking as a collective to solve the systemic problem of underfunding and fuel shortages that plague our communities every year. We are thankful for the opportunity to show our First Nations are committed to working together to resolve these issues."

A comprehensive work plan was adopted to ensure amongst other things, that the First Nations and the IPAs meet with the Federal government to resolve the emergency diesel shortfall issues, to explore alternative renewable energy options, negotiate bulk fuel purchasing agreements, and other agreements that will help provide affordable electricity to the First Nations.

All parties to this agreement intend to meet again in March of this year to evaluate the progress made on their work plan. Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Deputy Grand Chief Les Loutitt lent his support to the agreement which was initiated by the NAN Chiefs under resolution 09/35. Deputy Grand Chief Loutitt offered, "I am pleased with the level of progress made by NAN First Nations and the (Independent Power Authorities) IPAs in dealing with these urgent issues."

#### ***About NADF***

*Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund is a non-profit economic development organization providing loans, equipment leases, appraisal services, grants, community strategic planning, business counseling and mining/resource development advisory services to Aboriginal entrepreneurs on and off-reserve across northern Ontario. As an Aboriginal financial institution with a focus on small business, NADF has issued almost \$30 million in loans. An average loan has helped to create 2.3 full time jobs in the region.*

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