MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, November 2, 2017   **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

MATAWA FIRST NATIONS JOIN FIRST MILE CONNECTIVITY CONSORTIUM SUPPORTING THEIR FIBRE-TO-THE-HOME HIGH-SPEED BROADBAND PROJECT

THUNDER BAY, ON: Matawa First Nations (MFN) today announced that they joined the *First Mile Connectivity Consortium* (FMCC), a national organization of First Nations community-based telecommunications organization established to support remote and rural communities' efforts to develop essential and appropriate broadband connections. MFNM joined in order to build more capacity for the *Rapid Lynx* project.

Other First Nation organization members of the consortium include: First Nations Education Council (Quebec), First Nations Technical Services Advisory Group Inc. (Alberta), Atlantic Canada Frist Nations Help Desk (Atlantic region), First Nations Technology Council (British Columbia), First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba and Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre Inc. (Manitoba), Keewaytinook Okimakanak K-Net Services (Ontario), Western James Bay Telecom Network (Ontario) and the Native Communications Society of the NWT (NWT). University research partners include the University of New Brunswick, the University of Alberta and the First Nations Innovation Project (New Brunswick). For a complete list of FMCC representatives visit http://firstmile.ca and select the FMCC tab.

Today's announcement comes after welcoming funding commitments on October 6, 2017 from federal and provincial governments to assist in establishing state of the art *fibre-to-the-home* high-speed broadband in 5 fly-in/remote First Nations. MFN met the FMCC board of directors and members on October 25, 2017 in Fredericton, New Brunswick, where FMCC has its national office.

FMCC utilizes the First Mile approach to network infrastructure development which includes local broadband ownership and control over local telecom networks and infrastructure. With MFN building fibre-to-the-home networks in each community, First Nations across Canada will now be looking to create similar broadband networks and services for their community members. The MFN project creates new opportunities for all First Nations across the country.

QUOTES

"Matawa First Nations Management is pleased to join the First Mile Connectivity Consortium (FMCC). The FMCC is actively involved in research, outreach and policy development that will benefit our communities from sharing the broad range of experiences that other First Nations are challenged with across Canada. As we work on the design and build of the next generation Fibre to the Home Network (FTTH) that will service our remote First Nations, we will explore different opportunities to influence federal policy related to First Nations broadband infrastructure."

– Jason Rasevych, Matawa Economic Development Manager

QUOTES - CONTINUED

"First Mile Connectivity Consortium welcomes the Matawa First Nations Management team as a member of our not-for-profit organization. We celebrate Matawa's success in securing the funding required to establish FTTH in their member First Nations. Matawa's success provides all our member First Nation organizations with the opportunity to learn and grow their own networks. Working with Matawa First Nation representatives will support our work with government and the CRTC. Together we will establish the required regulations to support and sustain community-owned and managed broadband networks."
– Tim Whiteduck, Chair of the FMCC and Director of Technology at the First Nations Education Council

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Matawa First Nations Management is a Tribal Council providing a variety of advisory services and programs to 8 Ojibway and Cree First Nations in James Bay Treaty No. 9 and 1 First Nation in the Robinson-Superior Treaty area. Follow us on Facebook or Twitter @MatawaFNM.

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