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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **MATAWA FIRST NATIONS MANAGEMENT BEGIN PLANS FOR NEXT PHASE OF FIBER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT FOLLOWING SECOND ROUND OF GRANT AWARDS**

**THUNDER BAY, Ontario, and DENVER, Colo. (June 6, 2022)** – Matawa First Nations Management (MFNM), a non profit corporation serving the needs of nine Matawa First Nations in Ontario, Canada, for more than 30 years, has successfully secured funding for Phase Two of its Rapid Lynx long-haul fiber-optic network project. The grant continues the work MFNM and Magellan, a leader in providing turnkey services for building fiber and broadband networks, began in 2020 with an initial funding award for the Phase One portion of its project – which is currently underway.

The recently announced awards from [Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada](#) (ISED) and the Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure total \$62.7 million and will build on the work begun in [Phase One of the Rapid Lynx project](#) to deploy wholesale and retail fiber broadband connectivity to First Nation communities.

Phase Two will deploy an additional 289 kilometers (180 miles) of fiber and optical equipment connecting Aroland and the remote First Nations to the road access First Nations communities of Ginoogaming, Long Lake 58 and Constance Lake and provide broadband internet access to approximately 500 more First Nations premises.

Phase Two of Rapid Lynx will also connect Nibinamik First Nation to Wunnumin Lake First Nation to allow for a second connection to the internet for redundancy and path diversity, increasing network reliability and resiliency along the Rapid Lynx route.

“The significance of this project for the road access communities in Matawa cannot be overstated as they currently continue to struggle with connectivity issues,” says MFNM Chief Executive Officer David Paul Achneepineskum. “Matawa First Nations Management and the Matawa First Nations have worked together since 2014 to obtain support for broadband infrastructure in northern Ontario. When completed, the Rapid Lynx network will be 100% owned, governed and operated by the Matawa First Nations, allowing the First Nations to control our own digital future and provide affordable, reliable and secure high-speed connectivity for the first time to areas that only had the limited capability of shared satellite service before. Rapid Lynx will transform education, healthcare, economic development, job creation and security in the Matawa First Nations and increase prosperity and quality of life for our residents.

“Our partnership with Magellan has provided the invaluable assistance of their highly skilled team in every aspect of the process, beginning with their work on the funding applications for these phases and continuing with the overall management of this extensive and complex project.”

“Magellan is proud to continue growing our partnership with Matawa First Nations Management,” says Magellan CEO John Honker. “Since 2014 we have worked with MFNM to develop and manage their next-generation

broadband infrastructure planning, and have now secured over \$130 million in total funding to bring the Rapid Lynx project to fruition. We look forward to continued success with MFNM on this very important initiative.”

Magellan will provide detailed engineering plans and oversee all aspects of the Phase Two project, which includes permitting, construction management and inspections, as well as grant reporting and compliance. Phase Two construction is expected to begin in late 2022/early 2023. The network will provide symmetrical speeds of up to 1 Gbps to each and every premise.

#### About Matawa First Nations Management

Established in 1988, MFNM is an ISO 9001 registered non-profit Tribal Council. It’s membership includes 8 First Nations in Treaty 9 and 1 First Nation in Robinson-Superior (though not a signatory to this Treaty). 5 Matawa First Nations are accessible by air and winter road while the other 4 are accessible by all season roads. MFNM provides a variety of advisory services and program delivery to member First Nations. Learn more at [www.matawa.on.ca](http://www.matawa.on.ca).

#### About Magellan

Magellan provides planning, engineering, grant development, implementation and management of the fastest, most technologically advanced fiber and broadband networks. Our mission is to connect every community, one at a time, to the digital economy so that no one is left behind. Our goal is to find practical broadband and technology solutions that our clients can implement in their communities. Through Magellan’s services, more than \$1 billion in new broadband investments has connected more than 1,000 schools, hospitals, libraries and governments and passed nearly 1 million homes with fiber-optic broadband. Learn more at [www.magellan-advisors.com](http://www.magellan-advisors.com).

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