Media Release

"Toys for the North" Annual Initiative Donates 837 Toys to the Matawa Communities

Thunder Bay, ON – December 15, 2014: This Holiday season, Matawa First Nations Management (MFNM) staff gives a special thank you to the Thunder Bay RCMP Detachment and the Thunder Bay Gymnastics Association, who hosted their annual "Toys for the North" Initiative. This was in partnership with Matawa First Nations Management to distribute 837 donated toys to the children of the nine Matawa Communities. Other organizations in assistance for transportation are also involved this year, such as Cargo North Airlines, and Bearskin Airlines.

On Friday, December 12, a "Wrapping Party" was held locally at the Claydon building on the CLE ground. Matawa First Nations Management staff as well as students from Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen (KKETS) and Matawa Education participated in volunteering with the Thunder Bay RCMP, Thunder Bay Gymnastics Association, as well as other volunteer groups to wrap the donated toys for the nine Matawa First Nations. There was a large variety of donated items for the children that had many types of toys including dolls, colouring books, Legos, toys for babies, etc.

"The holidays are an important time for our First Nations," said David Paul Achneepineskum, CEO of Matawa First Nations Management. "The event was a great turn-out and I am pleased with our Matawa First Nations volunteers. These donated Christmas toys are appreciated every year, and Our First Nations look forward to receiving these special gifts," Achneepineksum added.

The Matawa Board of Directors and the Matawa First Nations Management staff would like to wish the First Nations and citizens of Thunder Bay a safe and festive Christmas Holiday, and a Happy New Year.

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About the Matawa First Nations

The Nine Member First Nations of MFNM: Remote (accessible by air or winter ice road) - Eabametoong First Nation, Neskantaga First Nation, Marten Falls First Nation, Nibinamik First Nation, Webequie First Nations. Road Access (accessible by provincial highways and roads)- Constance Lake First Nation, Aroland First Nation, Long Lake #58 First Nation, Ginoogaming First Nation.

"Toys for the North" Background Information

The "O" Division RCMP (Ontario) has participated in The Toys for the North initiative since 2010 as part of a national network of RCMP, the Department of National Defense, and law enforcement, corporate and external partners who collectively contribute to the success of this charitable activity. Toys are donated by members of the Canadian Toy Association, transported and warehoused by Thomson Terminals and sorted and distributed by the RCMP. In communities throughout the North, the RCMP arranges for wrapping parties and often is able to make a community event when delivering the toys.

The logistics involved in getting thousands of toys from a warehouse in Toronto to isolated communities is made considerably easier by the Canadian Forces who load the toys (and

diapers) onto planes and trucks wherever there is available cargo space, and send them to staging points in Winnipeg, Goose Bay and northern Ontario.

The RCMP members, families and community volunteer groups in the northern communities volunteer their time to wrap and label the toys and get them further on their way to communities which may only be accessible by float plane, ice highway or snowmobile. Wherever possible, RCMP and local leaders coordinate an event where families can gather for a festive day or evening celebration around the toy distribution to every child.