

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AGOKE DEVELOPMENT LIMITED PARTNERSHIP TO DEVELOP 10-YEAR OGOKI FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN AND BEGIN TALKS WITH ONTARIO ON AN INTERIM ARRANGEMENT

THUNDER BAY, ON: Three months after [calling for support for the interim management of the Ogoki Forest](#), officials from the Agoke Development Limited Partnership (ADLP) announced today that on June 26 they were notified along with their project partners that they were selected to develop the next 10-year Ogoki Forest Management Plan (FMP) and are beginning talks with Ontario to discuss their business plan on an interim arrangement while they develop a new permanent management model. These talks come as a result Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Minister McGarry's direction from June 2017.

The FMP will be undertaken with partners, *Green Forest Management* and *Four Rivers Environmental Services Group*. It puts them in a good position to secure a meaningful role within Canada's Indigenous forestry sector. The planning is anticipated to take 2.5 years and will set the stage for the Ogoki Forest from 2020-2030. It will include involvement with the forest industry and local communities, and Indigenous communities in its management. The Ogoki Forest is located 400 km north-east of Thunder Bay immediately east of the Wabakimi Provincial Park and is approximately 10,900 km² in size.

ADLP's involvement in the forest management planning process represents a significant milestone towards building capacity to ensure indigenous communities have as say in what goes into the plan. Currently, out of approximately 41 forest management units with the province, less than 5, including ADLP, are governed by Indigenous companies. ADLP is made up of members of *Aroland, Eabametoong and Marten Falls First Nations*—members of Matawa First Nations Management.

Since 2015, ADLP has been harvesting fibre currently moving to the Longlac Lumber Inc. sawmill and is working on a plan to restart the sawmill in Nakina that could bring long-term economic development to the region. It has also been a participant in the preparation of the Ogoki Forest 2017-2018 Annual Work Schedule and has successfully managed and administered provincial road funding. More recently, it has received the support of *Greenpeace Canada - Forest Campaign* for receiving long-term tenure in this forest.

The ADLP concluded their meeting today with plans to continue discussions with Ontario on an interim arrangement while they develop a new permanent management model and to meet with regional consuming mills to identify wood flow today and tomorrow in Thunder Bay.

The Ogoki Forest 2020-2030 FMP process will also begin at the end of this month.

QUOTES

“The three First Nations that make up the Agoke Development Limited Partnership have a great wealth of traditional knowledge and experience in the Ogoki Forest. Our peoples have been living on the land since time immemorial, we know our traditional territory better than anyone else and as stewards of the land are taking sustainable forest management very seriously.”

—*Mark Bell, President,, Agoke Development Limited Partnership*

“We are thrilled to start the forest management planning process toward the development of a 10-year plan. Our 3 First Nations have worked very hard to build capacity over the past few years, learn from the past and reach this key milestone.”

—*Jason Rasevych, Economic Development Advisor, Matawa (Interim General Manager, Agoke Development Limited Partnership)*

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For more information, please contact Carol Audet, Communications Manager – Matawa First Nations at (807) 632-9663 or by email at caudet@matawa.on.ca.

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 them on Facebook or Twitter @MatawaFN

