

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MATAWA FIRST NATIONS ATTEND PDAC 2018 IN TORONTO SET TO REVOLUTIONIZE ENERGY IN CANADIAN MINES

THUNDER BAY, ON: Matawa First Nations Management are attending the annual Prospectors Developers Association of Canada's International Convention this week to promote concepts around energy generation, storage and supply for the mining sector.

They expect the discussion to evolve later this month when the Matawa First Nations host the [2nd Annual 'Power to the People' Energy Conference](#) to be held in Toronto, Ontario on March 20 - 21, 2018 at the Chelsea Hotel. The conference follows the first that was held in Thunder Bay, Ontario on May 2 - 3, 2016 which concluded with the establishment of a *Matawa Energy Planning Committee* made up of representatives of the 9 Matawa First Nations.

Earlier in the year, Matawa embarked on a sponsorship campaign to raise funds for this event and are continuing to seek sponsorships. The theme of the conference is: '*A New Approach to the Social License*' and will include invited guests from the Matawa First Nations, government and industry.

Some of the areas of focus will include renewables with respect to Indigenous communities and long-term sustainable development. The conference will also include panels and presentations from government agencies such as the Ministry of Energy and the IESO, and other energy agencies such as Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation. Amongst the many areas of discussion will be distribution, generation, education/capacity building, renewable energy readiness and long-term energy planning. Other panels and presentations will focus on financing and insurance, transmission, and women in energy.

The conference expects to make linkages between their *Renewable Energy Readiness Assessment (RERA) Project* announced on December 18, 2017 and the *Clean Energy for Rural and Remote Communities Program* announced on February 16, 2018 by the government of Canada to reduce reliance on diesel fuel in rural and remote communities. The RERA, expected to be completed this spring, will explore the renewable energy production approach forward to address high fuel prices, get of diesel, prioritize planning with industry and establish sustainable community energy loads that integrate renewable energy into the landscape and allow each community to benefit.

The conference will conclude with a tour of the IESO Control Room for Matawa delegates and a formal dinner. PDAC 2018 participants are encouraged to visit Matawa's booth 750 to learn more.

QUOTES

“Energy is usually the second highest cost in operating mines and now with the imposition of the carbon tax it will make it more challenging for remote mines in Canada’s North to find a supply mix that meets First Nations, climate change regulation and environmental expectations. The best alternative to diesel for mines is to source their requirements to power supplied from a utility with a balanced and efficient energy supply. Our First Nations will be front and centre in discussions on developing that utility.”

– *Jason Rasevych, Economic Development Manager, Matawa First Nations Management*

“The renewable energy assessment for our First Nations highlights a critical threat to well-being and community development which is the use of aging, polluting diesel generators. There is opportunity to change that through the development of micro-grids that will be owned, monitored and maintained by our First Nations. As we explore options with our communities we will be reaching out to the world’s best in technology and innovation where renewables play a major role in other jurisdictions.”

– *Jonathan Neegan, Project Coordinator, Matawa First Nations Management*

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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