

COMMUNITY BULLETIN

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NFN & Miller Forming Partnership for Duchesnay Creek Bridge Replacement Project

GARDEN VILLAGE, ON - We are pleased to announce that our efforts in lobbying the province to allow sole sourcing of the Duchesnay Creek Bridge replacement project were successful. Ontario announced this morning that the contract for the reconstruction of the Duchesnay Creek Bridge, a two-year project valued at \$12 million dollars, was awarded to Nipissing First Nation and Miller.

“Nipissing First Nation has built a strong business relationship with Miller over the last 15 years, and this announcement represents the fruits of our relationship-building,” said Chief Scott McLeod. “This bridge is immediately adjacent to our territory and NFN should be part of the local economy. It’s these kinds of opportunities that First Nations have been seeking for a long time, but have historically been shut out of through current processes.”

Nipissing First Nation (NFN) has been working with Miller on a partnership agreement for several months to position ourselves to own and manage this opportunity in a joint venture. There is potential for this opportunity to lead to future highway work as well.

“We acknowledge the government of Ontario for supporting this proposal, which marks a significant change in the way of doing business and a step forward towards reconciliation. This means *real* opportunities for our people – not just platitudes and promises,” adds Chief McLeod.

Background

NFN has been preparing for this opportunity since 2018 when we launched the NFN/Miller Paving Training Initiative through our Employment & Training unit. Through this program, seven (7) skilled and unskilled labour positions allowed community members to gain valuable on-the-job training, with opportunities for full-time employment and further training.

We knew we wanted to be prepared for the upcoming Duchesnay Creek Bridge replacement project. The sudden closure of the bridge at the end of January 2019 over structural concerns has had a substantial impact on Duchesnay residents and businesses. The closure has resulted in limited access to the community from North Bay, and requires a shuttle service to replace the transit service usually provided by the City of North Bay via Main Street West.

About Nipissing First Nation – The people of Nipissing First Nation, known as the Nipissings, have lived in the area of Lake Nipissing since time immemorial. Prior to the signing of the Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850, the Nipissings had occupied and enjoyed the lands surrounding the Lake Nipissing watershed for their sustenance and survival through harvesting and other means.

Today, Nipissing First Nation’s mission is to continue to protect our Nation’s inherent rights and to empower the membership to work together in a positive, progressive manner to improve well-being and quality of life, to be socially and economically independent, culturally strong and self-governing.

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