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## **News Release: Positive Sustainability Assessment for Keeyask Generating Station**

The results of an independent assessment of the planned 695 megawatt Keeyask Generating Station under the Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol were released to the public today. Keeyask is the first hydropower project in North America to be reviewed under this protocol.

“The sustainability assessment of Keeyask is very positive, with all assessed aspects ranking at a good international practice to best international practice level,” stated Ken Adams, Chair of the Keeyask Hydropower Limited Partnership and Senior Vice-President, Power Supply, Manitoba Hydro.

Using an evidence-based assessment, 95% of the assessed aspects ranked above the good practice level. The project received the highest possible score on 16 of the 22 topics assessed which is more than any other project officially assessed to date world-wide.

Four accredited assessors and two assessors-in-training from five countries conducted the assessment in December 2012. In addition to a review of project documents, the assessors interviewed Manitoba Hydro staff and contractors, representatives of First Nation partners, members of each partner First Nation, representatives of civil society, government departments, academics, and the media and travelled to the project site and nearby communities of Gillam, Ilford, Split Lake and York Landing.

The Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol is a framework to assess hydropower projects according to a defined set of sustainability topics encompassing environmental, social, technical and financial issues using a consistent and globally-applicable methodology. The protocol was developed by the Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Forum which included representatives from the hydropower sector represented by the International Hydropower Association (IHA), social and environmental non-governmental organizations including The Nature Conservancy, World Wildlife Fund, Transparency International and Oxfam, governments

in developed and developing countries, and financial organizations such as the World Bank and the Equator Banks. The protocol is managed by the IHA and its application is governed by a multi-stakeholder council.

The assessment report has been posted for 60 days on the web sites of the Keeyask Hydropower Limited Partnership (<http://keeyask.com/wp/>), Manitoba Hydro ([http://www.hydro.mb.ca/projects/keeyask/sustainability\\_assessment.shtml](http://www.hydro.mb.ca/projects/keeyask/sustainability_assessment.shtml)) and the IHA (<http://www.hydrosustainability.org/Protocol-Assessments.aspx>). Based on comments received, the assessors will determine if changes are required to the report, and if so, the revised document will be posted online for another 60 days. If the assessors determine no changes are necessary, the report will be considered finalized.

Located on the lower Nelson River north east of Thompson and upstream of Gillam, Keeyask is a collaborative effort between Manitoba Hydro and four Manitoba First Nations – Tataskweyak and War Lake (acting as the Cree Nation Partners), York Factory, and Fox Lake – working together as the Keeyask Hydropower Limited Partnership. Subject to environmental licenses and other authorizations, construction of the Generating Station is projected to commence in 2014, with first power in 2019. Next week the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission will commence public hearings as part of the licensing process for the project. Keeyask is a component of Manitoba Hydro's development program that is subject to the upcoming Needs For and Alternatives To review by the Manitoba Public Utilities Board.

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