

# KEYYASK

## Project Manager Update



Spring 2022

A publication on behalf of Manitoba Hydro as the Keeyask Project Manager

## Keeyask Generation Project reaches main goal of installing seven functional generating units

The seventh generating unit – the final unit of Keeyask’s seven units – was released for service as of 10:46 a.m., Wednesday, March 9, 2022.

“I would like to acknowledge all the hard work and sacrifice by the entire Keeyask workforce in realizing this truly amazing accomplishment,” said Barry Nazar (Construction Manager, Keeyask).

“This means that all Keeyask units have been commissioned and are able to deliver renewable, dispatchable energy to Manitobans for decades to come.”

“This accomplishment was only possible as a result of the sacrifices, hard work and coordinated efforts of our Keeyask team — plus their family and friends who supported them during the project,” said Barry.



The tops of the seven units inside the Keeyask powerhouse

“Thank you to everyone for your excellent work, sacrifices and commitment to our Keeyask Project.”

Barry recalls the efforts of everyone during the pandemic, “I am impressed how the entire Keeyask team leaned in to get the job done in spite of everything COVID threw our way.

“It speaks to the grit and dedication I see every day, bringing this legacy mega-project towards the finish-line,” said Barry.

Keeyask’s first unit was brought on-line On February 16, 2021 - 6 months ahead of the control schedule, even with COVID and other major challenges faced by the project. The seventh and final unit comes online approximately 5 months ahead of the control schedule for this last unit.

But the work on the project continues with major construction activities planned for late summer 2022, including balance of plant systems and known, incomplete construction items, and completing work around the turbines and generators.

Resolution of longer-term issues related to the turbines and generators is expected over the next 2 – 3 years, and there will be a focus on completing and commissioning common plant systems and black start capability – in addition to site decommissioning and rehabilitation – now that the last unit is on-line.



# Job Seeker Managers contributed to community members and our projects

Manitoba Hydro would like to thank all those who took on the role of Job Seeker Manager (JSM) throughout the Keeyask project.

The role of the JSMs was working with job seekers from the Keeyask Cree Nations to assist with educational goals and to coach, register, inform and give guidance around job opportunities at Keeyask and Keewatinohk.

These community based JSMs accomplished these duties very effectively, and also accomplished much more than what was initially planned.

They created and implemented annual employment plans, provided personalized career plans for community members

and arranged training. Time & again they thought outside the box to implement initiatives (such as the Keeyask Engagement Project) and to work with Keeyask site reps and Workforce Adjustment Services to assist job seekers with employment after Keeyask.

We all recognize the excellent value these individuals brought, and more importantly how well they delivered on the promise of the JSMs. Their work has a tremendous influence on the projects, as well as other areas where we collaborated and worked together.

A heartfelt "thank you" to all the JSMs.



JSMs visiting Keeyask, L-to-R – Kathy Wavey (WLFN) and Wendy Saunders (YFFN)>



## Tree Planting

The next round of tree planting is planned for June 2022. Trees were planted at site in 2016, 2020, and 2021, so this will be the fourth year that the project is planting in areas disturbed during Keeyask construction.

250,000 seedlings, mostly jack pine and some black spruce, have been grown at a tree nursery using locally collected seed and will be ready for the summer 2022 planting efforts.

These trees will be planted by community members hired through Iron North, by tree planting coaches from Outland Reforestation, as well as by Manitoba Hydro staff (including Keeyask site staff: Earthworks and Engineering, and staff from Generation Environmental Services).



# Environment, and Site Rehabilitation

## Trapping Program to Monitor Mercury in Wildlife

The **Keeyask Mercury and Human Health Implementation Group** oversees mercury-related initiatives to build understanding about mercury and human health and to promote safe consumption of wild foods.

A registered trapline holder (from TCN) has been trapping beaver, muskrat, mink and otter this winter as part of the **Terrestrial Effects Monitoring Plan**.

We are working with this trapper to find out what the mercury levels are in these animals now that the reservoir exists upstream of Keeyask.

As a result of the creation of the Keeyask reservoir, mercury levels will increase in fish in Gull Lake, and to a lesser extent

in Stephens Lake. As otters eat fish some increase in mercury levels is expected in their bodies.

Other furry, water-based animals in the area are expected to continue to have low levels of mercury due to their diet being mainly plant-based. Mercury levels in wildlife consumed by people is also expected to remain low.

This trapping program is focused on areas near the new reservoir and will run in each of the first 7 years of Keeyask's operation, and then occur once every 3 years until mercury levels return to what they were they were before, or are found to reach a new, stable level.

As part of this monitoring, partner First Nation community members are also able to submit a tissue sample from any trapped or harvested animal (be it muscle, liver, or kidney) for testing. This is to allow them to determine what the mercury levels are in the captured animals near the project site. Samples can be submitted to a local Mercury Coordinator.

The main source of mercury in people is from eating fish, particularly large predatory fish. Free confidential hair sampling is available to help you understand how much mercury may be in your body. Ask your local Mercury Community Coordinator for more information about hair sampling and eating fish from Gull and Stephens Lakes.

A registered trapline holder from TCN, and his helper, set traps to collect beaver, muskrat, mink and otter tissue samples during the winter for the mercury in wildlife monitoring study.



# Keeyask Worker's Opportunity Fund awards for Tool Fund and Bursary recipients

The Keeyask Workers' Opportunity Fund has awards under the Education Award/Bursary, the Apprentice Training Award, and the Employee Equipment and Tool Fund.

The purpose of the Education Award/Bursary is to assist KCN members financially while completing post-secondary studies in certificate, diploma, applied degree and bachelor's degree programs leading to long-term career outcomes in Manitoba. The Apprentice Training Award is to help reduce financial barriers (travel, living expenses, etc.) while away from the jobsite and support KCN apprentices to progress towards their journeyman certification.

Shanelle Garson, of Tataskweyak Cree Nation, was awarded an Apprentice Training Award and an Education Award/Bursary. She started at Keeyask as a KCN Summer Student for Manitoba Hydro during the summer of 2017. In 2019 she returned with the On-the-Job Training program as a Clerk I for NMS. She wrapped up at the project in August 2021 - as a Clerk II - in anticipation of starting post-secondary education that September.



Shanelle Garson (TCN)



Anthony Spence, Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Mechanic Apprentice, (TCN)

She is now in her first year of the Business Administration program with University College of the North. Her plan is to achieve a degree in Business Administration, obtaining a major in administration, but also ambitiously seeking a double-major in management.

The Employee Equipment and Tool Fund was created to help offset some of the initial equipment and tool costs trainees and apprentices may have, and to support them in their progress towards training certification.

Anthony Spence and Dillon Beardy, both members of Tataskweyak Cree Nation, were recipients of Employee Equipment and Tool Fund awards. Anthony is a Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Mechanic Apprentice, working for Northern Maintenance Services (NMS), and Dillon is a former employee, having worked with Amisk on the project.

The Keeyask Workers' Opportunity Fund provides opportunities to support education, training, and employment for members of our four Keeyask Cree Nation (KCN) partner communities: Tataskweyak Cree Nation, War Lake First Nation, York Factory First Nation and Fox Lake Cree Nation.

## Workforce Adjustment Services extended to October 1, 2022

In order to help northern residents transitioning from project work, the Northern Manitoba Sector Council makes Workforce Adjustment Services available for those who worked at Keeyask. Services are being made available in Thompson at the Keeyask Workforce Adjustment Office, or by contacting 1-204-778-8094 or [kunal@nmscouncil.ca](mailto:kunal@nmscouncil.ca).

Assistance is provided in finding alternate employment through confidential assessment and development of individualized action plans. To ensure success for an individual's plan, referrals are made to community organizations that currently provide the required services, or they will be provided by one of Northern Manitoba Sector Council's Employment Consultants.

Workforce Adjustment Services provides coaching for:

- Job searches,
- Resume building,
- Interview prep,
- Career development, plus

Info on:

- Labour market,
- Training/re-training options,
- Self-employment,
- Upgrading education, and
- Mental health and Community resources

Individuals can contact their supervisor, KCN site rep, or Manitoba Hydro Site Support Liaison for eligibility and application process; we are still accepting applications.

Available in accessible formats upon request.

For more information on the Keeyask Project, visit [keeyask.com](http://keeyask.com)