



Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

For immediate release
February 8, 2022

MKO Commends Partners for Working Swiftly to Assist the Sayisi Dene Denesuline Nation

Treaty Five Territory, Thompson, MB – Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Inc. is issuing this statement in recognition of several partners coming forward to assist the Sayisi Dene Denesuline Nation (Tadoule Lake) in Northern Manitoba, the most Northern First Nation community in Manitoba.

Today, Calm Air is working to transport 20 barrels of fuel into Tadoule Lake. They are making two trips into the community to deliver 10 barrels of gasoline and 10 barrels of diesel fuel.

Sayisi Dene Chief Evan Yassie said:

“Thank you very much for the ongoing emergency assistance. It looks like the opening of the winter road is still some time out. If need be, we may need to get more fuel. I thank everyone for their hard work and dedication to getting the fuel into the community today. Ma si cho to everyone.”

MKO Grand Chief Garrison Settee states:

“On behalf of MKO, I express our appreciation to Calm Air and Indigenous Services Canada for their support in ensuring the delivery of fuel to the Sayisi Dene Denesuline Nation this afternoon. I also thank MKO staff for working diligently throughout the weekend to ensure the Sayisi Dene citizens receive support as they continue to grapple with the tragic loss of a community member. We have staff members on the ground in Sayisi Dene as well as others who are working behind the scenes remotely.

Last week, Chief Evan Yassie and I had the opportunity to meet with the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Indigenous Services Canada. During this time, Chief Yassie was able to brief the Minister on some of the challenges his community is facing.

While the Sayisi Dene Denesuline Nation is impacted by addictions and mental wellness concerns, a fuel shortage has been a most pressing concern. A lack of fuel in the community impacted the ability of service providers to provide mental wellness support and raised concerns about whether citizens would have enough fuel to heat their homes.

The winter road is not yet operational, so MKO called on our friends at Calm Air to assist us in delivering fuel to Tadoule Lake as an emergency measure to enable people to continue to heat their homes. The fuel will also assist staff in performing mental wellness checks around the community. Calm Air has arrived in the community with a first load of fuel this afternoon.

As we MKO has expressed previously, there must be a 'whole of government response' to stem the raging epidemic in bootlegging and drug-dealing in MKO First Nations. Thank you Minister Patty Hajdu for listening to our concerns and expressing your support for the Sayisi Dene Denesuline Nation."

Gary Bell, Chief Executive Officer of Calm Air, shared:

"Calm Air has a special relationship with MKO First Nations. We are pleased to partner with Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak in delivering fuel to Tadoule Lake today. We are delivering 20 barrels of gasoline and diesel fuel. Since there is a short runway in the community, we need to make two trips to deliver the fuel. We are very pleased to be in a position to do this and will continue to support Northern First Nations to the best of our ability."

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