

## MEETING NOTE

**NAME OF ORGANIZATION:** Nishnawbe Aski Nation

**DATE/TIME OF MEETING:** December 12, 2017

**LOCATION OF MEETING:** [TBC]

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### PURPOSE:

**ATTENDEES:** Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
Brad Duguid

Nishnawbe Aski Nation  
Deputy Grand Chief Smallboy

**LAST MEETING:** Include date of last meeting, if known. (Otherwise, delete.)

### ANTICIPATED AGENDA ITEMS (OR 'AGENDA' IF WE HAVE RECEIVED ONE):

1. Net Metering Opportunities
2. Microgrids

### NOTES ON AGENDA ITEMS:

#### 1. Net Metering Opportunities

- Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) is interested in economic development opportunities in NAN communities related to possible renewable energy projects, such as wind farms, solar, etc.
- The Feed-in-tariff (FIT) program and microFIT program are no longer accepting applications and are scheduled to end in 2017.
- Under a net metering arrangement, communities and individuals can offset their electricity bills by generating their own renewable electricity on-site.
- NAN represents 49 First Nation communities in northern Ontario where the electricity system faces technical constraints. Therefore, net metering opportunities may be limited at this time.

### Suggested Response:

- Net metering is a billing arrangement that allows customers to generate renewable electricity onsite for their own use, and to receive bill credits for any excess electricity that they send to the grid.

- **The Ministry of Energy is taking steps to expand and enhance Ontario's net metering framework, as part of the Ontario government's commitment to transition the Feed-in-Tariff (FIT) and microFIT generation purchasing programs to net metering.**
- **We have proposed changes to Ontario's net metering regulation that will allow for third-party ownership of net-metered renewable systems, which can remove barriers to participating in renewable generation such as upfront capital costs. It could also facilitate projects led by local economic development corporations.**
- **We have also proposed regulatory changes to allow for virtual net metering demonstration projects. Virtual net metering could allow Ontarians who may not be able to install their own renewable energy system to participate in renewable energy projects located away from their homes or businesses, and still receive a credit offsetting their electricity bill.**
- **Through the implementation of the 2017 Long-term Energy Plan, the Ministry of Energy is working with the IESO to develop an innovative renewable distributed generation program that will include support for VNM demonstration projects.**
- **Net metered projects are still required to meet the local distribution company's technical, safety and inspection requirements. This includes the ability to connect.**
- **An important consideration for NAN grid-connected communities looking at net metering is that in some parts of the province, renewable energy systems cannot be connected due to technical limitations of Ontario's electrical grid.**
- **I invite Nishnawbe Aski Nation or its member communities to contact the Ministry of Energy's Renewable Energy Facilitation Office to learn more about net metering opportunities and to provide input into proposed regulatory changes on the Environmental Registry.**

#### Background:

- Ontario electricity customers can participate in net metering by applying to their distributor to connect a renewable generation facility (e.g. solar panels), to their home or business to be billed on a net-metered basis.
- Net metering is enabled through regulation (O. Reg. 541/05: Net Metering), which requires electricity distributors (remote distributors are exempt) to allow eligible generators, as defined by regulation, to convey electricity into the distribution grid for a credit and to bill those customers on a net-metered basis. Ontario's net metering regulation has been in place since 2005.
- Net metering also supports initiatives under the Government's 2016-2020 Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP), such as enabling households, institutions and businesses, to move to net zero energy homes and buildings.

- An amended Net Metering Regulation (O. Reg. 541/05: Net Metering), came into force July 1, 2017, which removed the previous 500 kW project capacity size limit, allowed for pairing of energy storage with renewable energy systems and clarified that there is a 12 month carryover period for bill credits.
- The 2017 Long-Term Energy Plan (LTEP), released October 26, 2017, committed to further enhancing Ontario's net metering framework, including developing and proposing legislative and regulatory amendments to:
  - Enable third-party ownership of net-metered renewable generation facilities while ensuring appropriate consumer protection measures are in place; and
  - Provide flexibility for distributors to enable virtual net metering demonstration projects via participation in a targeted Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) administered program.
- Proposed legislative amendments to the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998*, required to expand the scope of eligible net metering ownership models, were introduced on November 14, 2017 through Bill 177, *Stronger, Fairer Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2017*.
- Pending the passing of proposed legislative changes, ENERGY plans to seek approval of proposed regulatory changes in Q1 2018.
  - On November 28, 2017, ENERGY posted three regulatory proposals related to the net metering enhancements (including siting and consumer protection provisions) on the Environmental and Regulatory registries. The comment period for these postings will end on January 18, 2018.
- The Ministry will also work with the IESO to develop a targeted distributed renewable distributed generation program that will include support for VNM demonstration projects. Program development details will be made available through the IESO's 2017 LTEP Implementation Plan, which will be submitted to the Minister of Energy by January 31, 2018.

## 2. Microgrids

- The Ministry is working to support the CCAP commitment to use renewable generation to offset diesel use in remote communities.
- ENERGY sees this as an opportunity to use GGRA funding to work with communities where grid connection is not viable, to maximize the penetration of renewable generation

### **Suggested Response:**

- **Opportunities for Indigenous communities and organizations in small-scale distributed renewable generation are expected to continue in the near term, given Ontario's strong energy supply position and a suspension of large renewable procurement at this time.**
- **The IESO-administered Energy Partnerships Program (EPP) provides**

**funding to First Nation and Métis communities and organizations for renewable project development as well as for partnership opportunities on priority transmission lines.**

- **Administered by the Ontario Financing Authority, the Aboriginal Loan Guarantee Program supports Indigenous equity participation in renewable energy and transmission projects by providing a guarantee for up to 75% of the equity in the project, up to a maximum of \$50 million. To date, over \$200 million in guarantees have been approved.**
- **The Aboriginal Community Energy Plan program Provides up to \$95,000 per community to develop a community energy plan. To date, 97 First Nations are participating in the program. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis.**
- **The Education and Capacity Building Program provides funding for initiatives that provide education, build capacity, and develop skills to better understand and participate in the electricity sector.**