

Aboriginal Set-aside a Historic First in Nova Scotia**Sydney Tar Ponds Agency
August 00, 2007**

The Sydney Tar Ponds Agency is seeking standing offers from eligible First Nations contractors to clean up the former Sydney Steel Cooling Pond.

The set-aside gives bidders with majority aboriginal ownership and control the ability to benefit from cleanup work and to gain skills and training needed to compete for other construction projects.

"The tendering of the cooling pond project as an aboriginal set-aside represents a historic first for Nova Scotia," said Premier Rodney MacDonald. "The cleanup of the Sydney tar ponds is creating new opportunities for our people, and the First Nations communities of Cape Breton play an important role in its future."

First Nation leaders are pleased the project is moving forward with a procurement process that ensures aboriginal involvement.

"This is the first aboriginal set-aside for the province of Nova Scotia and we are looking forward to having an opportunity to do some of the cleanup work," said Dan Christmas, Senior Advisor for Membertou. "Hopefully this will be a stepping stone for future work as the project progresses."

Only companies with at least 51 percent aboriginal ownership and control are eligible. In addition, if a bidder has more than five full-time employees, at least one-third of them must be aboriginal.

"The successful bidders will work alongside experts in the field of environmental remediation; they will have the opportunity to build partnerships that strengthen their ability to compete for other projects across Canada and beyond," said Frank Potter, Sydney Tar Ponds Agency President. "This construction project is just one example of how tenders are designed to build on the skills of all local residents while providing unique training and work experiences in an industry showing exceptional growth."

The cooling pond project also gives engineers a testing ground for further assessment of solidification and stabilization recipes considered for the tar ponds and coke ovens sites. This meets a recommendation given by the independent review panel.

The cooling pond is a circular body of water in front of the Sydney Tar Pond Agency's office on Inglis Street, Sydney. Its function was to cool water used by Sysco's rolling mills.

Work is expected to begin this fall and to be completed in spring 2008. The project is funded under the \$400 million federal and provincial cost-share

agreement.

The aboriginal set-aside for this standing offer follows the Government of Canada's aboriginal set-aside program.

FOR BROADCAST USE:

The Sydney Tar Ponds Agency is seeking standing offers from eligible First Nations contractors to clean up the former Sydney Steel Cooling Pond.

The work is the province's first aboriginal set-aside and is supported by First Nation leaders. It's designed to give successful bidders with majority aboriginal ownership and control the ability to benefit from cleanup work and gain valuable work experience that helps them compete for future work.

Companies with at least 51 per cent aboriginal ownership and control are eligible. In addition, if a bidder has more than five full-time employees, at least one-third of them must be aboriginal.

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