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NEWS RELEASE

Friday April 9, 2010 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

NAN PLEASED WITH FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WINTER-ROADS ASSISTANCE

THUNDER BAY, ON: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief Stan Beardy is pleased with the Government of Canada's 3.8 million dollar investment in fuel delivery subsidies to help winter roads communities in Northern Ontario.

"It is a great relief to us that the Government of Canada responded so quickly to our state-of-emergency declaration," said NAN Grand Chief Stan Beardy. "This funding will assist in getting basic essentials to our communities."

Unseasonably warm winter weather in Northern Ontario resulted in the early melting of the ice roads which are used by remote NAN First Nations communities. The winter-roads network lasted only 3 weeks this year, compared to the 4 to 6 week average.

On April 1, 2010 NAN leadership declared a state-of-emergency for winter road communities and called on Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to provide sufficient financial support to cover all the air delivery costs to transport essential goods such as building supplies and fuel to the affected communities and to help with the retrieval of materials left behind on the winter roads. Beardy says although the funding is a good start to address the high costs of transporting fuel, NAN will work closely with both levels of government to determine the shortfalls.

"There is still a question of how other essential services will be mobilized," said Beardy. "The majority of my people are on a fixed income and take personal shopping trips to stock pile their cupboards and we have to determine how the community stores can be subsidized to help off-set the high freight costs for basic staples and goods."

Nishnawbe Aski Nation is a political territorial organization representing 49 First Nation communities in James Bay Treaty 9 and Ontario portions of Treaty 5 – an area covering two thirds of the province of Ontario.

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