



Nishnawbe Aski Nation

ᐱᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅ ᐱᐅᐅᐅᐅᐅ

100 Back Street, Unit 200 Thunder Bay, ON P7J 1L2
Tel: (807) 623-8228 Fax: (807) 623-7730

NEWS RELEASE

Tuesday October 17, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW BRIDGE TO PROVIDE YEAR-ROUND ROAD ACCESS FOR NORTH CARIBOU LAKE FIRST NATION

NORTH CARIBOU LAKE FIRST NATION: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler joined with North Caribou Lake First Nation Chief Dinah Kanate and community members to celebrate the opening of a bridge that will provide year-round access for the remote community.

“The completion of this project will end North Caribou Lake First Nation’s reliance on the unreliable unstable winter road network, and I congratulate Chief Kanate, Council and everyone involved in this milestone project,” said NAN Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler. “This bridge provides safer and easier access to the permanent road system, opening up vital transportation links that will help ease the high cost of living.”

Funded by the Government of Canada, the \$5.1-million project began 12 years ago under the winter road alignment process. The bridge spans the Weagamou Lake narrows, connecting the community to Pickle Lake via the Northern Ontario Resource Trail (NORT).

“Our Elders have asked for the Wa-Pik-Che-Wanoog bridge for years because they have witnessed the effects of climate change in our territory and knew how it would influence life in our community. The winter roads can be dangerous, and two pieces of heavy equipment have gone through the ice while trying to maintain them,” said Chief Dinah Kanate. “I am pleased this bridge is finally open, and it is significant that the great-great-grandchildren of our ancestors who first walked these trails could participate in today’s ribbon-cutting.”

North Caribou Lake First Nation (Weagamow or Round Lake) is located approximately 900 kilometres north of Thunder Bay. Like many remote communities, it relies on an unstable winter road network as the primary transportation for vital supplies of food, fuel and other necessities of life.

Thirty-two of NAN’s 49 First Nations are remote and isolated, accessible only by air and seasonal roads. With a changing environment, commercial traffic on winter roads has been open for as few as 28 days in recent years; a significant reduction from 77 days a decade ago. This forces communities to rely on air delivery for supplies at significantly increased costs.

For more information please contact: Michael Heintzman, Director of Communications – (807) 625-4965 or cell (807) 621-2790 or by email mheintzman@nan.on.ca