

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO DESIGNATES NEXTBRIDGE AS THE LICENSED TRANSMITTER TO UNDERTAKE THE EAST-WEST TIE ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PROJECT**

**TORONTO – January 31, 2019** – Today, the Government of Ontario issued an Order in Council (OIC) and ministerial directive that provides the exclusive right of NextBridge Infrastructure (NextBridge) to proceed to construct the East-West Tie Transmission Line Project from Thunder Bay to Wawa. The timely resolution of this process is good news for families and businesses in Northern Ontario as the project can now move forward to ensure the availability of electricity in the region that will support a new era of economic growth.

The Government’s decision to issue the directive puts to rest recent uncertainty regarding who would construct this project. By taking this step, the government recognized the importance of Indigenous participation and has shown its commitment to completing this vital piece of infrastructure.

Fort William First Nation Chief Peter Collins, adds, “As President of Bamkushwada, I welcome the government’s decision to confirm that NextBridge will construct the East-West Tie Project. This is more than an electricity transmission project. It’s an economic partnership between industry and our First Nation communities that builds capacity and provides employment opportunities for over 300 Indigenous people.”

“NextBridge is ready to get to work,” says Jennifer Tidmarsh, Project Director, NextBridge. “We have worked in collaboration with Indigenous and local communities and right-of-way landowners for the past five years to develop this important project that will deliver economic benefits for generations to come.”

NextBridge has trained members of Indigenous communities for over 300 project jobs that will continue to enrich the lives of these young people well into the future. The project will also deliver over \$200 million in economic benefits for six First Nation communities that make up Bamkushwada once construction begins. NextBridge will support Bamkushwada’s acquisition of a 20% equity stake in the project at the end of the construction period.

The NextBridge project team expects to reach out to project partners, communities and landowners in the coming weeks as it acquires its final permits and initiates pre-construction activities.

**For more information, please contact:**

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**ABOUT NEXTBRIDGE**

NextBridge Infrastructure is a partnership between affiliates of NextEra Energy Canada, Enbridge Inc. and OMERS Infrastructure, established to participate in the Ontario transmission market. Collectively, the partnership submitted a proposal to the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) for the planning, development, construction, ownership, operation and maintenance of the Ontario East-West Tie Line Project in Northern Ontario. On August 7, 2013 NextBridge was designated by the OEB to develop the Ontario East-West Tie Line Project.