



CONSEIL DES ATIKAMEKW  
D'OPITCIWAN

VIA E-MAIL

Mr. Jeff Knapp  
Program Officer  
Natural Resources Canada  
580 Booth St., 7C9-3  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0E4  
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Opitciwan, February 11, 2020

**Subject: Cogeneration plant – Clean Energy for Rural and Remote Communities Program**

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Dear Mr. Knapp,

I am writing to you in my capacity as the new Chief of the Atikamekw of Opitciwan Tribal Council to express our commitment to moving ahead with the cogeneration plant project in our community. I realize that elections in our community have recently caused a delay in negotiations with Hydro-Québec Distribution. With work now having resumed, however, I wish to reassure you and reiterate that the subsidy from the Clean Energy for Rural and Remote Communities Program is important in bringing this project to fruition.

I am sure that you can understand that the cogeneration plant is vital to ensuring continuity of electricity distribution service to the families of Opitciwan and to meeting our long-term needs, which continue to expand. This new plant will also be the key sustainable-development lever for growing our local economy and creating jobs in our community while optimizing our sawmill operations. Over the long term, it will spur development of new economic projects and in turn generate the growth that our people have long hoped for. For all these reasons, I am dedicated to investing all of the energy and efforts necessary to move this file forward. Seeing this project through to completion is a priority for me.

In view of the fact that the Opitciwan cogeneration project aligns perfectly with Hydro-Québec's strategy to replace off-grid power generation networks reliant on diesel fuel—which are no longer compliant with minimum environmental standards—with clean, non-polluting energy sources that will lower greenhouse-gas emissions, I am confident that we will arrive at an agreement very shortly. As forest-biomass generation production is the greenest, most affordable and most socially acceptable alternative for our community, I have no doubt that Hydro-Québec Distribution and the Government of Québec are well intentioned and wish to reach an agreement quickly.

Bearing all this in mind, I must appeal to your patience and ask that you maintain the Clean Energy for Rural and Remote Communities Program funding for this project, which is so vital for our community.

Very sincerely yours,



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Jean-Claude Mequish, Chief  
Atikamekw of Opitciwan Tribal Council

c.c.: Eric Filion, President, Hydro-Québec Distribution