



## “OFNTSC’s First Nations Infrastructure Resilience Toolkit and Pilot Project” Wins Ontario Consulting Engineering Award

The award represents the highest honour for excellence in consulting engineers Ontario.

April 25, 2019 (Toronto, ON) – Stantec Consulting Ltd., in partnership with Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation (OFNTSC), has been awarded a 2018 Ontario Consulting Engineering Award for the First Nations Infrastructure Resilience Toolkit and Pilot Projects.

The Ontario Consulting Engineering Awards recognize consulting engineering firms and their projects in terms of high quality, innovation and technical excellence. They are considered the highest recognition for excellence in the consulting engineering industry and its winners are selected by independent jurors who have distinguished backgrounds in various sectors of the industry. Extreme weather continues to cause disruptions and damage to the infrastructure that First Nations require to provide essential services to their communities. In consideration of future climate uncertainty, the OFNTSC and Stantec developed a toolkit to help First Nations identify and develop mitigation measures for climate risks to their infrastructure. The toolkit provides guidance on how to incorporate these risks into asset management practices to better plan maintenance, repairs, and replacement of assets.

“The work we have managed to do is groundbreaking,” stated Elmer Lickers, Sr. Operations and Maintenance Advisor for OFNTSC and the Project Director, “it is so important that the impacts climate change place on First Nations community infrastructure are mitigated and minimized, and the toolkit provides the framework to do just that.”

The development of the toolkit and pilot projects involved several collaborators including Engineers Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, and Ontario Centre for Climate Impacts and Adaptation Resources. The toolkit adapts the widely used Engineers Canada Public Infrastructure Engineering Vulnerability Committee Vulnerability Protocol to make it relevant to First Nations communities and was created through lessons learned in three pilot communities: Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Moose Factory First Nation.

OFNTSC Executive Director Melanie Debassige stated, “First Nations have a strong cultural connection to their surrounding environments. and ensuring their communities can thrive in a

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changing environment is integral to their long-term well-being. The First Nations Infrastructure Resilience Toolkit represents a milestone in how First Nations communities can plan for their future, using traditional and local knowledge to identify the changes in climate that continue to be observed. I want to thank Stantec, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, Oneida Nation, and Moose Factory First Nations for their instrumental role in bringing this project to life.”

### **Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation (OFNTSC)**

The OFNTSC was established in February of 1995. Mandated by Ontario First Nations Chiefs-in-Assembly to provide advisory level technical services to Ontario’s Tribal Councils, Large First Nations, and Unaffiliated First Nations in the areas of capital project planning and development, quality assurance, training, operations and maintenance, fire protection, architectural support services, housing inspections, and housing programs. OFNTSC’s underlying objectives are to foster greater First Nation autonomy in the acquisition of capital facilities and infrastructure development in order to support and promote the development of modern community health and safety practices for First Nations in Ontario. If you would like more information on this topic, please call Melanie Debassige at 416-435-8972, or visit [www.ofntsc.org](http://www.ofntsc.org).

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