



News Release

New SaskTel Wireless Service Launches in Two Northern Communities

September 24, 2015 –Today SaskTel announced that the new cellular towers serving the communities of Wollaston Lake and Fond Du Lac First Nation are fully operational and residents can now enjoy the benefits of SaskTel wireless service. The extension of wireless cellular service to these Northern Communities was made possible through a partnership between SaskTel, Athabasca Basin Development and Huawei Canada.

This partnership is based on SaskTel's Community Participation Model, which encourages communities to raise funds to assist in installing cellular infrastructure where it may not otherwise be economically feasible for SaskTel to do so. Announced in November 2013, Wollaston Lake and Fond Du Lac First Nation are the first two of a total of four announced communities to receive this service. The partners have also committed to extending wireless service to the communities of Black Lake and Stony Rapids, with an anticipated completion date of year end 2015.

"SaskTel customers experience a level of connectivity that is rare in other sparsely populated parts of the world because of the ongoing commitment SaskTel shows to connecting our rural and northern communities", said Minister Responsible for SaskTel Jim Reiter. "In addition to this important initiative, with support from the Connecting Canadians Program, SaskTel is also working on extending and increasing broadband internet speeds to an additional 26 Northern communities."

"This is a great day for the residents of Wollaston Lake and Fond Du Lac First Nation who can now enjoy high speed connectivity, and we are proud to have supported this initiative," said Sean Yang, President of Huawei Canada, "SaskTel's leadership in connecting the rural areas of the province demonstrates a commitment to ensuring northern communities have access to the latest wireless technologies available in the world."

"We are pleased to be part of this exciting initiative that brings such a real and lasting impact on the Athabasca communities," says Geoff Gay, CEO of Athabasca Basin Development. "Now that two of the towers are operational, the increased connectivity will lead to many benefits for the people and the business climate in the region. I'd like to thank SaskTel and Huawei Canada for their efforts and commitment in getting this vital initiative going, and for giving us the opportunity to join them in this partnership to benefit the Athabasca region."

"We've been looking forward to the towers becoming operational since this was announced, and we are excited that the day has come," says Darryl McDonald, CEO for Fond Du Lac First Nation, "Up until today, we've had little to no cellular coverage in Fond Du Lac, and the impact these towers will have on local business development, safety, and the lives of our residents will be tremendous."



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“I am very happy to see this improvement in cellular service for the members of our community,” says Chief Bart Tsannie of Hatchet Lake First Nation, which is located directly next to the community of Wollaston Lake. “One of the most significant challenges for our area is accessibility, and these towers will help improve connectivity to the rest of Saskatchewan. Initiatives like these serve as an important step in building a better future for our residents, and I see this as a significant and vital investment in our community.”

The total cost of this project was \$6 million with Athabasca Basin Development Corporation providing \$249,000 and Huawei contributing \$385,000 in funding and telecommunications equipment.

About Athabasca Basin Development

Athabasca Basin Development is committed to building and investing in successful businesses. Investments are focused on the resource sector and include partial or complete ownership in twelve successful companies with last year’s consolidated revenues topping \$176M. The company is owned by the seven communities in Northern Saskatchewan’s Athabasca region. Visit www.athabascabasin.ca.

About Huawei

Huawei is a leading global information and communications technology (ICT) solutions provider. Huawei’s 170,000 employees worldwide are committed to creating maximum value for telecom operators, enterprises and consumers. Our innovative ICT solutions, products and services have been deployed in over 170 countries and regions, serving more than one third of the world’s population. Founded in 1987, Huawei is a private company fully owned by its employees, and was recently named by Interbrand as one of the world’s top 100 brands – the first Chinese company to receive this recognition.

Huawei Canada has been in operation since 2008. Huawei’s innovative wireless products and services support many of Canada’s leading telecommunications companies, and Huawei’s Canada Research Centre in Kanata, Ontario is a national leader in advanced communications technologies. We are proud to be a key part of Canada’s ICT Ecosystem.

About SaskTel

SaskTel is the leading Information and Communications Technology (ICT) provider in Saskatchewan, with over \$1.2 billion in annual revenue and over 1.4 million customer connections including over 618,000 wireless accesses, 437,000 wireline network accesses, 258,000 Internet accesses and over 103,000 *maxTV*™ subscribers. SaskTel and its wholly-owned subsidiaries offer a wide range of ICT products and services including competitive voice, data and Internet services, wireless data services, *maxTV* services, data centre services, cloud-based services, security monitoring services, advertising services, and international software and consulting services. SaskTel and its wholly-owned subsidiaries have a workforce of approximately 4,000 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs). Visit SaskTel at www.sasktel.com



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