

## SYDNEY TAR PONDS AGENCY--Cleanup Bringing New Skills to First Nations Communities

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The Sydney Tar Ponds Agency today, June 16, announced two initiatives that continue to build on the success of Aboriginal participation in the Sydney Tar Ponds and Coke Ovens Remediation Project.

A protective soil layer will soon be placed over the Coke Ovens site and Denko Mi'kmaq Enterprise Ltd. of Eskasoni will work on the project.

"This initiative builds capacity within the Aboriginal workforce and demonstrates the government of Canada's commitment to working with First Nations to provide a cleaner environment for the people of Sydney and to growing the local economy," said Rona Ambrose, Minister of Public Works and Government Services.

"The legacy of the Tar Ponds and Coke Ovens Remediation Project continues to spread across all of Nova Scotia," said Bill Estabrooks, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. "And the benefits will continue to have a positive impact on our local economy for many years to come."

The \$4.2-million project will begin later this month. The aboriginal set-aside contract accounts for about 30 per cent of the cover project. The remainder will be tendered this month as a general contract.

The second initiative, an enhanced environmental work training program has also begun. It helps eligible aboriginal people increase their skills in environmental remediation. The 18-month program provides field and office training as participants work with consultants and contractors.

More than 73,800 person hours (equivalent to 37 full-time jobs) have been designated to First Nations people. This meets the commitments of an Aboriginal Set-Aside Procurement Strategy signed in 2008 by the government of Canada, the province and the Mi'kmaq First Nations of Cape Breton.

In January 2007, the government of Canada and the province committed \$400 million to ensure the cleanup is completed by 2014.

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