Muskrat Falls Project achieves major milestones in October

October 29, 2015, St. John’s, NL – The Muskrat Falls Project achieved several milestones across the province on the generation and transmission components of the project this month.

“We are nearing the end of our third full year of construction and we continue to make steady progress in all areas of the project,” said Gilbert Bennett, Vice President, Lower Churchill Project. “Construction began in early 2013 and today construction and manufacturing is ongoing in more than 100 locations across the province and around the world.”

The Muskrat Falls Project includes construction of an 824 megawatt (MW) hydroelectric dam on the lower Churchill River in Labrador; more than 1,600km of associated transmission lines across Newfoundland and Labrador; a 30km marine crossing across the Straits, from Forteau Point, Labrador to Shoal Cove, Newfoundland; and various electrical infrastructure in Churchill Falls, Muskrat Falls, L’Anse au Diable, Dowden’s Point and Soldiers Pond.

“To date, more than 16 million person hours have been worked by the Lower Churchill Project team, contractors and sub-contractors with a safety record that is significantly better than the Newfoundland and Labrador construction industry average. Continued efforts are made daily to ensure the safety of everyone working on the Lower Churchill Project,” added Bennett.

Some of the major work completed in October 2015 includes:

**Muskrat Falls Generating Facility:** Completion of concrete placement in the spillway with more than 48,000 m$^3$ of concrete poured for the structure by the contractor constructing the powerhouse and spillway, Astaldi Canada. With the completion of these activities, construction is now focused on installing spillway gates in preparation for river diversion next year.

**Labrador-Island Transmission Link:** Stringing power line wire (conductor) for the 1,100km HVdc transmission line being built between Muskrat Falls and Soldiers Pond started this month. Work on this new transmission line, being constructed by Valard Construction, began in the summer of 2014 with the first of 3,300 transmission towers safely erected in April 2015.

**Strait of Belle Isle Marine Cable Crossing:** Following almost three years of manufacturing at Nexans plant in Japan, this month marked the completion of the last of the three subsea marine cables. The first of the three cables was completed in January 2015. The final phase of work in the Straits will involve a cable installation vessel that will install the three transmission cables on the sea floor in 2016. Rock berms will then be placed over each cable by a rock-laying vessel to protect the cables from marine vessel traffic and fishing activity. The quayside where the rock-laying vessel will be loaded was also completed this month, as well as the quarrying of the approximately 450,000 tonnes of rock that will be used for the rock berm.
Electrical Grounding Stations: This month, H.J O’Connell completed construction for both the L’Anse au Diable, in Labrador, and the Dowden’s Point, in Conception Bay South, grounding stations. These facilities included civil structures required for the grounding station including armour stone placement to build a breakwater structure.

Construction work for the Muskrat Falls Project is taking place across Newfoundland and Labrador. At peak this year more than 5,300 people were working on the project and around 84 per cent of the project workforce were residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. An estimated $9 million is returned to the provincial economy every week through local business opportunities, employment and wages generated by the project.

Quick Facts:
Muskrat Falls Generation Facility:

- Once built, the 824 megawatt (MW) Muskrat Falls facility will be the second largest hydroelectric generating facility in Atlantic Canada (the largest is Churchill Falls with 5,428 MW capacity) and the generating turbines will be among the most efficient in North America.

- The powerhouse/intake structure will be approximately 85m high. This will be 21m higher than the Confederation Building.

- Muskrat Falls will have two dams. The north dam will be about 34m high and 430m long; the south dam will be 20m high and 243m long. Combined, the two dams will be around the length of five CFL football fields.

Transmission Lines:

- The 1,600kms of transmission line from Churchill Falls to Soldiers Pond will include approximately 4,560 towers and around seven thousands kilometres of wire – enough to stretch from St. John’s to Lima Peru.

- Total weight of all towers and foundation steel is approximately 55 million kg, or approximately the weight of twice the weight of the Hibernia topsides.

- Total weight for all materials required for the transmission lines is more than 102,000 tonnes.

Media Contact:
Karen O’Neill
Communications Manager, Lower Churchill Project
t.709.737.1427, c.709.690-2012, e.koneill@nalcorenergy.com
Pictured below: The Muskrat Falls Project achieved a major milestone with the completion of concrete placement in the spillway with more than 48,000 m$^3$ of concrete poured in the spillway.

Pictured below: Stringing of the first wire (conductor) by Valard Construction on the transmission line between Muskrat Falls and Soldiers Pond. About 3,200kms of wire will be installed on this transmission line.
Pictured below: The last of the three marine crossing cables was completed this month. Each cable is approximately 30km in length and 11cm in diameter, which is about the size of a softball.

Picture below: Civil work construction for the grounding station located at Dowden's Point.