



**Media statement from Gilbert Bennett, Executive Vice President, Power Development**

*October 17, 2016* - Work activities in preparation for raising the water levels in the reservoir above Muskrat Falls are ongoing by the Lower Churchill Project. Nalcor is proceeding with raising the water levels first to 25 metres, which will happen this fall, followed by raising the levels to 39 m, which is anticipated by 2019.

Following regulatory approvals and permits, Nalcor is proceeding with building up the water level to 25 m to protect the generation site infrastructure and permanent assets from potential damage resulting from downstream rising water levels and ice formation. In the absence of creating the upstream reservoir and controlling the river, the downstream ice will form and dam as it has historically occurred. Controlling and stabilizing the flow of the river, which will happen once we reach the 25 m level, will create a much more stable ice cover downstream of the spillway and the historic flooding due to ice damming will not occur. This will prevent damage to the facility from flooding and ice creation.

There are several activities that are ongoing by Nalcor to raise the water levels to 25 m and impound or create the reservoir at Muskrat Falls. This includes building up the rock cofferdam, finalizing all remaining work in the spillway, and preparing for the installation of log booms upstream of the dam. Much like the process for river diversion completed earlier this summer, creating the reservoir involves a number of steps over a period of time. This work is ongoing and raising water levels upstream of Muskrat Falls will take place when all facilities and equipment are ready for operation. This is anticipated to begin later this month.

Nalcor advised the public that activities to raise water levels in the Churchill River above Muskrat Falls may begin anytime on or after October 15, 2016 and could continue through 2016. We provided that advance notice about activities related to impoundment to ensure the public was made aware of the important safety precautions they should follow.

We understand that the Provincial Government recently met with members of the Nunatsiavut Government regarding their concerns about methylmercury and their request to fully clear the reservoir. Nalcor has subsequently undertaken additional water quality monitoring and we are working with both governments on this program. Nalcor will continue to work with the Provincial Government and all stakeholders on this important topic.

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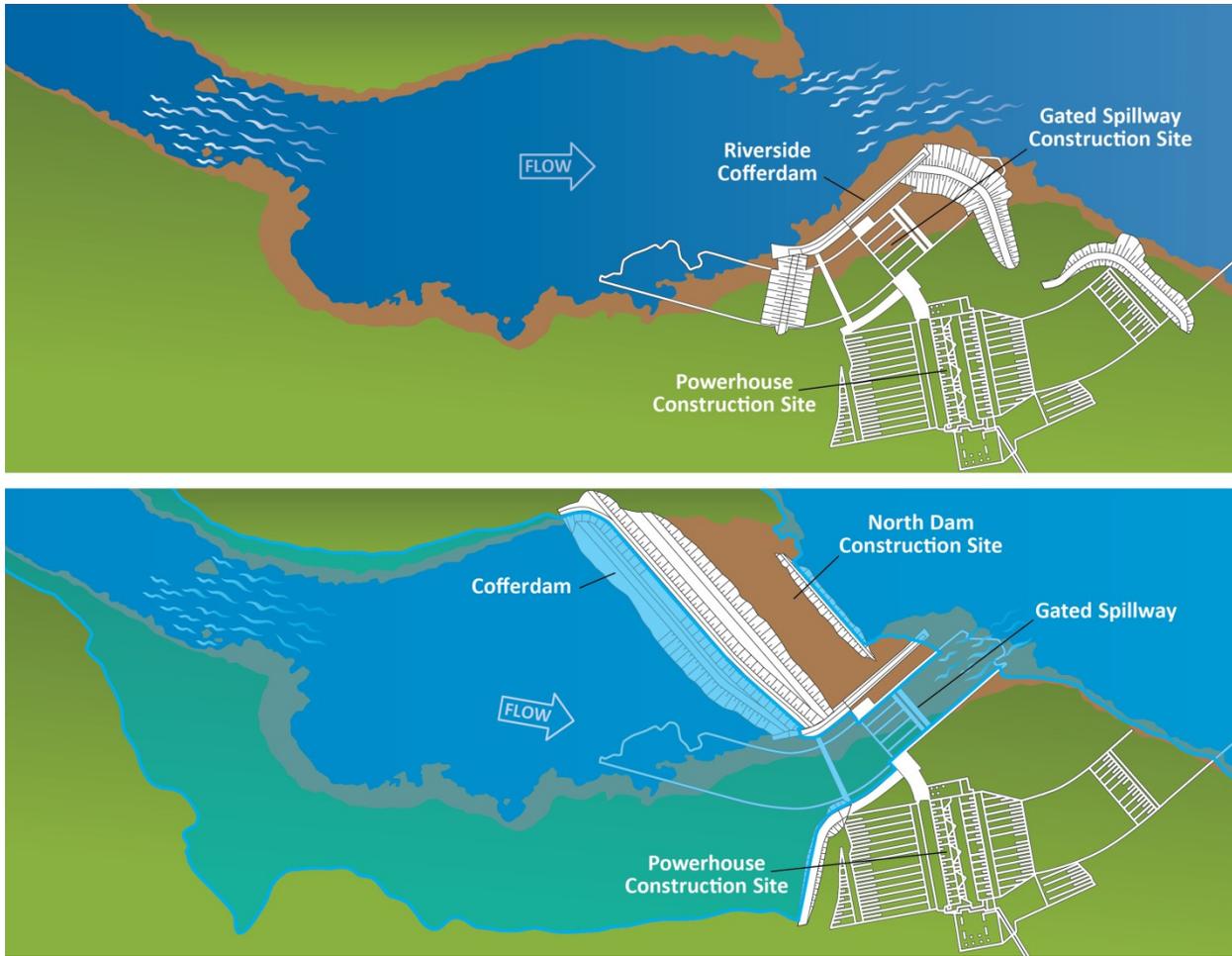
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Water levels at Muskrat Falls before and after 25 m reservoir creation. Water levels in the reservoir will rise gradually by approximately 0.5-1.0 m/day.