



Contact

Sustainable Hydropower Website
C/- Hydro Tasmania
4 Elizabeth St
Hobart TAS 7000
AUSTRALIA

sustainable.hydropower@hydro.com.au

Distribution & sharing of benefits

Minashtuk, Canada

The formation of a company (Hydro Innu Inc.) enabled a limited partnership arrangement between Canadian indigenous people and the Minashtuk^o Hydropower Station for the design, feasibility studies, financing, construction and operation of a cutting edge hydropower facility.

Overview

The Minashtuko Hydropower Station is a cutting edge run-of-river facility on the Mistassibi River, Québec province, Canada. The unusual dam structure consists of three very large inflatable bladders, which are computer operated to control flow in the Mistassibi River, and hence the turbine, with exceptional performance and flexibility.

Scheme Specifications

Dam Name

Scheme operator

Hydro Innu inc., General Partner of
Minashtuk^o Limited Partnership
Company

Size of scheme (MW)

9.9

Country

Canada

Catchment area

River

Mistassibi

Effective reservoir capacity

Run of River

Construction years

1999-2000

Reservoir size

Run of River

External Recognition

Nil

Details

In 1996 Hydro Innu, a corporation owned by the Innu Council of Lac St Jean, entered into a unique partnership agreement with Hydro Québec for the design, feasibility studies, construction and operation of a small, high technology hydropower station. Under the agreement, Hydro Innu owned 51% of the company that owns the development, with Hydro Québec owning the remaining 49%. Over a period of 20 years, ownership of the asset will transfer solely to Hydro Innu, with Hydro Québec agreeing to purchase electricity from the station over the full 20 year period.

This very unusual arrangement has given the Innu community ownership of the project, and has empowered them to participate in the environmental feasibility studies and design of the power station. This ensures that traditional way of life and the environmental values of the Innu people are protected throughout all stages of the project.

Further spin-offs from the partnership are in the form of newly created jobs, a healthier local economy and local capacity building.

Other aspects

Local Capacity Building

The construction of the dam created 56 short-term job opportunities, with a further 4 full time positions associated with the ongoing operation of the plant. As a result of the project, Innu people have developed expertise in project financing, administration and management. Revenue from the project is will enable these communities to engage in other development projects.

Environmental Flows

The unique design of the dam enables the Minashtuko development to generate hydro electricity with minimal alteration to the natural flow regimes of the Mistassibi River, and without the need to inundate large areas of land.

Siting and design

The selection of an appropriate site, along with cutting edge dam design has enabled the project partners to construct a run-of-river hydropower station with minimal environmental impacts.

Cost benefits and economic performance

The Minashtuko project is expected to generate a 13-15% return on investment, with spin-offs benefiting the entire community evaluated at \$10 million total.

Further information

Source: Hydropower Good Practices Workshop, Annex VIII - Examples for Good Practice Report, Villach, Austria, October 2005. International Energy Agency.

<http://www.hydroquebec.com/visit/index.html>

<http://www.dams.org/docs/kbase/contrib/soc196.pdf>

Anon (2000) Inauguration of the Minashtuk^o generating station (translation).
Piekuakami Inutsh, Vol 8, Num 8.