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CANADA/U.S. MEETING ON ONTARIO HYDRO ATIKOKAN PLANT

The Department of External Affairs announced today that Canadian and United States officials met in Ottawa August 24 to exchange information on possible transboundary effects of an Ontario Hydro coal-fired generating plant planned for construction at Atikokan in Northwestern Ontario. In addition to representatives of the two federal governments, Ontario and Minnesota officials and representatives of Ontario Hydro also participated in the meeting.

Ontario and Ontario Hydro officials provided the latest details on plans for the project, including estimates on environmental impacts of the plant, and indicated that the project will meet all provincial environmental requirements.

United States officials expressed concern at the potential transboundary impacts of the project, in particular sulphur dioxide emissions from the plant, on wilderness areas in the United States lying along the Minnesota-Ontario border including the Boundary Waters Canoe Area.

United States officials requested further technical and other information concerning the project, and there was agreement to establish a channel for regular exchange of data as further studies in both countries progress. A follow-up meeting is anticipated by late October to review these studies.