



## Media Release

**Det'on Cho Management LP partners with Northwestel, pursues public funding for Indigenous-owned Great Slave Lake fibre line.**

*Yellowknife, November 24 2021* – Today Det'on Cho Management LP announced its intention to pursue public funding for an Indigenous-owned submarine fibre line under Great Slave Lake. The company has signed a memorandum of understanding with Northwestel to collaborate on the fibre project and bring greater telecommunications resiliency to nine communities in the Great Slave Lake region of the NWT.

Upon successful completion Det'on Cho will own the fibre asset, with Northwestel operating, maintaining, and repairing the line at their own cost for a period of 20 years. While public sector funding will be required to advance the project, both Det'on Cho and Northwestel will contribute significant financial resources to the venture.

“The more important Internet access has become in people’s lives, the more important it is that access be extremely reliable. Our communities have benefitted from Northwestel’s investment in fibre, and now we have the opportunity to close a gap that has the potential to cause a crisis in our communities. This redundant fibre connection will protect against the inevitable fibre breaks that happen and vastly decrease the likelihood of major outages that harm our economy and our communities.” said John Henderson, Chief Operating Officer Det'on Cho Management LP.

“We are excited to be partnering once again on a First Nation-led project that has the potential to strengthen the NWT’s fibre network, while bringing jobs and private-sector investment to the region,” said Paul Gillard, Northwestel’s Vice President, Business Markets. “We look forward to supporting Det'on Cho in any way we can to move this project forward and bring added resiliency to our NWT customers.”

The Great Slave Lake Fibre Project is a proposed submarine fibre optic cable running between the North and South Slave regions of the NWT. The submarine line would connect at both ends with existing Northwestel fibre lines, creating a resilient fibre loop that allows for broadband traffic to flow even in the event of a fibre break. The new fibre loop would provide added protection to services in nine NWT communities: Fort Smith, Fort Resolution, Hay River, Fort Providence, Behchoko, Whati, Dettah, Ndilo and Yellowknife.

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## Det'on Cho Management LP

### **About Det'on Cho Management LP**

Det'on Cho Management LP is 100% owned by the Yellowknives Dene First Nation and exists to create jobs and prosperity for community members. Our main investment is in people. We began in 1988 with a \$15,000 grant and now have 600-700 employees working across 19 operating entities.

### **About Northwestel**

Northwestel is the largest telecommunications provider in Canada's north, serving 96 communities across Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, British Columbia and Alberta. In 2020, Northwestel launched a 3-year Every Community plan to significantly improve broadband services for residents, governments and businesses using the latest fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) and Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite technologies. Northwestel is a subsidiary of Bell and provides service on the traditional territories of Indigenous peoples across Canada's North.

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