

Membertou company lands tar ponds contract

By ERIN POTTIE

CAPE BRETON POST

MEMBERTOU — Two Nova Scotia companies will divert water from the Sydney tar ponds and coke ovens sites as part of an ongoing \$400-million remediation project.

Nova Scotia Justice Minister Cecil Clarke and Minister of National Defence and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway Peter MacKay announced Saturday that a \$37.6-million contract has been awarded to First Nations contractor MB2 Excavating and Construction Ltd. of Membertou in partnership with Beaver Marine Ltd. of Halifax. Beaver Marine's main construction yard is located in Point Tupper.

"The Mi'kmaq people are a huge part of our community throughout the province and certainly in Cape Breton," said MacKay. "Having them as major participants in work, I believe, is an important part of the spirit of this cleanup. They felt the bane of this particular sore spot more than anyone."

MacKay said the project is expected to create 29 new jobs and sustain 50 others.

The two partners are expected to begin building a system to redirect water from two brooks in late



Minister of National Defence and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway Peter MacKay, from left, speaks with Membertou Chief Terry Paul and Nova Scotia Justice Minister Cecil Clarke at the announcement of a \$37.6-million construction contract to divert water from the Sydney tar ponds and coke ovens sites. Nova Scotia companies Beaver Marine Ltd. of Halifax and MB2 Excavating and Construction Ltd. of Membertou are expected to start building the system that will redirect two brooks. Erin Pottie - Cape Breton Post

spring and finish in September 2012.

The project will be constructed in three phases. First a pumping station will be built between the Prince Street and Ferry Street bridge. The second station will be

built between Ferry Street bridge and the narrows of the north tar pond. A third station will be built between the narrows and Battery Point Barrier, at the mouth of Sydney harbour.

Steel-panel walls will block the

tide and manage other water sources. According to engineers, in the event of a heavy storm, surplus water will drain into the tar ponds.

This system will handle incoming water until a new channel is built in the remediated tar ponds.

Membertou Chief Terry Paul said having the water diversion awarded to a locally owned company is great news for the people of Cape Breton. The contract is considered the most significant awarded to date and comes in addition to \$19 million in aboriginal set-asides.

"The feeling is just great. It's just, it's almost like getting married or having a birth, this is how huge this contract is for a lot of people in Cape Breton," said Paul. "It's creating work and helping people who have the trades stay here in Cape Breton."

Robin Googoo, president of MB2 Construction Ltd., said the company will help construct the pumps for the project. MB2 had already helped in the solidification of the agency's cooling pond project. The aboriginal business currently employs 12 staff and will hire more people if needed.

"It's actually 12 times bigger than before," Googoo said of the new contract.

Sydney Tar Ponds Agency president Kevin MacDonald said the two companies will be working with project experts to determine how to carry out the work. He also said the project, despite some recent concerns, is on budget.