

Information Request Form Crystal Springs Lagoon Project

**Information Request
Number:**

REPLY to Information Request No. 1

Submitted by:

The Proponent

Date Submitted:

February 27, 2026

Subject Matter:

Surface Water Management (Quantity)

Reference document:

Provincial Water Infrastructure Permit (**Appendix A to
Reply to Information Request No. 1**)

Request: The proposed development requires changes to their external hydraulic setting (i.e., to the drainage network outside the development site in question). These proposed works are beyond their property and/or control. The individuals who would make changes to the drainage within the area are the municipalities – this would fall under their purview, and their budgets. As a consequence, the proponent's ability to implement these proposed changes is outside their control.

Proponent Comment: This statement is incorrect. The proposed development includes the construction of a shallow ditch from the SE corner of the lagoon to the west roadside ditch of Road 15E. The west roadside ditch is part of the South Malonton Drain, a Provincial Drain that falls under the jurisdiction of Manitoba Transportation & Infrastructure (MTI). As such, Burns Maendel Consulting Engineers (BMCE), on behalf of the Proponent, submitted an application to MTI

for the modifications required to connect the proposed ditch to the Malonton Drain. The required permit was granted on December 20, 2024, and is attached hereto as **Appendix “A”**.

It should be noted that MTI is the only authority that can authorize construction within the South Malonton Drain and as such the Proponent has indeed obtained authority to modify the drain. This work is not within the control of the RM of Armstrong; however the work will be coordinated with the RM’s knowledge and consent. The works and budget to execute the works will be born by the Proponent. As a consequence, the proponent's ability to implement these proposed changes is within their control.

Request (Resumed): Additionally, the municipalities are constrained in what they can do regarding changes to drainage based on the regional watershed management plan. The project resides in Zone 2 of the Willow Creek Integrated Watershed Management Plan. This Plan has identified several future targeted initiatives focussed on improved drainage performance.

Notably, the proponent's proposed drainage changes intended to improve the hydraulic setting for the project are in direct contrast with the Willow Creek Integrated Watershed Management Plan.

The Plan states “*Drainage projects should receive priority in downstream portions of the watershed (Zone 3 and 4), while water retention projects should receive priority in upstream portions of the watershed (Zone 1 and 2). These retention areas can be drawn down when downstream conditions are suitable. Water managers must consider downstream impacts of drainage projects.*”

Proponent Comment: The EAP is for the construction of a domestic wastewater lagoon and associated discharge to the South Malonton Drain. The proposal is not for regional drainage improvements and the associated drainage impacts that it would have on the Watershed. The Proponent would like to ensure that the review remains focused on the lagoon and discharge of effluent during summer months and low flow periods, it will not be discharged during spring runoff or wet weather times.

For transparency the Proponent can advise that MTI required the removal of the existing driveway approach and culverts off the west side of Road 15E. The removal was a condition of the permit for the installation of the main access to the colony off Road 106N. With the removal of the driveway approach and associated culverts there is a portion of ditch that requires clean out to remove silt and ensure that it has positive drainage. The length of ditch that is proposed to be cleaned out is 125m downstream and 80m upstream of the access that is to be removed. While these works are not part of the lagoon EAP it is provided for transparency.

Additionally, the work in the Malonton Drain is in accordance with the Willow Creek Integrated Watershed Management Plan. Zone 2 – Plan in Action identifies “the Province is to investigate possible upgrades along a 4-mile section of the South Malonton Drain to ensure it meets the design standard.”¹ The removal of this approach achieves this goal and will be completed by a private entity without public funds.

¹ Willow Creek Integrated Watershed Management Plan, page 22

Request (Resumed): The proponent's proposed drainage changes increase drainage within Zone 2. This is inconsistent with the plan's stated goal of increasing retention. Given the foregoing, the Rural Municipality of Gimli seeks the following information:

Request 1: Can the proponent provide an opinion on the likely degree of impact that the proposed development and supporting drainage improvements would have on the local and downstream drainage network?

Proponent Reply 1: The proposed drainage improvements indicated above, which have received the required permit from MTI, are limited to a ditch that will facilitate the discharge from the lagoon to the South Malonton Drain. The lagoon will be discharged during low flow times and therefore the Proponent can advise the impacts to downstream drainage network during discharge will be extremely limited.

Request 2: Can the proponent demonstrate any commitment from the relevant municipal bodies in relation to the level of operation and maintenance required in order to implement the proponent's proposed drainage changes?

Proponent Reply 2: As indicated above, the Proponent has obtained the required permit from MTI and will be responsible for the construction of the drainage swale that facilitates the connection of the lagoon to the South Malonton Drain. As the RM of Armstrong is not the government entity responsible for the operation and maintenance of the Malonton Drain, there is no commitment from the RM required for the implementation, operation or maintenance.

Request 3: Can the proponent confirm that the proposed drainage amendments are permissible under the current draft Willow Creek Integrated Watershed Management Plan and advise what steps they took to investigate this issue?

Proponent Reply 3: The Willow Creek Integrated Watershed Management Plan is not a document that in isolation permits or prohibits developments such as the Proponent's; it is a document that contains objectives, policies and recommendations.² Nonetheless, the Proponent has reviewed the plan and believes it complies with the objectives, policies and recommendations therein. The appropriate license has been obtained from MTI for the lagoon discharge swale that connects the lagoon to the South Malonton Drain.

² *The Water Protection Act*, section 16(1).

Request 4: Can the proponent provide commentary on whether the project location would be 'habitually inundated' without the above drainage improvements which are reliant upon third party participation?

Proponent Reply 4: As stated previously, there is no required reliance on third party participation. The required permit has been issued to the Proponent for the lagoon discharge works. The lagoon discharge swale is not related to the location being potentially inundated.

Request 5: Can the proponent confirm if they are (or are not) in alignment with Section 2. (c) of the Design Objectives for Wastewater Treatment Lagoons (MCC, 2022)? Further to the above question: can the proponent provide rationale as to why they are (or why they are not) in alignment with Section 2. (c) of the Design Objectives for Wastewater Treatment Lagoons?

Proponent Reply 5: Proponent was guided in its development of the lagoon by the Design Objectives for Wastewater Treatment Lagoons (MCC, 2022). Section 2(c) reads as follows: *“Surface Runoff: Location of lagoons in areas receiving significant amounts of runoff water is discouraged unless adequate provisions are made to divert storm water around the cells and otherwise protect embankments of the lagoon. Areas which are habitually inundated shall be avoided.”*

During the design and placement of the lagoon the location was reviewed. A Hydrologic and Hydraulic Assessment was commissioned to review water elevations and to determine the appropriate top of berm elevation. The 200-yr flood protection level was determined to be at 248.06m. The design top of berm elevation has been set at 248.50m which is 0.44m above the 200-year flood level and 0.70 m above the 100-year flood level.

The land upon which the lagoon is proposed to be located was reviewed and determined that it could be inundated during a 50-yr event. While the lands could be inundated it is important to note that the top of berm is 0.44m above the 200-year flood elevation.

Based on the above information it is the Proponent’s opinion that the design is in alignment with Section 2(c) of the Design Objectives for Wastewater Treatment Lagoons (MCC, 2022) as robust measures are in place to “divert storm water around the cells and otherwise protect embankments of the lagoon.”

Request 6: Any changes to drainage in that affect water elevations would trigger an Environmental Impact Assessment under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. Can the proponent confirm whether there would be any the impact on Dennis Lake if the above amendments to drainage are made and advise as to what steps they took to investigate this issue?

Proponent Reply 6: The Proponent has investigated the issues. The land in the vicinity of Dennis Lake is at an approximate elevation of 268m, while the land in the vicinity of the lagoon is 247.5m. As the development is approximately 20.5m lower than Dennis Lake and over 15km away it is virtually impossible for the lagoon to affect water elevations at Dennis Lake.

Request 7: Downstream flooding from the project site along Willow Creek has been documented. Can the proponent comment on the impact on downstream residents along Willow Creek during peak runoff periods if the above amendments to drainage are made?

Proponent Reply 7: As previously stated, the lagoon would only be discharged during dry weather conditions and therefore would not impact downstream residents during high water events.