

## Information Request Form Crystal Springs Lagoon Project

**Information Request  
Number:**

REPLY to Information Request No. 4

**Submitted by:**

The Proponent

**Date Submitted:**

February 27, 2026

**Subject Matter:**

Wildlife Management and Protection

**Reference document:**

N/A

**Request:** The lagoon will discharge into the Road 15E drain and travel north to Willow Creek. The effluent will follow Willow Creek east approximately 15 km where it will enter Lake Winnipeg. Over half of the length of Willow Creek, or nearly 10 kilometers, is classified as Class A and B fish habitat according to a Riparian and Aquatic Habitat Assessment completed by the East Interlake Conservation District in 2007 (Graveline, 2008). Adjacent to the proposed project site, Willow Creek is considered a Class A drain, where indicator species of fish are present, and the channel is considered complex.

**Request 1:** The Willow Creek Integrated Watershed Management Plan recommends conducting environmental risk assessments for all wastewater lagoons or sewage treatment plants to establish site-specific effluent discharge objectives. Given the sensitivity of the ecosystem and fish habitat that the wastewater lagoon is discharging

directly into, can the proponent advise whether an environment risk assessment was performed and if so, produce the relevant report. If not, can the proponent confirm that such an assessment will be conducted?

**Reply 1:** Site-specific studies are not commonly completed in Manitoba for Class 2 Lagoons, nor are development of site-specific effluent discharge objectives (EDO's). The Manitoba policy, under our Water Quality Standards has adopted a concentration-based discharge criteria rather than a site-specific nutrient loading based.

It is anticipated by the Proponent that if a site-specific analysis was warranted that MCC would have requested the assessment during the Technical Review of the EAP. It is our understanding that such an assessment was not requested and that the provincial experts at MCC have recommended that a license be issued for the wastewater lagoon.

**Request 2:** Can the proponent provide commentary on how effluent discharge would or would not impact fish and/or fish habitat in Willow Creek, including potential changes to spawning potential?

**Reply 2:** An assessment and commentary of effluent discharge on fish habitat in Willow Creek was not completed. License terms within the Province of Manitoba limit the discharge window to be between June 15 and October 31 of any year due to winter storage and fish spawning periods.

**Request 3:** Section 3.7.3 of the EAP describes habitat for two species of threatened bird (the barn swallow, *Hirundo rustica*; the bobolink, *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) that is in the immediate vicinity of the current proposed project location (specifically, the 'cultivated fields'). Has a species at risk study been conducted at the site to confirm that there are no nests, burrows, or dens in the project site? If so, please produce a copy of the species at risk study.

**Reply 3:** A species at risk study has not been completed for the site at this time. As the species listed are both migratory birds, they are protected by the Migratory Birds Convention Act. According to information on the government of Canada's website, this project site is located in nesting zone B4. The nesting window for nesting zone B4 is provided as mid April to Late August. It is proposed that any land clearing activity (clearing, grubbing, or topsoil removal) in preparation for the lagoon construction would occur outside of this nesting window. If this activity is required to be completed within the nesting window due to construction constraints, a bird nest survey would be completed immediately prior to construction or vegetation-clearing activities to confirm the absence of any nests in the area. If nests are encountered, then construction would be delayed accordingly to mitigate any negative effects.