

EXHIBIT # OTH-1012
WUSKWATIM GENERATION
& TRANSMISSION PROJECT
R.G.F.
CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

**WUSKWATIM GENERATION &
TRANSMISSION PROJECTS**

**Presentation
by
Mayor Bill Comaskey
City of Thompson**



**City of
Thompson**

MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

***PUBLIC HEARINGS
March 22 & 23, 2004***

Thompson, Manitoba

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TRANSMISSION PROJECTS***

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As Mayor of the City of Thompson, I would like to welcome you to our community and to northern Manitoba. Thompson is the third largest city in the Province, culturally diverse, offers all the amenities any major city enjoys and has the potential for further greatness. We are strategically located in the heart of the Province of Manitoba, centered in the middle of the north central trade corridor that originates in Mexico, runs through the central United States through Thompson, into Churchill and onto Eastern Europe. While we once depended heavily on the non-renewable resource of mining, we now see our future in diversification.

With the advent of the Northern University College, the potential to establish Thompson as a transportation re-distribution center; being a service center for a population of approximately 60,000 people living in our trading area, we are excited about future hydro development.

The reason why I am here today is to express our support for hydroelectric development projects in Northern Manitoba. More specifically, the Wuskwatim Dam and associated transmission projects. The advantages of generating clean energy for our citizens, for Manitobans, Canadians and for export is monumental.

Thompson has been involved with the Wuskwatim Project since its inception. The City has been briefed and has been included in the preliminary and periodic information sessions. We also have received regular progress reports concerning this development. As well, displays were made available in town hall meetings for the review and perusal of the general public.

There have been discussions concerning the environmental issues and from my reading and interpretation of the material provided, it appears there will be little or no impact on the environment.

This past weekend I participated in CUSO's *Creating a Climate for Change Conference* in Winnipeg. It is evident that industry has a significant impact on the environment, not only in the industrialized world, but also in developing countries. As there are serious concerns with using other types of energy, such as fossil fuels and nuclear reactors, it is obvious that the Wuskwatim project would greatly reduce environmental impact and concerns. This valuable resource can be marketed and sold worldwide.

The economic benefits to Thompson, First Nations and our region will be immense, even if we just consider the number of people and companies who would be employed directly during construction and indirectly with this initiative. Additionally, the opportunities for value-added in this province, with very competitive hydro rates, will attract industry to Manitoba and to our region.

I am pleased that these public hearings are being held in Thompson, a location that is near the actual site. While we support consultation, disclosure and due diligence, it is disconcerting however, to read and hear about individuals and organizations who are bent on preventing the project from going ahead. I question their motives and wonder if they have ever been to our area or if they have first hand knowledge of the circumstances surrounding this partnership. The partnership is to be commended. It is unique and perhaps historic, where we see industry and community partnering to create real and sustainable economic development. The viability of our communities are dependent on the creation of wealth. This and similar like projects will contribute and strengthen such endeavours.

NCN, Manitoba Hydro and the Province of Manitoba have been extremely open and honest about the venture. When we look at resource rich provinces, sometimes with envy, and now see what we have on our doorstep, it leads me to believe that the development of clean energy in the north will benefit all Manitobans.

In closing, let the record state, the City of Thompson totally supports the Wuskwatim Project. We want to get on with it!

Mayor Bill Comaskey