

William Anderson
GRANVILLE LAKE

Hi my name is William Anderson I am the Mayor of the community of Granville Lake. I would like to thank the CEC for this opportunity to speak. I am hear representing my community.

The community of Granville Lake Is located on the upper reaches of the Churchill River Diversion. The Churchill river is a main highway for our people, they travel by boat to Leaf Rapids, South Indian Lake, and also deliver fish to the fish plant located north east of Leaf Rapids. Our people also travel through Suwannee lake to Rat Lake.

Our community has struggled to continue our traditions and practices with in the impacted regions of the Laurie River area, and Churchill River Diversion. The flooding and continued water fluctuations caused by the Laurie River operations, the CRD, and the augmented flow program, continue to have extreme environmental, economic, and socio consequences in our area.

In essence this is a slow genocide of our identity as Cree, this break and detachment from the land must be recognized and addressed.

Manitoba Hydro has had free reign for the last thirty years and it must stop, we have never signed on to the CRD or the Augmented Flow Program. The free reign and to do damage to our environment without agreements has to stop.

I have concerns on the Wuskwatim process and its communication with the community of Granville Lake. For instance, the way that consultation was done. We would have liked to have had some say into what were the parameters, and possibly influenced some of the base line thinking on the scope of consultation.

The operations of the Laurie River, CRD, and the augmented flow program still have many unresolved, and outstanding issues concerning environmental impacts, socio impacts, economic impacts, outstanding compensation and settlement, and consultation issues surrounding the annual renewal of the augmented flow program.

Although they can be told about it, with out experiencing that part of them, their ethineen gets weaker as time progresses. This is troubling for ~~the~~ us, as history has told us there are many instances where the loss of aboriginal peoples ties to their lands has dire consequences on them as people.

We cree that are a part of the land in the Laurie River area, have placed it as the most important part of the adverse effects of the operations of the Laurie river and the Churchill river.

Once again it is the break and detachment of the development of the identity of our children that has been damaged. Their ethineen is in jeopardy. For us adults and the elders it is also the detachment from our land that causes us great grief, and anguish.

It is safe to say from us as cree, a part of our being is lost, for when our land is damaged we are damaged, when our land is hurt we are hurt, when we are separated or detached from our land a piece of us will always be missing. Who are we when we are not part of our land?

Due to water level and flow variations caused by the operations on the Laurie River and Churchill River, there has been a significant impact to the land usage of the Granville Lake area. The water flow, and water level variations have created heavy dead willow and debris on the shorelines of traditional summer camp areas, which make these areas not safe for young children, and hinder access to families that would normally use these areas. The water flow and level changes also hinder fall, winter, and spring travel in these areas due to slush conditions, and unsafe ice. Which render this area unusable for significant periods of time during the year.

This is where the Cree of the Granville Lake area run in to difficulties in maintaining the ties to the lands that they were raised on. The tie and connection to the land, their Ethineen is in jeopardy and must be recognized and addressed.

The break to the ethineen of our children (new born to teenagers), has had and continues to have the highest impact on us as Cree. We as adults, and elders have had sufficient time ^{to} know and develop our ethineen, we have our identity. Our children are, and will continue to lose their identity to the land of our ancestors.

There is a cycle of knowledge and understanding that we as cree people go through in life, which solidifies our identity for us. This cycle is fostered by the land, our parents, grand parents, great grand parents, as this knowledge, and understanding has been passed down us for generations. All this brings an understanding to us as cree people that we are a part of, and connected to the land in a very strong way.

This cycle of knowledge has been going on for as long as the cree have been cree. It is one of the reasons why extended families work so well within our cree society. As no matter who a child is raised with, they know the land they come from, and that they are a part of the land. They Know their identity is cree and with the land.

However their have been breaks and disruptions to this cycle of knowledge that have not been natural, which have been caused in a major way but not exclusively by hydro development on the Laurie River System and the Churchill River System. This development has, and continues to have extreme consequences to the individual cree persons identity Granville Lake area . The breaks and disruptions to this cycle have had significant negative consequences on us as cree people.

Us as Cree people live with a great respect, understanding, and are connected to the land of our ancestors. we belong to, and are a part of the land. When the land is damaged we are damaged, when the lands natural cycles are disrupted by development, our natural cycles for being at one with the land are also disrupted.

The term for a Cree person in our language is Ethinew, and the Cree term for the actual connectedness to and being at one with the land is Ethineen. Ethineen (the actual connectedness to and being at one with the land) for a Cree person is fostered and developed from early child hood, as this connectedness to and being at one with the land is passed down to us through our ancestors. The very basis of our identity as Cree, relies on the fostering, development, and the retention of our Ethineen

Ethineen is significant when referring to the socio impacts of hydro development on us as Cree people of Granville Lake. and the amount of internal turmoil that hydro development has had on the Cree person that uses the adversely impacted areas for cultural development, traditional use, recreational use, commercial use, and travel.

Hydro development continues to adversely impact our traditions and practices such as hunting (moose, goose, duck), medicinal plant gathering, recreation, travel, trapping, fishing, and being at one with our land.

We have been living with the adverse impacts caused by the development of the Laurie River, the Churchill River Diversion, and the Augmented Flow Program. For the last few decades, with no resolution to our pleas.

We have serious concerns on the impact of loss of culture and identity to our youth

The people of Granville Lake have lived on and practiced their traditional way of life in the Laurie River area, and the Churchill River Area, since time before hydro development. The following deals with the Granville lake people, our actual connectedness to and being at one with the land, and the impacts of hydro development on this connectedness.