

MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

LAKE WINNIPEG REGULATION REVIEW
UNDER THE WATER POWER ACT

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Transcript of Proceedings
Held at Cross Lake Community
Cross Lake, Manitoba
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2015
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APPEARANCES

CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

Terry Sargeant - Chairman
Edwin Yee - Commissioner
Neil Harden - Commissioner
Beverly Suek - Commissioner

Cathy Johnson - Commission Secretary
Joyce Mueller - Administrative Assistant
Bob Armstrong - Report writer

INDEX OF PROCEEDINGS

Opening by the Chair	4
Presentations:	
Trappers:	5
Morris McKay	
Roger Ross	
George McKay	
Flora Ross - Women's Council	37
Meeting with students	55
Cross Lake Community Council meeting	115
Keith Settee	
Cameron McLeod	
Connie Settee	
Rosalie Halcrow	
Roseann MacFadgen	

1 WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2015

2 UPON COMMENCING AT 11:00 A.M.

3

4 THE CHAIRMAN: My name is Terry
5 Sargeant. I'm the chair of the Manitoba Clean
6 Environment Commission, as well as the chair of
7 the panel for this review. On the panel with me
8 are Edwin Yee, who is over here, Bev Suek, who is
9 right beside me, and Neil Harden. We have staff
10 with us today, Cathy Johnson who is the Commission
11 secretary, Bob Armstrong who is our report writer,
12 and on this end we have Cece Reid, who is our
13 recorder. We record all of our meetings and then
14 we produce a transcript that is posted on our
15 website within a day or two or three.

16 So Darwin said he told you why we are
17 here. We just want to hear your stories about the
18 Jenpeg project and Lake Winnipeg Regulation. The
19 Minister has asked us to review -- to hold
20 hearings in communities around the lake and
21 downstream from Jenpeg, just to hear what kind of
22 impacts Jenpeg has had on you personally and on
23 your community and on your way of life. So
24 anybody who wants to start?

25 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: I will go first.

1 Morris McKay. I will make it brief. There is
2 four of us here.

3 The impact from the trapping in the
4 early fall, there is not much of a -- we can't get
5 anywhere within our trapping areas. Regarding the
6 fluctuation of the water, the water regime and all
7 of that, due to that project in Jenpeg, water
8 level going up and down in the early fall and
9 opening of trapping season.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: When is the trapping
11 season typically?

12 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: Roughly, it opens
13 up in October 14, 15, somewhere in there. So it
14 is -- we are very eager to go out and try out our
15 luck again.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: How long does it go,
17 typically?

18 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: February, the end
19 of the month.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

21 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: The licence runs
22 from October to May, that's our trapping season
23 here.

24 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: Martin runs to
25 February, it closes in February. So that's why

1 some trappers are eager to go out. And then on
2 the other hand is beaver, it runs up to May.
3 Yeah. Unfortunately, some of the trappers very
4 rarely go for it because, I guess, beavers, that
5 much work to put down.

6 And on the other hand is fall, fall
7 and spring hunting regarding moose and duck
8 hunting, that kind of thing. We go across,
9 upstream of Nelson River where the rapids, the
10 High Hill rapids, we usually go up there, my
11 brothers usually go up there for moose hunting.
12 And we have a rough time going out there regarding
13 we have to go to the rapids, and water going down,
14 or either going up, and that's where problems
15 arise with the areas there. Shorelines being --
16 you can't track anything, you know, the water is
17 that high, and when water is low, you can't go in
18 there on that.

19 And a couple of years back, four years
20 back in the spring, we usually go for muskrat, not
21 that the prices are high but it is pretty good to
22 eat. So we did some trapping there, me and my
23 brother, checking out those little beaver, muskrat
24 lodges, but they were all frozen. The water was
25 way up there. But I can see all of this moss and

1 all of that, what they use for their shelter. So
2 I decided to get more nosey and pushed all of
3 these moss and grass weeds and that out of there.
4 And I came up with some kind of soft thing there,
5 but it was furry. And I used my chisel to pop it
6 out like this here. Sure enough, there was three,
7 two or three muskrats frozen there, dead. But I
8 didn't take my cell phone that time. I would have
9 had more proof for that.

10 And then to my brother there, what is
11 that to you? And I said it is odd. He said, how
12 can you say odd, the water keeps going up and
13 down.

14 Well, that's a little bit of my story
15 in my hunting and trapping, and I will let the
16 others say what they want to say.

17 MR. HARDEN: Is that typically in a
18 period when Hydro was doing their manipulations at
19 Jenpeg for their fall freeze-up?

20 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: Yeah, it
21 probably -- it usually goes up and down, the
22 water, the trapping, and when the season is over
23 for example, it is starting to -- when we open
24 trapping season, we usually have a problem, that's
25 when we usually run into water going up and down.

1 And at the same time, these guys will probably
2 have serious stories regarding this.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Can I just pursue that
4 a little bit more, Morris? So is the water more
5 uneven or did it fluctuate more in the fall?

6 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: Probably a little
7 bit less, I guess, more or less.

8 MR. ROGER ROSS: Yes, more in the
9 fall, like somewhere in around December, you know,
10 it is nice there at first, in the first year of
11 say before freeze-up there. Once trapping season
12 starts, then the gates open up there, and that's
13 when the water comes in there. There is lots of
14 beaver houses here and muskrat houses here by the
15 shoreline. By the time we go out there, like when
16 I went out there it is before Christmas here,
17 December, there was a beaver house there right
18 where I was there, and I could still see half ways
19 there, you know, due to this slush there.

20 So since there wasn't too much there
21 to go out there for me again, so I didn't bother
22 going out there. Besides it's too cold in there.
23 But I'm planning on going out there. Like most of
24 those beaver houses that you see in the fall
25 there, like when there is lots of water coming in,

1 like there is one big one there comes to mind
2 there, when we went out there, I knew there was
3 something missing when we were out there. It was
4 kind of different. And my partner said, where is
5 that beaver house that was here? It was all gone.
6 Like I trap with him there, Thomas there, I trap
7 right beside there. Like he said there, he saw
8 muskrats. Like I saw, I saw quite a few up there
9 too. They either froze there, or sometimes the
10 water goes down, you know. So what else will the
11 animal do?

12 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm just trying to
13 figure out, is there a particular time of year
14 that the water is going up and down unpredictably
15 or --

16 MR. ROGER ROSS: It all depends on
17 Hydro, whether they want to raise this thing up or
18 down, you know.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: But Neil asked, again,
20 in the fall Hydro is getting ready I guess for
21 winter and they need to -- I guess they spill more
22 water in the fall to get more water into --

23 MR. ROGER ROSS: That's what we are
24 trying to say, the animals are trying to get ready
25 for the winter too and doesn't know what Hydro is

1 going to do, so...

2 MS. SUEK: Do you get any warning
3 about fluctuations? Do you know that this is
4 happening?

5 MR. ROGER ROSS: They announce it on
6 the local radio here.

7 MS. SUEK: They announce it on the
8 radio when it is going to go up or down?

9 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: Nobody comes
10 knocking on our door, and here is the water levels
11 for this month, nobody comes and tells us what the
12 water level is going to be.

13 MS. SUEK: Right. And I guess the
14 muskrats don't listen to the radio.

15 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: No.

16 MR. ROGER ROSS: There is one other
17 thing there too, like since they ban out most of
18 those traps we are using, we are using those
19 magnums now. Like we have got a whole bunch of
20 those old 120s there, but they changed them and we
21 can't use them. And like they are forcing us to
22 use them and, you know, us trappers, we don't have
23 that kind of money to go and buy things like that,
24 you know.

25 Once when the water goes south there,

1 takes out a trap, things like that, and now they
2 can't use it. Now, him himself there, just doing
3 regular trapping, what they use, they would be
4 using that trap there. That's like a weasel
5 there. It just takes it out just like that, you
6 know. So I don't know, like they would just tell
7 us to exchange those things there, you know, for
8 those -- make it a lot easier for us.

9 MS. JOHNSON: They don't do that
10 anymore?

11 MR. ROGER ROSS: No. Well, they used
12 to a long time ago, but not now. Like even now,
13 like we talk to Everett, trappers got \$4,000,
14 something like that, so you could buy your
15 trapping material there. But when you go to this
16 Hydro, like you want to go and buy some traps,
17 they don't let you. I don't know why.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Hydro won't let you buy
19 traps?

20 MR. MORRRIS MCKAY: These guys here,
21 the Hydro boys here.

22 MR. ROGER ROSS: I guess they are just
23 following orders there too, I guess.

24 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: Even if you have
25 left over, like 5, 700 left, and you go and ask

1 for some, you know, you want to buy some traps and
2 all that, they won't give you anything. They give
3 you the run around.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: What control does Hydro
5 have over it?

6 MR. ROGER ROSS: I don't know, they
7 give us to use that money for trapping. Like, for
8 instance, like you use a toboggan for trapping
9 there too and there is runners underneath there.
10 I broke one of mine out there. So I went to
11 Portage there and asked him if he could find me
12 one, there are some out here. And they said we
13 are not allowed that. So I had no choice but to
14 go out to the garage dump there and look for those
15 plastics things, and I still use it.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: So Hydro gives the
17 trappers some money?

18 MR. ROGER ROSS: Yes, some money,
19 \$4,000 for four years to buy your trapping
20 equipment. Like, I thought traps and toboggans
21 and things like that, they were equipment for
22 trapping, and now they won't let you use it. So I
23 don't see why.

24 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: Auger and chain
25 saw, and a chain. But when you go back to the

1 office and go ask for this much that you are --
2 sort of a chisel or ax, they don't give you
3 anything. And yet you still have some left there.

4 MR. ROGER ROSS: They let you buy
5 those ice augers there, but it's not -- to us,
6 when we use ice augers there say for chopping a
7 hole there for beaver there in the lake, you won't
8 get anything, you know, until later on there. So
9 I asked one of those old timers that I know from
10 up north, you know, that's what happens he says,
11 when you use those kind of things, there is that
12 gasoline there on the water there and, you know.

13 MR. MORRRIS MCKAY: Especially the
14 beaver. So what else you guys want to know?

15 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: My name is George
16 McKay. I do my trapping at Sipiwesk Lake area,
17 and I think it is affected by Kelsey and Jenpeg.
18 What I noticed a couple of years now is there are
19 hardly any muskrats now, I think they are all
20 gone, and beavers. Like when I used to trap with
21 my uncle, my late uncle, there used to be lots of
22 muskrats in our area there, but now there is none.
23 Either they drowned from the fluctuation of the
24 water levels or they freeze. There is hardly any
25 muskrats over there now, absolutely all gone.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: How long has that been,
2 George?

3 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: I have been
4 trapping over 30 years now.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: When was the last time
6 there were a lot of muskrats or beaver?

7 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: Back in the '80s.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: That long? That's 30
9 years ago?

10 MR. ROGER ROSS: That was in '85,
11 1985, I remember it was just before we went out to
12 Limestone there on that Hydro project there, I was
13 with him there. In 1985, everywhere you go there
14 was lots of muskrats all over the place there, all
15 over there, just lots of them, I tell you that.
16 But ever since that weir out here, that makes it
17 worse, you know, especially for traveling, you
18 know, that weir out here. The place where we used
19 to travel there, now you can't go there no more,
20 you have to go around it now.

21 MS. SUEK: Why is that? Like what is
22 wrong with it?

23 MR. ROGER ROSS: I don't know what is
24 wrong with it. Like the change of that river, I
25 guess, like it is not safe to --

1 MS. SUEK: The currents are too
2 strong, is that what happened with that?

3 MR. ROGER ROSS: Because we used to
4 trap out there, we used to cross that thing lots
5 of times there. That's where -- I was out in
6 Limestone there in 1985, that was with him
7 there -- when I heard, when we heard that he went
8 through it, so they never found him until the
9 spring time, 1985.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: So getting back to the
11 lack of muskrats and beaver, was it sort of all of
12 a sudden they were gone, or did it slowly --

13 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: They slowly went
14 away.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: And now there is very
16 few?

17 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: There is hardly any
18 muskrats now.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Are you guys trapping
20 this winter?

21 MR. ROGER ROSS: Yes, we do -- like I
22 said, I never went out there again, but pretty
23 soon we will at least go check anyway again.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Are you getting
25 anything this winter, or is anybody who is doing

1 it --

2 MR. ROGER ROSS: I don't know.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Are any of the other
4 trappers in town?

5 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: A little bit less
6 for me, I guess, just a little bit -- but it is
7 time to pull out those martin traps anyway.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Are there still martin
9 around?

10 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: I am pretty sure
11 there is in some areas, but not in our areas now.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Not in your area?

13 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: No, no traps.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: And there is no
15 muskrats?

16 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: Muskrats, we will
17 see this spring.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: So you trap the rats in
19 the spring?

20 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: We try, yeah.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, exactly. And
22 beaver?

23 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: Beaver, yes, there
24 is still some beaver.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Except your house is

1 gone, your beaver house?

2 MR. ROGER ROSS: We will see how it
3 is. Funny how it goes.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Is that it? Do you
5 trap for anything else?

6 MR. ROGER ROSS: We trap lynx, deer,
7 otter, stuff like that.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, but there is not
9 many of those?

10 MR. ROGER ROSS: There must be some
11 around there, but it depends on what kind of
12 trapper you are.

13 I trap with him anyway, the same
14 place, like I said our lines are right beside
15 there. So if I can't chop any wood for my stove,
16 I go to his place. He is a good cook too.

17 MS. SUEK: So after Jenpeg, I mean,
18 because of the flooding, did the traplines change
19 and did Hydro help people get to their traplines,
20 or did they do anything to help the trappers?

21 MR. ROGER ROSS: Well, I guess --
22 well, I myself never have a chance to ask for an
23 assist, something like that there, but I guess if
24 you do there, they still -- they will, you know,
25 probably will, you know. Well, even if you break

1 down out there, you know, make a phone call out
2 there, and one of those people that are working
3 for Hydro, they come out there with a couple of
4 skidoos, you know, give you a hand to get you out
5 of there.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: What did you do before
7 cell phones?

8 MR. ROGER ROSS: We used smoke
9 signals -- just trying to get out of there.

10 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: They used to have
11 those radios, what you call it, those radios for
12 communication?

13 MS. SUEK: So what about the
14 traplines, did they change after the flooding?
15 Did people have to -- a lot of them are
16 historical, you have had them for a long time.
17 Did they change with the flooding? Did people
18 have to have different traplines or were they much
19 the same?

20 MR. ROGER ROSS: Every trapper still
21 traps in the same place there, you know, like you
22 sit there. Sure, there have been lots of changes
23 out there, you know, like water too high, you
24 know, it is very hard.

25 MR. YEE: So it is the same trapline

1 but it is more difficult to get out there?

2 MR. ROGER ROSS: Yeah, it's more
3 difficult, you know, challenging. Sometimes it
4 is, like I tell you it's only maybe a mile, not
5 even a mile to cross that lake, sometimes I can't
6 go out there because there is too much water. And
7 by the time you go around there, for a little trip
8 like that it will take you a whole day, especially
9 in the winter time, there is not that much
10 daylight, you know.

11 MR. YEE: Yes.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Yesterday we saw some
13 pictures, they were taken in summertime, of the
14 shoreline, just cluttered with wood debris, you
15 know, trees, driftwood all twisted up. And we
16 were told that it causes a problem because you
17 can't get ashore because it is just so solid, you
18 have to chop through it, and that's a huge job.
19 Does that affect you guys too?

20 MR. ROGER ROSS: Yes, sometimes those
21 guys that are trapping out there, it is more
22 difficult out there.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: You are going to
24 Sipiwesk. Do you have trouble with that?

25 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: Yes. In December I

1 went over there, there was a lot of debris in our
2 trail there. We spent hours getting all of the
3 debris out of the skidoo trail. We spent two
4 hours, three hours, just to remove those piles.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Now, they just wash
6 ashore from time to time?

7 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: Yes, just come
8 through there.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: So, it is more work for
10 you?

11 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: Yes, more work for
12 us.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: And it slows you down
14 getting to your trapline because you have to do
15 that.

16 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: I told them guys
17 from Hydro, I showed them a picture, and they said
18 okay, that's all he said. He said I would be
19 compensated for that, but no. Like when the water
20 levels go high, you can see the marks on the trees
21 there, it is so high. And those trees begin to
22 die, soon they fall over. That's why you hardly
23 see any moose now, they have nothing to eat there.

24 MR. HARDEN: What about the safe
25 crossings the Hydro does, are they useful? Do you

1 find them useful in the winter? Do they go the
2 direction you want them to go?

3 MR. ROGER ROSS: Well, they just go,
4 just this one main where the guys went. But where
5 it branches off to your destination there, you
6 have to make your own, things like that, you know.

7 MR. HARDEN: So they are good to a
8 certain point, and after that you have to go where
9 you have got to go?

10 MR. ROGER ROSS: Yeah.

11 MS. SUEK: Is this an issue with
12 slush, trying to get over the slushy areas, is
13 that a problem for you?

14 MR. ROGER ROSS: Yes, that's a big
15 problem.

16 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: Major problem.

17 MR. ROGER ROSS: Sometimes you have to
18 leave your skidoos out there, leave it out there.
19 And if there is something wrong with them, if you
20 go claim them, you know, they ask you all kinds of
21 questions, you know. They don't believe you,
22 things like that, you know. What else can I say?

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Does the slush vary, or
24 is it a heavy slush?

25 MR. ROGER ROSS: Oh, they vary,

1 especially if there is lots of snow, you know, and
2 if there is slush, you won't be able to even lift
3 your --

4 THE CHAIRMAN: That would really bog
5 down your skidoo.

6 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: Your skidoo is
7 about 5 or 600 pounds, and with slush it doubles
8 that.

9 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: Especially in
10 December when it is very cold, that slush, it
11 hardens right away, like freezes up, that your
12 skidoo is so heavy you can't lift it up. And it
13 damages your, you know, that suspension there,
14 that track, you know --

15 THE CHAIRMAN: The track, yeah.

16 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: And you will ruin
17 your skidoo.

18 MS. SUEK: So when you go for
19 compensation, there is an office here that you go
20 to, is that what you do?

21 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: Yes.

22 MS. SUEK: And there is a person there
23 that you talk to. Do you have to fill in a form?
24 Like how does that work?

25 MR. ROGER ROSS: You just go out there

1 and you explain, you know. They can take out what
2 you say there, like if you claim for, if you lost
3 your equipment, you say that, you know.

4 MS. SUEK: Right.

5 MR. ROGER ROSS: Most of the time they
6 give it to you anyway.

7 MS. SUEK: Right. And sometimes they
8 turn you down, do they?

9 MR. ROGER ROSS: Yes, sometimes. Like
10 I just head out there -- like, when you want to
11 buy some traps or runners, you know, they don't
12 let you buy those. Those are the main things you
13 use out on trapping, but they don't, they don't
14 let you buy them, you know.

15 MS. SUEK: If they turn you down, do
16 you have an appeal process? Can you go anywhere
17 else or is that it?

18 MR. ROGER ROSS: No use arguing over
19 that, you know.

20 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: Take a look at
21 that.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: The slush, look at it.

23 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: You have to walk
24 two kilometres to get to the highway. By the time
25 you got to the highway, he was all wet.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: That's your trail?

2 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: That's my trail.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: So you have to clean
4 all of that junk off of there?

5 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: The one area took
6 us two or three hours.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, yeah.

8 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: The first time you
9 go out and trap, like in December, it is lots of
10 work for us, just cleaning out all the trees,
11 cleaning your skidoo trail.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: So what, in an ideal
13 world, what could be done or what would you like
14 to see?

15 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: What I would like
16 to see is have some workers clean out the trapping
17 areas, clean up all the debris on the shoreline,
18 especially where the skidoo trails are going.
19 Because that's lots of work for us during trapping
20 season.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: You want them to clean
22 off where you just showed me, the debris?

23 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: Yeah.

24 MS. SUEK: How do you clean off that
25 slush, what do you do?

1 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: You can't.

2 MS. SUEK: You can't? You were saying
3 in the start of the season you try and clean it up
4 a bit?

5 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: We used to use an
6 ax, get that slush out from the track.

7 MS. SUEK: People from the community,
8 they go out and they try --

9 MS. JOHNSON: No, we are talking
10 debris.

11 MR. YEE: Debris is what we are
12 talking, you know, the trails, once you get off
13 the trails.

14 MS. SUEK: Okay. I was wondering,
15 gosh, I was trying to think, how would you clean
16 that?

17 THE CHAIRMAN: No, the picture he
18 showed us of the debris leading to his trail.

19 MS. SUEK: Right.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: You know, we heard that
21 yesterday as well, that it's -- you just said 20
22 to 50 feet from the shoreline in it is just
23 debris, and you have got to clean that probably
24 every year, every fall.

25 Are there other things that you would

1 like, or should be done? More muskrats, but I
2 don't know how we can do that but...

3 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: You could
4 change the water regime is the only way to get the
5 muskrats back.

6 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: Try and maintain it
7 at the same level.

8 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: You could
9 potentially make improvements by changing it
10 certain years, not necessarily every year, not
11 just for the muskrats but the whole --

12 MR. YEE: The ecology itself, right,
13 riverine ecology.

14 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: The
15 eco-system, yes. Muskrats are important food for
16 a lot of other animals too.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Annette, are you going
18 to be giving us more information on that during
19 the main hearings?

20 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Yes.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Good.

22 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: I will also
23 show you the Hydro graphs from year to year. I
24 just noticed that you were asking a lot of
25 questions about when you can predict whether the

1 water is going to go up or down. And what we can
2 see over the period of time since Jenpeg is that
3 it is very erratic from one year to the next.
4 Maybe you have looked at that already, but the
5 information that Manitoba Hydro shared with us are
6 all based on averages. And from an ecological
7 point of view, what we need to do is look at what
8 is actually happening each season, each year.
9 Because that's what is experienced by the
10 eco-system, by the people. And it varies, it is
11 incredible how much it varies from one year to the
12 next. Because obviously they are trying to make
13 it more, you know -- there is a lot of reasons for
14 that.

15 MR. YEE: I guess you get a different
16 picture or perspective when you look at the
17 averages versus the maximum and minimum level?

18 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Yes, it is a
19 completely different interpretation.

20 MR. YEE: Because everything, the
21 whole riverine ecology would be quite different
22 based on up and down levels, maximum and minimum
23 levels.

24 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Um-hum.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: If you have more tales

1 to share with us, we are here, but if not --

2 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: I will put in one
3 more. The time we went fishing, to do a little
4 bit of fishing around here in our surrounding
5 community here, there is one area there, it is
6 lots of spawning. Sure enough, we went there and
7 we caught a few. But heading back -- this was a
8 couple years back, about five, seven years ago, I
9 had a 57-horsepower, steering cover, all of
10 that -- well, heading back there, it is on the
11 south side of the reserve, going full flight,
12 there was three of us, me and my wife, and my
13 daughter was sitting in the back. All of a
14 sudden, boom, the boat went like this. I grabbed
15 the steering and went like this back in neutral,
16 managed to keep it in control, balance. And I
17 turned back right away and I saw my daughter had
18 fell on the floor of the boat. I stopped the
19 motor, and I turned back and, sure enough, I seen
20 something floating up. And I turned around. It
21 was this 2 by 10 plywood floating, it was this
22 long, I guess, 2 by 10. I broke it in half, you
23 know, just like that. It is an 18-foot and
24 75-horsepower, so that's --

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Did that hurt your

1 engine?

2 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: Yes, it bent --
3 that lower unit was bent. I got a little bit of
4 help from these guys here, the Hydro boys.

5 But the other one, same, similar
6 incident happened when we were camping in hunting
7 areas there, me and my neighbour, Robert. We were
8 just cruising along the Nelson River, boom, all of
9 a sudden, it was a 30 horse I had at that time,
10 boom. I turn around, sure enough there was that
11 log, a log, just a regular tree floating on the
12 Nelson River. These new motors, E-Tech, they say
13 you can't hit anything, you will break this. Sure
14 enough it broke, it cost me about 7 or 800 bucks
15 to get the new thing. I managed to get that money
16 from my own pocket, I didn't -- these guys didn't
17 help me. We have our own mechanic here, local
18 mechanic. It still works, my motor still works.
19 I have got all of the receipts, but they didn't
20 want to help. That's another story I had to
21 share.

22 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: In the summer there
23 is lots of floating debris, especially the ones
24 they call dead heads.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: What are spiders?

1 MR. SETTEE: It is a tree stump.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Right, yes, yes.

3 MR. SETTEE: Before the project they
4 cut the trees down, but they left the stump. So
5 with all of the fluctuations over the years, they
6 started to float. They can be ten feet in
7 diameter.

8 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Can I ask a
9 question? Based on some conversations that I have
10 had before with trappers in Cross Lake, I wonder
11 if you could talk about how it feels as an
12 independent trapper, with the expertise that you
13 have on the land, to go to a claims office and not
14 be believed when you explain what happened out on
15 the trapline? How does that feel?

16 MR. ROGER ROSS: Well, it is
17 insulting, if that's what you are talking about.
18 You take out all of the information out here, and
19 if you want this thing fixed up, say your motor or
20 skidoo machine there, you want to have it fixed
21 up, you took it out to wherever, you want your
22 machine to be fixed out there, usually out in
23 Thompson there. And I guess this mechanic, or
24 skidoo mechanic, or boat mechanic, whatever, wants
25 to fix your thing up there, and looks at it and

1 disagrees, it didn't happen that way. Sometimes
2 there is a conflict that way too. I don't know
3 how the hell he can say that. He is not there
4 with us, you know, and still he says it didn't
5 happen that way.

6 Like it happened to me one time, like,
7 I don't know what was there -- me and my partner
8 there, like it was fairly warm, it was November I
9 guess, we went and stayed there for the freeze-up
10 there. But anyway, there was something wrong with
11 the skidoo driving, I had to leave it out there.
12 And then when we came back to Cross Lake, at that
13 time I went and claimed for it there. And once it
14 was taken out to Thompson there, the mechanic
15 said, like I started that thing there when it was
16 colder, started that right away, that's what makes
17 that thing broke there. But it wasn't cold at
18 that time, it was thawing. Well, anyway, that
19 Skidoo came up to a little over 3,000. So I had
20 to pay half of it and Hydro paid half of it.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: When you make a claim
22 for something like this, what kind of proof does
23 Hydro want that it happened?

24 MR. ROGER ROSS: I don't know. Like I
25 guess, like whoever they ask for, like the

1 mechanic, whoever is going to fix your thing
2 there, looks into it and maybe disagrees. That's
3 what they did with mine. So I had to end up
4 having to pay out, I think I paid 1700 something
5 like that.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: So there is -- they
7 don't have a burden of proof, it just sort of
8 depends on the day of the week?

9 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: More likely going
10 to get an opinion from a mechanic, so called
11 professional mechanic, like what his situation
12 there was. They didn't believe it.

13 MR. ROGER ROSS: He's not out there
14 trapping with you. He is out there and I'm out
15 there.

16 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: You have to be
17 related or be a friend of one of those workers
18 there. That's what happened to me once, I claimed
19 a skidoo, I borrowed from my cousin the skidoo, I
20 broke down where I trap. I went to see this guy
21 over there who was looking after the claims, and I
22 told him, my skidoo broke down, it is over there.
23 And he said, no, can't help you. And I explained,
24 I explained so much, and then I told him -- he was
25 a friend of my cousin there -- and I said that

1 belongs to -- that's his skidoo I told him. Right
2 away he fills out that form and he says we will go
3 pick it up. That's what I mean. You have to be
4 related to get help.

5 MR. SETTEE: I would like to add on
6 that some of the trappers did get assistance, like
7 it is all out -- cabins, like you are flooded out
8 and some of these trappers that work the lake were
9 given all out help. One of my friends of mine was
10 involved in hauling the material. He said it took
11 13 trips to build, haul out the materials to build
12 a very big 16 by 20 cabin. And the other, there
13 is two such cabins that were built out there that
14 spring. So, my friend, I was hunting and he told
15 me the details. It is pretty surprising he says,
16 these people that was hauling the lumber for
17 getting all of this help, and look at all of these
18 other crappy looking cabins. When they ask for
19 help, they don't get, just a certain group.

20 MR. MORRIS MCKAY: It is very
21 discouraging to go to the office and make a claim.
22 They ask you all kinds of questions. By the time
23 you are done and you take it out there, that guy
24 doesn't approve it, it didn't happen this way. It
25 is hard on us and we have to wait for a month to

1 get the Skidoo back, and you can't afford to waste
2 time when you are trapping.

3 MR. GEORGE MCKAY: This other time I
4 took my own skidoo there. They look at it, send
5 it to Thompson. When I come back, they asked me
6 to come to the office there. They told me
7 outright, no, we can't help you. Go pick up your
8 skidoo, whatever. That's what I mean, you have to
9 be related or a friend of those people there.

10 MR. SETTEE: Roger had to pay half and
11 he wasn't supposed to. So my case is still
12 ongoing, my claim, for four or five years.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Four or five years?

14 MR. SETTEE: Yeah. They told me, when
15 I filled the claim, okay, bunch of forms. And all
16 of a sudden I get a call, and a man at the office
17 told me, well, Hydro is settling all slush related
18 claims. They don't have to, but they are going to
19 be one-third. So I get -- well, I said in the
20 northern agreement there is no such provision
21 that -- Hydro is manufacturing all of this. And I
22 am supposed to be in no worse position it says in
23 the N.F.A. And they should do the repair in a
24 timely manner, not drag it on for years.

25 MS. SUEK: It still hasn't been

1 settled?

2 MR. SETTEE: No, they tried to get me
3 to sign the --

4 MS. SUEK: Sign off on it?

5 MR. SETTEE: Yes. But no.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Are some claims
7 resolved quickly?

8 MR. ROGER ROSS: Yes, I guess some of
9 them. Like I claimed my 14-foot aluminum boat
10 that I use for trapping, and another 16 footer
11 there, I guess a year ago since I came out here,
12 and I was going to bring it out here. And he
13 said, no, nobody will be out here, and nobody
14 shows up yet. And I just live close by here,
15 nobody shows up there. But I will try again this
16 coming summer. Like right now, I guess they don't
17 look after those boats now, they look after
18 skidoos and that.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Sometimes some are
20 resolved quickly and some take a long time?

21 MR. ROGER ROSS: For sure, yes. Like
22 I fixed that boat myself there once, but I can't
23 fix it now. And those two days that I was out
24 there, I was told I should bring it out here,
25 that's why I managed to bring it out there.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: That's about it?

2 MR. ROGER ROSS: Yes.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, thanks to the
4 four of you for coming in today. This is the type
5 of stories we want to hear. And I have to tell
6 you that I can't promise that we can do anything
7 that will help you, but we have heard what you've
8 told us, it will influence decisions that we make.
9 And there might -- hopefully there will be some
10 small steps in the right direction, but I can't
11 promise you that things will suddenly get better,
12 but I guess you guys have been living with this
13 for decades, so you know that things don't happen
14 suddenly. But it is important for to us hear
15 these stories so it will help us in our decision
16 making. So thanks for coming out, thanks for
17 taking the time to come and talk with us.

18 (Lunch recess)

19 MR. PAUPANAKIS: An update on our
20 schedule, unfortunately -- it is not unfortunate
21 for us, but unfortunately for our schedule, we
22 were supposed to head on to the Mikisew School at
23 3:00, which we won't be able to do today. They
24 will come to the ONR.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: To the high school?

1 MR. PAUPANAKIS: The one the gentlemen
2 there -- the one who takes in the students, he got
3 his dates mixed up.

4 MS. FLORA ROSS: My name is Flora
5 Ross, I'm the women's council member, for over 18
6 years or more. I can't really say how many years,
7 I have been here for long. And when I first
8 walked in here, my mind came to me and said to
9 myself, holy, what are they doing here, you know?
10 Because I wasn't aware to meet these kind of
11 people, but I was just told last night to be here
12 because the rest are gone. And I work at the
13 school, I'm a school counselor for elementary
14 area.

15 First of all, I want to ask why are
16 you here?

17 THE CHAIRMAN: We are here because --
18 I'm Terry, Sargeant, I'm the chair of the
19 Commission. We have other panel members with us,
20 Edwin Yee, Bev Suek and Neil Harden. And we also
21 have Cathy Johnson, who is the Commission
22 secretary, and then some staff, our report writer
23 Bob at the end, and Cece our recorder.

24 We are here because the Minister of
25 Conservation and Water Stewardship asked us to

1 hold hearings in communities around Lake Winnipeg
2 and downstream of Jenpeg to hear about impacts
3 from the Jenpeg project and the Lake Winnipeg
4 Regulation. So what we would like to hear from
5 you, as we've heard from other people in the last
6 day and a half, is how the Jenpeg project has
7 affected life in Cross Lake, whether it is your
8 life or your family's life, or just your
9 community's life.

10 I know we have heard from trappers,
11 you know, the problems they have had with the
12 uneven water levels and stuff like that, whatever
13 you can tell us.

14 MS. FLORA ROSS: First of all, I was
15 brought up in an isolated area away from the
16 community, and ever since I could remember, the
17 water was clean at that time. That's how we
18 survived. And the wild food, there was more food
19 on that days. That's how my dad survived us. My
20 dad was a trapper. And at that time there was no
21 skidoos and that. And I remember my dad would go
22 check his traps by walking, with a sleigh. And
23 then as it went on -- then at one time I remember
24 we were in a log house, and then some guys came
25 down to see my mom and dad and told them that they

1 have to move to a community area. And then if
2 they do, they are going to get a house. So they
3 promised a house to them. There was about maybe
4 five families living there. So since then that I
5 could remember, my mom and dad passed on, they
6 never got a house, ever.

7 MS. SUEK: They had to move because it
8 was going to be flooded, was that the reason?

9 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yes, that's the
10 reason.

11 MS. SUEK: And there were five others
12 you said too?

13 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yes, that's what I
14 can remember back then. And ever since then,
15 that's where I guess I could say electric came on,
16 electric lights and that. And it has been years
17 and years that we've suffered, I would say that.
18 And then from then on, that is how people started
19 to get sick, sickness, different kind of sickness.
20 Before then there was no sickness, nothing. There
21 was hardly anyone going to the nursing station.

22 Today it is just impact of sickness,
23 different kind of sickness. Diabetes is the main
24 one, that's the number one in our community, in
25 our Pimicikamak nation. And many times we talked

1 about it, maybe it is the water that's doing that.
2 Because back then the water was just clean.
3 Today, you should see it, it is just like dust in
4 there, it is not clear anymore, it is just fog
5 like, foggy looking.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: When you -- before you
7 moved into the community, you said this already,
8 you just lived off the land?

9 MS. FLORA ROSS: No, it was a reserve
10 land.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: No, no, but I mean you
12 lived on wild game and -- mostly wild game?

13 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yep, yep.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: And then when you moved
15 into the community, your food changed?

16 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yep, it was a
17 complete big change. And everything was okay when
18 we were out there.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: How long ago was that,
20 do you know? How many years ago did you move into
21 the community?

22 MS. FLORA ROSS: I will just guess,
23 maybe when I was nine years old. And then after
24 that I went to residential school, we ended up in
25 a residential school here.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Here in Cross Lake?

2 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yes. All of my
3 siblings were brought up there. There was only
4 two left, my young sister and my young brother,
5 they were lucky they didn't have to go in a
6 residential school. But I was the last one in
7 there.

8 MS. SUEK: So you had a school here in
9 Cross Lake then for you?

10 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yes. But then I went
11 out like for higher grade, I went to Portage la
12 Prairie, that's where I was for three years.
13 There it was -- it affected us in the residential
14 school. I thought everything would be okay then,
15 you know, being in that residential school, but it
16 wasn't.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: When you finished high
18 school in Portage la Prairie, did you come back to
19 Cross Lake then?

20 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yep. I came back
21 because -- well, I quit school over there because
22 of the treatment I got. So I told them, I told my
23 parents then, and they didn't allow me to go back,
24 which was good. And I got stuck here. And I got
25 married when I was young, and I have family too.

1 And the other thing that affects is
2 that the young women, the young girls, they get
3 pregnant so early age. Like I know one girl that
4 got pregnant at 12. Yep. And the other thing I
5 notice nowadays, they lost their babies. That's
6 the other thing that's just happening now, they
7 are losing their unborn babies.

8 MS. SUEK: More miscarriages?

9 MS. FLORA ROSS: I don't know, I can't
10 really say. I think it is something wrong.
11 Again, maybe it is the water or the food that they
12 eat. Yeah. I was saying, like they don't carry
13 their babies for full term, and those babies are
14 born with defects and complications when they are
15 born. And then as they grow, I work at a school,
16 there is a lot of special needs children too in
17 there, different kind of sickness they have, some
18 blind, can't hear, and we don't have that kind of
19 programs around here. But we are still there for
20 them, we are trying our best to help them.

21 And at one time too, there was a lot
22 of suicides for our young people too. I think it
23 was in the year of '68, '69.

24 MS. SUEK: Is that still happening? I
25 mean, that is a problem in a lot of communities,

1 suicides, right? Are you still experiencing that?

2 MS. FLORA ROSS: I remember one that
3 was to do with my nephew. His dad forced him to
4 go trapping with him, and he didn't like it, he
5 would rather go to high school and get his
6 education. But I guess he had no choice but to
7 stay with dad and help him out, and he didn't like
8 it at all, so that's why he did that.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Do you still have many
10 suicides in your community?

11 MS. FLORA ROSS: Not right now, it has
12 been a while.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, that's good.
14 That's really good.

15 MS. SUEK: You work in the school as a
16 counsellor. Are there opportunities for kids, do
17 they feel like, you know, with Hydro development
18 and whatnot, you know, do they think that there is
19 opportunities? Do they have jobs? Are they
20 discouraged by the lack of opportunities? What do
21 you -- do you have a feeling for that?

22 MS. FLORA ROSS: What I know about
23 students, they have lots of questions about this
24 Hydro thing.

25 MS. SUEK: What kind of questions?

1 MS. FLORA ROSS: Like, you know, why?
2 Why? What is wrong? What is happening now? What
3 is our future? Some get angry over that. I guess
4 they are confused, because some people say stuff,
5 negative and positive, so that's why they are
6 confused. Some get angry about it.

7 There was one girl that got really
8 angry because she wouldn't get a skidoo, I guess
9 she was promised to get a Skidoo but she wouldn't
10 get one. And I guess that's how she got affected,
11 because the mom and dad don't have a job. And
12 then -- suicide because of that, you know, parents
13 can't afford it. But nowadays kids are spoiled,
14 you know, what they want, they think they could
15 get it. But some parents are like that, but
16 others can't because there is lack of jobs around
17 here.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: What are the kids going
19 to do when they finish school? There is quite a
20 few going to the University College of the North.

21 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yep.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: And will they get jobs
23 when they graduate?

24 MS. FLORA ROSS: Um-hum.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: There will be jobs in

1 the community?

2 MS. FLORA ROSS: I hope so. They talk
3 about staying in their own community and work with
4 their own people, and there is quite a few that
5 became nurses now.

6 MS. SUEK: And there is quite a few
7 teachers too at the school.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Social workers as well?

9 MS. FLORA ROSS: Um-hum.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: You need to get
11 carpenters and plumbers and electricians.

12 MS. FLORA ROSS: They always ask if
13 there could be more programs around here. They
14 don't like to go out, especially in Winnipeg, they
15 are scared to go out there, because of murders and
16 stuff like that. So parents, they don't trust
17 their kids to go out there because of this. So we
18 are hoping to get programs here in the future.
19 And a new school, you know, our school is so
20 crowded.

21 MS. SUEK: Really.

22 MS. FLORA ROSS: Most of them, I think
23 there is three classrooms of grade nines only.
24 And grade ones, seven classrooms.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Seven classrooms of

1 grade one?

2 MS. FLORA ROSS: In each classroom
3 there is 23 students, some with 28 students in
4 there. And the grade nines, they don't have
5 enough desks. They have to stand around, you
6 know, it is not comfortable.

7 MS. SUEK: No, that's not good.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: How many students in
9 all? You have got three schools here, elementary
10 middle and high school?

11 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yep.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: How many students in
13 all three schools?

14 MS. FLORA ROSS: Well, I work at the
15 ONR areas, there's grade 9 to 12, and nursery to
16 grade 4. And on the other side, Mikişew, there is
17 5 to 8 I think over there. So our schools are
18 crowded.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: So lots of students, a
20 couple of thousand?

21 MS. FLORA ROSS: Over 1,000 for one
22 school. I don't know about the others on the
23 other side. You know, you don't know what to do,
24 like it is too crowded. You want to help them,
25 and yet they don't feel comfortable, and yet you

1 don't feel right as well.

2 MS. SUEK: So how do you think that
3 the flooding that happened here, how do you think
4 that has affected the community and the people and
5 the families? Do you think that it has affected
6 them in some way?

7 MS. FLORA ROSS: Of course they do.

8 MS. SUEK: Can you talk a little bit
9 about how, or what you think that's about?

10 MS. FLORA ROSS: Well, one main thing
11 is the sickness, a lot of people are sick now with
12 cancer and diabetes, which was never happening.
13 That's what I notice, more sickness growing in our
14 everyday life.

15 MS. SUEK: What about families, they
16 used to go out on the trapline together and do
17 things. Do people still go, in a family, still go
18 out on the traplines, or do they not do that
19 anymore?

20 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yeah, quite a few
21 maybe.

22 MS. SUEK: Yeah. What about other
23 families, are they doing okay?

24 MS. FLORA ROSS: As far as I know.

25 MS. SUEK: Okay. Good.

1 MS. FLORA ROSS: So we were talking
2 about the effect of -- there is depression going
3 on.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there much of that
5 in the community?

6 MS. FLORA ROSS: Um-hum, painful
7 emotions caused by our loss of connection to the
8 land. Because the land is part of the
9 relationship, you know, and we have lost it. Even
10 myself, sometimes I get that anger feeling because
11 of that, I experience a lot of that, you know,
12 thinking, oh, I wish I could help, I wish I could
13 help more. But there is nothing for me more that
14 I could do, yeah, because I feel sorry for them,
15 like some families.

16 MS. SUEK: And they are depressed
17 because of the loss of the connection with the
18 land, and the loss of work or things to do or, you
19 know --

20 MS. FLORA ROSS: The work, there is no
21 jobs. The land, they can't really use it anymore.

22 MS. SUEK: Right.

23 MS. FLORA ROSS: Even they have to buy
24 berries nowadays, because there was always berries
25 all over in the clean, clean environment.

1 Nowadays they are gone, nothing.

2 MS. SUEK: What about traditional
3 medicines and whatnot, do people do that?

4 MS. FLORA ROSS: If you want to do
5 that you have to go away from the community where
6 it is isolated, where you think it is clean.
7 That's where they go.

8 MS. SUEK: You don't want to do it
9 here because you don't think that it is clean?

10 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yeah, it is not
11 clean, so they have to go many miles to look for
12 it. That was some of the things I wrote that I
13 could think of. Oh, yeah, the other thing, there
14 was a lot of drowning before.

15 MS. SUEK: Is the drowning related to
16 the ice in some ways?

17 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yeah, the ice.

18 MS. SUEK: The difference in the ice?

19 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yeah. Like the
20 rivers, like low water and there is rocks under
21 it, and I guess that's how -- I remember one guy
22 that hit a rock and fell off the boat and hit his
23 head and drowned.

24 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Flora, can
25 you say anything about the hot lunch program in

1 the schools? That's one of the mitigating
2 measures.

3 MS. FLORA ROSS: That's the other big
4 problem that we have. There is a lot of high
5 school students, you know, teenagers, they eat
6 lots, especially boys. And you know what, they
7 only have a little bit, like I will say a little
8 bit of, you know, those chicken drumsticks, they
9 only have that and rice and vegetables, and that's
10 it. And they don't have enough. There is quite a
11 few -- just look in the high school. And same
12 with the elementary, they don't eat that much --
13 but high school. So we need to do something about
14 that lunch program.

15 MS. SUEK: It is paid for by Hydro, is
16 it, the lunch program?

17 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yes.

18 MS. SUEK: But you are saying it is
19 just not enough? It's just too small?

20 MS. FLORA ROSS: And when you ask for
21 it, they don't do nothing about it.

22 MS. SUEK: So who do you ask for that,
23 do you go to the local office here, the claims
24 office here?

25 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yes.

1 MS. SUEK: And they don't do anything
2 about it?

3 MS. FLORA ROSS: They are just saying
4 we have to ask first, it is a limit. Then we ask,
5 would they ask Hydro, Manitoba Hydro?

6 MS. SUEK: Um-hum.

7 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Do you know
8 how that whole thing is organized, the hot lunch
9 program? So Hydro pays for it, and then who
10 administers it?

11 MS. FLORA ROSS: Hydro pays for it,
12 but it is limited, not enough. And Hydro won't
13 give more, even when you ask for it.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Is that every day that
15 they have lunch?

16 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yes, every day. It
17 is just not enough for them, that's what I see.
18 Because I see some kids are angry, it is not
19 enough. There is a long line up, you know, and it
20 is just a little lunch for them. It is not worth
21 it, I would say. I feel sorry for them many times
22 because of the line up I see. It is not worth it
23 for what they are going to get.

24 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Do you ever
25 get fish from the domestic fish program?

1 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yeah. Well, we hope
2 to get it.

3 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Does that
4 work well for you?

5 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yeah. But the other
6 thing that sometimes bothers us, on the reserve
7 side, when I talk about like trees, you know,
8 something for the garden, people don't get enough.
9 Only Hydro's employment, they get them, like
10 people from the Metis side, they get more than the
11 Treaty people from the reserve side. And it is
12 not fair. Even the school teachers, they never
13 get anything because they are busy out there.
14 Nobody tell us anything that, when is the time
15 they are going to bring the stuff in. And by the
16 time we found out, everything is gone.

17 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Another thing
18 about the domestic, I was interested myself to
19 learn more about that program, because it is one
20 of the measures that is put in place to try to
21 compensate for the loss of fishing opportunities
22 in this area, as well as in the areas where the
23 new dams are being built. And one time somebody
24 was describing to me what it was like going to
25 pick up the fish at the fish building, and how

1 depressing that could even be sometimes, because
2 it wasn't replacing the opportunity to go out and
3 fish with your family. And really, the fishing is
4 part of the whole culture and it is a family
5 activity, and it almost -- it is kind of like it
6 was reminding them every single time they went
7 there.

8 MS. FLORA ROSS: It is more like you
9 don't have the choice.

10 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: There is no
11 choice, yeah, so we can't just take our boat and
12 go fishing on Cross Lake.

13 MS. FLORA ROSS: It is just what you
14 are given.

15 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Yeah, so you
16 just start to feel bad.

17 MS. FLORA ROSS: And on the ponds, you
18 get nothing.

19 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: And people
20 are concerned about overfishing in areas that are
21 being fished to bring those fish in here as well,
22 and there will be extra pressure on those areas
23 with more destruction of fish habitat from Keeyask
24 in the region, right? Those are just some of the
25 things that people brought up before. So if you

1 had anything to say about that too?

2 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yep. The other thing
3 too, skidoo accidents, nobody gets anything now.
4 I think before it was the skidoos were replaced,
5 wasn't that it, skidoos were replaced?

6 SPEAKER: They didn't give us new
7 skidoos, the same two skidoos already.

8 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yeah, that's the
9 other thing too. Just a couple of weeks ago there
10 was two skidoo accidents. One of them hit a rock
11 under the snow and his skidoo was just into
12 pieces. And I thought the Hydro is supposed to
13 put a sign or something to mark where is the rocks
14 under somewhere.

15 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Where the
16 safe trails are.

17 MS. FLORA ROSS: Yes, I think that's
18 their job. Now, I don't know what is going to
19 happen to that guy yet. He ended up in the
20 hospital and he lost his skidoo. That's the other
21 problem we usually have, skidoo accidents. That's
22 all I can remember.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, thank you for
24 taking the time to come here and talk with us.
25 That's why we are here in the community for, well,

1 a day and a half so far, and another day and a
2 half, we are here again tomorrow. Why we are here
3 is to hear stories from people like you. And
4 we've heard quite a bit so far and we know we will
5 hear some more over the next day and a half. So
6 thank you for this.

7 (Recess taken at 1:10 p.m.)

8 Meeting with school students

9 Resuming at 1:50 p.m.

10 (Introduction by Darwin Paupanakis)

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Darwin. As
12 Darwin said, my name is Terry Sargeant, I'm the
13 chair of the Manitoba Clean Environment
14 Commission. I'm chairing this panel. With me on
15 the panel is Bev Suek, to my right Neil Harden and
16 Edwin Yee. We also have some staff with us, our
17 Commission secretary, Cathy Johnson, and report
18 writer Bob Armstrong, our recorder Cece Reid.

19 Just for your information, we record
20 all of our hearings and all of our meetings and
21 sessions like this. Within two or three days a
22 transcript of what happens here this afternoon
23 will be posted on our website. So everything that
24 is said gets put on to the transcript.

25 When you do ask a question or tell us

1 a story about your experiences, I would ask that
2 you speak fairly loudly so that our recorder can
3 hear you, and also that you state your name at the
4 beginning of your presentation or question.

5 Darwin told a little bit about why we
6 are here, and I will expand a little bit. We are
7 here because the Minister of Conservation and
8 Water Stewardship asked us to hold hearings in
9 communities all around Lake Winnipeg and
10 downstream of Jenpeg to hear from people about
11 impacts, negative effects or positive impacts that
12 they have experienced because of Manitoba Hydro's
13 regulation of Lake Winnipeg.

14 Now, do any of you, or many of you
15 know what the regulation of Lake Winnipeg is?
16 Nobody? Or at least those, if you do know you are
17 too shy. Let me explain very briefly.

18 First of all let me tell you, I am
19 not, and we are not representatives of Manitoba
20 Hydro. There are some general questions that
21 might better be directed to Manitoba Hydro that we
22 could answer in a general sense. We are also not
23 representatives of the Government of Manitoba. We
24 are a Manitoba agency, a Manitoba Government
25 agency, but we operate at arm's length from the

1 government. The government doesn't tell us how to
2 do our job. We give them advice on how we think
3 they should do their job in this respect, and they
4 can take our advice or not. Usually they do.

5 I'm sure you all know that there are a
6 number of Hydro generating stations on the Nelson
7 River between here and Hudson Bay. There is one
8 quite close to here -- that is a little loud. I
9 think what we will do then, when I turn it over to
10 you to ask questions and stuff, I will get up and
11 walk around and give you the mic, and then I'll
12 take it back when I try to answer.

13 Let me tell you a little bit about
14 what Lake Winnipeg Regulation is. In the mid late
15 '60s, almost 50 years ago now, Manitoba Hydro
16 decided to develop the Nelson River to build
17 hydroelectric generating stations on the Nelson
18 River. So far they have built three major ones at
19 Kettle Rapids, Long Spruce Rapids and Limestone
20 Rapids. They are all near, and a little ways down
21 river from Gillam. Earlier they had built a
22 mid-sized one at Keeyask, and then when they put
23 the controls at Jenpeg they put a small generating
24 station there. But in order to drive all of those
25 generating stations they needed a consistent

1 supply of water. Their initial thought was to
2 divert a lot of water out of the Churchill River,
3 through Southern Indian Lake, and then into the
4 Rat and Burntwood Rivers, and then ultimately into
5 the Nelson River.

6 But what Hydro wanted to do would have
7 raised the level at Southern Indian Lake by about
8 40 feet. That's more than twice the height of
9 this room. It would have meant incredible
10 environmental destruction, a lot of damage to the
11 land around that community. And there was a
12 community -- well, there still is a community, but
13 in the late '60s that community was about 500
14 people, it is quite a bit larger now. If they had
15 gone with that high level flooding, they would
16 have had to move the entire community of South
17 Indian Lake, as well as a small community called
18 Granville Lake.

19 The government decided -- there was a
20 lot of protest, not only from people in South
21 Indian Lake, but people in Winnipeg as well --
22 there was a lot of protest against that high level
23 flooding. So the government said no, you can't
24 flood to a high level, you can only flood, I
25 believe it is nine or ten feet.

1 So they needed another source of water
2 for those generating stations down the Nelson
3 River, and they looked to Lake Winnipeg, and they
4 figured we can make a big reservoir out of Lake
5 Winnipeg, but we have to do a couple of things.
6 We have to move the water out more quickly, and
7 then we have to control it so that we can release
8 it, we being Manitoba Hydro, can release it when
9 they need it.

10 So they cut some channels, at the
11 north end of the lake there is one called 2-mile
12 channel, which is just to the west of Warren
13 Landing. They cut another one out of Playgreen
14 Lake called 8-mile channel. And then they ran it
15 through -- they ran it through the narrows where
16 Jenpeg is now, and they put a control at Jenpeg as
17 well as a small generating station.

18 So as far as Manitoba Hydro is
19 concerned, this is a really good thing. It works
20 well, they have got lots of water, they can drive
21 all of these stations.

22 However, there were problems caused by
23 this regulation of Lake Winnipeg. And by far the
24 largest number and the most serious problems
25 occurred right here in this community. I'm sure

1 you have heard it from your families and from
2 others in your community, you have heard it in
3 history classes in school, but there was a lot of
4 damage done to this community in particular.

5 There were others that were affected
6 as well, Nelson House and Norway House had
7 impacts. Even further down river, Split Lake and
8 York Landing had negative impacts, but no
9 communities were affected as much as Cross Lake.
10 A lot of those impacts, we have been hearing this
11 in the last day and a half from people in your
12 community, a lot of those impacts are continuing
13 until today.

14 So Manitoba Hydro, when they built the
15 structure in the '70s, the structure at Jenpeg in
16 the '70s got what is called an interim licence.
17 And normally an interim licence is used until
18 construction is completed, and then once
19 construction is completed the builder of the
20 project can apply for a final licence. For some
21 reason Manitoba Hydro -- they finished the project
22 in 1976, which is 39 years ago, they didn't apply
23 for a final licence until four years ago, I think
24 it is five now.

25 So what we have been asked to do is to

1 conduct these hearings leading up to the
2 government's decision whether or not to give them
3 a final licence. So we've been traveling
4 throughout northern and southern Manitoba, this is
5 our sixth week now. In early March we are going
6 to have five weeks of hearings in the City of
7 Winnipeg. And then later towards the end of March
8 we are going to be coming back up to Norway House,
9 and probably Split Lake as well. We have been
10 going around just listening to people in
11 communities like yours to hear what they think of
12 Manitoba Hydro's regulation and what the impacts
13 have been.

14 Because, as I said a few minutes ago,
15 your community was impacted more than any other,
16 we are actually spending three days here. We were
17 here all day yesterday, and we are here today, and
18 we will be back again tomorrow to hear from a
19 variety of people in the community. We have heard
20 from trappers and fishers and elders and community
21 leaders over the last few days. And this
22 afternoon we are hoping to hear from you, the
23 students, on what you think of this, and as best
24 we can, to answer some of your questions.

25 What happens after we finish this

1 whole process, we will finish our hearings about
2 the end of April, and then we have about three
3 months to write a report. So the panel will sit
4 down, and we will talk about what we've heard, we
5 will talk about the important issues that we've
6 heard, and we will come to some conclusions, and
7 then we will decide what kind of recommendations,
8 and what recommendations specifically we want to
9 send to the Minister. That report will come out
10 about the end of July. That report is public. We
11 make hard copies which will get sent out, and it
12 will also be posted on our website so you can see
13 it on the website.

14 For another moment or two, hopefully
15 we have amplified sound. So I think that's all I
16 really need to say by way of introduction. So I
17 will throw it open to anybody here in this room,
18 whether you have any questions or whether you have
19 any comments or statements you would like to make.

20 I should say just one more thing. We
21 were in your community almost a year and a half
22 ago when we were conducting hearings on the
23 Keeyask Generating Station. We actually had a
24 request to come to your community, it wasn't
25 originally on our agenda, and then Darwin

1 contacted our office and asked us if we would come
2 in, and we were only too glad to. And we had a
3 good day in your community that day. We were
4 delayed getting in because of fog I think it was.
5 We spent the afternoon, we heard from a lot of
6 elders, but we also had a number of written
7 presentations that were made by students, perhaps
8 some of you, that were delivered to us at the band
9 hall that day.

10 So, again, I will turn it over now,
11 and if anybody has any questions, or comments, or
12 stories they wish to share, just wave your hand
13 and I will hand you the mic and we can carry on.

14 STUDENT: So what's going on?

15 THE CHAIRMAN: What's going on? I
16 thought I just explained. We are here to hear
17 comments about what people think about Lake
18 Winnipeg Regulation and how it might have impacted
19 your community. Does that answer your question?

20 STUDENT: Yes.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Anybody else? Give
22 your name and whatever you want to say.

23 STUDENT: Brandon McKay. I'm going to
24 ask why is there another generating station being
25 built? Like why do we need it and why is it being

1 built?

2 THE CHAIRMAN: So why is another
3 generating station being built, and you are
4 referring to the Keeyask one?

5 STUDENT: No, the one that you were
6 referring to in Lake Manitoba.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: That one has already
8 been built, that is Jenpeg that I was talking
9 about, and it was built about 40 years ago. It
10 has actually been operational since late 1976,
11 which is almost 40 years ago. Manitoba Hydro is
12 currently building another station at Keeyask,
13 which is close to Gillam, it is up river from the
14 town of Gillam. And they are building it because
15 Manitoba Hydro says they will need more power for
16 the Province of Manitoba by, I think it's 2022.
17 And also they do sell, mostly to the United
18 States, any excess energy, any unused energy is
19 sold at a profit to Americans. Does that answer
20 your question?

21 STUDENT: Yep.

22 STUDENT: Beau Beardy. Is there any
23 other ways that you can -- other ways that you can
24 use electricity instead of dams in Manitoba?

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. I think your

1 question, I will repeat it and see if I have got
2 it: Are there other ways to generate electricity
3 beside dams?

4 There are. Right now in Manitoba 95
5 per cent of the electricity generated in the
6 province is generated by hydroelectric means, so
7 dams. I think there are six small ones on the
8 Winnipeg River in southeastern Manitoba, there is
9 one medium-sized one at Grand Rapids, and then the
10 ones on the Nelson River that I mentioned earlier.

11 There are two small wind farms in
12 southern Manitoba. They are privately owned but
13 Manitoba Hydro buys all of the power that they
14 generate. Wind power is really good ecologically,
15 except for birds, they seem to kill quite a few
16 birds because of the big turbines whipping around.
17 But right now they are expensive, it is more
18 expensive to generate electricity by wind than by
19 hydroelectric. And also it is intermittent, you
20 can't rely on it. If there is no wind you can't
21 get any power. Now, in the prairies there is
22 usually a fair bit of wind, so it is a good way to
23 add energy, but it is not good for basic service.

24 In Manitoba there are two small
25 natural gas powered generating stations, one in

1 Brandon and one in east Selkirk. And a lot of
2 provinces and a lot of American states, most of
3 their electricity is generated like that, by
4 natural gas. And there are a lot of benefits to
5 that. You can build them close to where the power
6 is needed, you can put them right outside of the
7 City of Winnipeg instead of building them up here
8 and then having to run a thousand kilometres or
9 more of transmission lines to get it to the south.

10 But when you start burning fossil
11 fuels, it puts a lot of carbon into the
12 atmosphere. And Manitoba Hydro has estimated that
13 the Keeyask project, for example, if you built a
14 natural gas powered station to generate the same
15 amount of electricity, which is about
16 600 megawatts, now I think it would be 200 or
17 2,000 times as much carbon emission. It is a huge
18 amount more. It is way more damaging in the long
19 run to the ecology. And as I'm sure you all know,
20 right now climate change is a big concern. And
21 climate change is largely caused by burning fossil
22 fuels, so burning natural gas, gasoline, coal,
23 stuff like that.

24 There is also, another way that a lot
25 of electricity is generated is nuclear plants.

1 And around the world there are a number of nuclear
2 plants. You may have heard a year or two ago
3 about an accident in a big plant in Japan. There
4 are nuclear plants in Ontario, and one in New
5 Brunswick in Canada. They have a lot of
6 advantages. Again, you can build them right next
7 to where the power is needed. The big problem
8 with them is the waste. In a nuclear plant you
9 have a lot of nuclear waste that's extremely
10 harmful to people and the ecology, and nobody has
11 yet figured out what to do with it. So wherever
12 there are nuclear generating plants, there are
13 stock piles of waste that nobody has yet figured
14 out what to do.

15 That's a long answer to your question.
16 There are alternatives, but for Manitoba the
17 cheapest and the environmental, believe it or not,
18 the most environmentally friendly is
19 hydroelectric. Even though in this part of the
20 world, in Northern Manitoba, over the years we
21 have seen an awful lot of environmental
22 destruction in the construction. Once the dams
23 are up and built, they are pretty friendly to the
24 environment, it is the building of them that
25 causes the big problem.

1 Does that long-winded answer get to
2 your point? Thank you. Anybody else?

3 STUDENT: My name is Nelson McIntyre.
4 Why are you saying hydroelectricity is
5 environmentally friendly when it is obviously not?

6 STUDENT: Tell him how it has affected
7 you.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Do you want to tell me
9 why it is not environmentally friendly?

10 Let me first -- I'm going to come back
11 to you -- let me first say, when I was wrapping up
12 my answer to the earlier question, most of the
13 environmental damage is caused during the
14 construction, and then obviously there is ongoing
15 impacts after that. Once it is built and the
16 water just runs through it, you are not burning
17 fossil fuels. So in that sense it is more
18 environmentally friendly.

19 The construction of hydroelectric
20 dams, especially in areas like this, there is a
21 huge problem. But I want to hear from you what
22 environmental damages you have seen because of
23 this stuff.

24 STUDENT: Okay. So over the last 25
25 years that the dam has been built, or whatever,

1 there is a lot of erosion over the water, and it
2 is polluting our waters, you know. Like once they
3 used to be really clean, the elders used to say,
4 and they are just being polluted by the dams. So
5 that's obviously not environmentally friendly.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: You are absolutely
7 right.

8 STUDENT: I'm not really good at
9 speaking so...

10 THE CHAIRMAN: No, you are absolutely
11 right, there are ongoing impacts. And this
12 community, as I said at the outset, this community
13 has seen those ongoing impacts more than any
14 other. We have heard in the last couple of days,
15 we have heard about the clean water that used to
16 be here. We have heard about erosion, shoreline
17 erosion. We have heard about and we have seen
18 pictures of debris that piles up on shoreline and
19 prevents people from getting to their traplines,
20 for example. We have heard about the slush ice
21 and the hanging ice and a lot of problems. And
22 those, in this area, are definitely impacts from
23 the Jenpeg project.

24 MR. SEAN CANNING: Has anyone here
25 gotten into an accident because of the slush, with

1 your skidoo?

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. So there is lots
3 of hands. Do you want to tell me about your
4 experience?

5 STUDENT: Hi, my name is Jordan
6 Muswagon. Recently, this past -- two or three
7 months ago, I was heading to my friends with the
8 skidoo, right. And due to all of the water levels
9 going up and down and whatnot, it caused, I guess
10 there is a bump on the ice, right. And I didn't
11 see it until we got close to it. And as soon as I
12 hit it, my friend stayed on his skidoo, stayed on
13 the skidoo, and then I flew about 20 feet from
14 where we hit that rock. And it caused me, I
15 couldn't walk for a couple of days. And I still
16 came to school and I was limping, and it still
17 hurt. Yeah, that's one of the reasons, one of the
18 damages it can do, because it can cause an
19 accident like that, it can cause anyone an
20 accident like that.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: How was your skidoo
22 afterwards?

23 STUDENT: It is not my skidoo, it is
24 actually his skidoo.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Do you want to tell us

1 what the skidoo was like? Tell us your name?

2 STUDENT: My name is Magnum McMillan.

3 My skidoo had to be sent out, I had to claim it,

4 My shock was broken, my seat, my back seat, and my

5 windshield, my lights, and all of my broken

6 parts --

7 THE CHAIRMAN: You said you had to

8 claim it?

9 STUDENT: Yeah, I had to claim it at

10 Hydro.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: And did they pay for

12 the damage?

13 STUDENT: Yes. It is still being

14 fixed. It is taking long.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Anybody else want to

16 just tell their experience with the slush ice?

17 STUDENT: Hello. I was walking with

18 my friends, we were hunting chickens at the

19 lagoon, at the lagoon over there, like the lagoon

20 area. We were crossing the ice, like this little

21 pathway of this ice, and I was leading our pack.

22 And I guess there was snow covered, and I didn't

23 see the yellow snow until I started stepping on

24 it, the slush. And then I walked a little further

25 and I fell in up to my stomach, and this guy

1 pulled me out before I got in deeper. He pulled
2 me from the back, and pulled me and said, holy
3 crap. And I guess I was all wet and my phone got
4 wet, and I gave this guy my phone right away.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Most important thing.

6 STUDENT: Yep. Yes, that was the
7 funniest part. I guess I was wet and that, a cold
8 walk home.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Anybody else? You can
10 share slush ice stories or you can ask questions,
11 or you can tell us other things that you think
12 about this project.

13 STUDENT: My name is Devon Muswagon.
14 Our water used to be clear, and now it is all
15 polluted. Is there any way that it can go back to
16 being clean?

17 THE CHAIRMAN: That's a really good
18 question. I don't know, I can't answer, I don't
19 know if it can go back to being clean. People
20 have already mentioned some of the erosion, more
21 silt gets into the water. I don't know how you
22 would you ever clean that out.

23 It is a problem that we are all
24 experiencing, though, the water cleanliness issue.
25 I grew up on Lake Winnipeg and Gimli, and the

1 water there is dirtier than it used to be. It is
2 the same on other lakes and rivers around
3 Manitoba. It doesn't make it any easier for you.
4 And you have got, as we have said and we have
5 talked about it earlier today, you have got a lot
6 more compounded impacts here. But clean water, I
7 don't know that there is any way it will ever be
8 cleaned up again.

9 STUDENT: Will it just be getting
10 worse and worse?

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Will the water keep
12 getting worse and worse? That I can't tell you
13 either. That's not necessarily the case that it
14 will continue to get worse, but it could. So
15 that's a sitting on the fence answer, but that's
16 probably the best I can give you.

17 MR. SEAN CANNING: That's what these
18 guys are trying to prevent.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Hopefully, in small
20 ways.

21 STUDENT: Hi, I'm Shana Blacksmith. I
22 have been in this school for five years and I have
23 been in my outdoor class for grades nine, ten and
24 11. And we always go fishing with our nets in the
25 same spot. And I guess last year we came back

1 with no fish, the net was green and gooey. Can
2 you explain that?

3 THE CHAIRMAN: We've actually heard
4 that in a lot of places, not only in the north.
5 We heard it -- we were at the Fisher River First
6 Nation a few weeks ago and we heard a similar
7 story there. We were in Berens River and we heard
8 similar stories.

9 For some reason, in the last two or
10 three or four years in particular, there is fewer
11 fish in a lot of areas. Then there is this muck
12 that's getting into nets. Nobody has explained to
13 us yet why that's happening. It is something that
14 we are going to identify in our report as an
15 issue, and hopefully somebody will find out why
16 that is. In some places, and to some extent, it
17 is because of an increase in blue green algae, but
18 we don't know yet whether that's the case in all
19 of these instances.

20 We've also heard, in fact I think we
21 heard it here yesterday from somebody about the
22 shoreline grasses getting washed away because of
23 erosion. That might be a cause of some of it.

24 It doesn't help you for the next time
25 you and your family want to go out fishing, or

1 your classmates want to go fishing, but it is a
2 problem that exists and hopefully somebody can get
3 to the bottom of it.

4 STUDENT: My name is Julie Lavlin, and
5 I have a question. How long are we guaranteed
6 electricity from these dams?

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, typically hydro
8 generating stations operate for at least 100
9 years. On the Winnipeg River there is one dam
10 that is now over 100 years old, just over 100
11 years old, and they are in the process of
12 re-building part of it. And presumably it might
13 go on for another 50 years. Kettle, which was the
14 first of the big dams up here, was built in around
15 about 1970, so that's 45 years ago. So it has
16 probably got another 60, maybe another 100 years
17 of life. So in Manitoba we should have
18 hydroelectricity for as long as we need it. Does
19 that answer your question?

20 MR. SEAN CANNING: Just a quick
21 question about the excess electricity after
22 Manitobans' needs are met. So how much of the
23 province's revenue comes directly from Manitoba
24 Hydro, as opposed to like forestry and farming and
25 stuff, is there a number on that that's public

1 domain?

2 THE CHAIRMAN: There certainly would
3 be, but I haven't got a clue what it is. But it
4 would certainly be in the public domain. Their
5 sales, some of their sales to American customers
6 are firm, so they get the same amount every year.
7 Some of it is sold on what is called a spot
8 market, which means if they have excess on that
9 day and somebody else needs it that day, they can
10 buy it. So that would be additional money. Those
11 figures would be available publicly but I don't
12 know what they are.

13 MR. SEAN CANNING: Is continuing
14 demand from the Americans for electricity
15 guaranteed or --

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, for the most
17 part, yes. I mean, some of the contracts that
18 they have stretch out for a number of years into
19 the future. Some states, Wisconsin is one in
20 particular, has made it a policy not to buy
21 electricity that isn't environmentally friendly.
22 And again, getting back to the point made by this
23 gentleman over here that, you know, they have
24 caused an environmental mess. What they mean is
25 not greenhouse gas, so not generated by fossil

1 fuels, so just to finish that thought, Wisconsin
2 is a continued market for quite a few years to
3 come.

4 MR. SEAN CANNING: So when Hydro are
5 talking about emissions, do they take into account
6 decomposing debris, biomass and whatnot, or is
7 that a gray area for them that they don't
8 necessarily mention?

9 THE CHAIRMAN: That I can't tell you,
10 you would have to ask Hydro. It is a very good
11 question. I know during the Keeyask hearings we
12 had a couple of people talking about Hydro doing
13 sort of a life cycle environmental assessment,
14 which would address things like that. But at this
15 point they are not required to. So it is like
16 anything, if you are not required to do something,
17 you don't do it.

18 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: I could
19 answer that question.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Ms. Luttermann says she
21 can answer it. I think you were one of the people
22 promoting life cycle ideas.

23 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Well, so you
24 asked about looking at the emissions, basically,
25 from various forms of energy production. So there

1 is no doubt that there have been many studies done
2 on the amount of methane and CO₂, which are the
3 two primary greenhouse gases that you would have
4 coming out of a reservoir. So when all of the
5 vegetation and soils are flooded, they start to
6 rot, basically, breakdown, and that creates CO₂
7 and methane. And methane is a very powerful
8 greenhouse gas, so there is a high level of
9 emission from large reservoirs. But compared to
10 burning coal or oil for energy production, sort of
11 per unit energy that you produce, there is a lot
12 less from hydroelectricity.

13 There is a lot of confusion about the
14 effects of climate change compared to the effects
15 of habitat destruction from dams. In fact,
16 habitat destruction is the most important cause of
17 species extinction globally. And dams around the
18 world, and there are thousands and thousands of
19 large dams, are one of the most important causes
20 of the extinction of aquatic species.

21 In the Nelson River here, there used
22 to be a lot of sturgeon. Sturgeon have been
23 recommended to be on the list of endangered
24 species and to be protected legally in Canada.
25 And that recommendation was made quite a few years

1 ago, but that recommendation is sitting on the
2 Minister of Fisheries' desk for the past several
3 years and nothing has been done about that. New
4 dams destroy sturgeon spawning habitat. And
5 throughout the whole river system, the regulation
6 of the water levels, like some of you have
7 mentioned, go up and down and up and down, and the
8 whole seasonal pattern is changed. And the
9 seasonal pattern of the water is one of the most
10 fundamental ecological processes that shapes the
11 character of the whole river system. It makes a
12 river a river, basically, and it provides the
13 habitat and forms the habitat that river creatures
14 are adapted to. And this has fundamentally
15 changed with the hydroelectric project. Not just
16 in the area where the dam is built, but over what
17 amounts to, in the Nelson River, many thousands of
18 linear kilometres of shoreline are affected in the
19 same way.

20 So I don't personally believe that we
21 can come to a conclusion at this point in time
22 whether or not a large dam or series of dams, or
23 burning fossil fuels, which one is worse for the
24 environment. Absolutely, for this environment in
25 this region, the dams are in fact worse, because

1 the direct effects of flooding and dewatering and
2 habitat destruction are the same effects that we
3 fear from climate change, but they are direct
4 effects in this region and not spread out
5 globally. That's my very long answer.

6 MR. SEAN CANNING: My class, I want
7 you guys to stay around, you can go take a quick
8 five minute break. Now is the time if you wanted
9 to use the washroom or bathroom, five minutes,
10 okay.

11 (Brief recess)

12 MR. PAUPANAKIS: All right. Thank you
13 for coming back, students. Again, I will give you
14 an example of what experience we are talking about
15 for you to share here. I will share a little
16 story, it won't take long, it was just a short
17 little story about an experience that I had with
18 my daughter. She was four years old, so I took
19 her out in a canoe, out in the bay, out in the
20 Salmond area there. So we went out in the spring,
21 so I took her in the canoe, four years old. We
22 were paddling along the shoreline, and there was a
23 nest, an grebe nest, and it had a couple of eggs
24 in it. So she asked me -- we were paddling by and
25 I said, look, and she looked at the nest and it

1 had two eggs in it. Let's take them she said.

2 And I said no, no, those belong to those birds out
3 in the bay there, they will be little chicks later
4 on, I said. And I didn't think of what I was
5 telling my daughter, I didn't think past that.

6 But a couple of days later we went
7 back, she wanted to go out on the water again so I
8 took her out on the water. So I went by to check
9 on those eggs. And we got there and the nest was
10 under water and those two eggs were under water
11 there. And she said, look, the birds, let's save
12 those birds, she said. And I told her, we can't
13 do anything about that, I don't know how long they
14 had been under water already, those birds are
15 gone, so they probably left them to die. So from
16 that point she said, well, let's take them, come
17 on, let's save them, let's warm them up and take
18 them home. I said we can't do that.

19 So it is just an experience that I had
20 with my daughter, and I had to explain to her
21 later on in life what that meant, the water level,
22 why those birds perished.

23 So that's the kind of stuff we are
24 looking for here, your experience out on the land,
25 your experiences with your grandparents. I'm

1 pretty sure some of you have heard those stories
2 from your grandparents telling you how beautiful
3 it was back then. Because, you know, you guys go
4 out on the lake today, you think it is nice.
5 Well, there should have been pictures taken of the
6 old days, because the pictures you see on the
7 internet, the beautiful pictures, the beautiful
8 waters, that's what it was like here. Your
9 grandparents should have shared some of these
10 stories with you.

11 I will open up again the floor for
12 your stories and your comments. If you have any
13 questions about the Lake Winnipeg Regulation, how
14 the water is being manipulated right now, it is
15 going up and down like this at a rapid rate.
16 That's the operation of the Jenpeg dam. What we
17 would like is the water to be regulated at a rate
18 where it is more manageable for us to be able to
19 live back on the land. Egesi.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Darwin.

21 Now, Darwin just said that most, if
22 not all of you have heard these stories from your
23 grandparents, and we would like to hear those.
24 But we would also -- we have heard a lot of those
25 stories from your grandparents. What we would

1 like to hear is, if any of you have them, is how
2 you think this might impact your life and your
3 future in this community. Those are stories that
4 we would like to hear as well.

5 Now, before we had the break, I was
6 asked if there were alternative ways to generate
7 electricity besides hydroelectric dams, and I
8 mentioned a number of them. The one that I forgot
9 was solar energy, and that's something like in a
10 Province of Manitoba where there is a lot of sun,
11 there is considerable potential for solar energy.
12 But, again, it is not something that could be
13 relied on to supply the whole province, but it
14 could certainly be supplied, or it could certainly
15 be relied on for small communities, or for single
16 operations, or a cluster of homes.

17 Now, I think before the break we had a
18 few hands waving who had questions or comments, so
19 I think you were the first ones? No? It's past?

20 For those of you who weren't here
21 before the break, if you have a question or a
22 comment, I will give you the mic so that it can be
23 recorded. Also, state your name and then say what
24 you would like to say. I think you are next.

25 STUDENT: Hi, my name is Ellie Ross.

1 And you said that we sell or excess power to
2 Americans who, by the way, pay way less than we
3 do, and it is our water.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: I think the question
5 was, why do the Americans pay less than we do and
6 it is our water?

7 Well, that's partly true. When they
8 buy stuff on the spot market, it probably is
9 cheaper than the rate that we pay for it. And
10 that is because you can't save energy, or
11 electricity. Once it has been generated, if it
12 doesn't get used, then it is wasted. So if there
13 is excess that is not going to be used, they will
14 sell it on the spot market, and the prices for the
15 spot market are changing all of the time and often
16 it can be low -- lower than what we pay.

17 On the contracted sales, and Manitoba
18 Hydro has a number of long-term contracts with
19 American suppliers, they are paying more than what
20 we pay.

21 Now, Manitobans in general pay just
22 about the lowest hydro rates or electricity rates
23 in North America. They are quite cheap by
24 comparison to other areas. The problem in a lot
25 of places, in communities like this, particularly

1 if you have older housing, is that the houses
2 aren't very energy efficient. So even though your
3 per unit rate is the same as I'm paying in
4 Winnipeg, you are using a lot more of it. So
5 that's one of the reasons why you are paying more
6 in a community like Cross Lake.

7 That might not be the answer you
8 wanted, but that's probably the best answer that I
9 can give. Does that satisfy you? Thank you.

10 STUDENT: Hello, I'm Colin Ross. Did
11 you have a choice to put the dam at the Nelson
12 River? Did you have a choice?

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Was there a choice to
14 put the dam -- are you talking about the Jenpeg
15 dam, where it is? Yes, there was a choice. When
16 Manitoba Hydro, in the '60s -- and none of you
17 obviously was anywhere near alive in the '60s -- I
18 was, I was much younger -- when Manitoba Hydro was
19 considering how to regulate Lake Winnipeg in the
20 '60s, there were a number of options that were
21 considered. The one that they considered for the
22 longest time was actually to put a control right
23 at Warren Landing. And Warren Landing is right at
24 the north end of Lake Winnipeg, it is where Lake
25 Winnipeg enters the Nelson River, and it is the

1 only outlet from Lake Winnipeg. And the initial
2 consideration was to put a dam there and then a
3 pumping station that would pump the water across
4 the dam. They also considered putting a dam, I
5 think it's at Whiskey Jack Falls, which is in the
6 Jenpeg area, but a little further south and I
7 think a little bit to the east of Jenpeg. And
8 another option they considered, which is probably
9 a little loopy in hindsight, was they were going
10 to put the control right at the middle of Lake
11 Winnipeg, at the narrows, so that they would have
12 made Lake Winnipeg into two basins. Well, it is
13 two basins but they would have cut off the flow
14 between the north and south basin except what was
15 pumped, they were going to put a dam at the
16 narrows and then pump it across there. That one
17 was the most expensive and it had a lot of
18 operational problems. And in hindsight, that one
19 was probably a bit loopy. But to extend your
20 question, if they were to build or to propose
21 building Jenpeg today, it wouldn't get built.

22 In the 1960s and early '70s, when
23 those controls were built, there was no
24 environmental legislation in place. I shouldn't
25 say that. There was environmental legislation,

1 there was the Manitoba Clean Environment Act, but
2 it didn't require environmental assessments before
3 somebody built the project.

4 Nowadays, for example, just a year ago
5 we reviewed the environmental assessment for the
6 Keeyask Generating Station, and Manitoba Hydro was
7 required to do a very extensive environmental
8 assessment, looking at all of the potential damage
9 caused by that dam. They didn't do a bad job. In
10 the end it was concluded that the project could go
11 ahead with certain mitigations to make it have
12 less impact on the environment. But if we were
13 going to build Jenpeg today, and they looked, did
14 an environmental assessment the way they do today,
15 it would just be concluded right off the bat that
16 it was far too destructive of the environment and
17 it wouldn't get built. But that is hindsight. It
18 has been there for 40 years now and it is not
19 going to go away.

20 Does that answer your question? A bit
21 long-winded and more than you asked, but thank
22 you.

23 I'm going to go up over here.

24 STUDENT: Why is Hydro mainly focused
25 on Manitoba lakes?

1 THE CHAIRMAN: That's a big question.

2 Hydroelectric generating stations are built on
3 rivers, they are usually built near rapids, in
4 part because that's where there is fast moving
5 water, but also because they can sort of gather
6 the water by building dykes around the edges and
7 drive it through.

8 In the case of Lake Winnipeg
9 Regulation, and I don't know if you were here at
10 the outset when I talked about how they added, how
11 they decided to use Lake Winnipeg as a reservoir.
12 This is pretty unique, it is one of the -- it is
13 probably the largest hydroelectric reservoir
14 anywhere in the world. There are other -- most
15 projects just have a forebay behind them. And a
16 forebay is, you just build a bunch of dykes so the
17 water won't spill around the dam, and it builds up
18 behind. If you have ever been to Gillam, or if
19 you look at a map of Gillam and you see what's
20 called Stephen Lake, that's a forebay, and it
21 gives them water to drive the generating station
22 at Gillam. Most hydroelectric generating stations
23 around the world are built like that. Some do use
24 small lakes as a reservoir, nobody anywhere else
25 uses a lake the size of Lake Winnipeg as a

1 reservoir. It is unique. As I said in response
2 to the last question, in hindsight, it probably
3 was not a good decision, and if it were to be
4 built today, it wouldn't happen and they wouldn't
5 be using Lake Winnipeg as a reservoir.

6 Does that get to what you were
7 wondering? Okay. Anybody else? Here, and then
8 back to you.

9 STUDENT: Do the communities across
10 the river, do they have any direct say in like if
11 a dam is built?

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Another really good
13 question. And direct say, no; indirect say, yes,
14 in today's world, not when most of these stations
15 were built. The three big ones on the Nelson
16 River, the Kettle, Long Spruce, Limestone, when
17 they were built there was no environmental
18 assessment, there was no environmental review such
19 as we conduct. So in those cases there was no
20 say, direct or indirect.

21 Today, and this applies to Keeyask, we
22 conducted hearings throughout, well, in Northern
23 Manitoba, Gillam, York Landing and Split Lake, and
24 we came into Cross Lake, and in Winnipeg. So in a
25 new project where we conduct hearings, people do

1 have an indirect say. They can come out to our
2 hearings, tell us what they think, and we will put
3 it into our reports, what we have heard from them.
4 And sometimes, perhaps often, we will make
5 recommendations based on what we have heard in the
6 communities.

7 So probably not fully what you would
8 like to hear. But I should note too, again, in
9 today's world, and this is very recent, First
10 Nation communities and other indigenous
11 communities do have, there is a constitutional
12 requirement that they be consulted before any big
13 projects are built in their area, projects that
14 will impact on their ability, that is the First
15 Nations' ability to exercise their Treaty and/or
16 Aboriginal rights.

17 We are not involved in that process at
18 all. It is a fairly new process, it has just
19 evolved because of court cases over the last
20 probably two decades. I think it is going to
21 prove to be a really important process,
22 particularly for First Nation and other indigenous
23 communities. But governments are still trying to
24 figure out how to do it. It is happening, I
25 believe it is happening in respect of this review

1 that we are doing right now, but we don't do it.
2 That will actually give communities such as yours
3 more say, but they don't have -- the courts have
4 said they don't have the power to veto a project,
5 but they do need to be consulted.

6 STUDENT: So if like you were to build
7 like a dam on our community, we as a community
8 cannot say at all, like you can not build it here?
9 Is that it? We have no say in it whatsoever?

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, that's actually a
11 really good question, and I don't think that I can
12 answer it. I don't think it would -- it would
13 never happen, not quite like that. It could
14 happen that somebody would want to build a dam
15 near your community. At one time Manitoba Hydro
16 had sort of long-term plans that identified two
17 more dams between here and Kelsey. Those have
18 long since been abandoned, but those would have
19 had a big impact on your community. And I think
20 if it were to be something right in your
21 community, you would have the power to say -- in
22 fact, if it is on First Nation land you certainly
23 have the power to say yes or no. But that's
24 something outside of my authority, that gets into
25 the constitutional arrangements between the

1 government and First Nations. So you would have a
2 direct say in that respect.

3 Is that it? Any follow on?

4 STUDENT: This is a question from
5 earlier, I just wanted to ask why our community
6 was most affected in a negative way more than any
7 other community was?

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, quite simply
9 because you are here, you are here just a few
10 miles from where the project was built. Manitoba
11 Hydro built the project here because they thought
12 that was the best place to build it. Although in
13 response to a question up there earlier, I said
14 that they had looked at alternative sites. Those
15 alternative sites would have impacted Cross Lake
16 less. But in the end they decided that Jenpeg was
17 the best place to build it, and that's right at
18 the mouth of the river into Cross Lake, and then
19 your community is just a little ways down river
20 from there. So, it was in respect of that project
21 that Cross Lake had the bad luck to be right below
22 that project. And with the changing water you
23 guys get affected, and have for 40 odd years.

24 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Can I clarify
25 something? You talked about electricity

1 generation but not flood control.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Annette just pointed
3 out that we have only been talking about Lake
4 Winnipeg Regulation being used for hydro
5 generation, and it is that aspect of Lake Winnipeg
6 Regulation that affects your community. But when
7 the Government and Manitoba Hydro decided to build
8 Lake Winnipeg Regulation, they had two reasons.
9 And one was for hydroelectric generation. The
10 other one was for flood control on Lake Winnipeg.

11 Now, this wouldn't affect your
12 community at all, but for many years, for decades,
13 Lake Winnipeg would have periodic very high water
14 seasons and cause a lot of flooding along Lake
15 Winnipeg. And this was of particular concern in
16 the south basin, in towns like Gimli and Winnipeg
17 Beach and Grand Beach, in farm areas, sort of
18 areas where farms came right up to the lake, there
19 was flooding. And this was very costly to those
20 communities and of great concern.

21 In the late '50s and into the early
22 '60s, the Manitoba Government looked at
23 controlling Lake Winnipeg just for flood control
24 on the lake. They found that it just wasn't cost
25 effective. It would have cost a lot more money to

1 build Lake Winnipeg Regulation than they would
2 have saved in flooding damages. But they said
3 that if you can put the two together, use it for
4 flood control, plus generating electricity, then
5 it would be worthwhile. So that's what happened
6 in around about 1970, when Hydro needed more water
7 to drive the generating stations, they put the
8 regulation into effect for Hydro, but also for the
9 secondary purpose of flood control on Lake
10 Winnipeg.

11 Any more questions? Yes?

12 STUDENT: My name is Caleb Costelle.
13 How has Hydro cleaned up the shorelines and has it
14 done enough?

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, I'm not sure if
16 everybody heard the question. It was, how has
17 Hydro cleaned up the shorelines and has it done
18 enough.

19 As I said a little while ago, we don't
20 represent Hydro, but I do know a bit about what
21 they are doing. I do know that upstream of Jenpeg
22 they have had an ongoing project for a number of
23 years. In fact, most of the workers doing that
24 project come from your community, and they are
25 cleaning driftwood off the shorelines upstream of

1 Jenpeg. How much they do downstream, I don't
2 really know.

3 And your second question, are they
4 doing enough. You and people in this room and in
5 your community can tell me a lot more about that
6 than I know. From what we have heard from people
7 in your community in the last day and a half, they
8 are probably not. But then as somebody pointed
9 out to us, again from your community yesterday, a
10 person who had pictures of where there is
11 shoreline debris, if you clean all of the debris
12 off, then the water can get further on to the
13 shore, undermine trees that are standing and knock
14 them down as well. So it has become a bit of a
15 devil if you do, devil if you don't. But I think
16 that somewhere in there, there is probably a happy
17 medium. Certainly, as we heard this morning from
18 a trapper in your community, if Hydro could at
19 least, in the fall before trapping season starts,
20 go out and clean the beaches where the trappers
21 access their trails, that would be a big help.
22 But that's something that your community has to
23 negotiate with Manitoba Hydro. That's not within
24 our authority.

25 Anybody else? Over here?

1 STUDENT: Why does there have to be
2 dams? My name is Flora DeLisa, but I prefer
3 Flora.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Flora. Why
5 does there have to be dams?

6 Well, in Manitoba and in many parts of
7 world, that's how we get our electricity. I mean,
8 we have lights here. Most, if not all of you in
9 this room have cell phones. If we didn't have
10 electricity, we couldn't have these lights, we
11 couldn't have this sound system that I'm talking
12 into, you wouldn't have anywhere to charge your
13 cell phones. You wouldn't be able to run your TVs
14 or your computers or your stoves at home.

15 So that's how Manitoba generates its
16 electricity. We talked earlier about alternative
17 ways of generating electricity, and some of those
18 work very well. But right now in Manitoba, the
19 practice is to do it with hydroelectric dams.

20 Anybody else?

21 STUDENT: It is not really a question,
22 it is just a concern. Okay. Well, as I was
23 growing up my parents would -- well, my uncles
24 would always have lots of like trapping, like
25 otters and beavers and all of those little

1 animals, and they would take us out and it would
2 be nice, but I haven't been out for a while. So
3 like I have been going out lately and it is
4 different from when I was small. Like there is no
5 shoreline anymore. It is like really hard to get
6 on to the thing when you are trying to land your
7 boat. My dad almost fell in once. That was kind
8 of funny but it was not safe.

9 Because we were sturgeon fishing, and
10 you can only do that by the current. And he does
11 domestic fishing, so he always has to go out and
12 get fish during the winter. And from the levels
13 that keep going up and down, it has made some of
14 our nets get stuck in the bottom, in that slush
15 and stuff. We lost a bunch of nets this year
16 frozen on to the ice. Yeah, those are the
17 concerns.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for
19 telling us that. We have heard similar stories
20 from others in your community, so it is important
21 that we hear it from you, and it corroborates and
22 adds to what we have heard already.

23 Well, thank you again.

24 STUDENT: I have a story. I just want
25 to share with you a story that my dad told me a

1 while ago. By the shorelines, where it is really
2 deep now, by like Albert Lake and the Bronx, where
3 the apexes are and all of that, a while ago my dad
4 told me when he was younger, when they were
5 younger he used to play bat and ball where the
6 water is, where it's really high. It used to be
7 like all sand there, and they used to just play
8 bat and ball with a bunch of friends. I wanted to
9 share that it used to be sand there, like people
10 would swim there. People want boats there now and
11 all of that to trap for fish and all. But a long
12 time ago this used to be sand. That's what I
13 wanted to tell you.

14 STUDENT: My family has a fishing spot
15 that we favour, like 45 minutes down, go south of
16 Pipestone Lake, it is called Pickle Creek. Like
17 as a kid I always remember that you could walk
18 across, because there was a high rapid at the top,
19 and you could see the water come down all of the
20 time. It was like a really beautiful spot, you
21 could see sucker fish spawning, you could catch
22 the fish just by hanging your hook in the water.
23 That used to be fun, I used to enjoy that a lot.
24 That was when I was 11 years old or something.

25 And I went there recently, like last

1 year. We went up there, and like you can take
2 your boat up there, we used to walk across and now
3 you can like drive your boat right up to the
4 rapids. That's just like a ridiculous, like
5 water, you know, it is so high. And I don't know,
6 like there is beaver houses around there too, and
7 they are completely under water. And there is
8 like another one that is also under water. And it
9 is just like an example of the phenomenal water --
10 the water gain, I guess you could say, the water
11 levels. That's a story and I just wanted to
12 share.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

14 I'm trying to be a little fair to
15 Manitoba Hydro, not all of the high water is their
16 fault, even downstream. The last two or three
17 years in particular, there has been a lot more
18 water coming into Lake Winnipeg than normal. So
19 Lake Winnipeg, as a whole, is sitting higher than
20 traditionally. And when it is high, then they
21 have to be spilling at Jenpeg all of the time. So
22 that would account for some of the concern that
23 you are talking about at your favorite fishing
24 spot. It is not all Manitoba Hydro's fault.
25 Certainly the fact that the dam is there has an

1 impact on it, but high water levels also impact
2 that.

3 Now, your question about, are there
4 any beaches left in the community?

5 STUDENT: There was the sand beach --

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, we have seen it.
7 Anybody else?

8 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Can I explain
9 something about the water levels?

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

11 MS. ANNETTE LUTTERMANN: Just to
12 clarify a little bit about that, I've been looking
13 at the records that we have for water level data
14 for Cross Lake compared to Lake Winnipeg over the
15 years. One part, I believe Terry explained
16 earlier that part of the Lake Winnipeg Regulation
17 involved building these deep channels so that the
18 water can come out quicker from Lake Winnipeg. So
19 at certain times, when we have very high water
20 years, the water can come out 50 per cent faster
21 than it used to be able to before this project was
22 built. And the result, though, is that because of
23 the licence that they have, once the water gets to
24 be a certain level in Lake Winnipeg, they have to
25 let the water out at full speed. So all of the

1 spillways have to be open. And this is increasing
2 the flooding in Cross Lake, there is no doubt
3 about that.

4 If you look at the water levels in the
5 past when they were very high in Lake Winnipeg,
6 the corresponding water levels in Cross Lake were
7 not as high as they are now. In 2011, we had the
8 record high levels in Cross Lake that we have ever
9 had here.

10 So I think that it is not quite
11 accurate to say that Manitoba Hydro isn't
12 responsible for high water levels here, because
13 the data is showing that they are in fact.

14 In the future, the climate change
15 predictions are suggesting, we don't know this for
16 sure, but in the future it is quite likely that we
17 are going to have quite a bit higher precipitation
18 coming into the watershed and flowing into Lake
19 Winnipeg. And this could create conditions that
20 see even more flooding in Cross Lake in the
21 future, in years where there is high water. And
22 that will be a direct result of the channels and
23 the licensing conditions at the Jenpeg structure.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: And that's an issue
25 that's going to be significant for this community

1 in particular, but for a lot of the province. And
2 I'm not sure anybody has figured out quite how to
3 deal with that yet. I'm not even sure how much
4 they have turned their minds to it yet.

5 Now, anybody else? Next, over here?

6 STUDENT: I'm Shana Blacksmith. My
7 mother would always take me for walks along the
8 shores, but now where we walk -- there was a road
9 there, and then there is trees and then there is
10 the shore we used to walk on, but it is just trees
11 there and it is just water. At one point I seen
12 that road flooded with water. That's past my
13 great great grandmother's house, she used to walk
14 there too.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: That's right here in
16 the community?

17 STUDENT: Yeah.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

19 STUDENT: I am Shani Muswagon. My
20 late granny used to tell me before the dam was
21 built the water was clear blue and you could see
22 the fish swimming under. Now the water is brown
23 and green, you can't see the fish at all. A lot
24 has changed ever since the dam has been built.
25 I'm just wondering if it is going to get worse or

1 is it going to get better?

2 THE CHAIRMAN: I can't really answer
3 that. I don't know. We've heard, we heard when
4 we were here a year and a half ago about the
5 dirtiness of the water here. In fact, one of the
6 people that was on that Commission took home a jar
7 of water from just beside the band office, and it
8 is still sitting in my office, and it is pretty
9 ugly looking water.

10 So we know to an extent why it is
11 happening. I mean, the corrosion or erosion of
12 the shoreline was putting more silt into the water
13 which is certainly causing some of that. And
14 other -- some scientists might know whether it is
15 going to get worse or better, but I don't. I'm
16 sorry, it is not information that I have. Good
17 question, but unfortunately I can't really answer
18 it very well.

19 Next?

20 MR. SEAN CANNING: So the Jenpeg
21 structure, I wasn't here, but one of the promises
22 a lot of these natural resource companies have is
23 that when they come into a community, they are
24 going to be promising economic wealth and jobs and
25 whatnot. I think it is wrong for a company to

1 step in and say, okay, we are going to give you
2 work but here is the type of work you guys are
3 going to do, we are going to call the shots. And
4 quite frankly, a lot of the positions that the
5 locals end up taking are more of the menial ones
6 at the generating stations, or the mining company,
7 or whatever.

8 As far as the economic development
9 within the community goes, one of the things they
10 don't frequently mention is the amount of fish and
11 mammals that do get trapped in these turbines. I
12 have talked to some of the people who have worked
13 and are working at Jenpeg, and they give me a few
14 details that they are not necessarily supposed to
15 be sharing. But it seems to be in the number of
16 tons and tons and tons of fish and mammals, that
17 they have to shut down the turbine and get people
18 in there manually to clean out.

19 I think that Hydro should be a little
20 bit more upfront of this phenomena, maybe even
21 give us the numbers on that. They can't come in
22 and take away one form of economic development, or
23 economics for a community, or even the way of
24 life. Because you can remove money away from the
25 equation altogether and just have people providing

1 and have a value in existence type thing, you
2 don't have to attach a dollar sign to that. So
3 Hydro, they don't mention this at all whatsoever.

4 If you guys, you know, are talking to
5 them, say, okay, we know this is happening up
6 here, you guys should be a little more open about
7 what is going on, and probably lay off on the
8 words environmentally friendly so much.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm not Hydro, so I
10 can't respond to that, but it is a good comment.
11 If we find an appropriate way and place to ask
12 Hydro, we will.

13 Now, just before we resumed from the
14 break you had said something about mercury. Did
15 you want to pursue that?

16 MR. SEAN CANNING: Yes, me and Annette
17 had a little discussion about the mercury. I
18 believe back in the '90s they had an order here,
19 or government warning, don't eat the fish if you
20 are pregnant or elderly. If you are eating fish,
21 try to limit the amount you intake.

22 The Hydro company says that the
23 mercury is coming from the soil, or the ground to
24 begin with, and due to the flooding, the mercury
25 that is in the ground is being released. My

1 question that I would have is that, you know, is
2 any of the mercury actually coming from the
3 facilities themselves?

4 I do know that Jenpeg is old Soviet
5 technology, it was not Canadian developed. So the
6 Russians were never known for their environmental
7 concern. I am just wondering if maybe -- you
8 know, who knows? I don't know if the specs for
9 Jenpeg or for any of the dams are public domain,
10 but I would like a little more hard data before
11 they say it is all coming from the soil type of
12 thing.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Most of that, I don't
14 have the information, but I do know, and I know
15 this from our recent Keeyask review, that when a
16 forebay is filling up, during the period when it
17 is filling up it is eroding land away from the
18 shorelines that it covers, and mercury leaches out
19 then. But that's mercury coming from the soil,
20 natural mercury. And Hydro estimates that it is
21 about a 30 year period before it gets back to what
22 it previously was. You know, it sort of goes down
23 by half over a number of years, and then down
24 again. But it is about 30 years before it is
25 fully back.

1 MR. SEAN CANNING: So we should see
2 normalized levels here now, I guess?

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, I think that it
4 might be a little different here, because it is
5 not a forebay that's filling, but it's irregular
6 raising and lowering of the water. And perhaps at
7 times when it goes up, when it is eating away
8 shorelines, it is bring more mercury in. That's
9 just a guess, though, I wouldn't go to the bank on
10 my opinion on that one.

11 As for the Soviet technology, it was
12 to Manitoba Hydro's specifications when they built
13 it. But what their environmental concerns were in
14 the factory where it was built, I have no idea. I
15 suspect there wasn't much, with my knowledge of
16 the Soviet Union, but the equipment was built to
17 Manitoba Hydro specs.

18 Anybody else?

19 MARGARET: Hi, I'm Margaret. Like
20 after hearing some of the students talking about
21 their experiences with their families, and I think
22 I would want to suggest maybe there would be
23 programs for them, even facilities given to the
24 youth in the community so that maybe they can have
25 early training, so they can actually have

1 something to look forward to, into working into
2 other dams or even locally. Because there is a
3 lot of socio-economic impacts in the community and
4 it runs off into this generation. And I would
5 like to see something more positive for them, you
6 know, like in the evenings, so that the school is
7 not the only place to kind of come to, but have
8 something in the evening as well for them.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for that.
10 And I think that is an exceptionally good idea.
11 Unfortunately, it is not something within our
12 power, but it is something that your community
13 should be pursuing with Manitoba Hydro, hopefully,
14 to a positive effect.

15 Anybody else? We are running down on
16 time, it will be your last opportunity, at least
17 for this visit.

18 STUDENT: My name is Morrison Ross.
19 I'm going to share a story what I experienced from
20 Manitoba Hydro and this water. A couple of years
21 back I witnessed something with my grandpa, my
22 late grandpa and granny, and another elder. They
23 were on the boat traveling back to town, and they
24 went for a ride around traplines and stuff like
25 that. And when they were coming back like, you

1 know, like the water, right, Hydro, the water
2 switches, like it goes up and down, right. When
3 it went up and down on the side of the shorelines,
4 there is trees, like trees in the water, or some
5 of them even float. So I don't know what
6 happened, but they were coming back, they were
7 driving, and as they were driving they were --
8 they hit a log, a big log, I don't know how big it
9 was. And then as they were -- they didn't see
10 this log, right, and this boat was a
11 75-horsepower. And when my grandpa was coming
12 back, and then as they were coming back, a log out
13 of nowhere comes up, and then they smashed into
14 that log and they flipped the boat and they went
15 flying. And my granny told me before -- after
16 that she was living for, I don't know how many
17 years, four years, five years, or longer, I don't
18 even remember. And then as they were -- she was
19 telling me that the water was good, it was
20 awesome, you could just drink that water, but now
21 we can't drink that water. And I really miss
22 that. And that's me, I think that's how I lost my
23 granny and grandpa is through that. They slowly
24 got sick after that boat accident. And it is
25 really hard right now to deal with it. I know

1 Hydro, the only -- well, to tell the truth, they
2 only paid, they only pay people, they don't give
3 them what they want, you know. And I'm hurt still
4 about that. And I can't even go on the boat
5 anymore because of that. Granny and some other
6 people were in that boat, they were bleeding and
7 all of that, and I thought one of them died. So
8 that was just my story and it just -- it was just,
9 I just wanted to share it, but I don't know.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Morrison,
11 for sharing that story.

12 STUDENT: I have got a story to tell.
13 It is about my grandpa. I guess, I'm not sure if
14 they were trapping, hunting or fishing far over
15 there, you know those rapids over there, him and
16 his friend were fishing, trapping. Anyways, they
17 were on these rocks, and these water levels go up
18 and down, and the rocks create algae, the slippery
19 stuff. And I guess one of my -- I don't know, one
20 fell in, or the other one fell in and the one of
21 them tried to save them, and that's my grandpa.
22 They got -- I guess they fell in the water and
23 they drowned from the water changes. Yeah.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for sharing
25 that too. Anybody else?

1 STUDENT: Our tradition is to hunt, we
2 hunt animals, right, animals are our food source.
3 I don't get how it is okay for you guys to kill
4 our food source. We don't go to the United
5 States, go to their farmlands and stomp all over
6 their crops, right? Thank you.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. That's a
8 very good point and I don't have an answer for it,
9 but that was a good comment, so thank you.
10 Anybody else?

11 STUDENT: It is me again. Anyways, I
12 know you guys aren't Hydro, right, but -- well,
13 not my question, but my concern was the fish we
14 eat, yeah, the fish we eat, the beaver we eat, and
15 what else we eat, I think otters, muskrat, and all
16 of those, anyways, my concern was a couple of
17 years ago there was a bear that went through the
18 Hydro thing, and that thing, right, and we weren't
19 told, like that bear went in to the propeller,
20 whatever.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Into the turbine?

22 STUDENT: Yes. Then when he went in
23 there, they didn't warn us. They just told us --
24 they didn't say don't go in the water. Then we
25 were told -- they said if you have something

1 growing in your system, or something, but then
2 they didn't tell us to stay out of the water for a
3 while. They just told us that there is a bear
4 that got, whatever. And then when they told us,
5 it felt like we weren't even allowed to bother the
6 water, but we still went in the water, right?
7 Then as that bear went through, that bear, right,
8 it has, I don't know how to say it -- I can't find
9 the words for it, but it is, you know, our
10 animals, they are getting treated like -- I can't
11 find the words for it.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: They are not treated
13 with respect?

14 STUDENT: Yeah, they are not treated
15 with respect, yeah. And what I experienced a
16 couple of winters ago, I go to traplines once in a
17 while and I go for drives alone, and sometimes
18 with buddies. I went with a buddy last year, and
19 then this year too, but I went alone. Last year
20 we experienced the water going up and down, just
21 45 minutes out of here, 20 minutes out of here.
22 Then we got stuck, and we noticed that our fish
23 was dead, when we saw, when we were checking the
24 net and all of that, right, and we checked them
25 the following day. Why does the water have to

1 keep going up and down? Because we get stuck out
2 there for like a couple of hours, and then some of
3 them days even. I don't know, just my thought.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, thanks again.

5 Why does the water keep going up and
6 down? I can't answer that fully because that's a
7 Manitoba Hydro decision, but they operate their
8 controls at Jenpeg to serve their needs further
9 down the river. It goes up and down as they need
10 it.

11 Perhaps, and I can't guarantee this at
12 all, but perhaps one of the things that might come
13 out of our review is some kind of limitations on
14 how they do it, or perhaps Manitoba Hydro can find
15 better ways to operate that to better control or
16 stabilize the lake levels here.

17 I think in his opening comments Darwin
18 talked about that. So whether that will happen, I
19 can't guarantee, but that would be a positive
20 step.

21 STUDENT: That question that you just,
22 that thing that you just said, you said the
23 waters, they keep going up and down, right? And
24 then you said something -- I forgot. Anyways, I
25 had something there that -- why don't they want to

1 know about our needs instead of their needs, you
2 know?

3 THE CHAIRMAN: That's a really good
4 question and a really good observation, and that's
5 sort of what we have been hearing in the last day
6 and a half in your community, and we will hear
7 some more of. And that's sort of the big
8 question. Can they take your needs more into
9 concern than they do now.

10 I think, it looks like people are
11 getting ready to roll on out of here. So I would
12 like to thank the leadership of this school for
13 welcoming us here today, and I want to thank all
14 of you for coming out, and particularly thank
15 those of you who asked questions or made
16 statements. And we are here for another day, we
17 are here tomorrow afternoon at the band hall for a
18 public session from 1:00 until 4:00. And if any
19 of you want more information, it's on our website,
20 cecmanitoba.ca. You can also go to the
21 Pimicikamak website and there will be a link.
22 Thank you

23 (Concluded at 3:40 p.m.)

24

25

1 Evening session at Cross Lake Community Council

2 Commencing at 6:30 p.m.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, are we ready to
4 go? Okay.

5 My name is Terry Sargeant, I'm the
6 chair of the Manitoba Clean Environment
7 Commission. With the panel, or on the panel with
8 me are Bev Suek to my right, to my left, Edwin Yee
9 and Neil Harden. Cathy Johnson is the Commission
10 secretary, and Cece Reid is our recorder. And
11 somewhere back against the back wall is Bob
12 Armstrong, who is our report writer.

13 And who are you folks?

14 MS. ROSALIE HALCROW: I am Rosalie
15 Halcrow, councillor.

16 MS. CONNIE SETTEE: Connie Settee,
17 councillor.

18 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: Roseann
19 MacFadgen, staff member.

20 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Keith Settee,
21 deputy mayor.

22 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: Cameron McLeod,
23 councillor.

24 MR. KEITH SETTEE: And our worship,
25 Mayor Bob Smith, well, he is probably just heading

1 home from work right now, so I don't know if -- he
2 should be here around 7:00 o'clock, so I don't
3 know if you maybe --

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you for
5 accepting our invitation to meet. What we are
6 doing is, we have been traveling around, all
7 around Lake Winnipeg, and in the north, I think
8 this is now our sixth week. We have been in -- we
9 have driven, in a three-week stretch we drove
10 2,700 kilometres around the Interlake and up the
11 east side of the lake, and we have been in
12 communities all around there. We have been up
13 north, we have been in Thompson and York Landing
14 and Wabowden, and yesterday in Cross Lake, today
15 in Cross Lake, tomorrow in Cross Lake. And then
16 early March we have five weeks in Winnipeg, and
17 then we have to come back up with north to Norway
18 House and probably TCN, Split Lake.

19 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: You are
20 getting to know each other very well.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: That's one way of
22 putting it.

23 The Minister of Conservation and Water
24 Stewardship asked us to hold meetings in
25 communities around the lake and downstream from

1 Jenpeg, as well as in the City of Winnipeg, just
2 to hear people's concerns about the effects,
3 negative or positive, of the Lake Winnipeg
4 Regulation project, which from your perspective
5 here is basically the Jenpeg dam and generating
6 station.

7 So we've been hearing lots of stories,
8 particularly here in the last two days, stories
9 from trappers and hunters and fishers and
10 students, and all manner of folk in this
11 community, just telling us about some of the
12 problems that you have because of the flooding
13 caused by Jenpeg, the ice problems, the debris on
14 the shoreline problems, stuff like that.

15 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: Water up and
16 down.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, yeah, the water
18 levels going up and down. So we are here tonight,
19 and if any of you have similar stories to share
20 with us, that would be very good.

21 MR. KEITH SETTEE: It is pretty much,
22 I guess, same, I guess, you would hear the same
23 stories from every person. But I am a trapper,
24 and pretty much every chance I have I'm hunting or
25 in the outdoors, out on the land.

1 And I've seen some, well, I should say
2 a lot of things that I didn't see before the
3 Jenpeg Generating Station. Mind you I was a young
4 boy, but I remember, I remember as a young boy
5 that we used to have such a beautiful, beautiful
6 waterways here at Cross Lake. And the water used
7 to be so, I would say clean, and there was no
8 fluctuation of water of any kind before the dam.
9 But there was, I remember there was, like every
10 place else there is some, we would experience some
11 droughts off and on over the years, but not as
12 devastating as after the dam came up.

13 Right now you can see, well, I guess
14 you would see -- but I'm not sure if you came here
15 during the summertime, but right now you won't see
16 anything of, like any flooding or any marks, you
17 wouldn't see where the water used to be on the
18 rocks. And now it is way down, sometimes it is
19 high, sometimes low.

20 So -- but after I think it was 19, I'm
21 not sure what year, but I think it was 1990 or
22 1991 when they put the weir, just northwest of
23 here. It helped somewhat, a little bit. Because
24 before that, there is a spot here where a lot of
25 us, when I was young we used to go out hunting for

1 ducks by foot, we would take out bikes or get
2 dropped off, and we didn't have boats at that
3 time, so we just went hunting up on the
4 shorelines. So, that time before the weir we used
5 to be able to walk across to the small islands
6 across from the -- we used to be able to walk
7 across over there, the water was so low. We just
8 wore boots, regular boots, to walk across, it was
9 so low. So after the weir was started here,
10 that's when the water was held to a certain level
11 and that's where it stays. But during these times
12 there is still water fluctuation, high and low,
13 but at least that helped a little bit in a way.

14 And the big effect for trappers is
15 during the winter. But this is the first time
16 ever since I started trapping, this year is the
17 first time that the water -- we didn't experience
18 any slush.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: No slush this year?

20 MR. KEITH SETTEE: No slush this year,
21 because we had such a cold winter, it was cold
22 right off the bat, when it was in October or early
23 November, it started getting cold right away. So
24 it froze -- the ice froze nicely, because we
25 didn't have much snow, so it froze very nicely.

1 So when you have a lot of snow and the fluctuating
2 water, the snow pushes down on the ice, squeezes
3 the water out, or when the water comes up, you
4 know, they usually let go, they open the gates in
5 Jenpeg during that time of the month, October,
6 November, between those months, during those
7 months they open the gates and that's when the
8 water comes. And this is where trappers have a
9 hard time traveling. And there is a lot of, I
10 guess you would hear from any trapper that they've
11 experienced a lot of hardship from getting stuck
12 with their snowmobiles.

13 MS. SUEK: Do you want to just clarify
14 that? I was told by someone if it is cold enough
15 and water that comes up when they let the water
16 out, it freezes, and then you don't have slush.
17 You have slush if it is a little bit warmer, and
18 like you say, if there is lots of snow.

19 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Yeah. When there
20 is a lot of snow, the water comes up and there is
21 slush about this much, or it just depends, depends
22 how much. Because the snow is heavy and the slush
23 gets heavy once it is so saturated. But there is
24 still snow up here, dry snow, that's what
25 insulates the water, the slush, it doesn't freeze

1 right way. It acts as an insulator to the slush
2 so it doesn't freeze right away. And that's where
3 the trappers have a hard time. So it delays their
4 activities on trapping. When they go to check
5 traps and come back, they have to wait for this
6 slush to freeze, and that takes a week to two
7 weeks, sometimes three weeks. There is all of the
8 hardships that they have experienced over the
9 years.

10 I'm not much of a fishermen, so I
11 don't know, but a lot of fishermen will tell you
12 the same thing. And even not just the traveling,
13 but the fur bearers, sometimes there is a -- I
14 think I got a couple of pictures where I trapped
15 the martin on a shoreline, and when I went to go
16 check my traps it was under water in the slush,
17 frozen in the slush, but just this spot above the
18 slush ice, yeah. So I had to chop it all around
19 and take the ice with me to thaw it out. Things
20 like that, the trappers have a hard time with.

21 During the summer you won't see --
22 during the summer you would see this water where
23 it was always so clear, and like right now you
24 will see when you take a cup of water, you will
25 see what you are -- like it is all murky and all

1 of that.

2 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: And we used to
3 drink right out of the river.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: How long ago did you
5 drink out of the river?

6 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Before Jenpeg.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: 40 years or more?

8 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Yeah, about --
9 because there is, we call Sand Bay here, there is
10 a sand bay where you drive in from, it is called
11 Sand Bay and there is a beach there. I don't know
12 if you have ever seen it in the summertime, but it
13 used to be so beautiful there on the beach, I
14 don't know, maybe close to a mile long beach. You
15 know, and the sand would go pretty far out into
16 the water, and everybody used to go swim over
17 there.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Is that the one by the
19 band hall?

20 MR. KEITH SETTEE: No, no, this one
21 when you drive into town.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: That long causeway
23 there?

24 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Yes. It used to be
25 so clear, everybody went swimming there. And now

1 it is just dirt, washing off, washing off the
2 sand. And weeds, you never used to see weeds over
3 there, you know, the tall green grass there, I
4 don't know what you call those, but that's all you
5 see now. It used to be so beautiful before, it
6 was before the generating station. And you hardly
7 ever see people who swim over there, just when
8 there is hot days and they have to go swimming.
9 The only time we use it, I guess, is during the
10 family camp out that we have here every year in
11 July. But when the water was high, there was a
12 lot of beach, a lot of swim area that you can --
13 because it used to fill the whole length of the,
14 width of the beach with people swimming.

15 I remember there was this old -- there
16 used to be a barge here to haul kids out to sand
17 bay, gather all of the kids here, and whoever
18 wanted to go swim for the afternoon, they would
19 pick us up in the morning and then -- the guy was
20 over there with a big barge and a whole bunch of
21 kids were on there, and we go swimming for the
22 afternoon and come back late in the evening before
23 sun down. That's how the people used to love to
24 go swimming. Now you won't see that. The odd
25 time people go to the dock or the beach we were

1 talking about there, there is some spots that
2 people swim here, but that's because they have to
3 because it gets hot in the summer. Yeah. You
4 will see some, but before that there was a lot of
5 swimming activities and outdoor activities. They
6 used to be able to enjoy it because it was so
7 clear.

8 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: In the summer
9 when the lake levels come up, it eventually makes
10 its up here. When they are diverting all of the
11 water into the lake, eventually -- we don't hear
12 the flood stuff going on like they do down south
13 until about a month or two later. And during our
14 family camp sometimes there will be a lot of
15 beach, and then by the end of the week there is
16 none left at all. So you can really see it coming
17 up.

18 MR. KEITH SETTEE: And I didn't notice
19 until later on into my years there that, until I
20 started turning my mind to what is happening with
21 Jenpeg, I knew there was a dam there but I didn't
22 really know Lake Winnipeg was being used as a
23 reservoir, and Jenpeg was the controller, like as
24 a control structure, and making the lake to be a
25 reservoir. So I started to understand. So that's

1 why they let go, they opened the gates during
2 October or September, November, or in December
3 even. And I think it was last year, or this
4 year -- last year that they had to open all of the
5 gates most of the winter I think.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: There was, just a year
7 or so ago there was a stretch for a year and a
8 half or two years when the gates were open all of
9 the time.

10 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Yeah, I noticed
11 that, because of the floods.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: That's probably going
13 to continue because of just high water coming into
14 the lake down south. You know, the high water in
15 the Assiniboine River in the last couple of years,
16 high water in Lake of the Woods this last year, so
17 the lake, Lake Winnipeg is full. So they are
18 spilling full time at Jenpeg, or they were.

19 MR. KEITH SETTEE: And that, I'm just
20 wondering, I think that has an effect, to a
21 positive way anyway for this year, in trapping.
22 Since the water is so steady, like steady flowing,
23 it froze nicely. Because if it drops, the ice
24 drops. And when it comes up, when the water
25 overflows the ice, that's when you get the slush

1 ice, and then slush ice is when --

2 MR. HARDEN: So what you need then is
3 either steady or gradually declining?

4 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Yeah, not like the
5 sudden, just open the gates and let go and that's
6 it. Because there is some days that it is really
7 warm and they have a hard time freezing up the
8 slush ice. But this winter it has been quite cold
9 and it froze nicely. I haven't heard much of
10 trappers complaining about slush this year, the
11 first time in 15 years trapping. We have always
12 had trouble, problems.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Are you trapping this
14 winter?

15 MR. KEITH SETTEE: I am, yes.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Are there many animals?

17 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Not really. I'm
18 not really trapping because I started late, I
19 couldn't go out. That's because I've been too
20 busy in town. It is not really my, like to try
21 and make money off my fur. It has been handed
22 down to me, I'm just following my tradition that
23 was handed down from my grandpa and my dad. But
24 what I have noticed is that since I have started
25 trapping, I haven't been able to trap muskrat.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: We have heard there is
2 very few, we have heard there is very few muskrat
3 or beaver.

4 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Um-hum. Anybody
5 else wants to share stories?

6 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: I have a
7 question and a concern. I know with all of the
8 flooding, it is going over all sorts of lands and
9 everything, and eventually that water makes its
10 way up here. Is there any testing being done yet
11 on the poisons and contaminants? Like when we
12 test our water, we are testing for e coli and
13 stuff, I don't think there is any way to test for
14 poison on a regular basis?

15 THE CHAIRMAN: I don't know. I don't
16 know if there is any testing for poisons. Most of
17 what they pick up when there is flood waters on
18 farmland, most of what they pick up is fertilizer,
19 phosphorous and nitrogen, which in and of
20 themselves aren't poisonous, but nitrogen can
21 cause the growth, or actually both of them can
22 cause the growth of some algae, some of which can
23 be toxic. And there is a large growth in algae in
24 Lake Winnipeg, but there hasn't been any real
25 problems to date with toxicity in the algae. But

1 they don't test for it before it enters the lake,
2 they don't test the water that runs off before it
3 enters the lake.

4 MR. YEE: Water Stewardship does
5 conduct water quality monitoring of the lake, and
6 they do more or less standard parameters, both
7 chemical and biological parameters. But we have
8 been told by Water Stewardship they are looking
9 now more at some of the toxins that are produced,
10 but it is such low concentrations that they are
11 not finding any. As well as they are looking at
12 other things like endocrine disrupters from drugs
13 and pharmaceuticals. But they don't do a lot of
14 testing, they just started that program from what
15 I understand.

16 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: Maybe it will
17 go across the water then.

18 MR. YEE: Yes.

19 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: I know that's
20 been a concern here, people have been wondering
21 about that.

22 MS. CONNIE SETTEE: My husband is not
23 a trapper or fishermen or hunter, I don't really
24 have nothing -- well, my dad was a fishermen, a
25 trapper and a hunter. The only thing I remember

1 was cleaning his nets for him, and that's about
2 it. And after -- that's all I can remember. But
3 one thing I remember, one time our people came
4 around, they took the pieces, one strand of our
5 hair, I don't know what for.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: That was for mercury in
7 the fish.

8 MS. CONNIE SETTEE: Yes, that's the
9 only part I remember. I liked listening to the
10 deputy mayor, what he was talking about there.
11 But I can't recite my past, I'm not even -- I'm
12 hardly a tap drinker, I buy my water from the
13 factory here, I hear about this e coli and all of
14 that. And that's about it.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: But your water is
16 treated here, isn't it?

17 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: We have
18 excellent water here.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: There are treatment
20 plants.

21 MR. KEITH SETTEE: The only thing is,
22 I guess, yeah, after treatment, like I guess our
23 water is one of the hardest water to treat because
24 there is so much high turbidity.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: High turbidity?

1 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Yes.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: What you were talking
3 about earlier, about when you said water is the
4 colour of this table top, a lot of that is
5 turbidity.

6 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Yes.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: And sedimentation that
8 gets into it.

9 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: Here and in
10 Norway House have the highest turbidity of all of
11 the plants I think in the province.

12 MR. KEITH SETTEE: There is one spot
13 there that I noticed, is to go on like a plane
14 from Winnipeg to Norway House and then Norway
15 House to here, when you are just setting down to
16 Norway House airport, you can see by air there,
17 when they made that channel there -- I forget what
18 they call that channel?

19 THE CHAIRMAN: 2-mile channel?

20 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Yes, something like
21 that. But it widened over the years, I guess, you
22 can see from the air all of that silt coming out
23 this way into the bay, you can see all of it.
24 There is this late -- he used to be the mayor of
25 Norway House and he used to talk about that. I

1 used to listen to him talk about that during our
2 negotiations with the settlement agreement, and he
3 used to talk about that silt. There used to be
4 high water there, and this silt is coming up from
5 the bottom and making it kind of shallow.

6 So, I used to listen to him, and so I
7 finally noticed it myself, that's where that silt
8 is coming from and all of that. And you can just
9 see it here where it is flowing and it is clear.
10 I finally knew what he was talking about. They
11 say they are not as affected as we are downstream,
12 but I don't know, there is so much, I guess, but
13 they are affected. Yeah.

14 Also Connie Settee was talking about
15 cleaning nets, that's what a lot of these
16 fishermen, it just came to mind and a lot of these
17 fishermen complain about it, is all of the weeds,
18 fluctuating water and you have all of these weeds,
19 weeds flowing from the bottom to the top. And
20 that's when they have, when they clean their nets,
21 all of these weeds are out of the nets, and they
22 have a hard time cleaning their nets and all of
23 that.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Where are the weeds
25 coming from, do you know?

1 MR. KEITH SETTEE: It is just from the
2 bottom, when the water is shallow, the weeds come
3 up, they grow up.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: So their nets drop down
5 into the weeds a bit?

6 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Yeah. And when
7 water comes up, the water takes the weeds out,
8 that's when they get caught, I guess, when they
9 flow in the water, in the channels. I heard
10 fishermen complain about that.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, we have heard a
12 bit of that too.

13 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: And the debris in
14 the water.

15 MR. KEITH SETTEE: And all the dead
16 fall on the shoreline.

17 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: It is steady
18 too, like lots more.

19 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: My dad is a
20 fisherman, commercial fisherman, and this one year
21 I remember, the water was low, it was dropping.
22 His trips from here going to the camp would take
23 him about an hour and a half to get his fish by
24 boat. And then these trips were getting longer,
25 like maybe a half hour longer, two hours it used

1 to take him. And then that's when the water was
2 going down. And then we used to have the, Hydro
3 would have the docks where he would, when he was
4 coming into town, that's where we load up the
5 truck. We would back up the truck towards the
6 dock to load up his fish on to the truck, to
7 transport them to Wabowden fish plant. And then
8 this one summer the water was so low, we couldn't
9 even -- his boat couldn't even reach the dock.
10 And then we had to go by foot in water to go meet
11 his boat. And it was two of us in water and my
12 dad in the boat, and his truck halfway in the
13 water, so we could relay the tubs of fish into the
14 truck, because we couldn't reach the dock like we
15 normally did.

16 And then pretty soon he couldn't use
17 this landing here, the one by the band office,
18 because the water was low. Then we had to move
19 down towards the gravel pit area. Then we
20 couldn't reach that too, so we had to do the same
21 thing there, all that summer we had to do it. So
22 the vehicles, the trucks had to back up into the
23 water, like the tires, the back tires were under
24 the water. And we had to pull the truck out, the
25 truck was in the water, and we had to get another

1 truck to pull him out because of the weight of the
2 fish. It was a hard summer for him.

3 And then we had to use, we had to
4 start using two boats for his fish, because the
5 one boat was too heavy for the fish to drive, we
6 had to try and balance out the boats, so they
7 wouldn't touch bottom, they wouldn't be so heavy,
8 the boat wouldn't be so heavy.

9 MS. SUEK: Do you know when that was?

10 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: I don't know what
11 year that was.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Does he fish on Cross
13 Lake?

14 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: Walker Lake, my
15 dad.

16 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Well, there is
17 certain areas that commercial fishermen have here,
18 and I know he has Walker Lake, Walker Lake and
19 Cross Lake, he had both.

20 MR. HARDEN: Was that before the weir
21 was installed or was it after the weir?

22 MR. KEITH SETTEE: I remember that
23 time he was talking about.

24 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: I'm not sure. It
25 doesn't seem that long ago anyway. I don't know.

1 MR. KEITH SETTEE: It is a few years
2 ago. Because there was a lot of -- a lot of low
3 level water, low level even after that, even after
4 the --

5 MR. HARDEN: Could it have been in
6 2003 maybe, which was a very dry year?

7 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Could be, yeah,
8 could be.

9 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: And then during
10 transport from the camp to here, then by the time
11 we get the fish on, loaded up on to the truck,
12 then it had to be driven out to Wabowden, another
13 two hours there. And then some of his fish was no
14 good already because it was too warm, the ice on
15 top of it had melted already. Like he lost out
16 quite a bit.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: He is still fishing?

18 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: Yes, he is still
19 fishing.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: And is fishing good
21 these days?

22 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: Not really.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Are there many
24 commercial fishermen here?

25 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: I know of my dad,

1 George --

2 MR. KEITH SETTEE: There is only a few
3 active now.

4 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: I think they
5 have an organization or something, a committee or
6 something.

7 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: So many things I
8 clearly remember anyway.

9 MR. KEITH SETTEE: When you say you
10 are traveling around, around these communities,
11 and I was just glancing through a letter there
12 that you had, it said something like about a final
13 licence or something that Hydro is -- I don't
14 know.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: The licence, this
16 project, the Jenpeg project is licensed under the
17 Water Power Act. And at the time that it was
18 built there was no requirement for an Environment
19 Act licence. In fact, most of the -- well, except
20 for Wuskwatim and Keeyask, all of the Hydro
21 projects along here, Jenpeg, Kelsey, Long Spruce,
22 Kettle, Limestone, none of them was built under
23 the Environment Act, so they didn't need to have
24 an environmental assessment or an environmental
25 review of the project, or they didn't need to get

1 an environmental licence either. They get a Water
2 Power Act licence, and the nature of those
3 licences is that they, the company building it,
4 Hydro gets a temporary, or it is called an interim
5 licence.

6 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Okay.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: So when they start to
8 build it, they apply for an interim licence. And
9 after the project is complete, typically they
10 would apply then for a final licence. And this
11 project started in 1970, they got an interim
12 licence in 1970, and then another interim, an
13 amended interim licence in 1972. And then they
14 completed the project in 1976, then they got an
15 interim operating licence. And it was expected
16 that somewhere along the line they would apply for
17 a final licence. But for whatever reason, they
18 waited until 2010 or 2011 to apply for a final
19 licence, which was 35 years.

20 And now, depending on what we hear
21 over the, you know, what we've heard and what we
22 hear over the remaining seven or eight weeks of
23 our hearings, if they get a final licence later
24 this year, it will only be good until 2026.
25 Because the whole licence is good for 50 years.

1 So they will have to apply, probably in about five
2 or six years from now, they will have to apply for
3 a new licence that will come into effect in 2026.

4 So it is a little confusing the way
5 this Water Power Act is set up, but this final
6 licence isn't permanent, it is only good for
7 another 10 or 11 years.

8 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: How does the
9 band and the territory have an effect on that?
10 The whole process that was going on out there,
11 they were saying that it has always been
12 Pimicikamak territory, right?

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah. Well, that falls
14 under different regulations and rules, and
15 actually most of that relationship falls under the
16 Constitution, under section 35, consultation
17 processes, which we don't do. Another branch of
18 government looks after that.

19 So, from what I know of the protest,
20 it wasn't related to this licence application.
21 They may use the licence application as part of
22 their argument in fighting with Hydro, but the
23 main issue, I don't know what the main issue is.
24 But that's another department, or another thing
25 that we are not responsible for, thank goodness.

1 MR. KEITH SETTEE: So when you are
2 talking about the licence, is that for the Jenpeg
3 Generating Station itself?

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

5 MR. KEITH SETTEE: So another licence
6 would have to be applied for, something for
7 Wuskwatim or something, or these other generating
8 stations that are coming up?

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. Hydro -- well,
10 they have a licence for Wuskwatim now because it
11 is up and operating. When they -- when Keeyask,
12 which they are just starting to build now, they
13 were awarded an environmental licence within the
14 last year, July, last July they got the
15 environmental licence. They still require a Water
16 Power Act licence, so that would be an interim
17 licence right now. So we are not certain what
18 licence they got. We know that they got an
19 Environment Act licence last summer for Keeyask.
20 They are probably also operating under an interim
21 Water Power Act licence. But that's just started
22 and that project will carry on probably six or
23 seven years before it is completed.

24 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: So do they now
25 have to apply for an environmental licence, once

1 they try and get the permanent one after?

2 THE CHAIRMAN: For Jenpeg, no. The
3 Environment Act licence applies more than anything
4 to the construction period. This was constructed
5 over 40 years ago now, so an Environment Act
6 licence wouldn't -- well, it was built before the
7 requirement came in.

8 MR. KEITH SETTEE: When did that
9 requirement come in? What year did the Water
10 Power Environment Act or something --

11 THE CHAIRMAN: The Environment Act
12 changed in 1987. The current act was passed in
13 1987 and came into effect in 1988. So actually
14 Wuskwatim was the first Hydro project that
15 required an environmental assessment.

16 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Okay. So, I just
17 was wondering, when you met with the local band
18 and other people today and yesterday -- were you
19 here yesterday?

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, we were.

21 MR. KEITH SETTEE: I was just
22 wondering if -- I wonder, just thinking now, if
23 they are going to use it to their advantage, I
24 guess, with this thing coming so late, where they
25 didn't require a licence back in '72, or when they

1 first started, and they waited until 35 years
2 later or something, I don't know. Do you think
3 they would use that to their advantage?

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Who, the band?

5 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Yes, the band
6 members?

7 THE CHAIRMAN: I couldn't say.

8 MR. KEITH SETTEE: I was just
9 wondering if you guys got any questions like that?

10 THE CHAIRMAN: No, they didn't ask
11 about that actually. More than anything it is a
12 process, this application for the licence and this
13 interim and final is a process question. But the
14 review that we have been asked to do is much
15 broader and looks at a lot of socio-economic and
16 environmental issues and impacts, after the fact
17 impacts.

18 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Okay. Yeah,
19 because consultation is a totally different
20 process too, other than this here?

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, the section 35
22 consultations are totally different. That's a
23 different branch of government does that.

24 MR. HARDEN: We are not here as a
25 representative of the government. We are here as

1 an independent arm's length board that makes
2 recommendations to government as to, you know, how
3 we can mitigate things, or what suggestions we can
4 make for improving operation, or whatever we might
5 come up with.

6 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Um-hum.

7 MR. HARDEN: So, they can accept or
8 reject our recommendations.

9 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: So after all of
10 this is done, is somebody going to be coming
11 around in the summertime to see or have a look at
12 things?

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Not from our
14 Commission, no. Whether there is somebody from
15 other branches of government, I don't know, but
16 our review is right now. We will be finished our
17 review, our hearings in late April. Then about
18 three months later we will deliver a report to the
19 Minister with our conclusions and whatever
20 recommendations we come up with.

21 MR. KEITH SETTEE: So everything is
22 pretty much by -- it seems kind of strange
23 where -- I don't know if I should use strange, but
24 kind of a, I don't know, you had to follow a time
25 frame where you had to finish by April and submit

1 a report by April or something, I don't know. Why
2 didn't they do a, like submit a report during the
3 summer and late summer --

4 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: Recommend that.

5 MR. KEITH SETTEE: -- where you as
6 the -- so you can experience it.

7 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: Have the study
8 done in the summer.

9 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Experience
10 everything, like where you can see, actually see
11 the effects that this generating station did to
12 this community. So, see, right now you can't see
13 much because everything is covered. I was just
14 wondering why you have to have it done in a time
15 frame where you have to be done by April, when it
16 would have been -- you would have seen firsthand
17 experience where you would see, you would actually
18 see what it did to the lands and waterways here,
19 as opposed to winter time where you really have to
20 depend on --

21 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: Where there is
22 vehicles driving over the lake.

23 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Yeah, where you
24 can't see much, everything is under the ice and
25 under the snow, and where you really have to

1 gather everything by word of mouth by people. But
2 in this way, if it happened in the summer, during
3 the summer too, you know, we would have loved to
4 go and take you on little tours where you can see
5 spots where --

6 THE CHAIRMAN: We actually tried to
7 get up here last September to do that, but it
8 didn't work out for actually some of the people in
9 this community, not on your side, but we talked to
10 people in the band at that time about doing that,
11 but it didn't work out. When would the lake be
12 clear?

13 MR. KEITH SETTEE: It will all be open
14 by May. In April it starts melting.

15 MR. CAMERON MCLEOD: Ice break up.

16 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Then May it is open
17 already. By June all of the ice is melted off the
18 shorelines, where you can actually see. I don't
19 know what the water level is going to be this
20 summer, like what you said it is pretty high down
21 south, all of the flooding, all the snow.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: There is actually not a
23 lot of snow in the south. Well, there is some,
24 but not a lot, not like last year. Last year we
25 had snow over our heads, and this year it is

1 fairly low so far.

2 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: We are
3 concerned about fires already this summer because
4 there is so little snow. It dries out.

5 MR. YEE: Well, we have actually been
6 here in the late fall during Keeyask, to the band,
7 and they have showed us a lot of photos of the
8 area and some of the damage that's been done to
9 the shoreline. As well, we even got a sample of
10 their water, showing the water quality.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Somebody, tomorrow,
12 somebody who teaches at Mikisew School is going to
13 have a presentation, powerpoint presentation, and
14 a bunch of pictures that he has taken. We have
15 had people show us and commit to sending us copies
16 of a lot of pictures along the shorelines and
17 different places, the impacts, the debris on the
18 shorelines.

19 MR. KEITH SETTEE: I actually seen
20 one, I guess it must have been footage, it has
21 been around for a while, I have seen where --
22 maybe you guys saw it too, it was a little clip of
23 footage from the residential school that was here,
24 you can see the residential school in the
25 background, where the water was so high. It

1 looked nice, it was black and white footage
2 anyway, but it looked nice, and the water was so
3 high. I don't know who has that footage.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: I haven't seen that.

5 MR. KEITH SETTEE: That used to be
6 around, footage, he was the one that -- I don't
7 know where he got it from, I don't know, he was
8 the one that took the footage with an old camera
9 or something. Okay. Well, I guess you have seen
10 pretty much what they showed you, and they have
11 all kinds of these pictures and that's good.

12 Rosalie, do you have anything?

13 MS. ROSALIE HALCROW: I just want to
14 mention something about my late husband. He went,
15 him and his friend went fishing, sturgeon fishing.
16 But long time ago he would still travel by boat to
17 go fishing, sturgeon fishing, and I used to go out
18 with them with these two other couples, but I
19 don't remember when was that. And we usually used
20 to go by foot, and then by boat, and I used to see
21 them pull this boat up on the high hill. I had a
22 lot of pictures for me from those, that time, but
23 my shed burned and all of my pictures burnt. And
24 then it was quite an adventure for me that time.

25 And ten years, it is going to be ten

1 years in June, June 17th, that they went sturgeon
2 fishing, and I don't know what happened, and they
3 both died. They had an accident. Because there
4 was no portages -- or what do you call it -- at
5 that time built, or even the four wheeler there,
6 that's what I heard anyways. Three days before
7 that they went and put their nets, and they had to
8 go, they had to go back the third day. But they
9 couldn't go right away because his friend, his
10 friend's motor broke, and they couldn't find a
11 boat right away so they left a little bit late
12 that evening. And then he said that they were
13 going to come back that same day, but they never
14 made it back. To this day, I don't really know
15 what happened.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Where was that?

17 MS. ROSALIE HALCROW: I don't know, I
18 don't know where exactly. I don't know. I don't
19 really know.

20 Everybody was involved at that time,
21 because when my husband's friend couldn't be found
22 right away until five days after, there was a lot
23 of people involved around the community. And the
24 councillors, they know all about it and they
25 should have the papers.

1 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: I have got a
2 whole disk that went to the RCMP, of the whole
3 search.

4 MS. SUEK: And you don't know what
5 happened to them?

6 MS. ROSALIE HALCROW: They drowned,
7 though, but I don't know, I don't really know what
8 happened.

9 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Well, from what I
10 gather from the people, these experienced outdoors
11 man, the fishermen, that there is certain
12 fishermen that go where they have to travel
13 through rapids, and there is portages that usually
14 have -- but they know where to go to portage. And
15 from what I gathered from other fishermen, that
16 what they suspect, or they gather what happened to
17 them. And they were saying from the low waters,
18 it is hard to portage an aluminum boat, and they
19 are using a Lund. When the water is high here,
20 your angle of your portage is high, you wouldn't
21 try to push up an aluminum. So the way they used
22 to portage is one would pull, one would pull the
23 boat and one would push out the boat, so it
24 doesn't come against the rocks like this, so it
25 doesn't get caught. And it helps his partner.

1 And what I think, what they think
2 happened is that they were doing the same thing,
3 they were trying to portage around. Because they
4 had all of their -- all of their gear up already,
5 but they just had their last -- their boat they
6 had to take up. And this is what happened to them
7 after that. Somebody must have lost footing or
8 something.

9 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: Thank you for
10 sharing that Rosalie.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: We heard from somebody
12 else about trying to get another, a new portage
13 built across one of the islands near the weir. So
14 I'm just wondering if that's related to your
15 story.

16 MR. KEITH SETTEE: No, that's a
17 different place.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Different place?

19 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Where the weir is,
20 it's close by here, but...

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

22 MR. KEITH SETTEE: But there is a few
23 cases where, a few incidents where actually a lot
24 of people, they just about had close calls on that
25 weir, where they are saying that their motor

1 stopped, and just about any second down that --

2 MS. ROSALIE HALCROW: That's what
3 happened when they first went there, I guess their
4 motor had stopped. He was telling me about that,
5 I guess their motor stopped, and then he was in
6 front trying to paddle away from that stream or
7 something. And the other guy kept on trying the
8 motor and it didn't want to start. And I guess
9 the motor started as they were close to that thing
10 and they went this way. He was telling me about
11 that story. But he didn't tell me right away
12 until he left, about half an hour's time.

13 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Like there is a lot
14 of experienced trappers that shoot these portages
15 with their motors, but there is not a lot of them,
16 there is only a few that are able to do that.
17 Like me, if you asked, I wouldn't try to do that
18 because that's not -- my trapline area is
19 different than theirs. These trappers, they trap
20 there, when they were young with their grandpas,
21 and they get all of that passed down to them. And
22 they did a lot of stuff in those days. Those
23 people are the only ones that know the area where
24 they can shoot these rapids by boat. And there is
25 only a few of them. Nobody else would dare do it.

1 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: Apparently Bob
2 got home late from work and he is not feeling
3 well. So he apologizes.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: That's okay. I think
5 we have had a good discussion here, we have heard
6 some good things from you, and it corroborates
7 some of the other stuff that we have heard, but
8 some of it is different as well.

9 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: Something
10 about the high turbidity and the high levels and
11 the current is it costs us way more for water
12 treatment than AMA puts on their MCA. But they
13 admit that it is one of the highest turbidity
14 plants for the intakes.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

16 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: It's way more,
17 like it's double the cost that they think it
18 should be for a 500 people community.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Is that how many live
20 in the community, approximately 500?

21 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: Approximately,
22 yes. But we provide treated water for the band
23 office, band hall. There is about 30 houses from
24 the reserve that are on the main water line.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, it seems that's

1 about it. Anybody have any more questions or
2 comments?

3 Well, thank you very much for coming
4 out and giving us your time. If we didn't hear
5 that, then we wouldn't get our job done very well.
6 So it is important that we hear from folks like
7 you in these communities. So thank you very much.

8 I can't promise you that -- we don't
9 know what our recommendations might be yet. I can
10 tell you that things will not get better
11 overnight, and things may not get better for a
12 long time. And in some ways, given the amount of
13 damage that's done, it is hard to say how much of
14 it could ever be fixed. But if we can find even
15 small ways to change how it operates and make life
16 a little bit better, then that would be positive.
17 So that's what we are hoping, but at this point I
18 can't guarantee that anything like that will
19 happen.

20 Our process, as I said earlier, our
21 time line is more or less the end of April and
22 then we have three months to do our report. So
23 something will come out late July. We do make
24 printed copies and we also post it on our website.

25 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: Can we get

1 copies?

2 MS. JOHNSON: Sure. Let us know how
3 many you want.

4 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: It does give
5 some employment to people, having Manitoba Hydro.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, yeah, for sure. In
7 September, I think, we went up to Jenpeg and they
8 toured us around, and they took us up the river
9 and they showed us crews that were cleaning
10 shorelines up river from the dam, and most of the
11 workers were from Cross Lake, most if not all of
12 them were from Cross Lake.

13 MR. KEITH SETTEE: The forebay.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, the forebay.

15 MS. ROSALIE HALCROW: It just seems to
16 keep coming.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: We have talked with a
18 lot of people in the last two days and they have
19 showed us pictures and it's just --

20 MR. KEITH SETTEE: Did they show you
21 where our islands used to be?

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah. We saw one --
23 where was it, was it Manigotagan? They had a
24 video of a chunk of land floating out into the
25 lake. It was a fairly big one, it was about the

1 size of this building.

2 MR. HARDEN: That was Black River.

3 MS. ROSEANN MACFADGEN: Are we done
4 the official business?

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

6 (Concluded at 7:50 p.m.)

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OFFICIAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE

I, CECELIA J. REID, a duly appointed Official
Examiner in the Province of Manitoba, do hereby
certify the foregoing pages are a true and correct
transcript of my Stenotype notes as taken by me at
the time and place hereinbefore stated, to the
best of my skill and ability.

Cecelia J. Reid
Official Examiner, Q.B.

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