

MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

LAKE WINNIPEG REGULATION REVIEW
UNDER THE WATER POWER ACT

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Transcript of Proceedings
Held at Private Chief Memorial Centre
Brokenhead, Manitoba
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 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
Melissa Hotaine - Community Liaison

MANITOBA HYDRO

Dale Hutchison

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1 TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2015

2 UPON COMMENCING AT 10:00 A.M.

3

4 MR. GORD BLUESKY: Good morning. I
5 would just like to get the Commission hearing
6 started. I just wanted to introduce myself, I'm
7 Gord Bluesky, the lands resources manager here for
8 the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation. We just recently
9 conducted a vote so we are now also a First Nation
10 lands management sectorial self-governing First
11 Nation, which means we have direct control and
12 administration of our lands here in Brokenhead.

13 So with that being said, I just wanted
14 to kind of go through what it is we are going to
15 be doing here immediately, and then getting into
16 the presentations. Now, we do have our --
17 starting off with, I wanted to first invite Chief
18 Bear up quickly. Did you want to do that now? We
19 will do that now. Then after that we are going to
20 be getting into a quick ceremony for that water
21 that we'll be talking about today.

22 CHIEF JIM BEAR: Thanks so much, Gord.
23 Good morning. And Terry I understand that you are
24 the chair?

25 THE CHAIRMAN: I am.

1 CHIEF JIM BEAR: It is nice to see you
2 once again. Good morning elders and commissioners
3 and other individuals who will be making
4 presentations. I would like to welcome you out to
5 the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation. And I hope that
6 you walk away today with a good feel and a good
7 sense of the destruction that has been caused by
8 Manitoba Hydro in particular. The economy has
9 certainly changed in the community, and we have
10 had tourism and other things impacted. But others
11 will be making presentations, aside from myself.
12 So I just want to first of all welcome you and
13 look forward to a great hearing and a good
14 understanding, better understanding by all of us,
15 and that we all move forward together, because we
16 are all interconnected and we all have an impact
17 on each other, and we just want the best for
18 Manitoba and for Canada. So, miigwech.

19 MR. GORD BLUESKY: With that being
20 said, we are going to move into our ceremony, and
21 I would like to have an elder come, Elder Kent
22 come and explain a little bit prior to us moving
23 into the ceremony itself. We felt that it was
24 very important for us to start off from our
25 perspective.

1 MR. RALPH KENT: (Native language
2 spoken). That's my spirit name, Little Buffalo,
3 and I am a Linx Clan, that's on my Ojibway side.
4 My Lakota side is (native language spoken), which
5 means Fast Cloud. I didn't know this, but when my
6 parents died, my grandmother had told me, when she
7 was crying telling me this, she adopted my dad,
8 John Kent, when he was about ten months old. This
9 young woman couldn't take care of him so she gave
10 him to her. That's how my ancestry come from Pine
11 Ridge. But I grew up here as Ojibway, and I
12 learned both languages a little bit, you know, all
13 the bad words first.

14 But what we have here, because it is
15 water, and water is very, very important to
16 Anishinabe, and I think it is important to all
17 people. Like what is happening in Winnipeg, that
18 boil water advisory stuff, you know what I think
19 that is, what us spiritual people believe that is,
20 we know it is people from Shoal Lake and they say
21 some day that city is going to answer for that.
22 They heard their own people saying that, because
23 they tried away back in the early 1900s, or the
24 late 1800s, or whatever, to tell them not to dig
25 there, don't make it there, because there is

1 burial there. All they did was come in and
2 bulldoze all of the graves off to the side and put
3 the aqueduct there. Now, it is (Ojibway spoken),
4 which means in Ojibway, what goes around -- rough
5 translation -- what goes around comes around. And
6 we don't want that to happen to this lake.

7 Because our old people tell us, told
8 us, they are all gone now, the reserves that
9 thrived were the ones that lived by the lake,
10 Brokenhead and Sandy Bay. Swan Lake, Roseau
11 River, and all of those other reserves that didn't
12 have a lake, they suffered a lot, a lot of their
13 people died. So I'm grateful for that lake.

14 And that's what we are here to do
15 today, and because it is water, these are water
16 drums. First of all, that one with the red ring
17 on it, that's the grandmother drum. My wife, she
18 sits with that one. I sit with this one here,
19 this is the grandfather drum. And our son sits
20 with the little boy water drum, the seven stones,
21 the seven teachings.

22 Now, I have been to many meetings here
23 and other places, and it is always somebody else
24 doing the opening and doing all of the
25 presentations and all that. We are the hosts

1 here, we live here, we know what the lake is.
2 These two ugly fishermen here, I fished with those
3 guys. So, recently we have had to pull up our
4 nets, we had three nets, my sons and I out on Lake
5 Winnipeg. And we only caught 17 fish, just 17
6 fish. And two years ago we would get a tub and a
7 half to two tubs per net. So there is a big, big
8 difference that happened.

9 So what we are going to do, we are
10 going to sing some songs here. We are going to
11 start off with (native language spoken), with us.
12 We are a matriarchal people. The women -- it is
13 like at a feast, a true traditional feast is all
14 of the women and children eat first. The men eat
15 last, because the men are the ones that go out and
16 gather the food and bring it back, and the women
17 and children prepared that food, so they should
18 eat first. So she is going to sing an appropriate
19 song for this. And I don't think you need the
20 mic. She is kind of shy.

21 (Opening Ceremony)

22 MR. RALPH KENT: I have been called
23 all sorts of names, from wagon burner to First
24 Nations to Aboriginal to all of that. But I don't
25 mind, I'm still here. And the very important

1 thing is that mother earth is being polluted.
2 From the south you got the Red River, from the
3 west you got the Assiniboine, to the east you got
4 the Winnipeg River. It all comes into the centre.
5 If you take a look at the centre, the geographical
6 centre, there is a monument over there by
7 Headingley, along the highway, that says the
8 geographical centre is here. And we have been
9 told a long time ago that we are the keepers of
10 the centre. Being Anishinabe, you have a very
11 important gift, and they are the keepers of the
12 centre. And this is what we are living up to
13 today, because today -- last night was a full moon
14 and today we are going to have a full moon sweat.
15 We are all going to go and sweat, every full moon,
16 and the women lead that. And we are a maker of
17 the people, so Glenda and my two sisters, Gail
18 sitting next to her in the white, Donna over there
19 in the black, and my son and his girlfriend over
20 there, my daughter over here and her ugly man over
21 there, we all work together. Oh, yeah, Sweet Pea,
22 he is the ugliest, I don't even want to mention
23 him.

24 So these things that I talk about are
25 very, very important to us, these instruments,

1 these water drums. We also have a Sundance drum,
2 we have been involved for many, many, many years.
3 I started out in 1977. And this coming June it
4 will be 30 years since I quit drinking, taking
5 alcohol, drugs. And I live as close as I can to a
6 traditional lifestyle. And we've made an offering
7 this morning from the fish that we caught. We
8 went and put it out in the bush, so that the
9 things will go in a good way here, that there will
10 be good communication between us and the people
11 involved. I think, I'm not sure who is all
12 involved here, I know that Manitoba Hydro -- is
13 the Province here? No?

14 THE CHAIRMAN: We are a Provincial
15 agency, but we don't represent a Provincial
16 department.

17 MR. RALPH KENT: Okay. Well, you will
18 do.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: As long as you don't
20 call me ugly.

21 MR. RALPH KENT: And bald.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: That I can't argue
23 with.

24 MR. RALPH KENT: He has got a lot of
25 face to wash, that guy.

1 So, I don't know what you have in mind
2 here, Gord. You got something?

3 MR. GORD BLUESKY: Yes, as soon as you
4 are done, we are going to take over.

5 MR. RALPH KENT: I think it was 1967,
6 I was just a little guy, and I asked my dad, why
7 is the water so damn high? It is way up into the
8 trees there by our house. And he said, well, they
9 are going to build a dam up north and they put up
10 a temporary dam, I believe they called it a
11 cofferdam, where they block off the water to build
12 a permanent dam. So the water kept coming up, and
13 we noticed that all the rat houses and the beaver
14 houses were getting all washed away. Because when
15 you get a north wind, all of that water comes.
16 So, we began to notice that change. And I guess
17 Kenny, you, yourself, we are about the same age,
18 only thing I'm better looking -- yeah he is
19 saying.

20 Then a long time ago we had seen this,
21 we lived it. And today, this year is one of the
22 worst years ever for fishing. It wasn't too bad,
23 but we used to see all kinds -- one time I saw a
24 big, big black island land out there. So I went
25 out there with my boat, and there was all kinds of

1 garbage that had come out of the Red River. There
2 was blue barrels, there was docks, there was even
3 fish shacks. It all come together way out there,
4 and it went north.

5 Now, when the water turns, I don't
6 know if you understand that, but when the water,
7 the air and the water get to about the same
8 temperature, the water will turn. The bottom will
9 come to the top, the top will go to the bottom.
10 And when that happens, anything on the bottom, we
11 have even caught aluminum cans, flattened aluminum
12 cans, plastic bottles on our nets. And there was
13 a lot of it. But we still managed to catch the
14 fish. And for some of us, we love eating fish.
15 We smoke fish, we -- the only thing is the paper
16 gets kind of greasy when you roll it.

17 MR. GORD BLUESKY: All right. I would
18 like to thank Elder Kent and his family for
19 starting us off this morning. What I wanted to
20 do, I guess, is give everyone an understanding of
21 why we are here. Obviously, we would like to
22 start the hearing process and start to introduce
23 presenters. We wanted to hear also the
24 introduction from the panel, so I guess we can
25 maybe move into that. And I know we also have

1 Manitoba Hydro representatives here that will also
2 help to assist us with a quick presentation.

3 So what we have here is opening
4 remarks, ceremony, the hearing process, Commission
5 introduction, the purpose, Hydro, and then we will
6 get into presentations, and we will start with
7 Chief Jim Bear from there. So I pass it over to
8 the Commission and whoever else from the
9 Commission -- I know we have been working pretty
10 close with Melissa Hotain. She has been assisting
11 us through the process, and I would like to give
12 her thanks for that, and bringing us here today.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Bluesky.

14 Good morning, thank you for your
15 welcome into your community. My name is Terry
16 Sargeant, and I'm the chair of the Manitoba Clean
17 Environment Commission, as well I'm the chair of
18 the panel conducting this review.

19 At the outset I would like to note
20 that we are holding these meetings, the Commission
21 is present here today in the traditional territory
22 of the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, and that you are
23 a Treaty 1 First Nation. I would like to thank
24 the leadership of your community for accepting our
25 invitation to host the Commission to hear concerns

1 from people in your community.

2 I would like to say, Jim noted earlier
3 in his comments, Chief Bear noted earlier in his
4 comments that it had been a long time since we
5 have seen each other. It has been a long time
6 since I have been in Brokenhead, it's over 30
7 years, and just in the little bit I have been
8 around, I have noticed many, many changes, all for
9 the positive.

10 I have good memories of this
11 community, a lot of very friendly people. I guess
12 also memories, at the time I was last here, both
13 Chief Bear and I were much younger men, but we are
14 still handsome in spite of what Mr. Kent has to
15 say.

16 Let me introduce the other members of
17 our panel. On my left is Neil Harden, on my right
18 is Edwin Yee and Bev Suek. With us today we also
19 have staff, our Commission secretary, Cathy
20 Johnson, our Commission administrator, Joyce
21 Mueller, our community liaison person, Melissa
22 Hotain, also technical staff, our report writer,
23 Bob Armstrong, and our recorder, Cece Reid.

24 We are here today because in 2011, the
25 Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship

1 asked us to hold hearings throughout a good part
2 of the province, in communities around both the
3 north and south basins of Lake Winnipeg, as well
4 as in the City of Winnipeg, to hear concerns that
5 people might have about the impacts from Manitoba
6 Hydro's regulation of the lake.

7 I would like to note that while Lake
8 Winnipeg Regulation is a key part of Manitoba
9 Hydro's regime, we have not been asked to look at
10 any other parts of the regime, simply at the
11 impacts of regulation. And a bit more
12 specifically, we have been asked to look at the
13 reasons why Lake Winnipeg Regulation came into
14 being with the issuance of the first licence in
15 1970. We have been asked to look at whether or
16 not Lake Winnipeg Regulation has succeeded or
17 failed in achieving those goals. And also to look
18 at the effects and impacts of Lake Winnipeg
19 Regulation since its first operation in 1976.

20 We try to make our hearings,
21 particularly in the communities outside of the
22 city, we try to make them as informal as possible,
23 to encourage as many people as possible to come
24 forward and share their thoughts with us.

25 The hearings are recorded. This is

1 required by the Environment Act. A verbatim
2 transcript of today's proceedings will be produced
3 in the next two or three days and posted on our
4 website.

5 Anyone who is here is welcome to come
6 up and make a presentation. If you feel more
7 comfortable coming up with somebody else, that's
8 quite all right as well. If you feel more
9 comfortable speaking in your own language, that's
10 also okay. Although, if you do speak in Ojibway,
11 we would ask that you or somebody translate, just
12 so we know what you said.

13 When you make a presentation, we would
14 like to know who you are. We want you to tell us
15 how Lake Winnipeg Regulation has impacted, perhaps
16 benefited you, how it has impacted your community,
17 your views on whether or not it has been
18 worthwhile for the province as a whole. We also
19 would like to hear from you if you have any
20 thoughts as to what decisions we should reach when
21 it comes time for us to make our recommendations
22 to the Minister.

23 Typically, we limit oral presentations
24 to 15 minutes. We have found that in the
25 communities outside of the city that's never

1 really an issue. For the most part many people
2 just speak for a few minutes, and then somebody
3 else speaks, and then the first person will come
4 back with another thought. And that's quite fine,
5 we have no problem with that.

6 Finally, for opening comments, I would
7 just like to say that if you don't feel
8 comfortable making a public presentation, or if
9 you know somebody else who wasn't able to come
10 here today, and you want to share, or they want to
11 share their thoughts with us, we do accept written
12 submissions. That need not be anything more
13 complicated than a letter or email sent to us.
14 The address, again, is available on our website.
15 Any written submissions that we receive are
16 treated with the same degree of importance as any
17 oral presentations. We read all of the written
18 presentations, they become a part of the record,
19 just as everything else that we have heard.

20 That's all I have by way of opening
21 comments. We will have a brief presentation from
22 Manitoba Hydro, explaining what Lake Winnipeg
23 Regulation is all about. And then we will turn to
24 you in the community for your presentation.

25 We will now invite Dale Hutchison from

1 Manitoba Hydro to come forward and explain these
2 panels.

3 MR. HUTCHISON: Thank you Commissioner
4 Sargeant. Is everybody here?

5 My name is Dale Hutchison. Respected
6 elders, Chief Bear, council, members of Brokenhead
7 Ojibway Nation, thank you for inviting me to your
8 territory to speak about the Lake Winnipeg
9 Regulation project. Thank you also for that
10 moving water ceremony.

11 I have been working with Manitoba
12 Hydro for 15 years to understand our impacts on
13 the waterways and on the people that we share them
14 with. Our presentation today will talk about the
15 Manitoba Hydro system, Lake Winnipeg, and our Lake
16 Winnipeg Regulation project. I'm also joined here
17 today with Murray Neufeld, who is from our
18 customer service office in Lac du Bonnet.

19 I will use these four banners to cover
20 this presentation. I hope you can see it. And if
21 you can't, I will keep them up and at the end of
22 the meeting, you can always come up for a closer
23 look.

24 So first I will talk about the
25 Manitoba Hydro system. A huge area, from the

1 Rocky Mountains in the west, to Lake Superior, the
2 edge of Lake Superior in the east, and south into
3 the Red River Valley of the United States flows
4 into Lake Winnipeg. The shape of the land is like
5 a million square kilometre bowl, and that's what
6 makes hydroelectric development possible on a
7 large scale in Manitoba.

8 There are 15 generating stations in
9 Manitoba to take advantage of this water flowing
10 through the province. These are shown by the blue
11 dots on the map, and the size of the dot, small,
12 medium and large, shows how much electricity each
13 of these generating stations can produce. There
14 are six small generating stations on the Winnipeg
15 River, a medium-sized generating station on the
16 Saskatchewan River at Grand Rapids. The Nelson
17 River flows out of Lake Winnipeg into Hudson Bay.
18 We have a small generating station at Jenpeg on
19 the west branch of the Nelson River. North of the
20 Nelson is the Churchill River, which also flows
21 into Hudson Bay. Rather than building generating
22 stations on this far northern river, its waters
23 were diverted in what is called the Churchill
24 River Diversion. This project involved placing a
25 control or a dam at the outflow of Southern Indian

1 Lake, raising the level of that lake nine feet,
2 and flowing most of the water into the Nelson
3 where it joined it at Split Lake.

4 The newest generating station,
5 Wuskwatim, is located on this Churchill River
6 Diversion route. So the main hydroelectric
7 benefit of Churchill River Diversion is that from
8 Split Lake downstream, the Nelson has the benefit
9 of two rivers. And you can see by the large blue
10 dots that our largest generating stations, Kettle,
11 Long Spruce and Limestone, are located downstream
12 of Split Lake. These three stations alone produce
13 70 per cent of all electricity in Manitoba.

14 Keeyask is currently under
15 construction and will be a medium-sized station on
16 this stretch of river downstream of Split Lake.

17 To move the electricity from these
18 northern stations to the south, there are two high
19 voltage bipole lines that run from Gillam 1,000
20 kilometres to a converter station near Winnipeg.
21 There is a third bipole line that's currently
22 being constructed, known as Bipole III. From the
23 converter station near Winnipeg there are 100,000
24 kilometres of distribution lines that take this
25 electricity to homes and businesses throughout

1 Manitoba.

2 We also use natural gas to produce
3 electricity at generating stations in Brandon and
4 Selkirk. In an emergency, we can use coal at our
5 station in Brandon. Also, we purchase energy from
6 wind farms at St. Leon and St. Joseph. You may
7 have seen these if you have driven to the States,
8 the winds mills on the side of highway.

9 All together the Manitoba Hydro system
10 uses water to produce 95 per cent of all of the
11 electricity made.

12 Now we will talk about Lake Winnipeg.
13 It is the tenth largest freshwater lake in the
14 world. It is Manitoba's great lake. Over a dozen
15 rivers flow into Lake Winnipeg. However, there is
16 only one natural outflow, the Nelson River. This
17 can make it easy for the lake to flood. The mouth
18 of the Nelson River is wide, but it is very
19 shallow, which means that over the winter ice can
20 block the flow of water out of the lake.

21 Historically, flooding has caused lots of problems
22 for people living around the lake, to the point
23 where cottages -- or to the point where highways
24 were closed, farmers crops were lost, homes and
25 cottages were damaged. This put a lot of pressure

1 on the government to do something about it.

2 These are Winnipeg Free Press
3 headlines, and pictures of flooding events in
4 recent history, times like 1927, 1954, 1955, 1966,
5 1968, 1969, 1970. As I said, this put a lot of
6 pressure on the government to do something about
7 it. So in 1970, the Premier of Manitoba announced
8 plans to proceed with Lake Winnipeg Regulation for
9 flood relief on Lake Winnipeg and power production
10 on the Nelson River.

11 This is where I have to look at my
12 notes.

13 So, now we will talk about Lake
14 Winnipeg Regulation project, which I will call LWR
15 so I can save some breath.

16 Before we could build LWR, first we
17 needed a licence from the province. This is
18 similar to getting a building permit before you
19 build a house. This initial licence is called an
20 interim licence, and to get it we had to provide
21 information on what we were planning to build and
22 the effect it would have on water levels and
23 flows.

24 The province granted us an interim
25 licence in 1970, which gave us the approval to

1 build LWR. They also gave us rules for how it
2 could be operated. And there were three types of
3 rules: The first rule was operating ranges for
4 Lake Winnipeg and some of the downstream lakes.
5 For instance, on Lake Winnipeg between elevation
6 711 and 715, Manitoba Hydro can decide how much
7 water to flow through Jenpeg in order to meet
8 electricity demands. Above elevation 715, we have
9 to let as much water as possible out of the lake.
10 This is called maximum discharge. And below
11 elevation 711, the Minister of Conservation and
12 Water Stewardship tells us how much water to let
13 out of Lake Winnipeg.

14 The second type of rule is we can't --
15 is that there always must be a minimum flow of
16 water out of Lake Winnipeg all of the time.

17 And the third rule is that we can't
18 change the rate of water flow at Jenpeg too fast.

19 We agreed with these rules and built
20 LWR by 1976.

21 The next step in the licence process
22 is to request a final licence which is good for 50
23 years from the date of construction. In this
24 case, the LWR final licence will expire in 2026,
25 which is only 11 years away. We applied for a

1 final licence in 2010, after many years of
2 negotiations with communities, First Nations and
3 resource user groups on the Nelson River, in order
4 to address impacts from LWR. Before our licence
5 expires in 2026, we will ask the province to renew
6 our licence for up to another 50 years.

7 So LWR, Lake Winnipeg Regulation,
8 involved digging a second outlet for Lake
9 Winnipeg, along with two other channels, to
10 increase the flow of water out of the lake. Of
11 course, these channels alone would drain the lake,
12 so it was necessary to build a dam at Jenpeg to
13 control the inflow of water from the west branch
14 of the Nelson River.

15 So using an example of a faucet, tub
16 and drain, if all of these rivers around Lake
17 Winnipeg are flowing into Lake Winnipeg, are
18 represented by the water drop under the faucet,
19 the water drop under the drain represents the
20 water flow out of the natural channel, the Nelson
21 River.

22 In this lower diagram you can see that
23 there is a second drain, and that represents the
24 LWR channel. The water drop under it is half the
25 size of the natural channel, represented by the

1 Nelson River.

2 You can see, though, that these two
3 drops are still smaller than the water drop coming
4 into the lake. So that means that whenever the
5 lake -- whenever there is a flood in the
6 watershed, there is more water coming into the
7 lake than can leave it, which means that the water
8 level will rise and the lake will flood. However,
9 with Lake Winnipeg Regulation, the water level
10 won't rise quite as high and the lake will not be
11 in flood as long.

12 I hate having to bring up a chart but
13 it is really the only way to demonstrate changes
14 in water flow over time. And what this chart
15 represents is that Lake Winnipeg Regulation has
16 reduced flooding on Lake Winnipeg. One side of
17 the chart has the elevation above sea level. The
18 bottom of the chart has the 40 years since 1977,
19 the first full year LWR was in operation, up to
20 today in 2015. The blue line represents the
21 actual water level with Lake Winnipeg Regulation,
22 and the red line represents what the water level
23 would have been if LWR did not exist.

24 Now, I think you all noticed that the
25 last decade in particular has been very wet, with

1 a lot of water flow into Lake Winnipeg and down
2 the Nelson River. What this chart shows is that
3 in years like 1997, 2005, 2011, 2014, that the
4 lake would have gotten two feet higher and the
5 flood would have lasted a lot longer if LWR did
6 not exist. In fact, in the last ten years, the
7 water level of Lake Winnipeg rarely would have
8 gotten below elevation 715. So this information
9 demonstrates that LWR is meeting its goal of
10 providing flood relief around Lake Winnipeg.

11 Now, in this last banner, over here, I
12 want to show you what happens downstream of Lake
13 Winnipeg. 20,000 people live along the Nelson
14 River. Land and water are extremely important to
15 their identity and livelihood. All Manitobans
16 benefit by having low cost reliable electricity,
17 and people around Lake Winnipeg benefit from the
18 flood relief provided by LWR. However, people
19 downstream of Lake Winnipeg have suffered by
20 having more water flow down the Nelson River
21 during times -- during the winter and during times
22 of flood. This additional water has caused
23 significant impacts to these people.

24 In natural conditions lake levels and
25 river flows gradually decrease over the winter.

1 With LWR water flows from the winter, or during
2 the winter are much higher, up to 50 per cent
3 higher than they would have been without this
4 project. This water affects ice conditions on the
5 waterways, which can make travel more dangerous.
6 It also negatively affects aquatic animals like
7 beaver, mink, muskrat and otter. During the
8 summer months, any time the elevation of Lake
9 Winnipeg gets close to or above elevation 715,
10 Jenpeg goes to maximum discharge, sending a surge
11 of water down the Nelson River. This affects
12 water level, or causes water level fluctuations on
13 the river and on the lakes. Ultimately, this
14 change in water flow from LWR affects the
15 cultural, commercial, recreational, and spiritual
16 pursuits of people living downstream of Lake
17 Winnipeg.

18 Working together, in Cree this is
19 called witasosketowin, with the people who live
20 and work along the Nelson River, Manitoba Hydro
21 continues to address impacts, through agreements
22 and other arrangements, through projects like the
23 Cross Lake Weir, through programs for resource
24 harvesting, access and navigation, recreation,
25 archaeology and heritage resources, like the

1 pictures shown in this banner.

2 Thank you for inviting me to speak. I
3 hope you have a productive meeting with the
4 Commissioners of the Clean Environment Commission.
5 Murray and I would be pleased to talk to you after
6 your meeting. Miigwech.

7 MR. RALPH KENT: I have got a
8 question.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: You will need to use
10 the mic, Mr. Kent. We need to record everything.

11 MR. RALPH KENT: That river there that
12 you say was very shallow, but it is the only
13 outlet into the Hudson Bay.

14 MR. HUTCHISON: Yes, right here might
15 be the easiest. This is the Nelson River.

16 MR. RALPH KENT: Oh yeah. Is that the
17 same thing there?

18 MR. HUTCHISON: Yes, the same thing
19 here.

20 MR. RALPH KENT: Well, if they can dig
21 a channel and flood out that reserve over there,
22 why couldn't they dig the channel going deeper,
23 maybe a little wider, going north. Too much
24 Zhooniyaa or what?

25 MR. HUTCHISON: It would have cost a

1 lot of money, yes.

2 MR. RALPH KENT: There we go, it is
3 all about Zhooniyaa. In Lakota we call that
4 (native language spoken). It is all about money.
5 I'm not trying to rub it into you, I'm just making
6 a point here. Okay.

7 So if that river is shallow, why
8 couldn't -- you have got all kinds of machinery
9 today, dig it deeper, dig it wider, and then
10 regulate the flow of Lake Winnipeg, or is that --
11 I got to be a white person in order for somebody
12 to listen me. Don't forget, I'm a (native
13 language spoken). Miigwech.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Now we will
15 turn it over to you for presentations,
16 Mr. Bluesky. Sorry, this fellow has a question.

17 SPEAKER: Dale, just a very quick
18 question. From what you just finished saying now,
19 you diverted water from the Churchill River into
20 the Nelson, all right. So, in effect, what you
21 had previously is you had two channels flowing out
22 into the Hudson Bay, now you have re-directed it
23 all into one channel, and you also just finished
24 saying that now the water is much higher along the
25 Nelson River channel now because of this. Why --

1 I don't understand why you couldn't have utilized
2 both channels flowing into Hudson Bay for hydro
3 generation?

4 MR. HUTCHISON: Well, you are calling
5 them channels, these are rivers, so there is the
6 Nelson River and the Churchill River. And the
7 decision, I guess in the late '60s, early '70s,
8 was that rather than building generating stations
9 on the Churchill River, it would be much more
10 economical to divert the water from the Churchill
11 River into the Nelson River, and then build the
12 larger generating station on the Nelson River.

13 SPEAKER: But now you have increased
14 the level of the water in the Nelson River, which
15 kind of restricts you now from allowing more water
16 out of Lake Winnipeg during high water seasons.

17 MR. HUTCHISON: No, that's actually
18 not the case. Lake Winnipeg Regulation was a
19 project that had two purposes. One of them was
20 flood relief on Lake Winnipeg, and the other was
21 power production on the Nelson River. So because
22 we built an extra channel out of the lake, we can
23 get up to 50 per cent more water out of Lake
24 Winnipeg during times of flood, or during the
25 winter when we need that extra water for power

1 production.

2 MR. GORD BLUESKY: All right. We have
3 got to our point of presenting now. Now, it is
4 11:00 o'clock, we are having lunch brought in.
5 I'm not exactly sure of the time frame that we
6 have, but we are hoping to go until, I don't know
7 if we had a deadline today, but I was told three
8 or four hours is how long it usually happens for.
9 What I wanted to present real quick, first, is
10 Delores Chief-Abigosis, in regards to our
11 responsibility as women, and our communities, that
12 they have when it comes to water. And this will
13 be our first submission, our first presenter.

14 DELORES CHIEF-ABIGOSIS: I was
15 actually supposed to follow the water drum, and it
16 is indeed a great honour to hear the sounding of
17 that water drum, because it is a sacred ceremony
18 within our Anishinabe way of life. And with that
19 water drum comes a lot of responsibilities, and
20 the understanding of that water that leads our
21 life.

22 I was asked to share a little bit
23 about our responsibility as women. Our
24 responsibility to that water is very important.
25 There is ceremonies around the sacredness, the

1 sacredness of that water and how we are
2 responsible to look after that water. Through our
3 ceremonies and our way of life, we have come to
4 that understanding about the water. Without that
5 water there is no life.

6 And last summer our grandmother's
7 walked around that Lake Winnipeg, and I was indeed
8 honoured to know those ladies. And they had
9 walked, and they had walked for that water. And
10 other ladies have walked before to bring light to
11 the responsibility of our freshwater lakes and our
12 water in general. And it is really a honour to
13 have those women as teachers. I had sat with our
14 water drum here in this lodge here with Elder
15 Kent, and that was the first sounding of that
16 sacred drum that we heard back in the mid '80s,
17 the first time I was lead to this way of life.

18 And it was interesting this morning to
19 hear about that water that comes out of Shoal
20 Lake. I followed that, I'm part of that lodge
21 that's established, that Midewiwin lodge that sits
22 in with the Whiteshell Mide in Shoal Lake. And
23 they talk about that water that comes from their
24 community. And our teachers many times have
25 shared the importance of the six (native language

1 spoken) needed in order for that water to be able
2 to be there for our next generations. It is not
3 only here today that we have to think about that
4 water, that clean water to drink, but you are
5 looking at generations of our children. It may
6 not happen in my life, because right now our water
7 needs to be here for generations, my great
8 grandchildren, my great great great grandchildren.
9 And I share that message to my children, that it
10 is not only here today, the here and now that we
11 have to speak in relation to water, that we have
12 to look at. As a woman, I have to be responsible,
13 as a grandmother, I am responsible.

14 And I could only talk about that water
15 in respect of what state that water is in today.
16 I could only talk about that season where our
17 water sits today in that time of the winter
18 months.

19 I'm from the Bear clan, and the Bear
20 clan people are responsible to be able to look at
21 that whole notion of medicine. And that water is
22 a medicine. When that water drum is sounded and a
23 ceremony starts, that mushkeeki, that's that
24 medicine water that is blessed through those
25 ceremonies. And in the winter months here, as a

1 Bear clan person, that right now my clan is
2 sleeping, my clan has taken that time to go
3 through that fast, that fast for that vision, as
4 we, as Anishinabe, will do at different times in
5 our lives that we will go on those spiritual
6 fasts, to be able to look for those answers that
7 we seek, and at this time my clan is slowly waking
8 up.

9 When our sister had sang that song,
10 the grandmother song this morning, it brings light
11 to that moon that we are presently in, and that's
12 what the old people, of my understanding and what
13 I have heard over time, they talk about that bear
14 moon. Those bears are now beginning to give that
15 light to the little ones. They are beginning to
16 slowly wake up, and they are beginning to be able
17 to walk into that next season, which is spring.
18 But to be able to hear that beautiful song and to
19 hear our sister sing that, it really brings joy to
20 my heart. Because it is the only way that we will
21 be able to save that way of life, that water.

22 Everyone needs that water, regardless
23 of what race that they are. We all need that. I
24 asked one of our grandmothers one time, how would
25 you explain that if you were talking to a group of

1 people, how would you explain the importance of
2 that water to a group in one word? And what she
3 shared with me, she had said, I will share that as
4 life, because that's where life comes from.

5 And our lodge, the way they are
6 situated, because we are Anishinabe people, we are
7 people that our lodges are open to that eastern
8 doorway, to that place where life comes from. And
9 it is really important to have that understanding
10 when we begin to do those, do that work that is
11 needed. It is like when we talk about, that was
12 shared earlier by Elder Kent about how polluted
13 those lakes are, how much garbage that comes out
14 and that is retrieved from the water. And the
15 same thing as we as human beings for the stuff
16 that we put into our own bodies and how polluted
17 our own bodies have come. They talk about that
18 life blood, the same thing as our earth mother,
19 our earth mother, that is her life blood. And the
20 thing is, same as with us, we can't survive
21 without that water.

22 And it is really important that we
23 need to understand that, and those people that are
24 at that table to make those decisions, they have
25 to keep in mind about that. It is not, it is just

1 not to have our water drums here, but that is a
2 part of our traditional way of life.

3 It is unfortunate that we don't have
4 our language here in Brokenhead. Our language
5 again has been affected by the many different
6 systems that have impacted our people, that has
7 taken that language from us. But be able to share
8 and understand that way of life when it comes to
9 that little boy water drum, and that grandmother
10 and that grandfather water drum, to be able to
11 have those teachings in the way that they were
12 originally shared a long time ago.

13 I believe that our young people would
14 have a better understanding of life, as our
15 grandmother had stated when she talked about the
16 water, they would have a better understanding of
17 their water if they understood their culture.

18 And I'm beginning to hear in the work
19 that I do, I work in the area of addictions, I
20 have been trained and educated in that,
21 university, I have taken, and went and achieved a
22 social work degree. But nothing is greater than
23 education that sits right there. That's what we
24 strive each day, when we wake up, we see our
25 grandfather's sun that comes up in the eastern

1 doorway. That's the education that our children
2 need. That's the kind of education that our
3 people need to pick up those bundles again. And
4 this is that time that they talk about, that we
5 are picking up that way of life and that we are
6 going to be teaching our children. I see my son
7 share that with his family, and it is honouring to
8 see that. And when you begin to work that way,
9 then you have a better understanding of who you
10 are. We have to know who we are. Because if we
11 don't know who we are as Anishinabe people, then
12 we have a grim reality of life that is yet to
13 come.

14 So with that, I would like to share,
15 and it goes back to many different teachings when
16 it comes to woman, but that could take a whole
17 day, it could take four days to talk about that,
18 in a setting where we would be able to hear those
19 beautiful songs or sounds by that drum, to hear
20 our grandmother's and our women speak, and our
21 young women, it takes a long time.

22 I have been given this opportunity to
23 share a few words of what I have acquired over
24 time in relation to that understanding of my way,
25 and understanding of who I am as Anishinabe Kwe.

1 Miigwech.

2 MR. GORD BLUESKY: Miigwech, Delores.

3 To continue on, do you have questions,
4 or how does the hearing work? Is it interactive,
5 or we are just coming up here to let you know
6 everything, and is there a point at the end where
7 we talk?

8 THE CHAIRMAN: As I said earlier, we
9 try to be as informal as possible. We invite
10 presentations. The panelists may have questions
11 of clarification. And then at any time, if you
12 just want to get into a bit of a dialogue, that's
13 good too. We start with presentations that people
14 may have prepared and just take it to where it
15 goes.

16 MR. GORD BLUESKY: All right. Thank
17 you. I would like to welcome our chief, Chief Jim
18 Bear, to provide some words to the panel.

19 CHIEF JIM BEAR: Thank you very much,
20 Gord.

21 Elders, Mr. Sargeant, panel, ladies
22 and gentlemen, I am here with Councillor Paul
23 Chief, Wendell Sinclair senior and Wendell
24 Sinclair junior. I just have to say that as
25 elected leaders, fostering positive government

1 relations is key to ensure the state of Lake
2 Winnipeg, its tributaries, and the negative
3 impacts of our people are adequately investigated,
4 mitigated, and prevented. Addressing the impacts
5 of Lake Winnipeg is a task that will require an
6 effort from all of us, all of us in Manitoba and
7 in the States, because we have that flow of water
8 from the States as well, by those experienced in
9 the impact and by those creating the impact.

10 And peaceful co-existence is what our
11 ancestors agreed to by signing Treaty number 1.
12 Peaceful co-existence cannot be had unless an
13 ongoing dialogue takes place. And for too long
14 our geographical boundaries have been perceived as
15 great walls of separation. It is apparent now we
16 are not as separate as we once thought. And the
17 state of Lake Winnipeg is teaching us this.

18 However, First Nations have always had
19 this interconnected teaching. And it is a great
20 thing when people come together in order to
21 resolve a common concern, and this licence cannot
22 be granted without considering the environmental
23 impact hydroelectricity projects cause.

24 The Assembly of First Nations, the
25 Special Chiefs Assembly in 2009 passed a

1 resolution calling for a review of the
2 environmental impacts Manitoba Hydro has had in
3 our province. And Manitoba Hydro can not carry on
4 business as usual without a regulation plan that
5 addresses the negative impacts on Lake Winnipeg,
6 our people, the wildlife, the plants, and all of
7 the living creatures. And I would further urge
8 Manitoba Hydro to involve our people around the
9 lake when they are doing anything on there so that
10 they can have the ceremony to respect mother
11 earth.

12 We all need Lake Winnipeg. And there
13 is a lot of concern about the almighty dollar.
14 But without the respect of mother earth, there is
15 always going to be a challenge.

16 I hope that the presentations that are
17 given here today by all people will be truly
18 respected by Manitoba Hydro and really carried
19 forward in a sincere fashion by the panel.

20 And, Mr. Sargeant, you were once an
21 MP, and we are really counting on you carrying the
22 message to the governments on our behalf. So
23 thank you very much.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Chief Bear.

25 MR. GORD BLUESKY: All right,

1 miigwech, chief and council.

2 I would like to dive into my
3 presentation, I guess. And our presentation that
4 I will be doing is based on a community meeting
5 that we had recently, and also some projects that
6 we have done in the past few years, since myself
7 being the lands manager. We just recently hosted
8 a Lake Winnipeg gathering of First Nation
9 communities where we had 19 First Nations from
10 surrounding areas that either harvest or live on
11 the lake. And it is kind of coincidental that we
12 are having the hearing when we are, because we
13 weren't planning that in advance, so it is pretty
14 good that we actually had an opportunity to speak
15 with the communities that live -- that have
16 livelihoods, and pursuit, even simple things as
17 teaching their children to swim, those types of
18 things, this is everything that the First Nations
19 on our lake do. And it is not a seasonal thing,
20 it is an annual thing, it is an all year round
21 type of thing that we live with the lake.

22 Just -- and I'm sure that you are
23 aware of our location as it relates to the lake,
24 but I had put up a map on the Google Earth to give
25 an example of where our community is situated. On

1 the Google Earth they only acknowledge
2 Scanterbury, but we are the Brokenhead Ojibway
3 Nation. Scanterbury is above the 40-acre parcel
4 of land within Brokenhead, but we are Brokenhead
5 here. Just to give you an idea where we are, this
6 is the outline of our reserve here. It borders
7 the lake, goes up here and up into here. And here
8 is highway 59 where you came in on. So just to
9 give you guys an idea of the amount of water
10 that's slowly encroaching in our territory, it has
11 also been encroaching over the past 50 years.

12 I do acknowledge the fact that Hydro's
13 presentation and the understanding that they seem
14 to assume, and none of us will be lead to believe
15 here that man can do better than mother nature in
16 regards to taking care of our waters and our land.
17 But it is good to hear the presentation that there
18 is an element of man trying to take pressures off
19 of civilization. But we also have to acknowledge
20 that civilization, when it is acknowledged of only
21 being of man, defeats the idea of everything else
22 that's included in there in regards to our
23 wetlands, the animals, the people that are here
24 year round, but also the habitat for those
25 critical beings that aren't just human. So it is

1 important that we have to acknowledge that.

2 And since the '70s and beyond, our
3 community has seen a lot of changes in our
4 territory.

5 I just wanted to talk real quickly
6 about consultation here. We obviously do not
7 consider this any form of meaningful consultation
8 with Hydro's presentation or anything else that
9 goes on from today. We are hoping to have that
10 consultation happen here soon. We have been in
11 discussions with the Aboriginal Northern Affairs
12 Consultation Branch. We do feel that our
13 community deserves more than a 10 or 15 minute
14 presentation, and we are going to be calling on
15 Hydro to provide that to our community too,
16 hopefully sooner than later. But that's work that
17 I'm doing as the lands manager, is getting the
18 appropriate departments of the province here.

19 So just in terms of this morning, and
20 I would like to say miigwech real quick again to
21 Ralph and family, and also Delores in providing
22 that specific perspective that we are coming to
23 here today. I would just like to acknowledge that
24 these are the things, the customs and traditions,
25 these are livelihoods that we are talking about.

1 And we have to understand that in the Manitoba
2 Hydro, that's only one element of the economy of
3 Manitoba, but there is multiple impacts on our
4 lakes. I definitely acknowledge that. I
5 acknowledge that there is more than just Hydro
6 that's causing harm to our waterways.

7 Just historical quickly, in 1871,
8 August, the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation signed
9 Treaty 1 with her Majesty the Queen in the right
10 of Great Britain. Within that we have never,
11 never relinquished our interest in our lands, or
12 in our, most importantly, our water. But both
13 parties agreed to peacefully exist, co-exist.
14 With our current situation back then, we had an
15 abundance of resources surrounding our nations,
16 and our people were able to hunt, fish, harvest
17 and gather what we need for our livelihood and
18 economy.

19 Now, the reason why, I think for me
20 anyways, we are at a very critical stage I should
21 say, that we have -- if you noticed on the way in,
22 and I don't know if you are travelers through here
23 all of the time, or is this the first time you
24 come here in a year, or ten years, or whatever,
25 but in our territory here we are completely

1 surrounded by farm fields, we are surrounded, 100
2 per cent surrounded by municipalities. Our lands
3 have been divided up, dissected, and given to
4 other landowners that have traveled from wherever
5 it is they traveled from, and own now. Our moose
6 habitat has been decimated. Our caribou used to
7 run this far down. There used to be elk here at
8 one time. We are now surrounded by deer, I think
9 is the more abundant species than anything.

10 But we have, now we have our lake,
11 which was a great resource to us at one time, and
12 still continues to be. But one of the things that
13 we all know now is that the lake is now in a
14 critical stage of where there has been so much
15 pollution, there has been so much regulation to
16 it, there is just so many factors that I can't put
17 one finger on and blame just one source. It is
18 even the communities that live around the lake
19 that also do provide pollution and impacts. So
20 whenever we do talk about the lake, we only talk
21 about it from a perspective that our community
22 members have shared.

23 So our educational system previously
24 was passed through oral teachings, our oral
25 history with respect to our relationship with our

1 land and waters. And it continues to convey that
2 our nation has experienced many negative impacts
3 due to the creation of hydroelectricity projects,
4 due to the manipulation of water levels on Lake
5 Winnipeg.

6 Now, you know we do -- our territory
7 stretches into Ontario and all the way down to
8 America. And we also have a great relationship
9 here in the Interlake.

10 So with the presentations that I have
11 been able to attend, I've had an opportunity
12 previously to sit with Dr. Gordon Goldsborough
13 from the University of Manitoba, and he provided a
14 powerpoint presentation about the Netley/Libau
15 marsh, we call it the Brokenhead wetland, and
16 impacts of industry on those wetlands, those
17 critical habitats. From his presentation he has
18 summarized some of the history that has lead to
19 the degradation of our marsh, and his presentation
20 provided the historical impacts of dredging which
21 ultimately affects the water quality and has also
22 impacted the nesting and breeding areas of fish,
23 of waterfowl, of the muskrat and so on.

24 So we had an understanding of what the
25 people had prior to that. And I am going to get

1 back into that a little bit later on in the
2 presentation here, when we get into the
3 discussions with the community members.

4 So, Dr. Goldsborough had discussed
5 about how Hydro and the regulation of that water
6 has an opportunity to not only regulate for the
7 benefit of hydroelectricity, but also potentially
8 regulating for the benefit of our very shrinking
9 wetlands. And I don't know, and I have heard an
10 estimate, they said about 75 per cent of our
11 wetlands here, at least in the south of Manitoba,
12 has been drained and there is nothing left but
13 what we have here. And specifically to our
14 wetlands, we are considered a coastal wetland to
15 Lake Winnipeg. And obviously we are not building
16 more lakes -- well, okay, maybe we are making some
17 lakes bigger, but we are not building more lakes.
18 So the coastal wetlands that we do have and the
19 issues that we have with Lake Winnipeg are very
20 critical to the health of the lake, and assist man
21 and assist nature in the filtration of the
22 pollutants that do get into our lake.

23 So we had some discussions on that.
24 I'm hoping to do some further work with
25 Dr. Goldsborough in regards to our work with our

1 wetlands. We are starting a project this year.
2 Carl Smith, he is here somewhere, he is actually
3 heading up the project with us. This year we are
4 going to be working on some restoration and
5 protection of our wetlands.

6 We have also created, just a footnote,
7 the first ecological reserve, under the
8 legislation that provides the opportunity to
9 create ecological reserves, called the Brokenhead
10 ecological reserve, just north of here. Once
11 again, it is part of the same system with Lake
12 Winnipeg and the water that fluctuates and so on.

13 So we are doing our part. We now have
14 completed a land use plan. We also are now a FLM
15 First Nation, and we are going to be looking at
16 areas that we want to protect, critical ecological
17 areas that we want to protect too, obviously the
18 marsh being one of them.

19 So September 2014, and I guess that's
20 what I can talk a little bit about. I will
21 provide a copy, and I don't know who I provide it
22 to, but I'm sure we will figure all of that out.
23 This presentation will be provided at some point
24 today, because it is oral, as most of them will
25 be. We are providing a First Nations report that

1 we have on the gathering for Lake Winnipeg. So I
2 wanted to talk a little bit about that, but I'm
3 not going to provide that today. I'm meeting with
4 them actually in Pine Falls here after we are done
5 here today. Our Lake Winnipeg First Nations are
6 meeting right now.

7 Brokenhead, we hosted in
8 2014 September, which had a meeting comprised of
9 First Nations people living around Lake Winnipeg,
10 who shared perspectives and identified their
11 primary concerns about Lake Winnipeg. The
12 gathering consensus was that the health of Lake
13 Winnipeg has been in decline over the past several
14 decades due to a number of factors, including
15 increased nutrient levels, which is obvious in
16 terms of our agricultural that happens along the
17 Red River, all the way up and down. Just the
18 scope and the size of the watershed that comes
19 into Lake Winnipeg is amazing. So it goes all the
20 way into, I believe, Alberta, into Ontario, down
21 into the States. All of these -- it is a huge
22 situation that we have. We sit -- we sit right on
23 it, right in the middle of where all this water
24 runs to is here, it's in the lake.

25 So number one, the number one issue

1 that they had brought up was the regulating of the
2 lake. I'm sure you are going to hear that as you
3 go all the way around the lake, I'm not sure how
4 many First Nations you are hitting, but they will
5 be more than likely bringing it up. It was the
6 number one issue that was brought up, was the
7 inundation of Lake Winnipeg and flooding and
8 erosion.

9 Obviously, there is climate change
10 issues and there is -- the gathering itself
11 resulted in common themes and key findings
12 regarding negative impacts of Lake Winnipeg, which
13 consisted of First Nation communities on the lake,
14 included once again the flooding and erosion,
15 algae blooms, the lack of safe drinking water, the
16 decline in the fish, and quality of fish and fish
17 habitat, lake level regulations associated with
18 Hydro activity, and the degradation of lake
19 activity affecting our traditional ways.

20 So this was the first meeting that we
21 had, but I didn't know there was actually four
22 other meetings that had occurred on Lake Winnipeg.
23 And it all had to do with regulations. That's
24 what I heard afterwards. But I know they had one
25 in Thompson, we are having one here, next year we

1 are hoping to have it in Grand Rapids, and maybe
2 Thompson again, I don't know. But Brokenhead
3 hosted the first one here.

4 We plan to continue to work with the
5 First Nations around Lake Winnipeg to develop a
6 strategy and a work plan. When we have these Lake
7 Winnipeg foundations, which we work with, we also
8 worked with the Senate for Indigenous
9 Environmental Resources. The reason why I brought
10 it forward as an issue is I didn't believe that we
11 had a coordinated effort to provide, not only
12 traditional knowledge, but also to provide
13 projects and highlighting what First Nations are
14 doing. I don't think there is enough of that
15 happening out there. Everyone is focused on what
16 we are doing wrong, but nobody is focused on what
17 we are doing, what we are actually doing to help
18 protect this lake. I know we are going to have
19 Councillor Paul Chief up here after.

20 But just the infrastructure that we
21 have here in Brokenhead, when we discharge our
22 effluent, the water that we discharge is cleaner
23 than the water that we are discharging it into.
24 That's the type of system that we have here and
25 that is the value that we have on our water.

1 So we will continue to work with them,
2 we want to have more voice, we want to have more
3 studies that are focused on the issues that we
4 have, not so much on Hydro development. And that
5 was another thing that came up, especially with
6 the meeting with our membership, and that's what I
7 will start talking about now, was that having the
8 onus put on the First Nations to come here and
9 provide evidence, or presentation on what we have
10 seen over the years -- I mean, it is a good
11 presentation, but once again we want to see more
12 from Hydro, but we would like to see what Hydro
13 has been doing to mitigate that. What have they
14 been doing to look at the flooding and how maybe
15 it does benefit ecosystems on fluctuations? And
16 the only thing that I have and the only thing that
17 I learned was from Dr. Goldsborough's study that
18 he did in 2003 when we had the drought here, and
19 the drought showed -- the lake level dropped about
20 two or three feet, and what that showed was the
21 wetlands around, like the coastal wetlands, and he
22 was focused mainly on our marsh, started to bounce
23 back and rehabilitate.

24 So to me Hydro can't be just focused
25 on economic benefits, which we obviously don't

1 receive anything from, we don't receive economic
2 benefit. And I hear, when I continually hear that
3 Hydro is a Crown corporation, which is publicly
4 owned, we struggle with ourself as First Nations
5 to understand what portion of that do we own? We
6 don't know. If anything, this is the first time
7 we have even seen a panel like this come to our
8 community. This is the first time that Hydro has
9 ever come to do a presentation as it relates to
10 regulation of our lake. We think that it is
11 important that we don't sit here and wait for you
12 guys to come back in another 40 or 50 years, that
13 we start the discussion and that we have an
14 ongoing communication on regulation, we have an
15 ongoing communication on impacts, we have an
16 ongoing communication on what it is Hydro can
17 support, or look at what they are doing to support
18 the restoration of our wetlands and also the
19 health of our lake.

20 Now, with that being said too, is that
21 our community had outlined -- and once again,
22 nobody came here when they started to dig up there
23 and started re-routing rivers, nobody came here
24 and said, you know what, Ralph, just FYI, just so
25 you know, we are re-routing the Churchill River

1 into the Nelson and there might be some
2 differences down here, or we are putting some
3 structures at the end lake that may be holding
4 back water so we can start to look at the forebay
5 of a Hydro development. Nobody came here and said
6 that. So we are just showing you and letting you
7 know what we have seen over the years. Not at a
8 point, oh, this was the first day that you did
9 Hydro development, but at a point of over a span
10 of time.

11 So the elder member also -- and I'm
12 going to go through a couple of points here --
13 shared his recent experience with setting nets in
14 the lake. This elder was also Ralph Kent, he
15 continues to fish and practice his traditional
16 livelihood. He stated that when he pulled up the
17 nets, he found a brown film which was left in the
18 ice and snow, which I will let him talk about
19 further, it wasn't my personal experience, but
20 when he comes up here he can talk about that a bit
21 more.

22 What has been talked about is the silt
23 that's been gathering, the erosion, the waters
24 that are taking our shorelines away are now
25 creating this silt in the water, it builds up, it

1 builds up in our marsh, it suffocates our marsh,
2 it suffocates muskrat habitat, it suffocates
3 nesting for ducks and geese.

4 Like one other thing that I did have,
5 that the community members did share, was that we
6 had, at one time we had an active and an abundance
7 of traditional medicines that were harvested.
8 Those have been greatly impacted and continue to
9 be impacted due to the lack of efforts to mitigate
10 the environmental impacts caused by industry, once
11 again, not just Hydro.

12 Muskrats at one time were plentiful,
13 I'm sure we will have presenters that will talk
14 about personal experience of muskrat, the fur, the
15 food, and those types of things. Once that
16 resource, that economic, that livelihood was gone,
17 it greatly impacted a few people here.

18 To go back a little bit to what I was
19 saying previously, in regards to the municipal
20 lands, the farm fields, the impacts of our lake,
21 the raising and lowering which would impact fish
22 habitat, waterfowl, muskrats, all of those things
23 at one time that formed part of our traditional
24 economy or local economy, we did actually provide
25 income off of those things. So with that gone,

1 what was the alternative? Going to stores, buying
2 food from Safeway, Sobeys, Giant Tiger, wherever
3 it is. That's what happens to our community. We
4 have totally lost the resources. Now we can't get
5 the medicines that were traditionally available to
6 us, now we go to pharmacies.

7 So with all of those things being
8 said, all of those things now form a column of
9 cost, so there is a cost associated with us not
10 being able to access what we had traditionally, to
11 now what we have to access from a corporation
12 that's been regulated by governments, and we get
13 taxed just to feed our families, which at one time
14 we were able to do on our own.

15 So through the flooding also, like I
16 said before, we used to have thousands, large
17 abundance, thousands on thousands, we could even
18 say millions, who knows, of ducks and geese,
19 muskrats that used to be here, so all of those
20 things. Now you can come out here anytime in the
21 spring, I'm sure one of these guys will take you
22 out and show you what we're talking about, this
23 isn't just something that Hydro can come and visit
24 us, let's have a peek at, let's have a look at it.
25 These are presentations, this can be live in HD

1 presentation on the lake, if you want to come see
2 that. I'm not saying you haven't.

3 Also we have seen more recently the
4 shoreline on Lake Winnipeg, and not just our
5 reserves, but I mean, we have a fellow here that
6 we have asked, and he is going to share a little
7 bit -- a neighbour to our community to discuss the
8 lands and the local beaches and cottages that have
9 also been impacted. These are recreational areas
10 for our community, and it isn't recreational
11 because there is a gate and there is a road in
12 there now, it has been recreational for as long as
13 we have been here too. It is not something that
14 just started because there is a park there now.

15 So we have one lake that I have been
16 kind of keeping an eye on and I have been learning
17 from and learning about, Fosters Lake, which is
18 now, I mean, I think from my understanding, from
19 what I have seen from previous pictures, it was
20 more like a pond at one time. Now it has
21 expanded, as you can see on the map that we have
22 there -- it went to sleep -- but all you can see
23 on there is the lake, it is now a lake, it is
24 quite huge. All of those little lakes that are in
25 there now weren't lakes at one time, and they are

1 now -- our whole territory has been flooded.

2 So I think about, for myself, I think,

3 when I think about the northern First Nations and

4 how they get treated when it comes to flooding,

5 compensation, benefit economically, all of those

6 things that I see coming from First Nations of the

7 north, a lot of that power, that resource comes

8 from down here. It only flows through their

9 generating stations after its leaves us. So I

10 don't ever think to myself, when I think whenever

11 Europeans and colonization happened here, I never

12 think about it as saying, well, you never had

13 hydro here before, so you should never benefit

14 from it. You never dug for that nickel before, so

15 you should never benefit from it. You never

16 crushed gravel, so you should never benefit from

17 it. That's a colonial mentality, it is a

18 mentality that we are sitting here doing nothing.

19 We utilize these resources. Maybe we didn't

20 require large scale hydro production to

21 accommodate a city of 800,000 people, maybe we

22 didn't have that. But the ability to develop a

23 hydro dam to accommodate a community of 800,000

24 people, that ability was always there. So that

25 resource was always there. That is not something

1 that we, when we signed Treaty, we said we want no
2 benefit from hydro, we want no benefit from
3 railroads coming through our land, we want no
4 benefit from -- we never said that.

5 These are things that I think that if
6 Manitoba Hydro can understand and move away,
7 deviate a little bit from looking at just the
8 north as to where these dams are going, but also
9 looking at what powers those dams, which is our
10 water that we hold sacred. So with the Fosters
11 Lake again, it is only about two or three feet, it
12 doesn't really provide for a very suitable habitat
13 for fish.

14 So, through that, I'm going to try to
15 move through here because I know we have a few
16 more presentations here. And I may be getting the
17 two minute warning here -- one minute, okay.

18 So what I wanted to move into is in
19 closing, and with our discussions with
20 Dr. Goldsborough, again, from my understanding I'm
21 sure he is in communication with the Commission,
22 I'm sure it is something that you guys are looking
23 at, but we also want to reflect a few
24 recommendations that we have come to conclusions
25 on, to protect.

1 Now, I did recently hear that they had
2 legislation that they are drafting up right now
3 on -- basically what it does is no net loss of
4 marshes or wetlands. It is basically a drainage
5 regulation. If you are going to drain this
6 wetland to build a hog farm, let's say, then you
7 have to replace that wetland somewhere else. So
8 what we have left here as wetland should be
9 protected. I'm hearing that from the province,
10 I'm hearing it loud and clear, they said don't
11 take anymore away, we have got to put it back.
12 Well, what about the ones that we do have here?
13 What about the ones that instead of draining, we
14 are talking about flooding them now? Why can't
15 the same mentality be put on to, if you are going
16 to draft legislation that shows that if you drain
17 it and it goes away forever, it doesn't benefit
18 our ecology. But if you flood it, it doesn't
19 benefit our ecology either, it doesn't benefit our
20 environment.

21 So if there is one message that I can
22 give today to the panel, to the hearing, is that
23 First Nations want to see the regulation of Lake
24 Winnipeg is not solely focused on economics, but
25 also -- and I've read his presentations, I went

1 through his reports -- regulating that water can
2 benefit the local environment also.

3 So there is just about six points that
4 I have here, I want to get it out of the way. I
5 already talked about the onus being on Hydro to
6 show what it is that they are doing to protect,
7 enhance and mitigate these impacts that we are
8 talking about. We have never heard from them. We
9 would like to see an annual relationship with
10 Hydro. This isn't something that should only
11 happen every 40 or 50 years when it relates to
12 regulating. If it is the tenth largest lake, this
13 is a kind of side note, but we had a discussion
14 on, if it is the tenth largest lake, if we are
15 manipulating a water body of that size on a global
16 scale, is there any rules to that? I don't know.
17 And if there are rules, are we, Manitoba,
18 following them? If you have got the tenth largest
19 lake in the world and you are messing with it,
20 does it throw our globe off, does it wobble it? I
21 don't know what it does, but it is something that
22 we would like to know about. And we would like to
23 know that if we have an opportunity to sit here
24 and say, okay, you are fluctuating our water on
25 this scale, you know.

1 And I have heard about the thing that
2 happened in China with their dam that they built,
3 they knocked it off an inch or two, I think.
4 Counselor Chief enlightened me on that. But what
5 I think about is there has got to be rules on
6 that, it is not just a Manitoba thing, it's not
7 just a First Nation thing, it should be a global
8 thing, what you do on water bodies of that scale.

9 So we would also like to recommend
10 that we develop, in partnership with Hydro and the
11 Province of Manitoba, environmental monitoring
12 programs, rehabilitation programs, protection,
13 conservation. Those are things that Brokenhead is
14 willing, and more than willing and open to working
15 in partnership with industry to show that we are
16 trying to make steps in providing an ecological
17 area that's meant for generations to come and not
18 just for Hydro for today.

19 Economic benefit, I don't know what
20 that -- how that would look or how our First
21 Nations should be able to benefit from the
22 manipulation of our water systems. We should see
23 a benefit of some sort, minus -- I mean, I have
24 heard that already, well, you have got lights,
25 that's your benefit, you have got lights. Well,

1 we need a little bit more than that.

2 I just want to also point out that one
3 of the other things that came out of the Lake
4 Winnipeg gathering was that the First Nations
5 should be part of the process, there should be
6 jurisdictions, and we should be working together
7 as it relates to decision making on these types of
8 scales, these levels.

9 And just one last point was the
10 environmental standards, just because this is how
11 Hydro has operated over the past 50 years or
12 longer, we have the Winnipeg River that's been
13 there for a lot longer than what we are talking
14 about today, we are talking close to -- back to
15 the 1900s, but early 1900s, that they have been
16 doing. What I think -- I continually hear,
17 especially when it relates to Treaty Land
18 Entitlement, Hydro wants what they have always
19 been doing to be what they have always been doing.
20 Well, when it comes to reserve, it doesn't mean
21 that we have the same level of standards that
22 everyone else does. Maybe we don't agree with a
23 hundred feet of our shoreline disappearing because
24 it benefits the rest of Manitoba. Maybe we don't
25 agree with that. We only have a tiny piece of

1 this land left that we call as our own, Brokenhead
2 Ojibway Nation, and maybe we don't want to see one
3 per cent of it eroded away. Imagine if one per
4 cent of Canada eroded because of what Russia was
5 doing, don't you think somebody would say
6 something?

7 So it is something that we want to
8 see, that if there is lands being eroded or
9 removed due to something else, then we should be
10 given fair treatment and compensation to that, and
11 I'm sure the rest of council is going to get into
12 that today.

13 So with that, I say miigwech, thank
14 you for hearing me. Community, thank you for
15 providing input for my presentation. We will be
16 bringing this forward as a written statement. But
17 we would like to move into lurch, I see it is
18 here, and I think that's the best thing for us to
19 do at this point.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. I can just note,
21 Mr. Bluesky, that you mentioned that we should be
22 in contact, or Dr. Goldsborough should be in
23 contact with us. I can tell you that we have
24 actually contracted with Dr. Goldsborough to do a
25 paper on this very issue for us. It has been

1 completed and it was posted on our website a
2 couple of days ago. And we will be hearing more
3 from Dr. Goldsborough during our meetings in
4 Winnipeg.

5 MR. GORD BLUESKY: Thank you. With
6 that being said, that's what I have for my part of
7 the presentation. I'm hoping that once we have
8 lunch, nobody fades away. I hope I didn't make
9 anybody sleep. But after I get back, after we eat
10 real quick, we will move on to Councillor Paul
11 Chief. Then we have Allen Hocaluk, Carl Smith,
12 Bev Smith, at this point. So I would like to say
13 miigwech, thank you. Let's eat quickly. Can we
14 do that or do we have to do a motion?

15 (Hearing recessed for lunch)

16 MR. GORD BLUESKY: All right. I hope
17 everyone has had their fill. I would like to move
18 along here and ask for Councillor Paul Chief to
19 join us up here and provide a presentation to the
20 panel. Councillor Paul Chief?

21 MR. PAUL CHIEF: Good afternoon, I'm
22 Councillor Paul Chief of the Ojibway Nation.
23 Should I wait?

24 While I'm waiting, I just want to
25 thank the ladies for their wonderful meal that

1 they provided for all of us. And I want to thank
2 Ralph and family for the ceremony that was
3 presented to all of us, which is very special and
4 deep in our hearts. I want to thank the elders
5 for coming out. You are our guidance, you are our
6 witnesses to what we are speaking to today. Thank
7 you for sharing that knowledge with us. I want to
8 thank the ladies for being present and being here
9 with us, and I want to thank all of our guests
10 being here. Like Jim and Gord stated, we never
11 have these opportunities, so it is wonderful for
12 you to join us in our hall and actually hear our
13 concerns with regards to Lake Winnipeg.

14 I want to start my presentation, I
15 know I will probably be reciting a lot of what
16 Gord said, but it is things that have come to mind
17 and things that I want to get off my chest that I
18 want to talk about.

19 As you are aware, Brokenhead was
20 signatory to Treaty 1, and our medallion states:

21 "For as long as the grasses grow and
22 the rivers flow, we have a Treaty."

23 The problem with Manitoba Hydro is,
24 when they start damming up Winnipeg River, they
25 never consulted the First Nations of Brokenhead or

1 the signatories of Treaty 1. And like Gord said,
2 the northern communities have an agreement with
3 Manitoba, but there is nothing for us southern
4 communities to take part or have a seat in
5 discussions in regards to our concerns with Lake
6 Winnipeg. The damming of the Winnipeg River was
7 to accommodate the need for electricity for the
8 City of Winnipeg, but we have no say on what goes
9 on through there. A transmission line runs
10 directly through our community to service
11 Winnipeg, it is call the McPhillips generating
12 station. I believe it is McArthur Falls is the
13 actual dam that comes through, or Pine Falls, one
14 of the two. But with that, we are currently going
15 to have another court case, or another hearing in
16 our community from -- our window is from September
17 to I believe November of this year -- because
18 Manitoba Hydro said that we sold them the land.
19 But the reality is, we never did surrender the
20 land, and it was supposed to be a lease, and we
21 are currently in court right now in regards to
22 this issue. So we were never consulted, the
23 band -- and I love this term -- and Kenny Flett's
24 father, who was my elder, I love his expression.
25 He says:

1 "Erosion is God. When man puts a
2 dirty hand on it, it is corrosion."

3 So, what is happening with Lake
4 Winnipeg is not the act of God, it is the act of
5 man. So it is not erosion, it is corrosion,
6 people, and we really have got to keep that
7 message strong and alive, because it is us that's
8 doing the damage.

9 Just north of our community is a place
10 called Stony Point, we all call it Patricia Beach,
11 but as a child when I was growing up, you could
12 actually park four or five cars at that point.
13 Today it is gone. The beach was a beautiful place
14 that we used for our recreation all of the time.
15 As a child, when I walked on the shores into the
16 beach, the ripples in the sand were so hard that
17 they would hurt your feet until you got further
18 out in the lake. Today, it is about six to eight
19 inches of mud and silt. It is terrible, e. coli,
20 all of those other, all of the other pollution
21 that's flowing down the Red River into our
22 beautiful lake. Our children can't even utilize
23 the lake as what it is meant to be for recreation.

24 We had many creeks in our system in
25 the Brokenhead River. And because of the

1 corrosion, or the erosion of Lake Winnipeg, and
2 the saturation of the lands, more and more of
3 those creeks are disappearing. When I was a child
4 there was so many muskrats out there that people
5 would actually make their livelihood from it.

6 I know the Hocaluk family, when I was
7 growing up they were one of the few trappers that
8 were still at it. But when the dams came in, in
9 the '70s, the northern dams, right away we noticed
10 in our community the changes in the lake. There
11 was a cabin, there still is a cabin out at the
12 shore. I can't even call it the shore because it
13 has changed so much. But all of us recognize it
14 as Bill Prince's hunting cabin. At the time you
15 could drive up to that cabin, but today you are
16 about a half a mile away from it, the water is
17 about a foot and a half deep in the cabin, and
18 there is no access to it. With the raising of the
19 waters in the winter months to accommodate the
20 hydro generation needs, it flooded out the
21 muskrat.

22 I used to work for Macdonald Youth
23 Services and we worked with Manitoba Conservation.
24 and Lake Winnipeg, the south basin where we are
25 right now, had the highest population of muskrats

1 in North America. Today, it is not even on the
2 list because of the Hydro development and the
3 changes that happened there.

4 Our land is completely saturated in
5 around us, as you see from the google maps.
6 Changes to the lake have been dramatic because of
7 the holdback of the water.

8 I'm not too sure on the date, but if
9 you look at that yellow board, there is these red
10 lines, and that's when the water went really high.
11 And I believe it was in October of 2011. I wasn't
12 in the community, but Manitoba was running at
13 their maximum level of 711 feet, right and then we
14 had a storm, a fall storm. The winds came in and
15 dramatically increased the water of our community.
16 It saturated, it flooded out homes, it filled up
17 our sewage system so bad that the sewage was
18 running into the homes. The following week the
19 municipalities, the Government of Manitoba and
20 Hydro did a presentation that we are going to fix
21 up everybody's place, but nowhere was there ever a
22 gesture of what about Brokenhead, what about the
23 other First Nations that are along Lake Winnipeg,
24 what happened to them? Was there any damages?
25 Nothing. We had to absorb those costs of

1 repairing all of the homes and trying to protect
2 them, at the 11th hour. We had no idea that this
3 was going to happen, and I'm glad that our people
4 jumped together and came up and worked and
5 protected the people that needed to be protected.
6 But we had no idea that the people at higher land
7 would be affected because of the sewer and water
8 system being flooded. The water was actually
9 seeping right into the manholes. If you drive by
10 that in the summer months, you would be amazed
11 because that manhole is about two and a half feet
12 above the ditch, but at the time it was under
13 water, and it flooded out the whole northern side
14 of our community. And we can't afford to be
15 paying insurance bills of that nature because we
16 have to look at each and every one of the homes,
17 and if it is not worth five grand to fix it, don't
18 bother putting in a claim because the insurance
19 value still goes up. And we had many tragedies in
20 regards to our community that we had to absorb the
21 costs on our own.

22 I'm disappointed by Manitoba Hydro for
23 not being there and understanding that we were
24 affected by this too. They ran to the
25 municipalities and said, there, there, we are

1 going to fix it. But they didn't do nothing for
2 Brokenhead or the other First Nations. That's a
3 disappointing factor. For some reason when they
4 step on to Federal land, they think that nothing
5 applies to the First Nation because it is not part
6 of the province. We didn't leave. We are still
7 here. And we are affected by everything that
8 happens in Winnipeg, in Selkirk, from Minneapolis
9 to Calgary, because this is our home. And we are
10 at the end where everybody's water runs through.
11 And you know what, our river is polluted. And
12 Gord stated, our effluent that we send out is
13 cleaner than the river. That's a dam shame.

14 I just really want Manitoba Hydro to
15 understand that when anything happens on that
16 lake, we are affected too. And we need a table,
17 such as the northern communities have in regards
18 to our concerns with Lake Winnipeg. We were never
19 consulted -- by the way, we were never allowed to
20 have a lawyer until 1954. But did our community
21 go running to Winnipeg to go and hire one? No.
22 We couldn't afford one. So all these agreements,
23 we never had our own legal counsel to speak for
24 us, we relied on the Indian agent. And the Indian
25 agent didn't do what the people wanted.

1 For example, the transmission line, we
2 didn't want it for our community. And yet they
3 said they were going to pay us rent every day that
4 it was in our community. We had a community
5 gathering for the transmission line and, thank
6 God, one of the members videotaped, one of our
7 elders that has long since passed on. And we are
8 going to utilize this video of him so we can bring
9 that when we do have that, I don't know what you
10 call it, a court case or what, that we are having
11 in the community. But there are longstanding
12 issues, they need to be heard, we need to be
13 understood, and we want to be part of the solution
14 and not part of the problem. And the only way
15 that we can do that is by having a seat at the
16 table.

17 I want to thank you for being here,
18 miigwech.

19 MR. GORD BLUESKY: All right. Thank
20 you Councillor Chief. I would like to ask Allen
21 Hocaluk to approach the podium.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Who is it?

23 MR. GORD BLUESKY: Former councillor
24 Hocaluk.

25 MR. ALLEN HOCALUK: Good afternoon, my

1 name is Allen Hocaluk, it's A-L-L-E-N
2 H-O-C-A-L-U-K. I want to mention, I guess,
3 reiterating some of the huge impacts of the high
4 water in Lake Winnipeg since the dam was set up at
5 the other end of the lake. And just looking at
6 the lake in this picture and seeing how there is
7 only one outlet, and all of these different
8 inlets, to me it definitely looks like Manitoba's
9 biggest lagoon.

10 Anyway, getting back to my part of the
11 presentation. I was born in 1964, and I can
12 remember back in the early 1970s going up to the
13 mouth of the Brokenhead River, and we used to go
14 fishing just before the mouth. And up there was
15 some really beautiful log cabins. I think there
16 is a lot of elderly people here in the community
17 that remember that. I was told there was seven, I
18 can recall four. At that time already, in
19 probably around '72 or '73, there was probably a
20 few of them already missing, and what happened is,
21 obviously, ultimately by the high water, the north
22 winds and the rest of destruction that took place.
23 It didn't take long for the north winds to destroy
24 everything.

25 Before the Nelson River dams were

1 there, there was also a lodge that had operated
2 here right beside our community. And most of us I
3 guess around the community know it, I don't know
4 if it was the actual name, but I've grown to know
5 it as the Red Lodge. And I have heard stories
6 from many people how big boats used to come into
7 the Brokenhead River and physically turn around
8 right in the river, and unload, unload cargo,
9 people, whatever, some goods. And if you ever
10 tried that today, good luck, because at the mouth
11 of the river you would be totally hung up. You
12 can't even get out into the lake. You have got to
13 pretty much be able to navigate. A lot of these
14 guys that go out fishing, they know where the
15 channels are and stuff like that, the main one I
16 guess that runs out there. And normally it is not
17 very deep. So that could never happen.

18 The mouth of the river, the Brokenhead
19 River is filled up with a lot of sand and silt
20 and, obviously, because of the strong prevailing
21 north winds and us being at the southern part of
22 the south basin, and all of this water is bringing
23 all of this sand and everything else that's at the
24 bottom of the lake, it has got to end up
25 somewhere. So where does it go? It goes into any

1 little water tributaries like our river and our
2 marshes.

3 Our farmland, in the west of our
4 community here was traditional use for hay land
5 for farmers. Now, because of the high water and
6 the winds, the water rises right to the bush
7 bringing logs and other debris, destroying the hay
8 and making the land not useful because of the high
9 water. And it would be way too much work to
10 physically go there every year and take away all
11 of the logs so you can go back there and cut hay.
12 That was part of what I recall, what I remember
13 and what I've seen.

14 Along the lakeshores of the lake, I
15 also recall being very heavily treed with big, big
16 water willows and other trees, I guess, that would
17 ultimately grow along, normally along the lake
18 like that. But before the dam was built on the
19 Nelson River, these trees were well existent.
20 Today it is all destroyed, it is all gone. There
21 is no big trees along the lake anymore. There is
22 no protection. There is nothing holding all of
23 that erosion that's going definitely into our
24 marshes and into our river.

25 For hunting, before the dam on the

1 Nelson River, our community and surrounding areas
2 flourished with people guiding, guiding for duck
3 hunting and stuff like that every fall. A lot of
4 that took place seasonally, and also for
5 sustenance for food for all of us, a lot of us
6 require the ducks. And with all of the high water
7 causing the erosion, and pushing all of the silt
8 and mud and everything like that into the marshes,
9 you can't even get around to the marshes out there
10 now. It is all built up with mud and stuff like
11 that. You have to hope for a strong north wind
12 for the water to come up so you can go out there.
13 Right now you would never be able to get around
14 out there.

15 Trapping muskrats, that's one thing
16 that our family has grown up with, a lot of
17 families here in the community, a lot of seniors
18 recall doing it. For many people it was an
19 opportunity to make money harvesting muskrats
20 annually. And since then their habitat has been
21 destroyed. The muskrats were used for food by
22 many. Prior to the dam being built, the water
23 being kept high, the muskrats flourished and done
24 well. There were many deeper areas within the
25 marsh that the muskrats required, especially for

1 winter habitat. And now again since all of the
2 high water and all of the waves, wind driven
3 waves, all of the erosion, all of the silt and the
4 mud has now filled up our marsh.

5 My last year of muskrat trapping was
6 1982. That year I harvested over 1,000 muskrats
7 myself. Today if you go out there, there is
8 barely any. I know we used to traditionally go
9 out there in the spring time for food, and we used
10 to go clubbing them. You find all the breeding
11 holes, they eventually have got to come up
12 somewhere, and a lot of times that's where we
13 were, we always ended up getting them. And at
14 that time we took them home for food, very tasty,
15 and the pelts were really well that year too.

16 But I heard stories also how a lot of
17 people really done well with just trapping
18 muskrats alone. Even in the depression years, the
19 muskrats were worth over \$3 to \$5 a pelt back in
20 the 1930s, a pelt. So if you could have a
21 thousand muskrats at \$5 a pelt, I think your
22 buying power is pretty good. A lot of people did
23 good with that. Today all of that is all gone,
24 there is nothing our there now, it is all gone.

25 With that I would like to say thank

1 you.

2 MR. GORD BLUESKY: All right. I did
3 have Carl here, we will wait for him, but I would
4 like to ask Bev Smith, please come to the podium.

5 MS. BEV SMITH: Okay. I don't have a
6 written presentation, so mine is verbal. And I
7 don't think that I will be sending one in because
8 I will probably forget what I said.

9 I will start, my English name is Bev
10 Smith, my spirit name is, I have two, my first one
11 is (Ojibway spoken) and the other is (Ojibway
12 spoken.) And I'm from the Caribou clan.

13 I really enjoyed this morning because
14 I think the -- for the Anishinabe people that
15 water is life. And to start with ceremony, to
16 start this day with having those water drums and
17 the presentation from Delores was really good,
18 because I think it creates and it cements us and
19 it creates that foundation that we Anishinabe
20 people have to begin to talk about, not just to
21 our own people, and to bring back those ways, but
22 for the non-aboriginal people to begin to hear
23 what that land means to us, what that water means
24 to us, what those plants mean, and those animals
25 mean to us, and how that -- and from the beginning

1 of time for the Anishinabe people, there was no --
2 no one was above, we were all created equal. In
3 fact, the people were created last, according to
4 our stories. So we, being last, we had to depend
5 on those other gifts that were given to us from
6 the Creator so that we can live. One of those
7 biggest ones was the water.

8 In terms of background, my family,
9 particularly my dad has been a fisher. In 2008 he
10 received recognition from the province because he
11 was 50 years being on Lake Winnipeg as a licensed
12 fishermen. He is now 87 years old. He only quit
13 fishing about three years ago, but he has been on
14 the lake for at least 60 -- over 60 years. That's
15 how he supported his family was through that,
16 through fishing on Lake Winnipeg.

17 The other one that I have concerns
18 about is back in, probably in the '90s there was
19 some concern because the community next to us
20 wanted to drain, I think it was Gull Lake. And
21 there was concern here in Brokenhead that if we
22 started to drain that lake, I don't think they
23 would have got a licence for it, but people were
24 concerned about it, and then we -- our concern was
25 that we didn't derive our water for our water

1 system from the river, we have a well system. And
2 if we began to -- if there was draining of any
3 lake, it would affect the quality of our water and
4 how long we can use that water. Because right now
5 with the Brokenhead wetlands there was -- and I've
6 heard from both our own people and then people who
7 have an interest in the wetlands that there was a
8 great many lakes, there was actually seven to nine
9 lakes. We are now only running three on the north
10 side of our community.

11 In 2003 the chief and council, and I
12 was on council that year, we supported the
13 protective areas program mainly to secure our
14 well, our drinking water. But most of those are
15 gone.

16 I also sat on the Lake Winnipeg
17 Stewardship Board when it first started, and I
18 completed the first term and I also went into the
19 second term. One of the things that I -- I ended
20 up leaving the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board
21 mainly because I had a hard time, it is very
22 scientific, everything was science, and I
23 struggled and I continued to talk about the
24 traditional knowledge.

25 We have a lot of people on our lake.

1 Many of those fishermen were fishing that lake
2 long before Manitoba Hydro began their Hydro
3 development. And over the years I've talked to a
4 lot of those fishers in terms of some of the
5 changes that they have seen in that lake after
6 Hydro started. One of the ones that I was talking
7 to, an old man from Berens River, we were at a
8 conference, and he talked about the time when the
9 tide or the flow of the river would come from the
10 north, come into the south basin and go out. And
11 he was telling me that that didn't happen anymore,
12 Because he was on the lake for a long time. And
13 it really, I thought, well, that sounds strange,
14 like if it's a natural occurrence -- I'm not a
15 scientist, but it would seem to me it wasn't going
16 back out, then maybe there is a correlation of
17 what he was saying to some of the problems that we
18 are seeing in the south basin. Because when it
19 goes back out, then it would actually clear, clear
20 the south basin of some of the, like some of the
21 environmental impacts that we are experiencing
22 down here, because we are right at the bottom of
23 the lake. I'm not quite sure, but I was --
24 really, he got me thinking.

25 So one of the things, when I did leave

1 the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board, it was mainly
2 because I felt they didn't recognize the
3 traditional knowledge that was -- that people that
4 lived on the lake had, both prior to development
5 and after development. And even with the 70
6 recommendations that were given in that first
7 report for the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board,
8 there is very little in terms of traditional
9 knowledge that's in that report. But yet for me
10 that was a very key component of it.

11 I also have some concerns in terms of
12 the consultation process itself. I think it is a
13 good thing that you are listening, but I'm not
14 naive enough to think that what we are saying here
15 or what you are hearing from other communities is
16 going to stop Hydro. Because it is an economic --
17 it's one of the ones for the Province of Manitoba
18 that drives the economic -- the economy of
19 Manitoba. And we've seen the -- or particularly
20 those of us that lived around the lake, we've seen
21 some of the impacts of what Hydro is. And we
22 can't take Hydro in isolation, because there is
23 other impacts that are affecting us, global
24 warming, and all of the other erosion, the wind
25 erosion and all of those also impact us.

1 What is being put into our river
2 system, let's face it, Manitoba is actually a big
3 ditch, and everything flows here because we are
4 probably right in the bottom of everything. So
5 there is a whole lot of things that -- and you
6 can't isolate Hydro and say it is the only thing,
7 without having to take all of those other impacts
8 into consideration if we are going to consider how
9 we are going to look at our water supply. Whether
10 we get our water from the river or whether we get
11 it through wells, that's one big aquifer.

12 For them coming and going for their
13 permanent licensing for another 50 years, I feel
14 that before that even goes, there has to be
15 more -- there has to be more done in terms of
16 determining what are the long-term implications of
17 that, if there is more Hydro development. If
18 there is -- because once you create and you start
19 to divert water, then you are changing the whole
20 natural flow of those systems. And if you are
21 starting to flood land, and South Indian Lake is
22 an example of that, South Indian Lake is not there
23 anymore -- the debris, and all of the nutrients
24 and the minerals that are coming when you cover
25 land with water has an impact in terms of the

1 quality of that water. It also impacts the flow
2 and the natural flow within those, and then it
3 affects the lands and it affects the marshes and
4 it affects actually those that make their living
5 on those lands.

6 And there is also the whole idea of
7 the cost. The cost is too great for them to shut
8 down Hydro. But when we talk about those costs
9 and who is benefiting those costs, it is actually
10 Hydro and the Province, there is very little that
11 comes back to the communities, other than every
12 once in a while we get consultation, every once in
13 a while we get a program that allows us to do some
14 research in terms of some of those impacts.

15 So I think for me, it's like if we are
16 going to look at that Hydro, whether it is the
17 interim, or now that they are moving in for a
18 permanent, licensing them, we have to really take
19 a look at the whole quality of that.

20 I also, when I talk about that, there
21 is a real need, because one of the things for the
22 Anishinabe people is that we do have seven
23 teachings. And I wouldn't go through the first
24 one because those things have happened already.
25 But the last of the teachings, the seven teachings

1 is that there will come a time where the
2 Anishinabe people and the non-aboriginal people,
3 where we will go out and we will begin to share
4 what our knowledge is. And hopefully that those,
5 the non-aboriginal people will be taking into
6 consideration and we will begin to work together
7 to restore mother earth, and to restore the
8 respect that she needs, and to work together so
9 that we can together as two nations begin to heal
10 mother earth. And we are in that seventh
11 generation now. And I think that we need to
12 really start to look at that, because I think the
13 long term implications is not for me, it is not
14 even for my nieces and nephews in their lifetime,
15 but it will be for those generations to come.

16 And before I leave, I was also wanting
17 to make a note on the Bipole III. I do support
18 the Bipole III in the way it is coming, because if
19 you come on the southeastern side or the eastern
20 side of Lake Winnipeg, that is pristine, nothing
21 has been there up until the Winnipeg River. And
22 if the Bipole III comes, they are going to open
23 that up, and it would be within the next maybe 20
24 to 30 years we will have -- you will be -- that's
25 going to be dammed also. And at least we can keep

1 one section of Manitoba pristine and the way it is
2 supposed to be.

3 And that's all I have got to say.

4 MR. GORD BLUESKY: Thank you, Bev.

5 I would like to call up Carl Smith to
6 the podium.

7 MR. CARL SMITH: Hello, I'm Carl
8 Smith, Brokenhead.

9 I have been involved with a lot of
10 studies over the years. The first study I sat on
11 was Lake Winnipeg shoreline erosion environment,
12 and out of that group came a handbook called Lake
13 Winnipeg Shoreline Management handbook. There was
14 a lot of stuff there to be implicated that would
15 say it is not a natural occurrence on erosion. If
16 there is natural occurrence, it continues over so
17 many years, whereas this took like 40 years, 30
18 years to erode that much off our, off our river,
19 so it is not natural. But Hydro thinks it is
20 natural.

21 So then I moved on to another one
22 called Eastside Planning Initiative, in 2004, and
23 that came, the report that came out of that was
24 called Eco-vision. We went over that. Under that
25 initiative we had key areas that we looked at and

1 one was the mining industry, First Nation and
2 northern communities, community infrastructure,
3 wild rice activities and harvesting. We had
4 wetlands in there, effects of ecological integrity
5 of the wetlands. And we had a caribou study done,
6 trapping activities, parks and recreation
7 activities. And during that time, 2003, we had a
8 three-day workshop with all of the shareholders on
9 the east side, to the east side broad aerial
10 landings planning initiative. We had five themes,
11 local economic development. And roads, that was
12 one area, planning processes for this stuff. And
13 Aboriginal involvement, which there was a lot of
14 Aboriginals in this group. And then research and
15 development.

16 So out of the first thing we had local
17 economic benefits, there was a score initiative,
18 and lots of people thought was important for
19 economic benefits. We scored 28 on better
20 management of our beach resources for tourism.
21 Erosion won't help us with tourism, it takes away
22 a lot of stuff that we can showcase and have a
23 viable business in the summertime, springtime.

24 And the next one that came out, it was
25 support and promotion from Provincial, Feds, for

1 industrial community partnership, which at that
2 time forestry was in the area and we wanted to get
3 into that with revenue sharing of resources.

4 Then we went to the ecotourism,
5 ownership opportunities for local people, keep
6 benefits local. And we went on to Hydro future
7 developments, Bipole III, is the training that
8 they give us going to materialize into jobs? That
9 never happens. So that was kind of a hot topic,
10 so we spent a lot of time on that.

11 Then we went to the roads they were
12 putting in there, asset management and control,
13 what's the trade-off? There was wildlife, moose,
14 caribou, trapping in the area. Social impacts, an
15 all-weather access road to remote communities,
16 what would be the impact with them? Influence of
17 a road decision should be greater for people in
18 the north because they have more to have impact on
19 them. So that was one of the topics.

20 The planning process, okay, linkage
21 between broad planning sequence development plans.
22 Land use studies and communities should be in
23 place. We did some of that. Do they recognize
24 our land use studies and our communities, as
25 industry, Crown corporation or the province

1 itself? So we have to utilize our elders in the
2 planning process. And how are priorities going to
3 be set? That's another question we have to ask,
4 and a lot of times it came back on deaf ears.

5 So aboriginal involvement was the next
6 topic that came up. First Nations had concerns
7 about development, environment, water and quality
8 of life. Infringement on Aboriginal rights,
9 Natural Resource Transfer Act 1930 came up quite a
10 bit. And that's where we thought we didn't get
11 nothing for our resources, and it is supposed to
12 be in our territories, traditional areas. Why
13 don't we benefit?

14 Then research and development, the
15 need to be more baseline environmental information
16 for decision making for wildlife, caribou, moose,
17 bears, skunks, mink, raccoon, whatever you have in
18 the area.

19 The impact on biodiversity of the
20 area. Like Bev was saying it is pristine, there
21 is not much development there, are we going to
22 trade off that to destroy some areas. But, again,
23 that's not just us to decide that.

24 And then the balance between economic,
25 social and ecological, the need for better

1 planning tools. Out of that came the report, that
2 one group that Bev sat on, came an interim report
3 for Lake Winnipeg Fish report 2005, our collective
4 responsibilities. Like all of these studies are
5 there and they have never been acted on. And as
6 the Clean Environment Commission knows, we have to
7 protest some of our rights and issues for you to
8 listen to us this time around.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Carl.

10 MR. GORD BLUESKY: All right. We had
11 Doyle, but we are going to move on to continue on
12 with Sweet Pea to provide a presentation at the
13 podium. Now, we are nearing the end of our list
14 here, so any individuals who want to put their
15 name down, let me know.

16 MR. SWEETPEA STARR: Sweetpea Star,
17 also known as (Ojibway spoken), which is Blue Sky
18 Man from Eagle clan.

19 I used to go on the lake when I was A
20 young guy with that guy over there, handsome guy.
21 And there was plenty of fish. My girl there, she
22 is here to represent the children, that's why she
23 is not in school today. Because I wanted to
24 emphasize a little bit more of that.

25 Two years ago we went on the lake, me

1 and the old man and a couple of the boys. She has
2 been going since she was three, she is now five.
3 When she first came to the lake we had tubs of
4 fish, and she loved it. Pick up those fish and
5 put them in the buckets. I don't want to touch
6 those wiggly things, they are wobbling, dad. We
7 went a couple of weeks ago and set some nets, we
8 left those nets for nine days. My girl says, dad,
9 how come there is no fish on the nets? It is all
10 mud. There is brown stuff coming out.

11 It is kind of emotional for me because
12 she is so young, but she is asking those kind of
13 questions. Why do we have no fish, dad? I don't
14 know what to say to her. I just said, well,
15 because the lake is getting dirty.

16 We are way out there, two miles off
17 the shore we are out there. Two years ago there
18 was no brown. In the two years that she has been
19 fishing, it is just brown. It is not coming from
20 the bottom of the lake because it is 35 feet
21 there, and our nets are 40 mesh. So I know that
22 that's telling me that it is at the top of that
23 lake now. So it is not sitting there no more, it
24 is all over.

25 So my main concern is, when she has

1 children and she wants to show her children how to
2 fish, she is not going to be able to do that.
3 Because I can barely teach her that today.
4 Because there will be no fish, there will be
5 nothing in the lake, it will be dead.

6 So, I know Hydro is not the only, but
7 it has a big impact on what is happening to that
8 lake. And if we, as Indian people, we didn't get
9 educated in the last 30, 40 years, we wouldn't be
10 sitting at this thing having this forum. But
11 because some of us Indians got a little bit
12 smarter, and we know what you guys are doing now,
13 we are having this meeting. But what kind of
14 meeting is that little girl going to have?

15 I heard an old guy on the news about a
16 week ago from Nelson House saying that he was
17 taking pictures of the lake for 30 years. And
18 what he said, and I want it to be noted, that we
19 as Indian people, we can't eat money, we just
20 can't. Sure, you guys are used to going to the
21 supermarket and buying everything processed,
22 whatever, right. As the traditional people we
23 need all of that food, we need all of that
24 medicine, we need the plant life. If you guys
25 keep building and building, that little girl right

1 there ain't going to do what we do as Indian
2 people.

3 So I would just like to say miigwech
4 for hearing my story of that little girl. If she
5 could talk, I don't know what she would say. I
6 don't know what she would say to you guys. But
7 she is going to be able to talk for herself soon,
8 and maybe she will be better educated than I will
9 ever be. But that's the most concern right there
10 is those little kids, what are they going to do?
11 They are not going to live like us today. They
12 are going to have a harder life.

13 And that's what the people used to say
14 when I was her age, I used to hear the elders say,
15 go get educated, you will beat the white man with
16 his pen. So our people did do that, and we have
17 the knowledge now of what is going on. But my
18 grandfather, he didn't know how to write or
19 anything, so you guys took advantage. So it kind
20 of worked out that some of us Indians got educated
21 and we can see now what the whole process that's
22 happening. But even without the education, we
23 still knew something was wrong as Indian people,
24 we knew from the beginning that Hydro was not good
25 for this land. But like everybody else has said,

1 it is disappearing fast, and in the two years we
2 have been on the lake with her, rapidly. So if
3 you guys keep building and building and building,
4 what are you going to do when you can't turn the
5 lights on, and you don't make money on that no
6 more? Where are you going to run to? Who are you
7 going to run to? You are going to run to these
8 guys and you are going to ask for help, and it
9 might be too late.

10 So I just want to note here that it is
11 not just an Indian problem, it is going to be you
12 guys problem very shortly too, and in a big way if
13 we don't do something. Not only in the
14 environmental aspect of it, but the take, take,
15 take, take, and no give back, you guys are going
16 to pay for that soon. It is going to happen. And
17 I don't want it to happen in her time, but maybe,
18 I don't know, we will see.

19 Like they say, we have got to have
20 more of this kind of a meeting. Like this is just
21 a little piece of our people here, it is not even
22 a percentage, maybe one per cent of our people
23 here at this meeting. But I come because of that
24 kid there, and I want her to grow up a traditional
25 life. And if we keep doing this, there is going

1 to be no tradition, we will be just Indians,
2 because we are going to need water to be
3 traditional.

4 So with that I like to say miigwech.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Starr, can I just
6 ask a question? The problem with the fishing,
7 with no fish and the mud in the nets, how long has
8 that been going on?

9 MR. STARR: Two years now, like real
10 rapid, like really fast.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

12 MR. GORD BLUESKY: Miigwech, Sweetpea.
13 I would like to ask one of our longest serving
14 fishermen on that lake, probably in Manitoba too,
15 Happy Smith to say a few words to our panel.

16 MR. HAPPY SMITH: Hi, ladies and
17 gentlemen. First of all, I'm going to say thank
18 you for coming here. I have known Terry for a
19 long time, for quite a while. When I was on the
20 school board, he used to come there.

21 So, ladies and gentlemen, I would like
22 to say a few words about the mouth of the river.
23 A few words that means the lake is shut down, shut
24 down the river channel. We would like to get it
25 out of the channel so our people can get out and

1 set a net or two, so they can have fish in their
2 homes. They don't have to buy it at the store at
3 \$12 a pound. So these are the things I would like
4 to talk about as well.

5 I have known Terry for quite a while.
6 When he was in Selkirk, he used to come to my
7 place once in a while, see if I was doing wrong
8 things around here, when he was a former RCMP, I
9 mean.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Just the MP.

11 MR. SMITH: So I'm glad to speak on
12 behalf of Lake Winnipeg fishermen as well, not
13 only for Brokenhead, but for Lake Winnipeg. A lot
14 of fishermen are, their channels, the channels of
15 docks and everything, the mouth of the river
16 there, it is closed, plugged up. You know, there
17 is things that we have to talk about to the
18 fishermen of Lake Winnipeg. It is something that
19 we have to do. If you look at all of the channels
20 and docks along the lake that are sand filling, I
21 know I went to Balsam Bay one time, could hardly
22 get in there.

23 But I feel very, very comfortable that
24 this is a place to talk about Lake Winnipeg as
25 well. I see a few fishermen here. I think we

1 have to start looking at Lake Winnipeg, not only
2 here in the south end, the north end as well. And
3 I know I fished up north so -- I know pretty well
4 Lake Winnipeg, Balsam Bay, Traverse Bay, all of
5 them, so I have been around Lake Winnipeg. But I
6 would like to see this channel open -- what you
7 call them, Terry -- so that water and sand won't
8 fill in. You know what I mean, it is a very hard
9 thing to get out of here now. I know a lot of
10 people along Lake Winnipeg who can't get into
11 their docks or something. Because I fished down
12 there, Victoria Beach all the way to Warren
13 Landing. I know these lakes. I know the lake
14 pretty well. I have been a fishermen for at least
15 54 years, I know what it is all about. But it is
16 time for the fishermen to speak out about the
17 south end of Lake Winnipeg, not only the south
18 end, to the island up there on Traverse Bay, and
19 all of those places, Victoria Beach. It is very,
20 very hard to get out of this channel here. It is
21 something I would like to see, you can't even get
22 out here sometimes, to go out and set a net.

23 I still got a licence. But, I mean,
24 it is something that we have to talk about, Lake
25 Winnipeg. It is time. I dreamt about it, that we

1 are going to see somebody here today, I'm talking
2 about south end of Winnipeg, Lake Winnipeg. It is
3 time, it is about time people are speaking out. I
4 know I went all of the way to Warren Landing and
5 down here fishing with Joe Sinclair, and that's
6 right clean around Lake Winnipeg, I know what it
7 is like. I have been a fishermen for a long time.

8 So that's all I'm going to say for
9 now. I think my daughter said enough.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you Happy, and
11 thank you for those comments. It's very nice to
12 see you again and to see that you are still doing
13 well. When I was coming here this morning I was
14 actually thinking about you and your daughters,
15 Bev and Glenda, who I got to know well back in the
16 early '80s. I remember those times quite fondly.
17 So thank you for coming out and thank you for your
18 comments, and Bev's as well.

19 MR. GORD BLUESKY: Okay. With that I
20 would like to open it one last time, if anyone
21 else wants to provide a presentation, prior to me
22 inviting up Ralph for our final presentation and
23 closing ceremony. And I'm not sure exactly how we
24 want to do this at the end. Is it, you provide
25 some feedback or do we just get right into --

1 THE CHAIRMAN: I will make some very
2 brief comments.

3 MR. GORD BLUESKY: It is open.
4 Marlene. They have got the whole family here
5 today.

6 MS. MARLENE SMITH: My name is Marlene
7 Smith, Lawrence is my dad, also known as Happy.

8 Because he has been a fishermen for a
9 long time, I remember cleaning nets with him and,
10 you know, you talk about the difference in lake,
11 and I just want to say that, because this has been
12 feeding us, that I really hope that people listen
13 to what my dad had to say, and the rest of the
14 people here as well. I think that -- I think when
15 you have all of these elders that are leaving us,
16 that they need to be respected by their own people
17 and everybody else, because they have had a long
18 journey.

19 And I think that I want to go on to
20 say that I'm opposed to the licensing for Hydro,
21 because I don't think that they quite understand
22 how much impact that they have had on the lake.
23 And I know that economically our province wouldn't
24 be anywhere without Hydro, but I think there is
25 other means of finding a way, with solar energy, I

1 think that's a better alternative to making more
2 and more dams and whatnot, generating stations.

3 Because when you look at what is
4 there, and when you look at the Whiteshell -- and
5 my dad always wants to go there, because I think
6 it enriches us spiritually to have these sites and
7 to know that there is a forest out there, an
8 eco-system that supports all of us. And I don't
9 think that we should take it for granted. Hydro,
10 anything else, infrastructure, whatever you want
11 to do, I think you need to respect that.

12 And I want to say miigwech.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

14 MR. GORD BLUESKY: Thank you, Marlene,
15 appreciate that.

16 Okay. We are going to call up Elder
17 Ralph Kent to provide his presentation, and then
18 lead us into our final ceremony for the day.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Do you want me to speak
20 before the final ceremony, or after? Why don't I
21 speak first, it is going to be very brief.

22 MR. GORD BLUESKY: Let's do that. We
23 will start with Terry here to provide his
24 feedback, and then we will get ready for Ralph,
25 and Ralph will still be doing a presentation,

1 though.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, that's fine. All
3 I want, all I really want to say by way of closing
4 is that, again, thank you very much to the
5 community for accepting our invitation for you to
6 host us. I would like to thank the community for
7 doing, obviously doing a fair bit of preparatory
8 work. It is obvious by the presentations that we
9 have heard here today that a lot of thought and
10 work went into them. We really appreciate that.
11 It certainly helps our process. I would like to
12 thank, I think they have gone now, but the women
13 who made the lunch. It was excellent.

14 What happens from here is, we have
15 another number of weeks of hearings, we still have
16 many hearings in rural communities, as well as on
17 a number of First Nation reserves. We are going
18 to have I think about five weeks of hearings in
19 Winnipeg in March and April. Following that the
20 panel will spend some time just talking about what
21 we've heard, what we've read, and deliberating and
22 deciding what we are going to recommend to the
23 Minister.

24 We provide, or we will provide a
25 report to the Minister on what we've heard and our

1 conclusions from what we've heard, and some
2 recommendations that may go to him.

3 We may not, our recommendations may
4 not give you everything that you would like to
5 see, but you will see in our report that we have
6 paid attention to what we have heard from you
7 today. And I think you will see that whatever
8 conclusions and recommendations we come to have
9 been well thought out. Chances are there may well
10 be some in there that you actually agree with and
11 are pleased to see in there. I hope that's the
12 case.

13 Once again, before we turn it over to
14 Elder Kent, thank you for hosting us in your
15 community, miigwech and have a good -- enjoy the
16 rest of this lovely day out there.

17 MR. RALPH KENT: There was something
18 that, when I was sitting here listening to some
19 people talking, it is about peat mining, peat
20 moss. Over here at Stead, they have cleared the
21 land and they till it and they plant grass seed.
22 And each year, they let it grow for three years,
23 but they cut it every year, and then cut it in
24 strips and then they dig it and sell it. Those of
25 you who live here, you seen them trucks going by

1 here with all of that, gone some place else.

2 Now, there is a place, there is a
3 company called Suncor that's got a peat mining
4 over on 44 and 11. They are doing the same thing
5 over there. My point is that the muskeg, the peat
6 is the kidneys of mother earth, it cleans the
7 water. And that's another form of abuse of the
8 water, that water flows off too fast, washes off,
9 then and next thing it will be here at Stead.
10 When the land is not -- you can't grow anymore
11 grass on it, they start putting chemical
12 fertilizers in there. And then when you get a big
13 rainfall, that runs through ditches and out into
14 the river and the lake, and you get these big
15 algae blooms and all of that pollution. So I
16 thought I should mention that.

17 But I would like to thank all of you
18 that are here, all of you good looking people,
19 both brown and white, and my family. We talked
20 about that, I don't make those decisions. We are
21 a matriarchal people, which means that the women
22 are the ones that call the shots. The women that
23 are there, they tell us and we as men carry it
24 out.

25 Now, in closing, we want to sing two

1 songs. One, it's a Lakota song that we learned in
2 Pine Ridge, we used to go to ceremony over there
3 with the people from Pine Ridge because that's
4 where my ancestors come from. It is about the
5 buffalo. The buffalo gave us life for centuries.
6 And it is called (native language spoken), which
7 means that the sacred buffalo are still here, the
8 spirit of them.

9 Now, the chief, I think he left, but
10 before I was talking to him here and he said, tell
11 those munya they have got a lot of catching up to
12 do, if you know what I mean, can you guess what I
13 mean? Munya, all they want to do is take and take
14 and take and take and don't put nothing back.

15 Maybe I could give you a little bit of
16 advice on that. Put on food offering, some
17 natural foods. And I could give you an example
18 here. One time a long time ago, I started out
19 like say in 1977, and I went to this old man and I
20 told him I couldn't find any sweet grass, I would
21 go out hunting with him for sweet grass. And I
22 found a small patch of sweet grass. He said go
23 over there and put a food offering and talk to
24 that sweet grass and tell them that you are
25 wanted, we love you, we need you, we want you. So

1 I did that. And a couple of years later, we
2 started finding sweet grass, big patches of it at
3 different places that I went hunting. Now, if
4 that were applied to sweet grass, this lake,
5 water, we are about, oh, I don't know, maybe 80
6 per cent water, 85 per cent water, and the rest of
7 it is just a bunch of bullshit. Right? So the
8 thing is to make an offer. Everything has a
9 spirit, you know that, everything that is a
10 mystery to you when you walked on mother earth,
11 you will know it all when you go into that spirit
12 world. But you don't have to wait that long.

13 We are relearning how to use what
14 medical science has learned. Do you ever hear
15 about chakras? Anybody hear about chakras through
16 medical science? Chakras are centres, they call
17 them nerve centres. One of them is here, to see
18 without a visual eye. The main one is here in
19 your chest, and your hands. The right side you
20 take in, the left side you put out. And then your
21 sexual area, that's four. And then your feet. So
22 every human being is born with these.

23 How many past lives have people lived?
24 You know, I can honestly stand here and tell you
25 that I've been here ten times before, and this is

1 the oldest that I have ever been in my ten past
2 lives. This is my eleventh time here. Twice I
3 was born a Lakota. I used to have dreams of that
4 landscape on Dances With Wolves, and it used to
5 really get to me. So when it started doing that,
6 it started communicating. And there was an old
7 lady that come from Pine Creek, or Pine Ridge, I
8 don't know how she come over here, she was guided
9 here by the grandmothers and grandfathers. Her
10 name was "Celine not help'um." That is my family
11 name, "not help'um." I was adopted by Mrs. Kent,
12 my dad was adopted by Mrs. Kent at 10 months old,
13 so that's how I become here standing here
14 bullshitting all of you.

15 And these three guys here, thank you
16 for watching out for me, and I watch out for you
17 out on that lake, because sometimes it get pretty
18 dam rough. And if I see you sinking next time, I
19 will just run right over you.

20 And these water drums, they make a big
21 difference. Our culture makes a big difference.
22 Anishinabe has to become very proud who they are,
23 never mind trying to be a munya or being somebody
24 else, be who you are. Because a lot of our people
25 today, you see them today, some of them walking

1 around with green hair, orange hair, big spiked
2 hair, or what do you call that, that gel or
3 whatever they put in their hair. Some of them
4 walking around with the cheeks of their ass
5 showing, you could swipe a card down there, trying
6 to be somebody else. Be who you are. Me, it
7 doesn't bother me. It used to bother me, but I am
8 just who I am, and I don't think that anybody is
9 going to change that. I worked for (native
10 language spoken) too, I worked for (native
11 language spoken). And that's one of the songs we
12 are going to sing here.

13 When we went to South Dakota, that
14 same song, we put Ojibway and Lakota together
15 because we are both. My wife, her grandfather
16 comes from Standing Rock, which is east of Pine
17 Ridge, so we are both. But we were born and
18 raised here on an Ojibway reserve.

19 And I hope, or I would like for you to
20 do something soon about our water, about our lake.
21 You will have our help. We are going to be asking
22 for that. And I think it is time now that we went
23 out to the mouth of the river and had a ceremony
24 out there, and made some offerings out there. It
25 is about time to do that. The spirit of that lake

1 has to be cleaned up. We have had enough
2 pollution. We have had enough of all of that.
3 These people that want only money, what are they
4 going to do when they die? You are going to be
5 like Elizabeth Taylor with all of those billions
6 of dollars, and when she died she had billions of
7 dollars all saved up somewhere, and then the State
8 of California had to decide what to do with the
9 billions of dollars. What good is that? So the
10 point I'm making here is money versus living.

11 And those things, those water drums
12 are our life, Anishinabe. And it is coming back
13 strong, not only on this reserve. And we have a
14 big responsibility here. We are the keepers of
15 the centre. So this is -- we are trying very hard
16 to live up to that. And I don't think that we
17 have missed one full moon sweat, thanks to the
18 women. Two of our boys, or three of our boys had
19 to go back and get things ready, so we are going
20 to be in the sweat after we are done here.

21 And I thank you, thank all of you, all
22 Anishinabe, for being here, and thank all of the
23 wasitu for being here to listen to what we have to
24 say. And we are going to do these songs now, and
25 there is two songs that we want to sing.

1 Miigwech.

2 (Closing ceremony)

3 (Concluded at 1:50 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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