

MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

LAKE WINNIPEG REGULATION REVIEW
UNDER THE WATER POWER ACT

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Transcript of Proceedings
Held at Selkirk Inn Conference Centre
Selkirk, Manitoba

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 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

CONSERVATION AND WATER STEWARDSHIP

Bob Matthews
Mike Morin

MANITOBA HYDRO

Dale Hutchison

INDEX OF PROCEEDINGS

Opening by the Chair	4
Manitoba Hydro presentation	8
Presentations:	
Jim Stinson	8, 43, 48, 55, 57
Chris Benson	24, 50
Donald Young	32, 41, 46
Dennis Walker	32, 41, 46
Margaret Young	35, 45
Gertrude Walker	39, 47, 50, 58
Narvey Levin	53
Maureen Walker	56
Evening Session:	
Opening by the Chair	58
Manitoba Hydro presentation	61
Presentations:	
Roxanne Anderson	70
Andy Weremy	84
Earl Stevenson	89
Bob Monkman	96
Patricia Mitchell	99
Ryan Duplassie	108

1 WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2015

2 UPON COMMENCING AT 3:30 P.M.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon, ladies
4 and gentlemen, welcome, my name is Terry Sargeant,
5 I'm the chair of the Manitoba Clean Environment
6 Commission, as well as the chair of the panel
7 conducting this review.

8 I would like to introduce other
9 members on the panel. To my left is Edwin Yee, to
10 my immediate right, Neil Harden, and further to
11 the right, Bev Suek. We also have Commission
12 staff with us today, Cathy Johnson, the Commission
13 secretary, and Joyce Mueller, the Commission
14 administrator, and to my right our technical
15 staff, Cece Reid the recorder and Bob Armstrong
16 our report writer.

17 I would just like to ask that anyone
18 who has cell phones with them, please make sure
19 that the bell is off, vibrate is fine. If you get
20 a call, take it outside of the room, please, but
21 turn the ringer off.

22 We are here today because in 2011, the
23 Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship
24 asked the Clean Environment Commission to hold
25 meetings to hear evidence from the public about

1 the impacts of Manitoba Hydro's regulation of Lake
2 Winnipeg. We were asked to hold meetings in
3 communities around both the north and south basins
4 of Lake Winnipeg, as well as in the City of
5 Winnipeg. We have to date, this is our fourth
6 week on the road, we have been in the north, we
7 have been in the central Interlake, we will do
8 more up the east side of the lake next week, and
9 then back up north. In March and into April, we
10 will be holding four to five weeks of hearings in
11 Winnipeg.

12 We have not been asked to look at any
13 other parts of the Manitoba Hydro system. We
14 recognize that Lake Winnipeg Regulation is a key
15 part of the overall system, but it is the only
16 part that the Minister has asked us to look at.

17 Specifically, we have been asked to
18 look at the reasons why Lake Winnipeg Regulation
19 came into being with the issuance of the first
20 licence in 1970. We have also been asked to look
21 at whether or not Lake Winnipeg Regulation has
22 succeeded or failed in meeting the goals, the
23 original goals. And we have been asked to look at
24 the effects and the impacts of Lake Winnipeg
25 Regulation since its first operation in 1976.

1 We try to keep the meetings in the
2 rural communities and northern communities as
3 informal as possible, in order to encourage as
4 many of you as possible to come forward and share
5 your thoughts. The meetings are recorded. This
6 is required by the Environment Act. A verbatim
7 transcript is produced within a few days and
8 posted on our website.

9 Anyone who is present is welcome to
10 make a presentation. If you feel comfortable in
11 doing it with somebody else in a pair or threes,
12 whatever, that's fine as well.

13 What we are looking for -- an oral
14 presentation is really just an opportunity for
15 members of the public to share their personal
16 knowledge, their views, their concerns, about this
17 matter that we have been asked to look at, Lake
18 Winnipeg Regulation. If you make a presentation,
19 what we would like to hear from you is your name,
20 who you are, how Lake Winnipeg Regulation may have
21 impacted you or your community, your views on
22 whether or not the project has been good for the
23 province as a whole, any views you have or might
24 have as to what decisions the panel should make
25 when we make our recommendations to the Minister,

1 and any other information that you feel is
2 important.

3 Typically, we restrict oral
4 presentations to 15 minutes. But we have found
5 that when we are in the rural and northern
6 communities, in the more informal settings, very
7 few people go anywhere near that long, but then
8 they may come back a little while later with
9 second or even third thoughts, and we are quite
10 open to that.

11 And finally, there are options to an
12 oral presentation, if you don't feel comfortable
13 or you are not prepared to make an oral
14 presentation today, you are quite welcome to make
15 a written submission. That need not be anymore
16 involved than a letter or even an email sent to
17 the Commission. Our addresses are available on
18 our website. I can assure you that we receive all
19 written submissions, they become as much a part of
20 the record as any oral presentations.

21 That's all I have by way of opening
22 comments. I would now like to call upon Dale
23 Hutchison of Manitoba Hydro, who will make a brief
24 presentation explaining what Lake Winnipeg
25 Regulation is all about, and focused on these

1 panels that are set up here. Dale?

2 MR. HUTCHISON: Thank you,
3 Commissioner Sargeant. Can everyone hear?

4 My name is Dale Hutchison. Thank you
5 for inviting me to the City of Selkirk. I have
6 been working with Manitoba Hydro for 15 years to
7 understand our impacts on the waterways and on the
8 people we share them with. In my presentation
9 today, I will cover the Manitoba Hydro system,
10 Lake Winnipeg and our Lake Winnipeg Regulation
11 project.

12 So, first I will talk about the
13 Manitoba Hydro system. A huge area from the Rocky
14 Mountains in the west, to the edge of Lake
15 Superior in the east, and south into the Red River
16 Valley of the United States flows into Lake
17 Winnipeg. The shape of the land is like a million
18 square kilometre bowl. And it is because of this
19 that hydroelectric development is possible on a
20 large scale in Manitoba.

21 There are 15 generating stations that
22 take advantage of the water flowing through the
23 province. These are shown on the map by the blue
24 dots, and the size of the dots, small, medium and
25 large, shows how much electricity each can

1 produce. So on the Winnipeg River, there are six
2 small generating stations. Across the lake on the
3 Saskatchewan River at Grand Rapids is a medium
4 sized station. Now, the Nelson River flows into
5 Hudson Bay. We have got a small generating
6 station on the west branch of the Nelson River at
7 Jenpeg. The Churchill River is north of the
8 Nelson, it also flows into Hudson Bay. Now,
9 rather than building generating stations on this
10 far northern river, instead its waters were
11 diverted into the Nelson at Split Lake through
12 what is called the Churchill River Diversion. The
13 newest generating station, Wuskwatim, is on this
14 Churchill River Diversion route.

15 Now, the main hydroelectric benefit of
16 Churchill River diversion is that from Split Lake
17 downstream, the Nelson has the benefit of two
18 rivers. And you can see by the size of the blue
19 dots that our largest generating stations, Kettle,
20 Long Spruce and Limestone, are located in this
21 area downstream of Split Lake. These three
22 stations alone produce 70 per cent of all
23 electricity in Manitoba.

24 Keeyask is the newest generating
25 station, and it is being built on this same

1 stretch of river downstream of Split Lake, and it
2 will be a medium sized station.

3 To get the power from these northern
4 stations to the south, we have got two high
5 voltage bipole lines that run from Gillam, 1,000
6 kilometres to a converter station just outside of
7 Winnipeg. There's a third bipole line that's
8 currently being built as well, which you have
9 probably heard of, it is known Bipole III.

10 Now, from this converter station near
11 Winnipeg, the electricity is sent over 100,000
12 kilometres of distribution lines to homes and
13 businesses throughout Manitoba.

14 We also produce electricity using
15 natural gas at stations in Selkirk and Brandon,
16 and in an emergency, we can use coal at our
17 station in Brandon. And although we don't own
18 them, we do purchase electricity from two wind
19 farms at St. Leon and St. Joseph. If you have
20 gone to the United States, you have probably seen
21 these on the side of the highway.

22 The Manitoba Hydro system uses water
23 to produce over 95 per cent of the electricity
24 made.

25 Now we will talk about Lake Winnipeg.

1 It is the tenth largest freshwater lake in the
2 world, and there are a dozen rivers that flow into
3 the lake and there is only one natural outflow,
4 that's the Nelson River. This makes it easy for
5 the lake to flood. And flooding is caused -- or I
6 should say the mouth of the Nelson River is wide
7 but it is very shallow, and ice can block the flow
8 of water out of the lake over the winter. And
9 historically, this has caused flooding around the
10 lake.

11 These are Winnipeg Free Press
12 headlines and photographs of recent flooding
13 events, years like 1927, 1950, 1954, 1955, 1966,
14 1968, 1969, 1970. This constant flooding around
15 Lake Winnipeg put a lot of pressure on government
16 to do something about it. At the same time the
17 demand for electricity was growing in the
18 province. So in 1970, the Premier of Manitoba
19 announced a plan to proceed with Lake Winnipeg
20 Regulation in order to have flood control on Lake
21 Winnipeg, and power production on the Nelson
22 River.

23 Now we will talk about our Lake
24 Winnipeg Regulation project, which I will call LWR
25 for short, because it will save me some breath.

1 Before we could build Lake Winnipeg Regulation,
2 first we needed a licence under the Water Power
3 Act. This is similar to getting a building permit
4 before you build a house. This initial licence is
5 called an interim licence. And again, we had to
6 provide information to the Province about what we
7 wanted to build and the effect it would have on
8 river levels and flows.

9 In 1970, the Province granted us an
10 interim licence which gave us the approval to
11 build LWR. They also provided rules on how it
12 could be operated, and there were three types of
13 rules. The first type were operating ranges for
14 Lake Winnipeg and some of the downstream lakes.
15 So, for instance, on Lake Winnipeg between
16 elevation 711 and 715, Manitoba Hydro can decide
17 how much water to flow through Jenpeg in order to
18 meet electricity demands. Above elevation 715, we
19 have to let as much water as possible out of the
20 lake. This is called maximum discharge. And
21 below elevation 711, it is the Minister of
22 Conservation and Water Stewardship will tell us
23 how much water to let out of the lake.

24 Second type, or the second rule is
25 that we have to have a minimum flow of water out

1 of Lake Winnipeg all of the time.

2 And the third rule is we can't change
3 the rate of water flow at Jenpeg too fast. So we
4 agreed with these rules and by 1976 had
5 constructed Lake Winnipeg Regulation.

6 So to build LWR, it involved digging a
7 second outlet for Lake Winnipeg along with two
8 other channels to increase the flow of water out
9 of the lake. Now, these channels alone would
10 drain the lake, so it was necessary to also have a
11 control structure on the west channel of the
12 Nelson River to control the flow of water out of
13 the lake.

14 Okay. So to use the example of a
15 faucet, tub and drain, if all of these rivers
16 flowing into Lake Winnipeg are represented by the
17 water drop under the faucet, then this drain
18 represents the outflow of the Nelson River, and
19 the water drop under it, the amount of water that
20 can flow into the lake. You can see that the
21 water drops are different sizes. What this means
22 is that in flood years, you would have more water
23 entering the lake than can leave it, so that will
24 cause the lake level to rise and flood.

25 In this lower diagram you can see that

1 there is a second outlet, or drain. This
2 represents the LWR channel. And the water drop
3 under it is half the size of the natural channel.
4 You can still see these two water drops together
5 are still smaller than the droplet under the
6 faucet. So when there is a flood, more water will
7 enter the lake than can leave it. However, now
8 the lake will not rise as high and it won't be in
9 flood as long. So it is this difference between
10 inflows and outflows that means that LWR can
11 influence the level of the lake, but it can't
12 control the level of the lake.

13 Now, people have different ideas about
14 how LWR affects water levels on Lake Winnipeg.
15 Some people think we keep the water levels higher
16 all of the time, others think we keep it lower.
17 The Federal Government has been monitoring water
18 levels on Lake Winnipeg for 100 years. What this
19 water level data shows is that the lake is still
20 behaving now the way it always has. In the spring
21 and summer, the water level rises, and over the
22 course of fall and winter, the water level falls.
23 When there is a drought in the watershed, the lake
24 gets lower, and when there is a flood the
25 watershed, the lake will get higher.

1 However, since 1976 when the LWR was
2 constructed, there was one noticeable change. And
3 I'm afraid I have to use a graph to show that,
4 because it is really the only way to show changes
5 in water levels over time. So this graph shows
6 how LWR has reduced flooding on Lake Winnipeg by
7 comparing the water level with LWR to what the
8 water level would be if LWR did not exist. One
9 side of the graph has the elevation above sea
10 level. The bottom of the graph shows the 40 years
11 since 1977, the first full year LWR was
12 constructed, up to the present. The blue line
13 represents the actual, or with LWR water level,
14 and the red line is an estimate of what the water
15 level would be if LWR did not exist.

16 And you probably noticed that in the
17 last ten years or so, it has been very wet with a
18 lot of water flowing into the lake and down
19 through the Nelson River. What this chart shows
20 is that in flood years like 1997, 2005, 2011 and
21 2014, the lake would have gotten two feet higher
22 and the flooding would have lasted much longer if
23 LWR did not exist. So this information is
24 demonstrating that LWR is meeting its goal of
25 providing flood relief on Lake Winnipeg.

1 Now, this last banner has information
2 about what happens downstream of Lake Winnipeg.
3 There are 20,000 people that live along the Nelson
4 River. Land and water is extremely important to
5 the identity and livelihood of these people. Now
6 most, or all Manitobans I should say benefit from
7 having reliable low cost electricity, and people
8 around Lake Winnipeg benefit from the flood relief
9 provided by LWR. However, people downstream have
10 suffered by having more water flow out of the lake
11 during the winter and during times of flood. And
12 this additional water has significant impacts to
13 these people.

14 In natural conditions, lake levels and
15 river flows gradually decrease over the course of
16 the winter. With LWR, more water flows out of the
17 lake over the winter, up to 50 per cent more. And
18 this additional water causes problems for the ice,
19 which makes it -- which can make it more dangerous
20 for people to travel on the waterways. Also it
21 negatively affects aquatic animals like beaver,
22 mink, muskrat and otter. Then during the summer,
23 any time the level of the lake gets close to or
24 above level 715, Jenpeg goes to maximum discharge,
25 sending a surge of water down the Nelson, causing

1 water level fluctuations on the rivers and lakes.

2 So, ultimately, Lake Winnipeg Regulation has
3 caused impacts to the cultural, commercial,
4 recreational and spiritual pursuits of people
5 living downstream of Lake Winnipeg.

6 Now, Manitoba Hydro, by working
7 together, in Cree this is called witasosketowin,
8 with the people who live and work along the Nelson
9 River, Manitoba Hydro is working to address the
10 impacts from Lake Winnipeg Regulation, through
11 agreements and other arrangements with all
12 communities and First Nations along the Nelson
13 River, through projects like the Cross Lake Weir,
14 through programs for resource harvesting, access
15 and navigation, archaeology and heritage resources
16 and recreation, like the photos shown in this
17 banner, we are working to address these impacts.

18 So that's my presentation, I hope you
19 have a productive meeting with the Commissioners,
20 and I will be available at the end of the meeting
21 to talk if you have any questions.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Dale.

23 Now, it is your turn. Anyone in the
24 audience have any presentations, any thoughts, any
25 concerns they wish to share with us? We have a

1 handheld mic that we will pass around. If you are
2 going to speak or ask questions, I would ask that
3 you use the mic, that way it goes into the
4 recording system for our transcripts.

5 Anyone have anything to say? Yes,
6 sir?

7 MR. JIM STINSON: Mr. Sargeant, panel,
8 thank you very much for coming today. My name is
9 Jim Stinson, S-T-I-N-S-O-N, I'm a resident of the
10 RM of St. Clements. I was the emergency
11 coordinator for the RM of St. Clements for nine
12 years, and experienced flooding several times, not
13 only in the Red River, but Lake Winnipeg. I was
14 also a resident of Norway House for three years,
15 have very close ties in Norway House, so that is
16 the Nelson River.

17 Sir, just one small question; there is
18 not a Hydro natural gas output in Selkirk, it is
19 East Selkirk, the electrical thing is East
20 Selkirk. Okay. And we are very proud of it being
21 in East Selkirk, even though it almost blew up
22 when they had that thing the one time when they
23 first started. But that's all right. Okay. So
24 it is East Selkirk.

25 I want to talk on two things. One is

1 on the soil erosion. The other one is on the
2 level of the lake and the way it is determined.

3 Soil erosion is not covered under DFA,
4 Disaster Financial Assistance. Lake Winnipeg is
5 in essence two lakes. We have the north basin, we
6 have the south basin. There is more development
7 on the south basin than north basin.

8 There was soil erosion in British
9 Columbia off of Powell River. What were they
10 going to do with the ocean, that's off the ocean
11 there, because of all of the ships? They took
12 cement ships and made a break water. You go down
13 into the Great Lakes, you look at the Great Lakes,
14 and you mentioned that we are one of the ten. We
15 do not have a breakwater in Lake Winnipeg except
16 that little minor one up at Gimli, which is kind
17 of a pier.

18 The soil erosion, we have cliff
19 dwellers in the RM of St. Clements and Victoria
20 because of soil erosion, not necessarily because
21 of the height of the water, but because of wind.
22 Now, here is where I start to get to my questions.
23 Today we are at 714.2, correct, for the level of
24 the lake. Okay. The lake has its licence to,
25 right now, at 711 to 715.

1 Are you aware, sir, how many months
2 last year Hydro was in violation of their
3 elevation? Five months, June, July, August and
4 September, they went five months in violation. No
5 penalty, there was nothing done about it.

6 On the 26th of October, and the
7 morning of the 27th, with the weather bomb, we
8 were told that Norway House at Jenpeg, all the
9 outlets were running at full bore. There was
10 words being used there that weren't totally
11 accurate. I had a look at Jenpeg, and I had some
12 friends look at Jenpeg. There were turbines that
13 were not turning, that were not putting water out.
14 The total amount of water does not come out when
15 they are saying it. So they are using schematics.
16 If we are going into winter, and the forecast
17 right now, we are going to be at 714.2 right into
18 May and June. So what I'm getting at is, if we
19 leave that water at 714.2 between now and then,
20 the amount -- the shallow that lake is, you get
21 any wind, we are going to have flooding. If you
22 don't worry about the nor'westerlies in June or
23 May or July or even August, the nor'westerlies
24 come in September and October, that is when the
25 weather bomb is. We control the lake for the

1 whole -- you go and look at your thing, it is the
2 whole year that they look at. There is a
3 difference between October levels and July levels,
4 because that's the nor'westerlies and that's when
5 people get flooded and all of the erosion happens,
6 and we get nothing done for it.

7 Monitoring stations, there are nine
8 monitoring stations on the lake, only two, only
9 two in the south basin, one on the east side and
10 one on the west side. Manitoba Hydro has so many
11 monitoring stations up here. There is not one
12 monitoring station in the south basin that I can
13 go to online and find the wind speed. Yet they
14 have got monitoring stations up here that will
15 tell me today the temperature of the water in the
16 north.

17 So if Hydro wants to use our water,
18 then please give us the information that we need
19 to protect our residences. Two monitoring
20 stations for that whole area.

21 In essence, I know it will never
22 happen, I know it will never happen, have a weir
23 put at the narrows, because that north basin
24 pushes through there, and we all know the depth of
25 it up at the narrows here, because that is really,

1 really deep. Because that water pushes down in
2 here, it builds up the basin, and then that's when
3 we get the flooding because of the high water.

4 We are dealing with 711 to 714, three
5 feet. You try and lower that lake a foot depth,
6 one foot depth with that much wind causes that
7 flooding.

8 Then we go down to the historical,
9 about the marshes. The marshes, we are not
10 letting nature do its job, the marshes are staying
11 wet. I travel on those marshes, fishing,
12 travelling out there. A friend of mine is a
13 trapper out there. Those marshes are wet. We
14 don't have the fluctuations that mother nature
15 used to give us, and with that we now don't have
16 the cattails that are dying off and we don't get
17 the phosphorous taken out. So we do need that
18 fluctuation in the lake for the marshes.

19 I didn't -- there is lots more I could
20 talk on, Mr. Sargeant, I apologize. It is the
21 monitoring of the lake, and if you are going to
22 use the lake, please try and assist some of our
23 residents with some type of compensation. I know
24 there was a study done three years ago and people
25 came out and said that the height of the lake does

1 not cause erosion. You live on this side of the
2 lake, and you see that wind at eight feet on the
3 27th of October, going over top of the semis, and
4 I'm dumping rocks in there. If that lake would
5 have been a foot lower prior to that weather bomb,
6 we wouldn't have had eight foot waves, we might
7 have had six, but that one foot makes a huge, huge
8 difference.

9 Thank you very much for the
10 opportunity, and I appreciate you coming around,
11 thank you very much.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Stinson
13 I'm not going to respond to all of your comments,
14 but I'm not sure Manitoba Hydro owns any of the
15 monitors in the lake. I believe they are all
16 owned by the Canada water survey.

17 MR. STINSON: Well, if you go --

18 THE CHAIRMAN: I know that the
19 information is posted on Manitoba Hydro's website
20 daily.

21 MR. STINSON: Yes, it is on their
22 website daily. It is only, when you go on it
23 today, you don't find anything, I cannot go back.
24 And I tried to find some historical stuff to show
25 you, especially from the weather bomb. But you

1 only go back so far. It may be -- Hydro, I can
2 tell you, have very, very good monitoring. If I
3 wanted to get some levels of the river on the
4 Winnipeg River, I'm going to Manitoba Hydro to get
5 their levels. Because Manitoba Hydro levels are
6 so much more accurate than MITs. They are
7 awesome, and it is too bad we don't have more of
8 them.

9 So you could be correct, I'm not sure,
10 but that's what we have to deal with as residents.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: I understand. Thank
12 you very much, Mr. Stinson.

13 Now, did you want to make some
14 comments? We will get the mic to you.

15 MR. CHRIS BENSON: Thank you. My name
16 is Chris Benson, I am a resident of the
17 St. Clements area. I have had a secondary
18 property out there all of my life, and my family
19 has had a property there for nearly 100 years.
20 And we are in the Netley/Libau marsh at the south
21 end of Lake Winnipeg.

22 And our concern, or as we see it, our
23 concern is not so much the flooding, it is the --
24 as Mr. Stinson alluded to -- the dryer years.
25 Since we've had that property we've kept maps of

1 the area all of the way from -- I think our first
2 map is about 1930. And Netley Lake at that time
3 was approximately maybe three quarters of a mile
4 across and a mile long. If you look at it now, it
5 is nearly 20 miles, or 30 miles, or whatever it
6 is. And our marshes at the south end of Lake
7 Winnipeg are being washed out, and that's simply
8 because -- well, there is a number of reasons and
9 a number of issues, but one of them is the
10 regulation of the water in dry years not allowing
11 that lake to drop to allow that regrowth in
12 vegetation, in the cattails and other emergent
13 vegetation, to allow the filtration of Lake
14 Winnipeg.

15 In 2003 we had a drought year, and
16 there was significant growth or regrowth in the
17 Netley/Libau marshes. In areas that are now under
18 three feet of water, we were walking on dry land.
19 And not only does this affect us as people, but
20 also the biodiversity in these marshes, you know,
21 for waterfowl, for muskrats and beaver and fish
22 and other types of wildlife. This eco-system is
23 the filtration for Lake Winnipeg. And by not
24 allowing that lake to come down to below 711,
25 those marshes are continuing to erode, continuing

1 to lose their vegetation, lose, you know,
2 different types of soil. And even in my life, and
3 I'm not that old, I have seen significant erosion
4 in the Netley/Libau marshes. And it is a great
5 concern for myself as a cabin owner there, and
6 someone who goes into Netley Marsh for hunting and
7 trapping and fishing and that sort of thing.

8 So it is something that we keep a
9 close eye on, and something that is a great
10 concern for us. We would love to see, if
11 possible, regulations put in place that would
12 allow once every ten years for that lake level to
13 be dropped below 711, to allow the regrowth in
14 those coastal wetlands around Lake Winnipeg, and
15 not just in the Netley/Libau marshes, but the
16 whole lake. There is marshes, I'm sure, all the
17 way up and down the coast lines of Lake Winnipeg
18 and other lakes that really need to be addressed.
19 And if we don't, we are going to continue to have
20 issues of phosphorous and nutrient overloads in
21 Lake Winnipeg, and other issues of flooding and
22 that sort of thing.

23 And as I mentioned, I understand that
24 there are other issues surrounding this. There is
25 glacial rebound, there is more water being put

1 into the system through wetland loss and other
2 types of issues, but it is something that I feel
3 needs to be addressed to make the quality of life
4 in the Lake Winnipeg watershed that much better
5 and to help save Lake Winnipeg.

6 So, that's just my comment.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Benson.
8 I just have a quick question. You mentioned that
9 go into the marsh to hunt. Is there much wild
10 fowl in there?

11 MR. CHRIS BENSON: Not as much as
12 there used to be. As I mentioned, my family has
13 had a cabin there for nearly 100 years. So in
14 talking with my uncles and family members, you
15 know, there was significant more wildlife back
16 then, not just ducks and geese, but wildlife
17 biodiversity, more beaver, muskrats, other types
18 of animals. There are areas that are in the
19 marsh, especially in Netley Lake, that you would
20 be hard pressed to find a single duck or a goose
21 or a single animal. And 30 years ago or 40 years
22 ago, there would be hundreds of thousands of birds
23 and animals and different types of wildlife in
24 these marshes. So, I have seen a huge difference.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm far from an expert

1 in that regard, but I grew up in the Interlake and
2 there seems to have been a change. I mean, when I
3 was a kid we never saw Canada geese. Now I can
4 walk out in my front yard at the cottage in Gimli
5 and just bat them over the head with a tennis
6 racquet. Not that I have ever done that or would
7 think of doing that.

8 MR. CHRIS BENSON: Canada geese are a
9 little bit different in that, you know, humans
10 have altered the landscape throughout North
11 America and the world. Canada geese have adapted
12 and have made use of our changes in the landscape.
13 They are able to nest in areas that have been
14 disturbed by humans. And in the fall time, the
15 City of Winnipeg gets more Canada geese than any
16 where else in the province. And you go into areas
17 like Kenaston and you see thousands and thousands
18 of geese. At one time in the '30s or '40s, the
19 giant Canada goose, which we see hundreds of
20 thousands every fall and spring, was thought to be
21 almost extinct. So, yeah, the Canada geese have
22 adapted to that change and are able to nest and
23 successfully nest, whereas waterfowl don't.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Again, I'm not an
25 expert, but have they pushed the ducks out of the

1 area? Does that contribute to it, do you know?

2 Mr. Stinson is shaking his head. I say I don't
3 know, I'm actually honestly curious.

4 The other thing is you used to see a
5 lot more Snows, even 35, 40 years ago, you would
6 see a lot more Snows. Now it is all Canadas.

7 MR. JIM STINSON: The Snows have
8 migrated farther west. If you go through -- there
9 is a lot of Snow geese over there.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: I think they have been
11 pushed over by the Canadas.

12 MR. CHRIS BENSON: Well, it is not
13 because they were pushed over, and I'm not an
14 expert in this either, but, you know, their
15 migration pattern has changed, it fluctuates.
16 Netley/Libau marsh has not been a breeding ground
17 for waterfowl except for certain species of
18 waterfowl like Redheads and Canvasbacks, and other
19 birds. It has been more of a staging area for
20 waterfowl. So in the fall and spring migrations,
21 they go there to refuel, to gain nutrients in the
22 marsh. And part of the reason too that you are
23 not seeing them is the submergent vegetation, the
24 taggle pondweed, milfoil, pintail, those types of
25 submergent vegetations are no longer in the marsh,

1 and they are getting wiped out. And it is partly
2 due to high water and partly due to invasive
3 species like carp and other issues, which having a
4 lower lake level would prevent some of the carp
5 from getting into the marshes and, therefore,
6 promote submergent vegetation growth.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: I think at Delta marsh
8 there has been some attempt to put sort of fences
9 in to keep carp out of the marshes. Has there
10 been any talk about that at Netley/Libau?

11 MR. CHRIS BENSON: Yes, you are
12 correct, there has been carp gates put in at Delta
13 marsh and that has been quite successful for
14 keeping the fish out, or keeping the invasive
15 species out. The difference between Netley/Libau
16 and Delta is Delta has small channels going into
17 the marsh. So there is I think five different
18 gates that were put in, in the winter time a few
19 years back. And with the Netley/Libau, you look
20 at -- unfortunately, there is not a great map of
21 the marsh there, but you look at Pruden Bay, other
22 bays, you are dealing with a huge area that has
23 water going into the marsh. And to do a similar
24 program would be nearly impossible.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, I mean, you

1 couldn't put a fence across the Red River because
2 that's a major navigation route.

3 MR. CHRIS BENSON: Correct. The only
4 thing that you could do in that regard is section
5 off certain areas of the marsh, and isolate a lake
6 so that you only work on that lake, which would be
7 extremely beneficial, which is something that
8 realistically, I don't know if it could be done or
9 not, it would require quite a bit of money, but,
10 yeah, it is certainly one.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Just for your
12 information and the information of others who
13 might be interested in this specific issue, the
14 Commission has contracted with Dr. Gordon
15 Goldsborough at the University of Manitoba, who is
16 one of, if not the leading expert on the state of
17 this marsh. We had him do a paper for us and it
18 is now complete and it is posted on our website.
19 He addresses a lot of the issues that both of you
20 have talked about, and others as well.

21 MR. CHRIS BENSON: I would be very
22 interested in reading that.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: You can check our
24 website, which is cecmanitoba.ca, and hunt around
25 there a bit there and you will find that paper.

1 MR. CHRIS BENSON: Thank you. Thank
2 you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for coming
4 out, thank you for your comments.

5 Anybody else? Next up? Did you want
6 to talk about Patricia Beach?

7 SPEAKER: No.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: No? Anybody else have
9 any comments they wish to make? Use the mic,
10 please?

11 MR. DONALD YOUNG: You see the thing
12 is, Hydro wants to raise the level of the lake, I
13 think it is way too high right now, period. It
14 has ruined the marsh. And all of these cottages
15 and everything else, they are building dykes
16 inside of the lake. So that tells you the worst
17 is yet to come. So I think instead of you looking
18 at raising it, they should be looking at lowering
19 it, and tell them to get another reservoir
20 somewhere else.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Young.
22 Any comments or questions?

23 MR. DENNIS WALKER: Yes. Dennis
24 Walker, I'm a fishermen. If the water goes really
25 high too, the lake level, like it is going to

1 wreck a lot of commercial fishermen's nets and
2 stuff like that, because the currents will be so
3 strong now, and the winds and that, the waves will
4 be higher and all of that too. And I think it is
5 going to be hard on the commercial fishermen too,
6 like the water is going to be so high all of the
7 time, it is going to be rougher seas too for the
8 fishermen. That's what I think.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Just hold on to the
10 mic, I have a question. Have you seen evidence of
11 that? Where so you fish, just in the southern
12 basin?

13 MR. DENNIS WALKER: I fish in the
14 southern and the northern too. By Matheson
15 Island, I fish out by that way, and then I can
16 fish -- I can move my nets to the south basin too.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Have you seen
18 evidence yet of higher water that's affecting the
19 fishing?

20 MR. DENNIS WALKER: Yes, it is
21 affecting the fishermen, a lot of fishermen are
22 losing their docks because the water is getting so
23 high sometimes.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: How long has that been
25 going on?

1 MR. DENNIS WALKER: It has been going
2 on for quite a while now. The lake level -- a few
3 times we lost our docks already, we had to rebuild
4 our docks and all of that. The last four, five
5 years, like we had to do it twice already.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: And whereabouts are
7 these docks?

8 MR. DENNIS WALKER: Out at Matheson
9 Island. Where you fish, like you have to have
10 your boats tied up, you know, you have to --
11 sometimes the water is so high, it just affects
12 the docks with the waves and all of that.

13 MS. SUEK: Can I ask a question? Can
14 you tell us, is there a difference in the number
15 of fish that you are getting, or the type of fish
16 that you are getting in the last ten years? Has
17 that changed for you at all or is it about the
18 same?

19 MR. DENNIS WALKER: It is about the
20 same, but we are getting a lot of whitefish now
21 lately.

22 MS. SUEK: Right.

23 MR. DENNIS WALKER: And that's not
24 very good, it is not a very high priced fish.

25 MS. SUEK: Right, but the quantity

1 that you are getting is about the same?

2 MR. DENNIS WALKER: About the same,
3 yes.

4 MS. SUEK: Okay, thank you.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you,
6 Mr. Walker.

7 Anyone else, any other comments or
8 questions? Yes.

9 MS. MARGARET YOUNG: Margaret Young, I
10 live along the Red River, and when the water is --
11 when the water is high we used to have a tide
12 effect of about six feet, and now you are looking
13 at closer to 10 or 12.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Just whereabouts on the
15 Red River are you, Mrs. Young?

16 MS. MARGARET YOUNG: I'm in
17 St. Clements.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: North of town?

19 MS. MARGARET YOUNG: North of town,
20 north of the blue bridge.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. The blue bridge
22 is the --

23 MS. MARGARET YOUNG: Number 4 bridge,
24 a couple miles north of that.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. And you say that

1 the effect is up to ten feet?

2 MS. MARGARET YOUNG: If there is a
3 strong north wind, we can have a tide effect on
4 the river of up to ten feet.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: And how often does that
6 happen?

7 MS. MARGARET YOUNG: Whenever you have
8 a really good north wind.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.
10 Anything else? Mr. Young?

11 MR. DONALD YOUNG: Yes. What the high
12 tide is, you know, it will ruin peoples' docks or
13 whatever they have on the side, if they are
14 floating docks or whatever it is, it won't be able
15 TO hold the boat when the water comes up that
16 much. So that's far more, far more than ever
17 normally would happen. So that's why I like to
18 see it lowered.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Has the base level of
20 the river or the lake at the south basin, or the
21 south end, has it been higher in recent years?

22 MS. MARGARET YOUNG: It must be, the
23 marsh is gone.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Is that just in the
25 last couple of years or does this go back longer

1 than that?

2 MR. DONALD YOUNG: One of ways to tell
3 how high the lake is, is there used to be -- there
4 is two breakwaters as you go out the main channel.
5 So at one time when you used to have a 14-foot
6 boat, for example, and go out through that, you
7 were looking up. But right now you can hardly
8 find them, that's how high the lake is.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: How long has that been?
10 Has that been for many years?

11 MR. DONALD YOUNG: Well, it is
12 increasing every year.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: It is increasing every
14 year?

15 MR. DONALD YOUNG: Yes. So that's
16 why -- like we have no control over what Hydro
17 does. As far as I'm concerned, someone should
18 control Hydro and tell them to stop raising the
19 level, use another lake for a reservoir where
20 nobody lives.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Stinson?

22 MR. JIM STINSON: Mr. Sargeant, that's
23 where my question was, I was trying to find the
24 ancient history of the levels. And if we knew how
25 many -- the licence is 711 to 714, and all of the

1 history that I can find now shows to the high end
2 closer to the 714, and in fact going up 715.
3 There is very little that I can ever see that we
4 are down to the 711. So they have got a licence
5 for the three feet variance, but who slaps their
6 fingers, if they go over the 715? Nothing
7 happens, nothing has ever happened to Hydro if
8 they have ever gone over. There is never
9 compensation for the fishermen, there is never --
10 a three-day blow will blow up to Lockport dam, you
11 can get five to six feet at the Lockport dam
12 raised. If you go to Cats On The Red there, it
13 will blow right above their dock there, in a three
14 day blow. So when you get a three day blow in a
15 river like that, when you get a nor'westerly, the
16 commercial fishermen, you ask them in October when
17 a nor'westerly comes, that's when it is so
18 dangerous having it so high in the fall time.
19 These guys are losing their nets. And we are
20 losing our soil because of that one extra foot, so
21 close to the 714. And that's why we have lost our
22 marshes, is because they are flooding out.

23 If you go to Pruden Bay, there is
24 no -- that lake, and I think it is Fraser, it is a
25 huge body of water now, where it used to be a

1 marsh. They used to have a hunting lodge up there
2 where there was all kinds of duck. Now it is all
3 water and carp, because we don't have it dried
4 out. So it is that high level that they are
5 keeping it at. And no one spansks them, you know,
6 like really, has Hydro ever -- who are you going
7 to, are you going to go after me? This is the
8 closest Hydro has ever been spanked by saying, you
9 have got to renew your licence.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: The lodge that you
11 referred to, is that Red Lodge?

12 MR. STINSON: No, it is at Pruden Bay,
13 where we go ice fishing out Pruden Creek, the guy
14 is on the right-hand side. I'm not sure of the
15 name.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm just curious,
17 because yesterday in Brokenhead they told us about
18 an old lodge that was there, it was called Red
19 Lodge, it was a log cabin lodge.

20 MR. STINSON: Yep. Yep.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Any questions or
22 comments? Anybody have anything else they would
23 like to say?

24 MRS. GERTRUDE WALKER: Okay. The last
25 time they flooded in Peguis, all of the people

1 from Peguis moved to Gimli. And did you go to
2 Gimli that time they flooded? That's about 30
3 years ago I guess.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: That was about 36 years
5 ago.

6 MRS. GERTRUDE WALKER: Well, I was the
7 one that took you to Gimli, Gertrude Walker, to
8 meet all of the people in Gimli.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: I remember your name,
10 Gertrude. Yes, that was in the spring of 1979,
11 there was a Federal election going on, and most of
12 the Peguis people got evacuated to the old Gimli
13 air-force base.

14 MRS. GERTRUDE WALKER: Yes.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: And it was actually
16 pretty good for me, I could talk to a lot of
17 people in a short time because they were all
18 together in those barrack blocks, and you took me
19 around.

20 MRS. GERTRUDE WALKER: Yes, I took you
21 from Selkirk here.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, I remember that
23 Gertrude.

24 MRS. GERTRUDE WALKER: To meet the
25 people.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

2 MRS. GERTRUDE WALKER: But now I want
3 to tell you that the Lake Winnipeg is really
4 affecting my family. Because my boys are fishing,
5 and my husband was a fishermen pretty well all of
6 his life, since he was 12 years old. And the lake
7 really rises up high now, since, I don't know,
8 about 10 or 12 years ago I guess it started. And
9 they lose their nets, and there is logs floating
10 around, and they can't -- they break up the nets,
11 and it is really affecting the whole family, all
12 of the fishermen. So I think something should be
13 done. I don't know what could be done, but I know
14 it is harder on the fishermen right now.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for that.
16 Anyone else have any comments or questions?

17 MR. DENNIS WALKER: Most of the
18 fishermen now, like, when we are losing our
19 equipment, we are spending more money on the
20 equipment, we're hardly making any money. Plus
21 over, like all of the drifts, the lake goes so
22 high and all of that driftwood and all of that
23 floating into your nets and wrecking your nets,
24 holding up your nets, it is making the nets more
25 heavier, and you are losing your anchors and your

1 buoys and all of that, so that's a lot of
2 equipment, and sometimes if you have your nets on
3 the dock and the water comes up, it will just
4 destroy your -- it will pull your nets and boxes
5 off the docks and everything. And we are not
6 making too much money, just making like, you know,
7 just breaking even some times, because we need so
8 much equipment because the water is so high all of
9 the time. That's all.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Young, did you have
11 anything?

12 MR. DONALD YOUNG: Yes, I was going to
13 ask, like after listening to all of these people,
14 is it the tendency to let them -- is your decision
15 to let them raise it, or are you going to maybe
16 make them lower it?

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, they haven't
18 asked to raise it any higher than 715. And we
19 haven't come to any conclusions at all yet, we are
20 still in week four of what is going to be about 12
21 weeks of hearings, so we can't make our decisions
22 yet. We have a lot of information to hear before
23 we come to make decisions.

24 MR. DONALD YOUNG: Well, a good point
25 was brought up here about monitoring this thing

1 and, you know, there should be a monitoring
2 station where lots of people can go to, either
3 Gimli or Winnipeg Beach, and everybody can see
4 exactly where it is. Because I think we are being
5 hoodwinked a lot of times as to what the real
6 level is. So if you wouldn't mind doing that?

7 MR. STINSON: On the monitoring, I had
8 a person who left Gimli every morning and the pier
9 numbers -- on the pier they have a measurement --
10 and I guarantee you that that pier number
11 measurement was different than the number that I
12 got off the guide, off the monitor, even on the
13 west side. Because they average -- I don't know,
14 it is not real time measurements, so like -- its
15 either not real time measurements or their gauge
16 is out, what they put on the measuring board. So
17 it's like what Mr. Young says, we have to rely on
18 what we see, not necessarily what we are being
19 told by that thing.

20 What I would like to ask the
21 Commission, prior to you making your report, the
22 Clean Environment making your report, am I as a
23 general citizen going to be able to see what
24 everybody else has said? And if everybody is
25 saying to allow the licence to stay at 714, or

1 even lower it a foot, are we going to be able to
2 see that and then go to the Minister and say,
3 well, whoa, Clean Environment -- and I respect
4 your opinion, but what the -- and I appreciate
5 that everything is being recorded, what people are
6 saying, so we can see what is being said. So if
7 it is being said that you should lower it, from
8 everybody around Manitoba -- do you understand
9 where I'm coming from, Mr. Sargeant?

10 THE CHAIRMAN: I understand exactly
11 what you are suggesting, Mr. Stinson. And anybody
12 would have the opportunity to read every word that
13 people have said in all of our hearings, because
14 as I noted at the outset, we produce verbatim
15 transcripts. They are on our website within a few
16 days. There is already transcripts on the website
17 from our first number of hearings. It is
18 thousands of pages to read. By the time we are
19 finished, it will probably be in the tens of
20 thousands of pages. But it is available for
21 anybody and everybody to read if they so wish.

22 MR. STINSON: I think you may remember
23 me, Mr. Sargeant, from the Red River Floodway. I
24 attended every one of those meetings except one,
25 every one of them, and I read every word, and I

1 made a submission. And I have all intentions of
2 reading every one of those submissions and
3 saying -- I think you know where I am --

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Good, that's what we
5 like to hear. I mean, well-researched and
6 well-informed opinions help us in our ultimate
7 deliberations.

8 MS. MARGARET YOUNG: In all of this,
9 and everybody talking about the south basin and
10 the marsh, have you guys ever gone in a small
11 plane and flown over there in the summertime, just
12 to take a look and see how high that water really
13 is, and what really is happening to the marshes
14 and the cottages at Petersfield and everywhere.
15 And they are not all cottages in Petersfield,
16 there are homes as well.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: No, I can't say that I
18 have flown over it. I have been down the Red
19 River, although it was many years ago.

20 MS. MARGARET YOUNG: I think maybe it
21 would be a good interesting afternoon for you
22 guys.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, it certainly
24 would be. I'm just not sure of the timing because
25 we have -- our current schedule has us completing

1 our hearings in mid to late April, about the third
2 week in April, and it might not be open by then.
3 But we have -- we have seen videos, we have seen
4 maps, we've read a number of papers, including the
5 one most recently done by Dr. Goldsborough that I
6 referred to a few moments ago. So we have a
7 pretty good sense of what has happened in there.
8 And we know as, you know, a couple of people have
9 pointed out, both Mr. Stinson and Mr. Benson
10 pointed out that high water is only one of the
11 issues there. I mean, there are many other
12 issues; that cut that was put in the bank along
13 the Red River a hundred years ago, the fact that
14 there is no more dredging at the mouth, all of
15 that has impacted on the marsh.

16 MR. HARDEN: I can say too from a
17 personal point of view, many years ago I worked
18 for Ducks Unlimited Canada, and at the time we
19 were taking a look at Netley/Libau marsh. And I
20 did a fair bit of work on that at that time, the
21 early '80s, so I'm quite familiar with the issues
22 that were around even then.

23 MR. DENNIS WALKER: There is a good
24 documentary on the Nature of Things, David Suzuki,
25 that you could watch. It would show pretty well

1 everything what's happening on the marsh. Lake
2 Winnipeg I think it is called. Maybe you could
3 check that out, that will give you an idea of what
4 is going on in the marsh.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: I saw that video and
6 I'm not sure if my colleagues have, but I saw that
7 a couple of years ago.

8 Anybody else?

9 MRS. GERTRUDE WALKER: Maybe you
10 should go to Matheson Island and go and check out
11 by Black Bear Island, my son lost his dock twice
12 now. This is the third year he is going to be
13 putting barrels to float. He has to put barrels
14 to float because the water is so high, it takes
15 his dock away. And he has to pull the boat right
16 up to the trees and tie his boat to the trees to
17 keep his boat safe there. That Black Bear Island
18 where they are fishing, it is pretty bad these
19 last few years for the fishermen.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: We were in Pine Dock
21 just last week, last Tuesday in fact, yeah, just
22 last Tuesday we were in Pine Dock, and there was
23 one couple from Matheson Island that were there.
24 And we heard a lot of the same stories that you
25 have just said. We've also heard from other

1 people in Dauphin River and Fisher River very
2 similar concerns about the high water.

3 MRS. GERTRUDE WALKER: Yes, my husband
4 fished in Dauphin River too, we know pretty well
5 all of it, Dauphin river, Berens River.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: We have heard a lot
7 about this same issue.

8 MRS. GERTRUDE WALKER: We lived in
9 Dauphin River and we had to move away from there
10 because of the water. We moved to Peguis, and
11 when we moved to Peguis, it flooded there too, so
12 we moved to Selkirk.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: And you are high and
14 dry here?

15 MRS. GERTRUDE WALKER: We are still in
16 Selkirk so far.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Any other comments? We
18 have about another 20 minutes or so, I guess, in
19 this afternoon session, and then we are back here
20 at 6:30 for an hour and a half. So if anybody has
21 any more comments, we will hear them now. If not,
22 we will just stand at ease -- but Mr. Stinson here
23 wants to add to the conversation.

24 MR. STINSON: I would like to make a
25 comment on the compensation, because Manitoba

1 Hydro has never given -- they give compensation in
2 the north for the nets, I know on some of the nets
3 that are destroyed, and some of the fishermen up
4 north in some of the communities. And I don't
5 know if there has been any compensation in the
6 southern area, actually in the lake for some of
7 the nets that have been destroyed. So it almost
8 seems like if you are north of Norway House, and
9 your nets or whatever are destroyed in that area,
10 they seem to get some compensation from Hydro for
11 various things that have affected their community,
12 et cetera, and I will maybe talk about Cross Lake.

13 But if you live in the southern area,
14 you know, in this area here, has there been any
15 compensation given to these people, and has there
16 been any compensation -- I know it is a slippery
17 slope to say that the high water causes erosion,
18 but if you increase it a foot, you have caused
19 more erosion. So once you start it, I know it is
20 going to be a slippery slope, but they have
21 stopped erosion because of the high water and the
22 waves coming in in other areas, in Powell River,
23 beautiful to see those cement boats out there, you
24 know. So maybe Manitoba Hydro, if they want to
25 keep the licence and keep it going, maybe assist

1 some of the people in the basin or our lake.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

3 MRS. GERTRUDE WALKER: We went through
4 some hard times. We moved from Dauphin River, it
5 took seven days to get to Lake St. Martin, going
6 through the water. I had five of my children
7 walking through the water, up to their knees, and
8 our horse is played out. And we had to walk to
9 Gypsumville pretty well, and it took us five days,
10 and we were in the flood and in the bush there for
11 five days without -- my husband walked all the way
12 to Gypsumville to get food, and he got some food
13 there, and come back to give us food. And it took
14 about 12 hours to walk from Gypsumville, to look
15 for us, and we were way out in the bush. Now we
16 couldn't go across today, to the lake there, they
17 had to go to the highest places. We had a rough
18 time and I will never forget that.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mrs. Walker.

20 MR. CHRIS BENSON: One of the concerns
21 that we are bringing up here today, are some of
22 these concerns going to be addressed by Manitoba
23 Hydro? A lot of what we are saying is the high
24 water and the low water. In the new licence that
25 Hydro is going to be possibly getting, are those

1 concerns going to be addressed in that, and to
2 allow maybe instead of being 714 to 711, the high
3 and low, dropping it down further to 710 or 709?

4 THE CHAIRMAN: I can't tell you today
5 what our conclusions are going to be, or what our
6 recommendations are going to be, because as I said
7 a few moments ago, we still have eight more weeks
8 of hearings to go through. What I can tell you is
9 that what we hear in all of these community
10 sessions will be reflected in our report. You
11 will see these concerns noted in our report.
12 Whether there are specific recommendations
13 attached to those, I can't tell you today, because
14 we just haven't got there.

15 MR. CHRIS BENSON: Okay, thank you.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: But you will see these
17 concerns reflected. I can also tell you that
18 something that the Commission does quite often is
19 that we make two sets of recommendations. We make
20 recommendations that are specific to the licence.
21 We also make what we call non-licensing
22 recommendations. They are usually directed to the
23 government, and we suggest that the government
24 should do this or do that. And in the last couple
25 of our reports, these have been accepted and some

1 of them are being implemented right now. And some
2 of them, one that we made I guess twice, in the
3 Bipole and then again in the Keeyask report, we
4 recommended a major cumulative effects study on
5 the Nelson River. And the government accepted
6 that, and now the government and Manitoba Hydro
7 jointly are doing the study.

8 So there could be something, and I
9 have to emphasize "could be something" that comes
10 out of these sessions that's not specifically
11 related to the licence, but that we feel would
12 enhance the state of Lake Winnipeg, that we would
13 recommend as a non-licensing recommendation. And
14 it may, you know, some good things may come to
15 pass, but I can't guarantee anything at this
16 point. I can guarantee that you will be heard, or
17 you have been heard. We will reflect on all that
18 we have heard when we get around to our
19 deliberation phase, but --

20 MR. STINSON: Where is our elected
21 officials?

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, the elected
23 officials -- we are appointed by the government to
24 do this. We are an arm's length commission, we
25 don't take directions from the government, but we

1 don't expect the elected officials to participate
2 in our proceedings.

3 MR. STINSON: I mean our elected
4 officials, our municipality, where are our --

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. That I can't
6 tell you. In a number of communities we do have
7 municipal officials come out. I know in Gimli
8 tomorrow at least one councillor is coming to
9 present to us. For your area, I don't know.

10 MR. HARVEY LEVIN: Harvey Levin, I
11 have a question, I'm assuming that the 711 to 715
12 level is the optimum to maintain dam operation?

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

14 MR. HARVEY LEVIN: They will not
15 operate efficiently at a lower level?

16 THE CHAIRMAN: I believe that it would
17 cost them, it would cost Manitoba Hydro in terms
18 of profit if it were at a lower level.

19 MR. HARVEY LEVIN: Okay. Thank you.

20 MR. YOUNG: Is this a big
21 miscalculation on their part, an engineering
22 calculation when they built that dam? They should
23 have built it further downstream and they wouldn't
24 have had to raise the lake so far.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm not sure -- that I

1 cannot answer you. I don't know -- sorry, I can't
2 answer that, I just don't know.

3 MR. YOUNG: The reason I say this is
4 because, you know, the rest of us shouldn't have
5 to pay in perpetuity for what we consider an
6 engineering mistake. From what they are telling
7 me, I think the dam should be moved further down
8 the river. And from what also the retired boys
9 tell me is that this is the one where they put
10 those Russian generators in there and there is a
11 number of them aren't working. It is maybe time
12 to focus on that thing and move it further down
13 river, it would save a lot of problems.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: We were up there, we
15 had a tour of Jenpeg in September, I believe it
16 was. And I think the Russian generators, or the
17 Soviet generators are working, it just costs a lot
18 of money to make spare parts when they need to
19 replace spare parts, but to my knowledge, they are
20 working.

21 I think there might have been some out
22 of service at that time, but that's typical. You
23 know, when we have gone to -- we toured Kettle a
24 couple of times, and there were always one or two
25 that were down. They are constantly being

1 maintained.

2 MR. STINSON: I think if you go on
3 their website, you will see it is 711, Dale can
4 probably tell us here, but I am under the
5 impression is at 711 they still can put out full
6 output. From looking at their website, 711, they
7 do full output, so...

8 THE CHAIRMAN: See, with the amount of
9 water that's in the lake right now, it would be
10 impossible to get down to 711, because they are
11 spilling, they are fully open right now. I mean,
12 the lake is full. There has been a lot more water
13 than normal coming into the lake. Some of this is
14 likely attributable to climate change. And if
15 that's the case, then this might become a
16 longer-term problem.

17 MR. STINSON: And they are
18 forecasting, it is at 714.2 right now, and they
19 are forecasting it is going to stay at 714.2 until
20 well after breakup. So that's, as you say, they
21 can run it, according to their website they can
22 run it full bore at 711. So my question is, why
23 do you need the licence to go to 714 if you can do
24 full bore at 711?

25 THE CHAIRMAN: That's actually a very

1 good question, and we will ask that question of
2 Manitoba Hydro.

3 MS. MAUREEN WALKER: What about ice
4 jams? What about if they have ice jams? Does it
5 matter?

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Ice jams where? Like
7 in the river?

8 MS. MAUREEN WALKER: On the other side
9 of the dam.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: On the other side of
11 the dam?

12 MRS. MAUREEN WALKER: Right. Would
13 that matter?

14 THE CHAIRMAN: I don't think that's an
15 issue, I'm honestly not certain, but I don't think
16 that's an issue.

17 MRS. MAUREEN WALKER: (Inaudible) at
18 spring breakup.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: I can't tell you. That
20 would also be a question that would have to go to
21 Manitoba Hydro. But I think downstream of the
22 dam, it never really freezes until you get a few
23 hundred yards down, because the water is --

24 MS. MAUREEN WALKER: Yes, but if they
25 had ice jams in spring breakup, it would, the

1 water would rise up too, so --

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, again, that's
3 something that I don't know, so that question
4 would have to be posed to Manitoba Hydro.

5 MR. STINSON: Mr. Sargeant.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm just making a note.
7 Just give me one second. Actually, it is your
8 question that I'm writing down.

9 MR. STINSON: I believe there is,
10 between Warren Landing, which at the outlet, the
11 top end, to Jenpeg, historically there has never
12 been ice jams because of the amount of water
13 that's going through. It is like -- it is not
14 like the Red River, the Nelson is nowhere near
15 like the Red River. It is a -- historically, I
16 don't believe there has ever been -- and there is
17 quite a big boom in front of Jenpeg, you probably
18 noticed that there, as you quite rightly said,
19 downstream from Jenpeg is huge open water year
20 round, and there would be no ice jams to cause any
21 problems for the water there.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: We do know that prior
23 to freeze up at Jenpeg, and we were told this when
24 we toured Jenpeg in the fall, they take very
25 special measures to ensure that the ice forms at a

1 certain level, both to control the water during
2 the winter, but I'm sure also to assist with the
3 spring thaw as well.

4 MRS. GERTRUDE WALKER: When there is
5 an ice dam in Fairford, the ice all piles there,
6 right at the dam there. It doesn't go into the
7 river, it just piles up and piles up. Then all of
8 that water goes to St. Laurent, that's why they
9 are flooding at St. Laurent all of the time.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: That's a whole other
11 issue, and I'm glad we don't have to look at that
12 one. That one is complicated too.

13 MR. STINSON: Don't want to go there.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Any more
15 comments before we close for the afternoon?

16 Well, I want to thank you all for
17 coming out. I think we have had some good
18 presentations and some good interchanges here this
19 afternoon. So thank you very much for coming out
20 and thank you to all of you who contributed to
21 this conversation.

22 (Hearings recessed at 4:40 p.m. and
23 reconvened at 6:30 p.m.)

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Good evening ladies and
25 gentlemen. Welcome to Commission session. My

1 name is Terry Sargeant, I'm the chair of the
2 Manitoba Clean Environment Commission, as well as
3 the chair of the panel that's conducting this
4 current review.

5 I would like to introduce the other
6 members of the panel. On my left is Edwin Yee, my
7 immediate right is Neil Harden, and to his right
8 is Bev Suek.

9 First of all, cell phones, if you have
10 cell phones, please turn the bells off. Buzzers
11 or vibrators are fine, but turn off the sound. If
12 you get a call while we are in session, please
13 take the call out of the room.

14 We are here today because in 2011 the
15 Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship
16 asked the Clean Environment Commission to hold
17 public hearings to hear about impacts of Manitoba
18 Hydro's regulation of Lake Winnipeg.

19 We recognize that Lake Winnipeg
20 Regulation is a significant and key part of the
21 Manitoba Hydro system, but we are not here to
22 review any other parts of the system. We have
23 been asked specifically to look at the reasons why
24 Lake Winnipeg Regulation came into being in the
25 first place, whether or not it has succeeded in

1 meeting those goals, and also to look at the
2 impacts and effects of Lake Winnipeg Regulation
3 since its first operation in 1976.

4 We try to keep our community meetings
5 as informal as possible to encourage as many
6 people as wish to come forward and share their
7 stories or opinions with us. We do record these
8 sessions, as is required by the Environment Act.
9 A verbatim transcript of each session or each
10 day's session is posted on our website within a
11 few days.

12 Anyone who is present is welcome to
13 make an oral presentation. What we would like to
14 hear from you is who you are, how Lake Winnipeg
15 Regulation has impacted you or your community,
16 your views on whether the project has been good
17 for the province as a whole, what decisions would
18 you like the panel to make, and any other
19 information that you think is important.

20 Typically, our oral presentations are
21 about 15 minutes, are limited to 15 minutes, but
22 we found in the rural parts of the province nobody
23 really comes close to filling the 15 minute time
24 slot. And then people will often come back later
25 on and make further comments and add further

1 comments, and that's quite fine, that works well.

2 There are other options to oral
3 presentations. If you don't feel comfortable or
4 if you are not prepared tonight to make an oral
5 presentation, you may submit a written
6 presentation that can be as simple as a letter or
7 an email. You will find addresses to send those
8 to on our website. I can assure you that all
9 written submissions are read by all panel members.
10 They become as much a part of the record as any
11 oral presentations or any other evidence that we
12 hear.

13 That's my opening comments. We will
14 have a presentation from Manitoba Hydro, based on
15 these panels, just explaining a little bit about
16 what Lake Winnipeg Regulation is.

17 Dale? Dale Hutchison is with Manitoba
18 Hydro.

19 MR. HUTCHISON: Thank you Commissioner
20 Sargeant.

21 My name is Dale Hutchison, I have been
22 working with Manitoba Hydro for 15 years to
23 understand our impacts on the waterways and on
24 those people that we share them with. I will go
25 through a brief presentation using these banners

1 that will cover the Manitoba Hydro system, Lake
2 Winnipeg, and our Lake Winnipeg Regulation
3 project.

4 So a huge area, from the Rocky
5 Mountains in the west, to Lake Superior in the
6 east, and south into the Red River Valley in the
7 States drains into Lake Winnipeg. The shape of
8 this land is a million square kilometre bowl.
9 This is what makes hydroelectric development
10 possible in Manitoba.

11 This is a map of Manitoba Hydro's
12 system. Generating stations are shown by the blue
13 dots, and the size of the blue dots, small, medium
14 and large, shows how much electricity is produced.
15 You can see the bulk of the electricity is
16 produced on the lower Nelson where our three
17 largest stations produce 70 per cent of all of the
18 electricity produced in the province. We have got
19 high voltage bipole lines that take electricity
20 from the north and bring it to the south. Of
21 course, we have a third Bipole line that's
22 currently being constructed. And from there the
23 electricity is sent over 100,000 kilometres of
24 distribution lines to homes and businesses
25 throughout Manitoba.

1 We can also produce electricity using
2 natural gas at stations in Selkirk and Brandon.
3 In an emergency we can use coal at our station in
4 Brandon. And we purchase electricity from wind
5 farms at St. Leon and St. Joseph.

6 I will talk about Lake Winnipeg. As
7 you know, or may know, it is the tenth largest
8 freshwater lake in the world. It is Manitoba's
9 great lake. Over a dozen rivers flow into the
10 lake. Now, there is only one natural outflow, the
11 Nelson River. This can make it easy for the lake
12 to flood. The mouth of the Nelson is wide, but it
13 is very shallow. So in the winter, ice can block
14 the flow of the water out of the lake. And over
15 time, or historically, this has caused a lot of
16 problems for people living around the lake, to the
17 point where highways have been closed, farmers
18 can't get their crops in, homes and cottages have
19 been damaged.

20 This next banner shows Winnipeg Free
21 Press headlines and photographs of recent flooding
22 events, times like 1927, 1950, 1954, 1966, 1968,
23 1969, 1970. This recurrent flooding put a lot of
24 pressure on Government to do something about it.
25 At the same time, the demand for electricity was

1 growing in the province. So in 1970, the Premier
2 of Manitoba announced plans to proceed with Lake
3 Winnipeg Regulation for flood control on Lake
4 Winnipeg and power production on the Nelson River.

5 So, I will talk about Lake Winnipeg
6 Regulation. I will call it LWR, because I will
7 say it quite a few times, it will save me some
8 breath. Before we could build LWR, first we
9 needed a licence from the Province under the Water
10 Power Act. This is similar to getting a building
11 permit before you build a house. So this initial
12 licence is called an interim licence. And to get
13 it, we had to provide information to the Province
14 on what we wanted to build and the effect it would
15 have on water levels and flows.

16 In 1970 the Province granted us an
17 interim licence which gave us the approval to
18 build LWR. They also gave us rules for how it
19 could be operated. And there were three types of
20 rules, the first were operating ranges for Lake
21 Winnipeg and a few of the downstream lakes. So,
22 for instance on Lake Winnipeg, Manitoba Hydro can
23 decide how much water to flow down through Jenpeg
24 through elevations 711 to 715. If the elevation
25 of Lake Winnipeg gets above 715, we have to let as

1 much water as possible out of the lake. This is
2 called maximum discharge. And below elevation
3 711, the Minister of Conservation and Water
4 Stewardship tells us how much water to let out of
5 the lake.

6 So we agreed with these rules and in
7 1976 built LWR, or construction was completed on
8 LWR.

9 The next step in the licence process
10 is for us to request a final licence, and it is
11 good for 50 years from the date construction was
12 completed. So in the case of LWR, our final
13 licence will expire in 2026, which is only 11
14 years away. Before that time, we will again ask
15 the Province to renew our licence for up to 50
16 years.

17 So to build LWR involved digging a
18 second outflow from Lake Winnipeg and two other
19 channels to increase the flow of water out of the
20 lake. Now, these channels alone would drain the
21 lake, so it was also necessary to build a control
22 structure at Jenpeg on the west branch of the
23 Nelson River. Bear with me, I just had dinner.
24 They know it better than me at this point, that's
25 funny.

1 To give you an example, so using the
2 analogy about a faucet, tub and a drain, if all of
3 the rivers around Lake Winnipeg are represented by
4 the water drop under the faucet, then the drain
5 here represents the natural outflow which is the
6 Nelson River, and the drop under it, how much
7 water can flow out. You can see that there is a
8 difference between the size of the drops, and
9 that's because during a flood more water can enter
10 the lake than can leave it, which will cause the
11 level of the lake to rise and flood.

12 You can see in the lower diagram there
13 is a second drain, this represents the LWR
14 channel. It is half the size of the natural
15 channel. But you can see also that the two water
16 drops under these drains still aren't as big as
17 the water drop under the faucet. So it means that
18 even with the second outflow available with LWR,
19 you can still have more water entering the lake
20 than will leave it during floods. So the lake
21 level will still rise, however, it won't rise as
22 high and it won't be in flood as long.

23 So this shows the difference between
24 inflows and outflows. That is the cause why LWR
25 can influence the water level of the lake, but it

1 can't control the level.

2 Now, people have different ideas about
3 how LWR affects water levels on Lake Winnipeg.
4 Many people think that we keep the lake, the water
5 level of the lake higher all of the time, while
6 some people think we keep it lower.

7 The Federal government has been
8 taking -- or has been monitoring water levels for
9 100 years. What this water level data shows is
10 that Lake Winnipeg is still acting now as it
11 always did. During the spring and summer, the
12 water level rises, and during the fall and winter,
13 the water level falls. When there is a drought in
14 the watershed, the level of the lake goes low.
15 When there is a flood in the watershed, the water
16 level of the lake goes high.

17 However, since 1976 when LWR was
18 built, there is one very noticeable change. And
19 I'm afraid I will have to use a chart because it
20 is difficult to explain water levels over time
21 without a chart.

22 This chart shows that Lake Winnipeg
23 has reduced, or LWR has reduced flooding on Lake
24 Winnipeg, by comparing the water level with LWR to
25 what the water level would have been if LWR did

1 not exist. So on the one side of the chart we
2 have got the elevation above sea level, the bottom
3 of the chart has the time from 1977, which is the
4 first full year of operation for LWR, to today,
5 2015. The blue line represents the actual with
6 LWR water level, and the red line is an estimate
7 of what the water level would be if LWR did not
8 exist.

9 I think you probably noticed that the
10 last ten years or so have been very wet, with a
11 lot of water flowing into Lake Winnipeg and down
12 through the Nelson River. What the information on
13 this chart shows is that in flood years like 1997,
14 2005, 2011 and 2014, the lake would have gotten
15 two feet higher and the flood would have lasted
16 much longer if LWR did not exist. So this
17 information is demonstrating that LWR is reducing
18 flooding on Lake Winnipeg.

19 What happens downstream of Lake
20 Winnipeg? Well, there are 20,000 people that live
21 along the Nelson River. Land and water are
22 extremely important to their identity and
23 livelihood. While most people, or I should say
24 while all people in Manitoba benefit from having
25 low cost reliable electricity, and people around

1 Lake Winnipeg benefited by having the flood relief
2 provided by LWR, people downstream have suffered
3 by having more water flow down the Nelson during
4 times -- during the winter and during times of
5 flood. By working with people, resource users,
6 First Nations and communities, Manitoba Hydro has
7 got a lot of programs and other works to address
8 the impacts. And these are shown by the
9 photographs in this data.

10 That's my presentation. I will be
11 available after you meet with the Commissioners to
12 answer any questions you have or to talk more
13 about this. Thank you.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Dale.

15 So we have had indications from two
16 people that they wish to make presentations. We
17 will hear from those two first, and then anybody
18 else in the room who wishes to make a
19 presentation, or just ask questions, or say
20 anything will be welcome to.

21 We have Roxane Anderson and Andy
22 Weremy. So Roxane Anderson first?

23 One thing I should note, when you make
24 a presentation or ask a question or anything, you
25 will have to use the mic so that it goes into the

1 recording. You can stay where you are, you can
2 come forward, whatever you prefer.

3 MS. ROXANE ANDERSON: Can I use a
4 table?

5 THE CHAIRMAN: We can run a table
6 over. All right. Okay.

7 Whenever you are ready, just introduce
8 yourself for the record and then proceed.

9 MS. ROXANE ANDERSON: Thank you.

10 My name is Roxane Anderson. I would
11 like to thank you for this opportunity. My
12 husband, John Anderson, and I own property located
13 approximately 13 miles by boat from the mouth of
14 Lake Winnipeg on the Red River.

15 The Commission was asked by the
16 Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship to
17 consult with communities, look at the reasons why
18 Lake Winnipeg Regulation came into being in the
19 early 1970s, whether it succeeded or failed in
20 meeting its initial goal, and the impact and
21 effects of it since its first operation in 1976.
22 The Commission can comment on concerns raised
23 about issuing a final licence, but you have not
24 been asked to advise or recommend whether or not a
25 licence should be issued past the year 2026.

1 Instead of reviewing Manitoba Hydro's
2 request for final licence for Lake Winnipeg
3 Regulation, you are to report back to the Minister
4 on the concerns from people and to suggest how to
5 address these concerns. You are also to review
6 the negative impacts, if any, on the environment.

7 The current licence expires in 2026
8 and Manitoba Hydro is requesting a final licence
9 for another 50 years. It is my understanding that
10 the next licence will operate between 712 and
11 716 feet above sea level, not the current 711 and
12 715, but one full foot higher. If that happens
13 more of the landscape will disappear under water.
14 I already know I will not be here 50 years from
15 now, and certainly if the licence is allowed,
16 neither will the land, shorelines or the river
17 banks.

18 I think back over the past few years,
19 having talked with neighbours, commercial
20 fishermen, construction contractors, engineers,
21 shop owners and local old timers. I ask these
22 people why the lake is so high, and the answer is
23 always the same, Manitoba Hydro, they use the lake
24 as a reservoir to keep the lake higher in order to
25 make money for the province, higher, water

1 increased profit.

2 I hear reports from fishermen who
3 state that lake levels have been as high as
4 720 feet on days without wind events. A retired
5 lake boat captain said, when I showed him a map
6 that defined lake level as 710 feet, the lake
7 average was lower than in the past, 709, even 708
8 feet. I hear about the demands for more
9 electricity and how the Province wants to sell
10 power to Saskatchewan and the United States.
11 People say that our province relies on Manitoba
12 Hydro as a cash cow.

13 As I listened to all of this and
14 compare the findings from others, I checked into
15 our past. I too see the changes in the water
16 levels. I see how the lake is easily two to three
17 feet higher than normal. The boat launch in front
18 of the Anderson family cottage is long under
19 water. I don't hear the birds in the marsh any
20 more. The wetlands have disappeared. Every time
21 the north winds rise, I fear for the people I know
22 who live along the lake. I watch as lake water
23 backwashes, pushing the Red River up onto our
24 pasture. I have witnessed water in our front
25 pasture far too many times.

1 I have lived on the Red River almost
2 all of my life. My family moved to the area in
3 1971. John's great grandfather arrived in Willow
4 Point, near Gimli, in the late 1800s, and
5 throughout the years his family owned property in
6 Sandy Hook, in Ponemah, Muckles Creek and on the
7 Red River near Sugar Island and Selkirk. John
8 never heard his family talk about floods. Family
9 pictures show sand dunes in the 1960s at Sandy
10 Hook. John recalls driving the family car down on
11 a concrete boat ramp directly in front of the
12 cottage to wash the car in the lake water.

13 It appears to me that Lake Winnipeg
14 Regulation is slowing the flow out of the lake and
15 storing water for winter power, which keeps the
16 lake artificially high. The marsh doesn't see any
17 restorative drawdowns. Netley Marsh needs both
18 highs and lows, and I think Lake Winnipeg
19 Regulation has interfered with the state of
20 nature. Manitoba Hydro says Lake Winnipeg
21 experienced flooding then, in 1927, 1950, 1954,
22 1955, 1966, 1968, 1969 and 1970, that these floods
23 caused problems for people living on the lake,
24 that farmers lost crops, highways were closed, and
25 homes and cottages were lost. This has not been

1 my husband's family's experience. Neither did I
2 find any evidence that our river property flooded
3 in those years.

4 However, in recent years we have had
5 overland flooding that we can directly correlate
6 to the high water on Lake Winnipeg. High water
7 has encroached, flooding one-third of our property
8 during flood events. And I show a photograph here
9 of the river shore swamped out on Canada Day,
10 2014.

11 When John and I owned a cottage at
12 Chalet Beach during 1999 to 2005, half a kilometre
13 east from a fishing station, we did an experiment.
14 We placed a wall of limestone rocks on our land
15 that was then underwater, at a 57-degree angle due
16 north. Up to that time a third of the property
17 was in the lake. The result was reclaimed beach
18 front. That is the nature of the lake in the
19 storms, that means highs and lows, the lake level
20 water must be allowed to draw down.

21 Unfortunately, our reclaimed beach did
22 not last. And when I returned this past summer,
23 the devastation was very disturbing. We have
24 allowed Lake Winnipeg to be used as a reservoir.
25 That equates to the lake staying at an average

1 height far too high, where there are no means for
2 the landscape to return to what was -- pardon me,
3 can I repeat that sentence? That equates to the
4 lake staying at an average height far too high,
5 where there are no means for the landscape to
6 return to what it was before Lake Winnipeg
7 Regulation was implemented.

8 I believe that drawdowns also reduce
9 the likelihood of wind elevated events. And I
10 show another picture here of Chalet Beach of
11 July 2014, with a lot of the lakeshore in the
12 water. While we had the cottage at Chalet Beach,
13 John and I used to walk on Hagar's Road to see
14 evidence of life past. I recall a 29 Ford Model T
15 off the side of the road, that was proof that the
16 road existed in earlier times. The lake level has
17 been held too high for too many years and the
18 change in the shoreline and resulting erosion is
19 shocking. The maintained high water levels are
20 destroying the lake shores.

21 Find below a copy of a map from 1934
22 that clearly depicts a surveyed post of small
23 lakes and numerous channels. The road that we
24 live on now referenced as End of Main, used to go
25 well into the marsh where farmers once cut hay. A

1 ferry operated across Netley Creek and John's
2 grandfather recalled traveling up that way many
3 times in the past.

4 In preparing for this presentation I
5 looked at water maps. I have collected archival
6 aerial photographs of our property dated from
7 1950, '68, '70, '93. I have copies of lidar maps
8 dated in 2004.

9 When John and I flooded in April 2009,
10 the first time ever, that lead me on to a quest
11 for why we flooded. I researched our river
12 property from 1859. I cannot find any past
13 evidence of flooding before Lake Winnipeg
14 Regulation. I have interviewed people and
15 reviewed historical accounts, including Henry
16 Hind, a geographer who toured the area in 1857.
17 His writings speak about the bogs, marshes and
18 bridges that were here.

19 When John saw the navigational pier at
20 the main channel on Lake Winnipeg during the
21 summer of 1972, he recalls seeing the piers
22 attached to land. He says they were built there
23 to keep the sand from filing in to the main
24 channel.

25 I first say these piers in August of

1 1987, when he took me for a ride through Netley
2 Marsh and into Lake Winnipeg. I recall seeing a
3 number of islands of wetlands as we followed a
4 winding river path and arrived at the trunk of the
5 Red River. Three well-marked channels gave us a
6 choice to take the east, the main, or the west.
7 As we traveled towards the piers on the main
8 channel, I vividly recall seeing shoreline and
9 trees. Sadly, this area is now under water. And
10 there is a picture of the Lake Winnipeg and Red
11 River mouth, and the piers are in the background
12 and there is no land attached there anymore.

13 So does Lake Winnipeg Regulation help
14 to prevent flooding? No.

15 When I returned to our former cottage
16 last summer, I found that more of the shoreline
17 has disappeared. Hagar's Road was underwater.
18 There used to be farms in the area. There used to
19 be roads into the marsh where local farmers drove
20 their cattle, and where they went to hay during
21 late summers.

22 No, Lake Winnipeg Regulation isn't
23 helping to prevent flooding. Instead the
24 landscape is disappearing, and areas along Lake
25 Winnipeg and the Red River are turning into a

1 water world.

2 Recently John and I learned that river
3 front property was owned by Joseph Monkman senior,
4 a local farmer. Mr. Monkman had purchased the
5 property back in 1859 from Aborigines who had
6 lived there before him. And I have confirmed this
7 at the Provincial archives. Norman Cochrane, a
8 direct descendant of Mr. Monkman and a farmer
9 himself, told us to build on the ridge, it never
10 floods. His family had lived on the property for
11 over 100 years. Norman spent his entire life on
12 the property since his birth in 1923 until his
13 passing in 2001.

14 Today when I look across our land to
15 the north, where my eye follows the ridge line,
16 his 90-year old house still stands, and burned
17 remnants from previous homes can be found on our
18 land still. It makes sense that people do not
19 build houses and barns where it floods.

20 There were beaches, sand dunes, tree
21 lines, well before Lake Winnipeg Regulation. We
22 know the natural level of the lake was 710 feet.
23 Are we really in a wet cycle? Do we have more
24 water in our watershed due to climate change, to
25 mother nature? Do we have increased water due to

1 drainage?

2 Lake Winnipeg is used as a reservoir
3 by Lake Winnipeg Regulation. I have seen with my
4 own eyes the changes in lake water levels.

5 I think Lake Winnipeg Regulation
6 altered the annual water cycle by artificially
7 causing a seasonal reversal of higher water levels
8 for winter power production. No wonder Netley
9 Marsh never gets to dry out. Before the marsh had
10 a chance to dry out from time to time. In a state
11 of nature, the water was high in the spring and
12 low in the fall. That was reversed by Lake
13 Winnipeg Regulation.

14 Lake Winnipeg belongs to all
15 Manitobans. Why did we allow Manitoba Hydro to
16 use the lake? In the 1960s we were promised that
17 Lake Winnipeg Regulation would prevent flooding.
18 If this is the case, where are the miles and miles
19 of pristine beaches from those days? Those
20 beaches are gone now. Netley Marsh, a world
21 renowned bird migratory corridor, is disappearing.

22 When I first saw Lake Winnipeg at the
23 age of 11 in 1972, I saw sandy beaches with well
24 established tree lines. My family had a cottage
25 in Matlock and enjoyed Half Moon Bay. Most of the

1 beach and shoreline is gone now. We also camped
2 at Wayside Park, at the End of Main on the Red
3 River, where I recall tree lines along the river
4 and Netley Creek. John recalls visiting the End
5 of Main back in 1971 and seeing boathouses. Do
6 people build cabins and boathouses to flood?

7 My research indicates that there were
8 a few low spots that did flood in spring, but not
9 month after month and year after year like it does
10 now.

11 A couple of days ago I returned to the
12 Manitoba Hydro website and looked at a report. I
13 read this statement:

14 "Average lake levels are lower with
15 Lake Winnipeg Regulation in place."

16 I do not agree.

17 In a very short time period of a few
18 decades, and under our very noses, the state of
19 nature has been changed. Lake Winnipeg Regulation
20 has become man's natural disaster. It subjects us
21 to man-made flooding. See two pictures taken in
22 front of the Anderson family cottage located on
23 the west side of Lake Winnipeg in the south basin.
24 The first picture of a dog running on the beach
25 was taken in August 1993. The lake level was

1 already too high. In fact, the cement boat launch
2 located in that area had gone under water. The
3 second picture taken in the same location is from
4 July 2013. The trees and bush behind the dog in
5 the 1993 photo are gone, the shoreline is gone,
6 the water level is now into the tree line on the
7 roadway.

8 I disagree that Manitoba Hydro should
9 be reissued a licence. I disagree that they
10 should have control of lake levels under the guise
11 of Lake Winnipeg Regulation. I disagree with
12 artificially held high water. Water levels need
13 to drop to allow wetlands and agricultural lands
14 to replenish. If not, Lake Winnipeg Regulation
15 will continue to flood us out. And if that is the
16 case, then Manitoba Hydro needs to buy us out so
17 that we can move on with our lives.

18 I suggest the following points. Lake
19 Winnipeg Regulation be managed by an independent
20 entity, other than Manitoba Hydro; that the next
21 licence expires in ten years, not 50, thereby
22 allowing for future reviews. Lower the lake level
23 to the state of nature, 710 to 711, so that
24 marshes can have the ability to regenerate the way
25 they did before. Return the water flows back to

1 the state of nature by eliminating the reversal of
2 water flow. That is artificial. Changes must be
3 carefully considered to minimize further damage.
4 Install additional water level gauges to find true
5 numbers for lake levels instead of averaging
6 present levels across the lake. I think my
7 sources, the commercial fishermen, when they
8 measure the lake may be on to something. We have
9 been re-routing Manitoba's lakes and waterways far
10 too long. A Manitoba wide assessment for a water
11 management by an independent third party is
12 required. Compensation for property owners as
13 financial disaster assistance does not begin to
14 cover true costs. Perhaps Manitoba Hydro should
15 be sharing the revenue so that affected citizens
16 can make decisions to raise their homes and
17 protect what is left, or move out of the area
18 completely.

19 Please, convey these concerns to the
20 Minister. Also tell him that we must not be
21 forgotten. If Lake Winnipeg Regulation is about
22 Manitoba Hydro making more money, then we all need
23 to remember the cost to the environment, to the
24 First Nations living downstream, to the people
25 living all along the lake, and to us remaining

1 upstream on the Red River. Only with low water
2 levels will the marsh, wetlands and the lake and
3 the river shores return, leaving a lasting legacy
4 for future generations.

5 Thank you.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,
7 Ms. Anderson. Just A couple of points. This
8 licence that Manitoba Hydro is requesting right
9 now is called a final licence. It is actually
10 only good for another 11 years. This licence is
11 not good for 50 years. The 50-year gap actually
12 started, or period started in 1976 and will run
13 until 2026. They've operated under an interim
14 licence from '76 until now, and they have now
15 requested the final licence. In about another
16 five or six years, 2020, 2021, they will have to
17 then apply for another licence to start after
18 2026. That one will be for 50 years. That one
19 will be subject to some kind of review, I can't
20 say what it will be, that's way off in the future,
21 but it will be subject to some kind of review.

22 MS. ROXANE ANDERSON: I thank you for
23 the clarification. I do not agree with the
24 licence being for 50 years. Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Also, I'm not

1 sure that they have requested to raise the levels
2 from 712 to 716. They haven't under the current
3 licence. Whether they do that in 2026, I think
4 only time will tell.

5 MS. ROXANE ANDERSON: It has been
6 discussed in the media, and I have seen reports of
7 that in the newspaper about it being raised one
8 full foot.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.
10 Thank you for your presentation. Any of the
11 panelists have questions?

12 Thank you very much, Ms. Anderson.

13 Mr. Weremy, Andy Weremy? If you could
14 introduce yourself for the record and then just
15 carry on with your presentation.

16 MR. ANDY WEREMY: Okay. Thanks to the
17 Commission for allowing the hearings to be held,
18 and thanks to Dale, Manitoba Hydro, for that
19 presentation, thanks very much. And Roxane, for
20 your presentation, and for the people being here,
21 thank you.

22 Good evening, my name is Andy Weremy,
23 and I will introduce, I have got introductions and
24 history, but I'm here today by way of my family,
25 my wife's family. My wife is Lisa Weremy, and

1 prior to our marriage she was Lisa Davidson.
2 Lisa's mom and dad, Margaret and Eric Davidson,
3 they are down south, so I'm here representing the
4 family. I'm presenting to the Commission on the
5 family's behalf to share some of their experience
6 and observations over the 85 years of having
7 property on the shore of Lake Winnipeg.

8 The Davidson's purchased their
9 property, 441 Chalet Beach Road, in the 1930s.
10 The land was used as a summer home to enjoy the
11 lake, the countryside and good times. Lisa's
12 grandparents raised their two sons at the cottage,
13 and Eric and Margaret raised their three children
14 at the cottage, and faithfully are at the cottage
15 from May long weekend through September. Today
16 the cottage continues to be a summer vacation home
17 to Eric, Margaret and three families.

18 Why are we here at today's meeting?
19 This meeting is obviously to hear public input as
20 CEC gathers information from various interest
21 groups to assess the social and economic impacts
22 of a permanent regulation for Lake Winnipeg. This
23 presentation is intended to provide our
24 observations on the lake and describe some of the
25 impacts that the Davidson family has endured in 85

1 years on the lake.

2 The CEC has a difficult task ahead of
3 them, gathering information and trying to make
4 recommendations that balances the interest of the
5 environment, the many industries that depend on
6 the lake, people who live directly adjacent to the
7 lake, and the many Manitobans and tourists that
8 enjoy the lake every year.

9 Impacts of Lake Winnipeg: I have been
10 a part of the Davidson family for about 25 years.
11 When I first visited the lake at their cottage,
12 Eric had one of his first two shoreline protection
13 efforts completed. This involved the protection
14 of the shore by placing large granite boulders to
15 dissipate the destructive energy of the waves
16 during storms. Eric had to add another layer of
17 reinforcing to his shoreline defence some years
18 later.

19 Now, many of the Chalet Beach owners
20 did the same. There were variations in their
21 methods. Some used large limestone boulders, as
22 Roxane indicated, and some even tried concrete
23 retaining walls. The effort was similar, as well
24 as the goal, to protect the shoreline during storm
25 events, and the subsequent damage, erosion that

1 would occur.

2 The Davidson's often talk about the
3 lake before regulation. They talk of the time
4 when they had two Hydro poles end to end in the
5 sand from the water's edge to the tree line. They
6 said back before regulation, a person could pull a
7 boat on to shore and leave it there over night,
8 confident that even if the wind changed direction,
9 the boat was safe. As you all know, neither
10 conditions exist today. The cottages do not have
11 sand shores, other than the odd corner or rock
12 outcrop that has allowed the sand to collect
13 without being swept away.

14 Impacts and costs, our perspective:
15 There is an obvious lifestyle impact to these
16 changes. Today we have to be extremely vigilant
17 with a boat in the water. I have on several
18 occasions myself had to remove a boat from the
19 water in less than 30 minutes, because the wind
20 switched to the north, and if you didn't retrieve
21 the boat damage would occur, or a very unsafe
22 condition.

23 Sand beach days are literally less
24 than one per year. If the lake levels are down
25 and the south wind is strong, strongly blowing, we

1 might have five to ten feet of beach. Again, if
2 the south wind stops or changes, the beach quickly
3 disappears.

4 Eric has undertaken two major
5 shoreline efforts. These have resulted in
6 approximately \$40,000 in cost, with no
7 compensation for that work. The Davidson's have
8 been very lucky to have been able to afford to pay
9 for this work, or the cottage would have been
10 likely lost. Every fall we make sure that the
11 shore is fortified to protect the land from the
12 October and November storms.

13 There is also the question of the
14 property value. If Eric and Margaret chose to
15 sell, how has the destructive force and impacts of
16 the lake affected its value? Additionally, there
17 is also a lot of uncertainty, if anyone would even
18 be interested in the property, knowing the type of
19 expense that can exist if the high water levels
20 and storm conditions present themselves.

21 Our request: We understand that the
22 recommendations of this Commission will not
23 institute pre-regulation conditions. The days of
24 100 feet of beach are simply gone and just a
25 story. Our request is as follows: There are a

1 lot of users and uses of Lake Winnipeg, both
2 economically and recreationally driven. What we
3 ask is for the Commission to consider all uses of
4 Lake Winnipeg and try to balance these interests.
5 We also believe that monitoring of the lake, its
6 conditions and the impact of its regulation should
7 continue to be monitored and discussed going
8 forward. Just as needs and expectations change
9 with time, so should the constraints that we all
10 must live and work with. Nothing should be set in
11 concrete without review and improvement.

12 Thank you.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
14 Mr. Weremy. Questions? Thank you for your
15 presentation. Thank you for coming out this
16 evening.

17 Anyone else wish to make a statement
18 or add questions or comments? Nobody else? It is
19 still a little -- okay.

20 MR. STEVENSON: Good evening. My name
21 is Earl Stevenson, I'm a member of the Peguis
22 First Nation. Historically our nation, our
23 community was also located here just in the Town
24 of Selkirk, at our original reserve, the St.
25 Peter's Reserve, which is I guess right along the

1 Red River. And this was, I guess you could say
2 the heart of our traditional territory.

3 I came here this evening basically to
4 hear what was going on. So this is kind of a last
5 minute thing with respect to coming here.

6 Nonetheless, I will try to keep my comments as
7 succinct as possible.

8 I also want to commend Ms. Anderson
9 for her words as well. The health of Netley Marsh
10 is of great importance. It is a key historical
11 territory for our community, for our nation. I
12 have heard many, many stories of our elders, of
13 many of my relatives who spent time in the marsh.
14 They used to serve as guides within the marsh,
15 because a lot of hunters would come to the area
16 and seek out our expertise with respect to duck
17 hunting and goose hunting and others. So it is an
18 important territory, it goes without saying.

19 But I also want to point out that
20 St. Peter's Indian Reserve, I guess it would be
21 Peguis Indian Reserve 1A, is the St. Peter's
22 fishing station, which is at the south end of Lake
23 Winnipeg, which is the north end of Netley Marsh.
24 That's a small piece of property, and I have been
25 told by some elders from the St. Peter's area that

1 the fishing station at St. Peter's was a favorite
2 picnicking area and fishing area for our band
3 members. And after Lake Winnipeg Regulation,
4 obviously the St. Peter's Indian Reserve 1A became
5 less and less available for those recreational
6 activities and family activities. So Manitoba
7 Hydro, as a result of these activities, has in all
8 likelihood probably created irreparable harm with
9 respect to our fishing station at St. Peter's
10 Reserve 1A.

11 Just a bit of background for myself.
12 I have a Bachelors of Arts majoring in Geography
13 from the University of Winnipeg. I have a
14 Master's degree in Natural Resources Management
15 from the University of Manitoba, and a Law Degree
16 from the University of Victoria. And I'm
17 currently practising law here in Manitoba, but I'm
18 not here in any professional capacity, I'm only
19 here as a member of a First Nation and speaking
20 only as a private individual. I haven't been
21 engaged by any community or any organization to
22 make any presentation on their behalf. So I have
23 to make sure that I make that statement clear.

24 Nonetheless, in part of my previous
25 experiences I have had the opportunity to sit with

1 many of our elders here in St. Peter's, as well as
2 back in Peguis, to talk about many of the
3 activities that they participated in, including
4 fishing, including recreational activities, as
5 well as simply going out and enjoying the waters.

6 Now, our traditional territories, our
7 traditional waters, we were active in the south
8 basin, we were active in the north basin, we had a
9 great many commercial fishermen. However, after
10 our relocation from St. Peter's to our current
11 main reserve at Peguis 1B in North Interlake, a
12 lot of our fishermen, unfortunately, had to give
13 away a lot of their commercial fishing licences
14 due to the fact they didn't have as direct access
15 to the lake as they would have if they remained at
16 St. Peter's. So that's part of, I guess, the
17 historical circumstances of our community being
18 relocated from St. Peter's to Peguis.

19 However, a lot of our people were
20 active fishermen in the south basin, you know, a
21 lot of primary fish species, they harvested
22 commercially as well as for personal use. And it
23 is incredibly important to understand the fact
24 that the health of the lake, of Lake Winnipeg,
25 goes to the heart of a lot of communities along

1 Lake Winnipeg, especially for the First Nation
2 communities. A lot of the cultural and legal
3 traditions that are held by these communities rely
4 upon the ability to be able to practice and ensure
5 that those rights, whether they be Treaty rights,
6 inherent rights or indigenous rights, those rights
7 have to be maintained in order for the cultural
8 integrity of these communities to survive.

9 We are very concerned, obviously,
10 about Lake Winnipeg Regulation. I am personally
11 concerned about Lake Winnipeg Regulation. I
12 remember as a young boy we used to go to Fisher
13 Bay, and we spent many great hours there, many
14 great times, swimming and boating and doing
15 whatever else. So there was a lot of great
16 beaches there.

17 Today when I go up to Fisher Bay and
18 along the lake in that area, it is all rocky,
19 there is nothing left. You can't enjoy, you know,
20 the beaches as we did in the past.

21 So it is obvious that regulation of
22 Lake Winnipeg has been a detriment to the
23 environmental and eco-system health of Lake
24 Winnipeg, as well as Netley Marsh. The problem
25 is, there is other issues that are corollary to

1 the fact that Lake Winnipeg is being regulated by
2 Manitoba Hydro. A lot of these corollary issues
3 are not adequately being dealt with or considered
4 either.

5 So our friend from Manitoba Hydro
6 talked about reduced flooding. Well, that's
7 simply not the case. Many of our elders back in
8 Peguis, they talked about when the major flooding
9 on Peguis started to occur, and this started to
10 occur in the 1970s, after Lake Winnipeg Regulation
11 was implemented. The natural flows from Fisher
12 River and other rivers, tributaries to Lake
13 Winnipeg, were impacted.

14 So as a result of, I'm not going to
15 say it is all a result, but partly as a result of
16 the fact that Lake Winnipeg Regulation has been
17 undertaken, we have seen an increase in flooding
18 in Peguis Reserve 1B. So, I know that our friend
19 from Hydro here has his graphs and charts in
20 place, but we also have our own graphs and charts
21 in place through our own indigenous knowledge. So
22 it is through that experience, personal
23 experience, as well as experience from our elders
24 that we understand there is something amiss with
25 how this lake is being controlled.

1 So Ms. Anderson talked about personal
2 impacts on her family and others. We have the
3 same impact as well. So it is important for those
4 considerations to be reviewed, undertaken,
5 analyzed. Manitoba Hydro always puts on a good
6 nice colourful presentation, but don't let that
7 colour your interpretation, your understanding of
8 how these impacts, how these impacts affect our
9 lives daily.

10 So, in that sense, I just want to
11 indicate that perhaps this licence should not be
12 issued as a final licence. Perhaps we need a
13 great deal of more cumulative effects assessment
14 undertaken for Lake Winnipeg. It is seriously --
15 there is not enough information that has been
16 produced, in my belief, that cumulative effects
17 hasn't been soundly understood with respect to the
18 health of the overall eco-system, health of the
19 lake, and the tributaries that flow into the lake
20 are impacted. So it has been too much of a bubble
21 we are examining, we are examining this lake.
22 Perhaps the scope has to be expanded a bit more.

23 With that being said, I'm just going
24 to say, I recommend that the final licence not be
25 issued, but put into abeyance until more

1 cumulative effects assessment is undertaken, and
2 take into consideration, greater consideration,
3 the impacts on the communities along Lake
4 Winnipeg, and with emphasis I guess on First
5 Nation communities as well.

6 For that I would like to thank you for
7 the opportunity to say these few words in front of
8 the Commission.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr.
10 Stevenson. I just have one technical question. I
11 think I know the answer, but I just want to
12 confirm it. Peguis Reserve 1A is down in this
13 area, and the main reserve up in the central
14 Interlake is 1B?

15 MR. STEVENSON: That's correct.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you very
17 much. Anybody else have questions? Thank you,
18 Mr. Stevenson. Anybody else have questions,
19 comments?

20 MR. MONKMAN: My name is Bob Monkman,
21 I'm from -- my ancestors are from the east side of
22 Lake Winnipeg. And I just want to make some
23 comments maybe and follow up to what Mr. Stevenson
24 said in that -- you know, perhaps my father and
25 his brothers and sisters just happened to live in

1 the past 100 years, and as part of that 100 years
2 we happen to have high water events that were
3 inclusive in Lake Winnipeg Regulation. But I have
4 to believe that what they've told me over the
5 years, that there has been a change in their view.
6 And traditional knowledge is well documented that
7 those are things that need to be considered,
8 regardless of what the graphs might say, or what
9 the short history of regulation has brought to us.
10 Not to say that we don't need to look at the whole
11 picture and say we, as a province or as people
12 within the province, need to look at the big
13 picture as to what the energy requirements are for
14 the province and for the people of Manitoba, but
15 we have to look at the long-term effects. And I
16 don't think, as Mr. Stevenson said, we have seen
17 that. I don't think. You take history since
18 1975, and say we saw the effects of regulation in
19 that many years, I don't think you can do that,
20 and I don't think traditional knowledge in any way
21 suggests that.

22 I have to look at what my father and
23 his brothers and sisters have looked at in the
24 past 80 years. And many other of the communities
25 along the east side of Lake Winnipeg, in talking

1 with the elders, understand the same thing.

2 And I well understand Manitoba Hydro.

3 I'm well versed with it, knowing the whole system.

4 But from the perspective of long-term cumulative

5 effects, those things have not been reviewed well

6 enough. And I'm not suggesting, nor would my

7 father suggest that we should shut the lights off.

8 That isn't at all what they taught me. They

9 looked at progress, but they also looked at what

10 are the long term effects, and how do we look at

11 those things from nature's perspective?

12 And I don't think that Manitoba Hydro,

13 or I should say the Province, has looked at that

14 long term enough. I don't think that 50 years

15 tells you that. I have experienced flooding for

16 50 years. I have seen the augmented flow change

17 things after 25 years. I have seen what it does.

18 I don't think 50 years of Lake Winnipeg is enough

19 time to evaluate.

20 I'm not suggesting for a minute that

21 we don't need regulation of some form. I think

22 the people that are impacted, as other speakers

23 had said, there are impacts within Lake Winnipeg

24 as well. Not to say -- the lake is not regulated

25 more than nature would have been. I don't think

1 that we have seen enough of that, not for a
2 minute. I don't think 50 years can tell you that
3 we regulate the lake, or someone, to make an
4 assessment that we should issue a licence based on
5 the number of years that have already been there.
6 I think more evaluation should be done on the
7 impacts of people on Lake Winnipeg, certainly on
8 people on the lower Nelson.

9 And the other thing is the CRD, as
10 part of this whole picture. They are looked at in
11 two different components where, in fact, they are
12 jointly one. Not directly, but very -- not
13 absolutely directly, but very directly. And one
14 was built because of the other, or one was built
15 before the other. But those are all of the things
16 that should be reviewed. I know CRD is looked at,
17 I know that LWR is looked at on two different
18 scales. I don't think you can look at nature on
19 two different scales. I think you need to look at
20 it all together, and the cumulative effects of all
21 of this. So thanks.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Monkman.
23 Anybody else?

24 MS. MITCHELL: Hi, my name is Patricia
25 Mitchell and I am from the Black River First

1 Nation. We are going to be having our CEC hearing
2 next Tuesday, February 10th, and I invite people
3 to come and listen. Members from the audience,
4 you are welcome to come.

5 I was asked to come here on behalf of
6 my Chief and Council, as I had been elected as the
7 spokesperson to speak on behalf of the women in my
8 community. And I was really -- it is really --
9 water is very sacred, water is very sacred to us,
10 and it is very sacred to the women. We carry our
11 lives in us for nine months and it is in water.
12 That's where that little person comes alive is in
13 water. The women treat that water very sacred.

14 And it is really unfortunate that
15 Hydro doesn't seem to see the value in keeping and
16 sustaining a healthy water system that is
17 beneficial to all Manitobans. And they say it is
18 for the advancement, and to protect or prevent
19 flooding. But that advancement is happening at
20 other people's expense.

21 Over the summer my community saw two
22 pieces of land, marshland about the size of this
23 room, that broke off from our community, and it
24 was floating by, it was just such a shock to us to
25 see that piece of island floating by.

1 And who are you supposed to tell?

2 Like who are you supposed to call? You can't even
3 call the police, they can't do anything, that land
4 is gone.

5 We used to live off the land, we were
6 very independent. Unfortunately, our livelihood
7 got interrupted. We have a video that we will
8 show you next week that shows a member of our --
9 an elderly member from our community that made the
10 water bottle out of a sturgeon fish, didn't use
11 any modern day equipment, he made a water bottle.

12 And back then when we were able to
13 live off the land, and just use that water, just
14 for the purposes, just to sustain life, that
15 livelihood has been interrupted so bad that the
16 people don't share that knowledge anymore, because
17 they can't use that water the same way they used
18 it before. They can't go fishing off the
19 shorelines, we can't drink that water right out of
20 the lake anymore. We only started getting running
21 water probably in the last maybe 20, 25 years. We
22 used to drink right out of the lake, and there is
23 no way that you can drink out of that lake today,
24 because nobody knows what goes in there. You have
25 all of these water systems, all of these waters

1 that's draining into Lake Winnipeg. Nobody is
2 monitoring what is going in there.

3 You know, Hydro says that we are going
4 to build another channel, but what effect does
5 that have on the system? Like is there more
6 phosphorous? Is there more chemicals? It is very
7 frustrating that the government allows them to
8 almost act like God in terms of monitoring that
9 lake. And it is really unfair that they are
10 allowed to make billions off a resource that's
11 supposed to be shared by everybody there. It
12 would be nice if they actually were forced to give
13 something back, help everybody around there,
14 whether it is implementing programs to make sure
15 that the water is not contaminated. Maybe they
16 come up with a better way of protecting the
17 shorelines.

18 Because we have been forced into a
19 small area, we had to relocate, we were forced to
20 relocate from our initial site, we had to move
21 forward. And to this day we haven't been
22 compensated for that. Now our community is
23 bunched in together, our people that were once
24 nomadic are now sitting still, and it has resulted
25 in a high rate of diabetes. Our livelihood of us

1 living off that water, moving, is just -- and it
2 is impacting, you know. Like I know that our
3 people that get sick, that get diabetes, it
4 affects all of Manitoba, because it's taxpayers
5 that go to paying that.

6 But Manitoba Hydro and the government
7 should be helping find a better way to make sure
8 that they are not the only ones benefiting, and
9 that they help initiate programs that will help
10 those First Nations sort of get a better system
11 where they are not just sitting idle and becoming
12 dependent. Because everybody had a role,
13 everybody had a responsibility.

14 Sure, they say that regulating the
15 lake is not their problem, it is not the loss of
16 our culture -- the loss of our culture is not
17 their fault. Well, whose fault is it if they are
18 going to regulate that lake and we can't use that
19 water, because we don't know what is in there
20 anymore? I would like the government to answer
21 that. When they say they only keep it at a
22 certain level, what level are they talking about?
23 They can't tell me that the lake is the same level
24 all the way right across. Like is it 711 in
25 Sagkeeng and 715, 20 minutes down? Who is

1 monitoring that? I want to know who is monitoring
2 that.

3 And the fish that we used to get, we
4 can't -- it is not even safe, we don't even know
5 if it is safe. We found fish that have two heads.
6 We have a picture of fish that has got some tumors
7 in it. That fish that we used to get from the
8 lake, that was our main sustenance, along with the
9 animals like the moose. And they drink that
10 water, so who knows what they are contaminated
11 with.

12 I came here, and I'm really glad that
13 I did, because it is bringing our concerns to the
14 table. And it has always just been a negative
15 stereotype against First Nations. But in terms of
16 the lake and those of us that use it, those of us
17 that use it for life, this is -- we are in this
18 together. And the only ones benefiting is
19 Manitoba Hydro and the Government. And I think
20 there should be something in place that they
21 should be forced to share that with those that are
22 losing. Thanks.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,
24 Ms. Mitchell. I think Ms. Suek has a question or
25 two.

1 MS. SUEK: I just wanted to hear a
2 little bit more about, you talked about the impact
3 on the livelihood of the people in the community.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: We will be in their
5 community on Tuesday.

6 MS. SUEK: Yes, I know. But I just
7 wanted to hear from you a little bit more about
8 what you meant by that. Was there commercial
9 fishing there then, and is there less now, or do
10 you still do commercial fishing? Was there
11 hunting and do you still do it, or is it
12 completely gone, or is it less than it was?

13 MS. MITCHELL: It is almost completely
14 gone. When we lived at the mouth of the riverbank
15 in the 50s -- I believe we were told not to talk
16 about anything beyond 1976, but we -- where we are
17 situated now, that was a summer village for us.
18 We actually used to travel around and sort of
19 follow the food and, you know, we used to pick
20 rice right at the lake. We did our fishing right
21 at the lake. And we can't do that anymore,
22 because we can't -- like our shorelines are
23 eroding, we can't just go and fish anymore.
24 Literally, you could fish like standing on the
25 shoreline, we would fish off of there, and if we

1 ever got hungry, that's what you did.

2 MS. SUEK: And you just can't do that
3 anymore?

4 MS. MITCHELL: You can't do that
5 today. Who is going to want to eat a fish that
6 has tumors on it?

7 MS. SUEK: Okay. Thanks, I just
8 wanted to clarify that. Thank you.

9 MS. MITCHELL: Thank you.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I'm not
11 sure, I think you may have misunderstood -- you
12 said you are not supposed to talk about anything
13 before 1976, I think there might be a slight
14 misunderstanding.

15 Telling us what your life was like
16 before Lake Winnipeg Regulation is perfectly fine,
17 but what the licence covers is the period after
18 1976. I mean, to compare what happened before and
19 after is perfectly fine, and it is on the table,
20 so you can tell us stories about what happened in
21 your community or what it was like in your
22 community before '76. And we will see you on
23 Tuesday for a good chunk of the day I guess.

24 Anybody else have any comments? I
25 think we have had some pretty good presentations

1 this evening. I think we have a few more minutes
2 if anybody else -- last chance, going, going.

3 Okay. Well, then let me thank you all
4 for coming out this evening. Let me thank you all
5 for making presentations, all of which had a lot
6 of thought put into them, we appreciate that.
7 Even those that were done a bit extemporaneously
8 were based on a lot of previous thought and
9 knowledge, so we value that.

10 What happens after tonight, what
11 happens to your evidence this evening, we have
12 another eight weeks of hearings with a couple of
13 breaks. We are going to be going until late April
14 before we finish our hearings. About five of
15 those weeks are going to be in Winnipeg, and we
16 still have more hearings in rural and Northern
17 Manitoba.

18 Once the whole process is over in late
19 April, we will sit down, we being the panel, will
20 sit down and talk about what we've heard. We will
21 identify specific issues that we need to address.
22 We will discuss conclusions, and we will report on
23 our conclusions and on any recommendations we
24 might have that we send to the Minister.

25 We may not make recommendations that

1 you all want, but I can assure you that what we
2 have heard tonight will be part of our
3 deliberations, and what we've heard tonight will
4 at least be noted in our report. We will note
5 what we heard in the different communities.

6 So, again, thank you all for coming
7 out. Yes, Ryan?

8 MR. RYAN DUPLASSIE: I was wondering,
9 and I appreciate that everything will be, all of
10 the information will be collated and it will be
11 published, I imagine that it will be on public
12 record for everybody?

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, everything that
14 we hear during the hearings will be on the public
15 record within a few days. The verbatim transcript
16 will be on the public record within a few days.

17 MR. RYAN DUPLASSIE: My question is,
18 would Manitoba Hydro and/or the Province be making
19 any type of formal responses to some of the things
20 that have come up throughout the communities, and
21 will those responses -- for example, Roxane and
22 some of the other presenters, Mr. Stevenson,
23 everybody is talking about the impact of what they
24 have noticed, the increasingly higher levels of
25 the lake ongoing. Mr. Hutchison's presentation

1 spoke to the fact that Lake Winnipeg Regulation
2 actually has resulted in a consistently lower, or
3 at least a less volatile level of the lake. And
4 it seems as though the two observations are at
5 odds, at least from a layperson's perspective.

6 What would Dale here tonight, or
7 Manitoba Hydro generally, have to say to in
8 response to the fact that everybody around the
9 lake is noticing consistently high levels of water
10 and property damage, but Manitoba Hydro's position
11 is that, in fact, Lake Winnipeg Regulation has
12 mitigated those effects?

13 THE CHAIRMAN: That will all be
14 addressed when we get into the Winnipeg hearings
15 in particular. Manitoba Hydro will make a formal
16 presentation that presumably will take a day or
17 so. And that will be followed by a day or so of
18 cross-examination of Manitoba Hydro, and those
19 questions will be put to Hydro specifically.

20 And then during the following weeks in
21 the city, various participant groups will make
22 their presentations as well and make their
23 arguments. In the end, it is up to us to try and
24 sort of throw all the balls up in the air, and try
25 to come to some balance. We know that we can't

1 please everybody, but we need to find some balance
2 that will be best for the lake and for the people
3 who live around the lake and downstream of the
4 lake. I don't expect we will find perfection, but
5 we will try to come up with the best we can.

6 MR. RYAN DUPLASSIE: My name is Ryan
7 DuPlassie. Thank you, Terry. So, I guess it
8 would be for these presenters, it would be up to
9 them to head to the Winnipeg hearings in order to
10 get any type of air time with Manitoba Hydro as
11 to --

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, I think that they
13 can be assured that some of the various
14 participant groups will be asking those specific
15 questions of Manitoba Hydro. There will be
16 opportunities on two or three evenings when the
17 general public will also be able to ask questions
18 of Manitoba Hydro.

19 MR. RYAN DUPLASSIE: Thank you.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Unless there are
21 any more questions? Again, thank you all for
22 coming out this evening and we are adjourned.

23 (Concluded at 8:00 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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