

MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

LAKE WINNIPEG REGULATION REVIEW
UNDER THE WATER POWER ACT

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Transcript of Proceedings
Held at the Community Centre
Wabowden, Manitoba

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2015

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APPEARANCES

CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

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

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

MANITOBA CONSERVATION AND WATER STEWARDSHIP

Rhonda Dyck

MANITOBA HYDRO

Dale Hutchison

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1 TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2015

2 UPON COMMENCING AT 3:30 P.M.

3

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon, ladies
5 and gentlemen, and welcome. My name is Terry
6 Sargeant, I'm the chair of the Manitoba Clean
7 Environment Commission, as well as the chair of
8 the panel conducting this review. At the outset I
9 would like to acknowledge that we are holding
10 these hearings in the traditional territory of the
11 Treaty 5 First Nations, as well as in the homeland
12 of the Manitoba Metis Nation.

13 I would like to also thank the
14 leadership of your community for accepting our
15 invitation to host the Commission so that we may
16 hear from as many of you as possible, or as many
17 of you as wish to share your thoughts with us.

18 I should note on a personal note, this
19 is the first time I have been in Wabowden in about
20 40 years. I think the last time I was here I came
21 to visit a friend who was teaching here. So it
22 has been quite a while since I was last here. I
23 don't recognize much of it.

24 I would like to introduce the other
25 members of the panel and some of our support

1 staff. With me on the panel to my right is Edwin
2 Yee, to my left is Neil Harden. In addition to
3 the panel members, we have staff; Cathy Johnson,
4 our Commission secretary; Joyce Mueller, who is
5 the Commission's administrative assistant. Over
6 at this table is our report writer, Bob Armstrong.
7 And also just sitting near the front, our
8 community liaison, Melissa Hotain.

9 I would like to start by saying please
10 turn your cell phones off, or at least turn the
11 sound, the bells or whistles, whatever, please
12 turn them off. They can be a bit disruptive.

13 We are here today because three years
14 ago, actually almost four years ago now, in 2011,
15 the Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship
16 asked the Clean Environment Commission to provide
17 a public forum to consult with stakeholders
18 regarding Manitoba Hydro's performance under its
19 interim licence to regulate Lake Winnipeg. We
20 were specifically asked to hold meetings in
21 communities around both the north and south basins
22 of Lake Winnipeg, as well as in the City of
23 Winnipeg, to hear evidence about the impact of the
24 regulation of Lake Winnipeg.

25 We have not been asked to provide an

1 opinion on whether or not a final licence should
2 be issued. We have not been asked to provide an
3 opinion on whether or not the lake should have
4 been regulated in the first place. Therefore, our
5 hearings and our review will not focus on those
6 issues.

7 We have been asked specifically to
8 review the broader public policy issues, or public
9 policy rationale that was in effect at the time
10 leading up to the issuance of the initial interim
11 licence in 1970. We have been asked to look at
12 the effects and impacts of Lake Winnipeg
13 Regulation since first operation in 1976, and we
14 have been asked to look at the successes and
15 failures of the implementation of the policy
16 goals.

17 The Commission, once we have concluded
18 these proceedings, here and in other communities
19 and in Winnipeg, in our report we may make comment
20 on concerns raised about the issuance of the final
21 licence, including, but not limited, to future
22 monitoring and research beneficial to the project
23 and to Lake Winnipeg.

24 While we recognize that Lake Winnipeg
25 Regulation is a very significant part of a much

1 larger Manitoba Hydro system, we have not been
2 asked to review other parts of the system.

3 We will attempt to make these hearings
4 or meetings as informal as possible, to encourage
5 as many of you as possible to say your piece. The
6 hearings will be recorded. You will note over
7 here on this side, the hearings will be recorded.
8 I didn't introduce our recording person, Cece
9 Reid. This is required by the Environment Act, a
10 written record of what is said each day at these
11 community meetings will be prepared and will be
12 posted on our website within a few days.

13 Anyone who is present may make an oral
14 presentation. And it is quite okay if more than
15 one of you makes a presentation at the same time.
16 An oral presentation is a chance for community
17 members to give their personal knowledge, their
18 views, their concerns or their opinions about the
19 Lake Winnipeg Regulation project to the panel in
20 your own words. What we are interested in hearing
21 from you is who you are, and how Lake Winnipeg
22 Regulation has impacted or benefited you, how it
23 has impacted or benefited your community, your
24 views on whether or not the project has been good
25 for the whole of the province, what decisions you

1 might like the panel to make, and any other
2 information that you think is important.

3 Presentations typically are limited to
4 15 minutes. If anyone wishes to make a
5 presentation in a language other than English,
6 they are welcome to do that, so long as you have
7 somebody who can translate for the benefit of the
8 panel. And there are options to an oral
9 presentation. If you want to say something, but
10 you don't feel comfortable speaking in public, you
11 are quite welcome to provide a written submission,
12 which can be as simple as a letter or an email or
13 a written statement that you put together and send
14 to us. It can be sent to us at our website by
15 email or by regular mail. We will read all
16 written submissions. They become a part of the
17 record and carry equal weight to anything that we
18 hear in the hearings. The deadline for written
19 submissions is the end of February, February 28th.

20 That's all I have by way of opening
21 comments. We will now have a brief presentation
22 from Manitoba Hydro, which will explain just what
23 Lake Winnipeg Regulation is before we open the
24 floor to oral presentations. Dale.

25 MR. HUTCHISON: I'll just take a

1 minute to get set up. I'm using these banners
2 over here. I don't know if people at the back can
3 see them. If you want to move up for this part.
4 I will have them set up at the end as well.

5 Hi, my name is Dale Hutchison.

6 Respected elders, Mayor Mead, councillors, people
7 of Wabowden, thank you for inviting me to speak
8 about a project called Lake Winnipeg Regulation.
9 I have been working with Manitoba Hydro for 15
10 years to understand our impacts on the waterways
11 and on the people whom we share them with. My
12 presentation will describe the Manitoba Hydro
13 system, Lake Winnipeg and Lake Winnipeg
14 Regulation.

15 I'm here with Warren Taite and Hank
16 McIvor at the back who are from our community
17 relations office in Thompson and who handle a lot
18 of the programming in the area.

19 So first I will talk about the
20 Manitoba Hydro system. So if you can imagine this
21 map, if you went way out in the west to the Rocky
22 Mountains, all the way to the edge of Lake
23 Superior in the east, down into the Red River
24 Valley in the United States, that huge area all
25 drains into Lake Winnipeg. The shape of the land

1 is like a million square kilometre bowl. And this
2 is what makes hydroelectric possible on a large
3 scale in Manitoba. There are 15 generating
4 stations that make use of the water that flows
5 through Manitoba. These stations -- so there are
6 15 generating stations that make use of the water
7 that flows into Manitoba, and these stations are
8 shown on the map by the blue dots, and they are
9 small, medium and large, which shows the amount of
10 electricity that these stations can produce.

11 There are six small generating stations on the
12 Winnipeg River, there is a medium sized station on
13 the Saskatchewan River at Grand Rapids. Now, the
14 Nelson River flows into Hudson's Bay. We have a
15 small generating station at Jenpeg. The river
16 system north of the Nelson River is the Churchill
17 River and it -- sorry, it also flows into Hudson's
18 Bay, and rather than build generating stations on
19 this far northern river, its waters were diverted
20 into the Nelson in what is called the Churchill
21 River Diversion. This project involved placing a
22 dam at the outflow of Southern Indian Lake, and
23 then diverting most of the waters into the Nelson
24 River at Split Lake. So at Split Lake you have
25 got the Churchill River waters mixing with the

1 Nelson River waters.

2 Wuskwatim, the newest generating
3 station, is located on this route, it is right
4 here. The main hydroelectric benefit of Churchill
5 River Diversion is that from Split Lake downstream
6 you have got the benefit of two rivers. And this
7 is where our largest generating stations, Kettle,
8 Long Spruce and Limestone are located. These
9 three stations alone produce 70 per cent of all of
10 the electricity produced in Manitoba.

11 Keeyask, which is currently under
12 construction right here, is a medium sized station
13 and it is being built right now on this stretch of
14 river.

15 To move the electricity produced from
16 these stations, we have got two high voltage
17 Bipole lines that go 1,000 kilometres from Gillam
18 to a converter station near Winnipeg. There is a
19 third Bipole line that's also currently under
20 construction. And from this converter station,
21 there is 100,000 kilometres of distribution lines
22 that takes the power to homes and businesses
23 throughout Manitoba.

24 We can also produce electricity from
25 natural gas, in Selkirk and in Brandon. We can

1 also, in an emergency, burn gas at the -- or coal
2 at the Brandon station. And we purchase wind
3 energy from farms at St. Leon and St. Joseph. So
4 the Manitoba Hydro system uses water to produce
5 over 95 per cent of all the electricity made.

6 So now I want to turn your attention
7 to Lake Winnipeg. This is the tenth largest
8 freshwater lake in the world. It is Manitoba's
9 great lake. As you can see, over a dozen rivers
10 flow into the lake and there is only one outflow,
11 the Nelson River. This makes it easy for the lake
12 to flood. The mouth of the Nelson River is wide,
13 but it is very shallow, which causes ice to block
14 water flow out of the lake in the winter.

15 Historically, flooding has caused problems for
16 people living around the lake. Highways were
17 closed, farmers crops were lost, homes and
18 cottages were damaged.

19 So these photos and Winnipeg Free
20 Press headlines describe Lake Winnipeg flood
21 events in recent history. There is everything
22 from 1927, 1950, 1954, 1955, 1966, 1968, 1969 and
23 1970. People around the lake put a lot of
24 pressure on the government to do something about
25 the recurrent flooding. At the same time, the

1 demand for electricity was growing in the
2 province. In 1970, the Manitoba Premier announced
3 a plan to proceed with Lake Winnipeg Regulation
4 for flood control on Lake Winnipeg and for power
5 production on the Nelson River.

6 So now we will talk about the Lake
7 Winnipeg Regulation project, which I will call
8 LWR, so I can save some breath. Before we built
9 LWR, first we needed a licence from the province
10 under the Water Power Act. This is similar to
11 building a house where you get a building permit
12 first. This initial licence is called an interim
13 licence. To get it we had to provide information
14 on what we were building and the effect it would
15 have on water levels and flows.

16 The province granted us an interim
17 licence in 1970 which gave us the approval to
18 build Lake Winnipeg Regulation, along with rules
19 for how it could be operated. There were three
20 types of rules. The first were operating ranges
21 for Lake Winnipeg and on the downstream lakes.
22 For instance, on Lake Winnipeg, between elevation
23 711 and 715 above sea level, Manitoba Hydro could
24 decide how much water to flow through Jenpeg to
25 meet power demands. Above elevation 715, we have

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

6 The second rule is that there must be
7 a minimum flow of water out of Lake Winnipeg all
8 of the time.

9 And the third rule is that we can not
10 change the rate of flow of water at Jenpeg too
11 fast.

12 We agreed with these rules and built
13 LWR by 1976, including the channels and the Jenpeg
14 dam.

15 The next step in the licence process
16 is to request a final licence which is good for 50
17 years from the date construction was completed.
18 In the case of LWR, the final licence will expire
19 in 2026, which is only 11 years away. We applied
20 for a final licence in 2010, after many years of
21 negotiations with communities, First Nations and
22 resource user groups, to address the impacts from
23 LWR. And before our licence expires in 2026, we
24 will ask the province to renew our licence for up
25 to 50 years.

1 So LWR involved building a channel, a
2 second outflow for Lake Winnipeg. We also built
3 two other channels to help get water flow through
4 that part of the area.

5 These channels alone would drain the
6 lake, so it was necessary to build a dam at Jenpeg
7 on the west channel of the Nelson River. I will
8 use an example of a faucet, a tub and a drain. If
9 all of these rivers in a flood are represented by
10 this water drop, under the faucet, then the water
11 drop under the drain represents the outflow on the
12 Nelson River. You can see that there is quite a
13 difference between the size of the drops. And
14 that's because in flood times, a lot more water
15 can flow into the lake than can flow out, and
16 that's why the lake would flood and cause all of
17 these problems for people around the lake.

18 Now, in the second diagram below you
19 can see there is another drop, this is half the
20 size of the main drop. This represents the LWR
21 channel, this one right here. So it is half the
22 size of this one. And together, you can still see
23 that these two drops don't equal the drop under
24 the faucet. So what that means is the lake will
25 still flood, however, it won't flood as high, the

1 water won't get as high, and it won't be in flood
2 for as long. So Lake Winnipeg Regulation can
3 influence the water levels of Lake Winnipeg, but
4 it can't outright control it.

5 So people have different ideas about
6 how LWR affects Lake Winnipeg. Many think we keep
7 the water level of the lake higher all of the time
8 and a few think we keep it lower. The Federal
9 Government has been monitoring water levels in the
10 lake for 100 years. What this water level data
11 shows is that Lake Winnipeg still acts the same
12 way now as it always did. The water level rises
13 in the spring and early summer, and falls
14 throughout the fall and the winter. When there is
15 a drought in the watershed, the lake gets really
16 low. When there is a flood, the lake gets really
17 high.

18 However, since 1976 when LWR was
19 built, there is one very noticeable change. And I
20 apologize for having to use a graph, but it is
21 about the only way you can show changes in water
22 level over time. So this chart demonstrates that
23 LWR has reduced flooding on Lake Winnipeg. It
24 compares the water level with LWR with what the
25 water level would have been without LWR. On the

1 one side of the chart you have got the elevation
2 above sea level, and on the bottom of the chart
3 you have got the years from 1977, which is the
4 first full year of operation of LWR, up to today,
5 2015. The blue line represents the actual water
6 level with LWR, and the red line is what the water
7 level would have been without LWR.

8 As you likely noticed, the last decade
9 in particular has been very wet throughout the
10 Lake Winnipeg watershed, with a lot of water
11 flowing into Lake Winnipeg and down through the
12 Nelson River. This chart shows that in flood
13 years like 1997, 2005, 2011 and 2014, that the
14 lake would have been about two feet higher than it
15 was and that the water level would have stayed
16 higher for a much longer time. So this
17 demonstrates that LWR is meeting its goal of
18 providing flood relief on Lake Winnipeg. We are
19 not seeing these kind of headlines in the Winnipeg
20 Free Press anymore.

21 Now let's look at what happens
22 downstream of Lake Winnipeg. 20,000 people live
23 along the Nelson River. Land and water are
24 extremely important to their identity and to their
25 livelihoods. Now, all Manitobans benefit from

1 having reliable, low cost electricity. And people
2 around Lake Winnipeg benefit from the flood relief
3 provided by LWR. However, people downstream of
4 Lake Winnipeg have suffered from having more water
5 flow out of Lake Winnipeg during the winter and
6 during times of flood. This additional water
7 caused significant impacts to people living
8 downstream of Lake Winnipeg. In natural
9 conditions, lake levels and river flows gradually
10 decrease over the course of the winter. With LWR,
11 water flows during the winter are much higher, up
12 to 50 per cent higher, than they would have been
13 without the project. This water affects ice
14 conditions on the waterways, which can make travel
15 more dangerous. Also it affects animals like
16 beaver, mink, muskrat and otter.

17 During the summer, any time the Lake
18 Winnipeg water level gets close to or above
19 elevation 715, Jenpeg goes to maximum discharge,
20 sending a surge of water down the Nelson River
21 causing water level fluctuations on the rivers and
22 lakes. Ultimately, this changing water flow from
23 LWR affects the cultural, commercial, recreational
24 and spiritual pursuits of people living downstream
25 of Lake Winnipeg.

1 Working together, in Cree this is
2 called Witatasketowin, with the people who live
3 and work along the Nelson River, Manitoba Hydro
4 continues to work to address impacts through
5 agreements and other arrangements with all
6 communities and First Nations on the Nelson River,
7 through projects like the Cross Lake Weir, and
8 through projects like resource harvesting, access
9 to navigation, archaeology and heritage resources
10 and recreation, as shown in all of the pictures on
11 this diagram.

12 So thank you for inviting me to speak.
13 I hope you have a productive meeting with the
14 Commissioners of the Clean Environment Commission.
15 And Warren, Hank and I will be available after
16 your meeting to talk about anything that you would
17 like. Thank you.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Dale.

19 Okay. We will now turn to the
20 presentation part of the proceedings, and I invite
21 anyone who wishes to come up and say a few words
22 to come up to the front table and do so right now.

23 Reg, are you going to lead off?

24 MAYOR MEAD: Sure.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Now, there is a

1 hand-held mic, I think you have to turn it on, and
2 then just introduce yourself and then go for it.

3 MAYOR MEAD: Reg Mead, Wabowden mayor,
4 also the president of the Northern Association of
5 Community Councils.

6 I would like to even get something
7 clarified first on your opening comments about
8 Treaty 5 and the Metis traditional land. And I
9 honestly believe that, I would say 99 per cent of
10 the people that are in the room wouldn't know what
11 the contents of Treaty 5 is, or the Manitoba Metis
12 Federation, or as far as that goes, traditional
13 land. Until this Commission can, or the Province
14 of Manitoba can come up and say exactly where
15 this, what compliance of Treaty 5, what
16 traditional land is, and who is managing the
17 traditional land, I don't think that the province
18 or the Clean Environment Commission and the
19 Ministers are going to hear the views of people
20 like the ones living in communities like Wabowden.

21 We have got the list of people that
22 belong to different First Nations here in
23 Wabowden. There is -- in 2013 there was, 63 per
24 cent of the population was First Nations, and
25 that's from all over, not only the Province of

1 Manitoba, but Saskatchewan and as far away as the
2 Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia. So is this Commission
3 only going to be listening to and hearing from
4 representation from Treaty 5, or the Manitoba
5 Metis Federation, and not actually getting the
6 input from all walks of life that live in, not
7 only communities in the northern part along the
8 Nelson River, but also along the shores of Lake
9 Winnipeg on the eastern, southern side, on the
10 western southern side of the lake? Because if
11 that's the case, then what are we doing here?

12 I would like to make a comment that
13 this Commission should be going back and
14 recommending to the Ministers of finalizing where
15 this traditional land boundary is, because the way
16 it is right now, any First Nation or anybody can
17 go take a stick and make a line in the sand and
18 say this is our traditional land. Not so, because
19 the history of Wabowden it goes back from the fur
20 trade, back in the 1700s. But we aren't
21 recognized, we are not recognized as this being
22 our traditional land. We are getting pressure
23 from both sides, mostly from one side, of this
24 being their traditional land, that we can't do
25 anything, we can't have industry, and we can't

1 survive without industry because we don't get
2 Federal dollars here. We need the industry to
3 survive. We need the Clean Environment Commission
4 to actually make some of these recommendations,
5 because we can co-exist with each other as long as
6 we are abiding by the rules and the regulations of
7 the Clean Environment.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Can I just address
9 that, Reg?

10 MAYOR MEAD: Sure.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry if I mislead
12 you and others in the room in that respect. When
13 I said that, it was really just to pay respect to
14 people who have long standing, I mean, basically
15 since time immemorial, interest in these areas.
16 It was certainly not meant that we were only going
17 to listen to Treaty 5 or Metis people. We are
18 here to hear from anybody and everybody.

19 We also, you know, if people wish to
20 come and speak on behalf of Treaty 5 or Metis
21 concerns, they are certainly welcome to it. We
22 have in the past, when we have held hearings in
23 the north, had official representatives of the
24 Manitoba Metis Federation speak to us. But in no
25 way do we restrict who we hear from. And it was

1 just meant as a note of respect for people with
2 long-standing interest in these areas.

3 As far as defining or describing
4 traditional territories, that's far beyond the
5 authority of the Clean Environment Commission, it
6 is far beyond the authority of the Minister of
7 Conservation. As you well know, that is largely
8 in the bailiwick of courts and negotiations.

9 MAYOR MEAD: Yes, I understand that.
10 But as we are sitting here today, the Province of
11 Manitoba doesn't recognize traditional land claims
12 that are being taken place by just about everybody
13 in the part of -- mostly Hydro development areas,
14 because everybody wants to get their hand in the
15 big bucket of money, so they say, well, this is
16 our traditional land and this is our traditional
17 land. And if we keep on having hearings on
18 traditional land claims, we are not going to get
19 any place. Because if it is an Environment
20 Commission hearing on Lake Winnipeg, it is much
21 larger than just Manitoba Hydro, we are getting it
22 from all aspects, and like Dale said earlier, from
23 the Rocky Mountains or from the States.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: We are not here to hold
25 hearings on traditional territories. That is far

1 beyond our mandate. We are not here to do that.

2 MAYOR MEAD: I understand that, sir.

3 But I was hoping that you would take that back as
4 one of your recommendations that go forward to the
5 Ministers, because the Ministers have to hear some
6 of those things.

7 But, you know, getting back to
8 Manitoba Hydro, and I know I will get contradicted
9 on that, between the pros and the cons, myself
10 personally, I believe that we had more pros than
11 cons in Hydro development in the north. I know we
12 have lost some waterways and some are a little bit
13 dirtier than the others, but going back as many
14 years as I can remember, if it wasn't for Hydro
15 development, we might not have had highway 6
16 coming through Northern Manitoba, where we used to
17 have to drive around all the way through the Pas
18 for a 14 hour trip to go to Winnipeg. That is one
19 of the positive parts about doing that. 373 or
20 376 is going into Norway House, Cross Lake.

21 When Jenpeg went out there, it was
22 positive and it was negative, because at the same
23 time we used to have airlines here that was flying
24 in and out of those communities on float planes,
25 and we hauled all of the freight out here by

1 winter roads. So we kind of lost that part of
2 industry.

3 The fishing, and I know I will be
4 questioned on that, but I go back a long ways, and
5 I was hoping there was some more old timers here,
6 on one of the lakes around here used to be a
7 whitefish fishery. Whitefish is not something
8 that is in high demand now. Since the dams were
9 put in, it turned in to be a pickerel fishery.
10 More dollars for the fishers on those lakes.

11 But it is the regulations that aren't
12 complied with by either Manitoba Hydro or the
13 Provincial Government of the flooding of those
14 waters, and it is very difficult for individual
15 people, including myself, to understand the
16 elevations of the lakes going up, elevation 17,
17 elevation 15 and all of that. I remember years
18 back when some of the old fishermen around South
19 Indian Lake and on Sipiwesk were saying that water
20 came up more than the five feet they were allowed,
21 it is 25 feet into the bush. Well, it only came
22 up five feet but the ground lifted.

23 So those are some of the things that
24 Manitoba Hydro is lacking. When you are not
25 educated on the elevations of lakes, you don't

1 know how much water is coming up or going down.
2 And we hear that constantly here on the Nelson
3 River that, you know, it is going up higher than
4 they said it was going to be. There is a lot of
5 these little things that the Commission really has
6 to listen to. And with the Bipole III going,
7 there is no control when Manitoba Hydro and their
8 contractors lose their line or their GPSs and end
9 up way off route to where they are supposed to be
10 going. If anybody else did that, we would be
11 charged as individuals by cutting down two or
12 three trees where you are not allowed to. But yet
13 certain times Manitoba Hydro and the province can
14 get away with these things. That is not really
15 kosher for the industry to be able to do things
16 like that and get away with it. If they are
17 getting away with it on a small project like
18 Bipole III, what is being hidden under the huge
19 projects?

20 Myself personally, I'm all for
21 Manitoba Hydro and what they can bring to the
22 north and what they can bring to the residents
23 that are living there, because I don't want to cut
24 wood and haul it out by a toboggan or dog team or
25 something. I enjoy my lights and electric heat

1 and coloured TVs and all of that. But this
2 Commission has got to have open dialogue with
3 others than just the lawyers and the consultants
4 from the First Nation people, or reserves that can
5 afford those type of people. We can't here, even
6 though we are -- I guess some people feel we are
7 represented by Cross Lake First Nations or the
8 Manitoba Metis Federation, but we don't have any
9 input in what we have to say in how we have to
10 live in this community.

11 The community of Wabowden needs
12 industry, they need the logging, they need the
13 mining, they need the commercial fishing because
14 otherwise we can't survive, and this is how we
15 have been surviving for the last, I will say 100
16 years.

17 So those are some of my comments, and
18 I know that somebody will come up behind me, and
19 these are lists and a diagram of what the
20 population of Wabowden is in '13. It has changed
21 drastically since '13, it is changing every day
22 you might as well say. So if we don't have a say,
23 or our voice is lost in some of these hearings
24 that are taking place right now, then what have we
25 got to look forward to, if we are going to be

1 controlled by outside interests?

2 So I will leave this for a while. You
3 told me 15 minutes, I think I took 14 and a half,
4 so I am going to save half for later on. Let
5 somebody else come up behind me. Thank you.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Just before you leave
7 the table, Reg, you said that your community wants
8 to be heard, and that's one of the reasons that we
9 are here. We want to hear what people in your
10 community have to say. We may not be able to
11 address all of your issues because that's beyond
12 our mandate, but certainly in this one small area
13 we are here to hear what you have to say.

14 MAYOR MEAD: I am just hoping it
15 doesn't get lost in the shuffle and it is heard,
16 first and foremost, when you present that to the
17 Ministers.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: I can't guarantee
19 anything right now. I guarantee we will listen to
20 you and your community members and we will
21 consider what your community members have to say.
22 I can't guarantee that we will agree with all of
23 what you recommend or suggest.

24 MAYOR MEAD: If you are listening, you
25 are agreeing.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Anybody
2 else wish to say something? You have heard your
3 mayor open the proceedings.

4 MR. MCLEOD: I have a question.
5 Everybody can hear me?

6 THE CHAIRMAN: We need to use the mic
7 so the recorder can hear it. As I noted at the
8 outset, we need to record these proceedings.

9 MR. MCLEOD: Hello. Okay. When you
10 are talking about that Lake Winnipeg there, I
11 worked on the Hydro dam when it was first built in
12 Jenpeg there. When the Hydro had a meeting there,
13 they were explaining to the people there, you
14 know, a pencil is only how many inches long, that
15 pencil, that's the highest level you are going to
16 get on the Nelson River he told the people, the
17 Hydro guy from Winnipeg there. But that's all
18 long gone.

19 Anyway, when you mention about you
20 haven't got a problem with Lake Winnipeg
21 flooding -- I suggest that Nelson River has got a
22 lot of pressure as it is now, the dam is lost and
23 they are putting up more and more Hydro dams
24 there, but I suggest, my own opinion, I figured
25 that might be the best thing to do is divert that

1 water into Hayes River, that's going through God's
2 Lake and it comes out by York Factory there, it
3 doesn't affect so much flooding on Nelson River.
4 So that might be something to think about, to
5 regulate the water in Lake Winnipeg there. It is
6 all downstream going towards York Factory anyway.

7 So I seen a lot of damage myself on
8 the Nelson River. I have been there, the first
9 time I flew out there, from here to Bear Lake east
10 of here, I couldn't believe my eyes. About five
11 years after, it is like when you are looking at
12 toothpicks around the islands, that's how the
13 shoreline looked like, you couldn't see no
14 outcropping, everything floating around. They
15 told me, I went on Nelson River there once, and
16 they told me to keep off the main channel
17 otherwise you run into debris and all -- that
18 really bothered me after that.

19 Now Sturgeon are declining, and they
20 have a problem with fish I heard, mercury on the
21 whitefish. So that's about all I got to say. I
22 can say a lot, but I'm just wasting my time maybe,
23 I don't know.

24 Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, sir. What

1 is your name?

2 THE WITNESS: Charlie McLeod.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

4 MR. MCLEOD: I was raised in Cross
5 Lake. I moved out of there when mining started up
6 here in Thompson.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: And you live in
8 Wabowden now?

9 MR. MCLEOD: Yes, since '63, we moved
10 here.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for
12 your comments.

13 MR. MCLEOD: As Reg here was talking
14 about, there was a lot of activity here at one
15 time, diamond drilling and oil exploration here.
16 There was no shortage of work, but things are
17 different nowadays. They once had a lot of work
18 if you needed a job.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: How long ago did Buckle
20 Lake Mine stop operating?

21 MR. MCLEOD: Oh, this guy would know.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Three years ago? Okay,
23 thank you.

24 MR. MCLEOD: Thanks a lot. Just to
25 have that in mind, because a lot of water comes

1 from North Dakota too. I don't know if anybody
2 mentioned that, when they have floods down south.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah. I think when
4 Mr. Hutchison made his presentation he referred to
5 the Red River Valley going right down into the
6 States, so that's North Dakota and Minnesota.

7 MR. MCLEOD: Yeah. Thank you.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Anybody else? I think
9 there was somebody heading up here.

10 MR. CAMPBELL: My name is Norman
11 Campbell senior and I'm a commercial fisher, I
12 fish on the Nelson River.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Norman Campbell?

14 MR. CAMPBELL: Yes. I just had a
15 couple of questions. Like when they say, like if
16 Lake Winnipeg gets high, like, and they say there
17 is only 20,000 people that high water levels
18 affect in the north, I'm kind of surprised that's
19 all it is. But like when they are going to --
20 because Lake Winnipeg gets high and you don't want
21 to flood the city out, or the cottage owners on
22 Lake Winnipeg, you know, you may dig a couple of
23 channels. And I have seen how the high water
24 affects our resources and our land, just coming
25 through the Nelson River and whatever is diverted

1 over from the Churchill. So if you dug a couple
2 more channels, like wouldn't everything be a
3 little out of whack? Like, don't you think you
4 would be flooding a lot more land coming
5 downstream?

6 And there was, the other thing, I was
7 just wondering, like, you know, like any little
8 bit more flooding, it does more damage, it does a
9 lot more damage than a lot of people realize. And
10 you know, I'm just wondering, if we are creating
11 more energy, more like, you know, hydroelectric,
12 is it just for sale, or is it matter of life and
13 death, or like is it -- I'm just wondering how
14 important it really is. Because they mention how
15 many generating stations there are, some are small
16 and some are a little bigger, but I would just,
17 you know, we can't just supply us, our demand, and
18 a little less -- and I know the farther downstream
19 you go, like the less it affects, but any place
20 you block the water on the river systems, it
21 affects downstream. And sometimes if it's just
22 another few inches, it makes a big difference.

23 And I was wondering also if Hydro,
24 like because if this isn't like a real important
25 matter, death right away or -- I was just

1 wondering if Hydro was looking into some of the
2 new technology they have like, you know, you don't
3 have to build a dam now to create energy, they are
4 coming up with some things like that.

5 When you were here, I do believe that
6 was four years ago, I asked you guys a question
7 also, if Hydro had had a permit, I know I heard
8 someone mention about the wood, I think it was Reg
9 and that, but I was just wondering, because I had
10 asked, and I believe you guys said you were going
11 to look into it, to see if they had a permit for
12 moving the millions and millions and millions of
13 cubic metres of wood that they have washed off our
14 shores and everything like that.

15 And you know, I know building things
16 like this, it creates jobs and helps everybody I
17 guess, helps the province. But that was one of
18 the things I was just wondering, like how
19 important this was, or is it to export or --
20 because they are coming up with a lot of new ways
21 to create energy without destroying our planet any
22 more than it is.

23 And that was all. Thank you.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,
25 Mr. Campbell. Just to address a couple of your

1 points; we are not here considering Hydro building
2 more stuff. I mean, a year and a half ago, we
3 were reviewing the Keeyask Generating Station,
4 which is now under construction. At this point
5 what we are looking at is part of the system
6 that's been operating for almost 40 years, since
7 1976. So I guess it is 38 years now, 39 years
8 this fall. I think -- I'm not here to speak for
9 Manitoba Hydro, but it is a matter of public
10 record that they do sell a reasonable amount of
11 the electricity they generate, they do sell it to
12 the United States and some to Ontario and
13 Saskatchewan.

14 And your point about using alternative
15 means of generating electricity, I think on one of
16 these maps it shows, right at the bottom on the
17 map on the left, it shows St. Leon and St. Joseph,
18 those are both wind farms. They are not owned by
19 Manitoba Hydro but Manitoba Hydro buys the power
20 from them and then resells it.

21 And your last point about the permits
22 to move the wood, I know that when we were in the
23 north on the Bipole hearings, there was concern
24 raised about what would happen to all the wood
25 that was cleared along the Bipole route. And

1 before the meeting started, your mayor, Reg Mead,
2 and I talked a bit about that as well. It was our
3 feeling, and I believe Manitoba Hydro had made a
4 commitment that wherever possible, if the wood was
5 usable, it would be used. And where it wasn't
6 possible to use it or if it wasn't very good or if
7 it was just too expensive to get it out from the
8 Bipole line, then it would be burned.

9 MR. CAMPBELL: I was talking about,
10 like the water effects from the '70s.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah.

12 MR. CAMPBELL: And the wood that I'm
13 talking about is not the wood recently that they
14 cut for the Bipole, I'm talking about the millions
15 and millions and millions of cubic metres of wood
16 that they washed off the shorelines while they
17 were doing all of their flooding. And it still
18 happens daily. Like when the water goes high,
19 like the, you know, the forest is continuously
20 falling into the rivers, into the lakes. And
21 that's the question that I asked at the meeting
22 there, the first one they had about Lake Winnipeg
23 Regulation. I guess I must have missed a couple
24 in between. But I asked that there and they said
25 that they would get back to me.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. This is the
2 first time the Clean Environment Commission has
3 looked at Lake Winnipeg Regulation, so that might
4 have been somebody else that was holding the
5 meetings that you are referring to. I know that
6 the issue of wood getting into, or washing into
7 the waters came up during our Keeyask Hearings,
8 and Manitoba Hydro has undertaken to clear the
9 wood before the water is flooded in the forebay to
10 the Keeyask Generating Station.

11 MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,
13 Mr. Campbell. Anybody else? Anybody else just
14 dying to say something?

15 MR. BECKER: I would just like to say
16 a little bit.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Sure.

18 MR. BECKER: Walter Becker, Wabowden
19 Community Council. One of my concerns living --
20 living on Northern Affairs, living in Northern
21 Affairs community with Bipole going through, the
22 government and Manitoba Hydro, they seem to build
23 a partnership, a little bit what Reg has touched
24 on, that we always have to -- because we don't own
25 the lands, we always have to fight for every

1 nickel and dime, and we never get a fair, honest
2 shake with jobs, opportunities. And with the
3 government, they have got to understand that we
4 are a partnership too, we want to grow too. And
5 it almost seems like, when it comes to Manitoba
6 Hydro now it is just First Nations that has the
7 opportunity, and all of the people living on the
8 land that's owned by the government, we don't even
9 have a say what goes on.

10 We got the Bipole III running through
11 us, and the contractors are all from First Nations
12 on one side. The other side, they come through
13 there and they say they are going to hire our
14 people. They don't hire our people. They are
15 almost half done. They didn't give us an
16 opportunity. I don't know if that has much to do
17 with this Winnipeg Regulation, but when it comes
18 to Manitoba Hydro and -- I think everybody should
19 have opportunity for jobs. Thank you.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Becker.
21 Anyone else have anything to add to our
22 proceedings this afternoon? Well, we are here
23 until 5:00 and then we break until 6:30, and then
24 we are back until 8:00 o'clock. So we won't stop
25 now, but we will take a pause, I guess, and if any

1 of you wishes to say anything, just let us know,
2 or if other people arrive, they may wish to say
3 something. So we will sit back and relax for a
4 few minutes.

5 (Recessed at 4:28 p.m.)

6

7 (Concluded at 7:45 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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