

MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

LAKE WINNIPEG REGULATION REVIEW
UNDER THE WATER POWER ACT

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Transcript of Proceedings
Held at Grand Rapids
Grand Rapids, Manitoba
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 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
Melissa Hotaine - Community Liaison

MANITOBA HYDRO

Dale Hutchison

INDEX OF PROCEEDINGS

Opening by the Chair	4
Manitoba Hydro presentation	9
Presentations:	
Annette Fleury	19
Heidi Cook	21, 49, 66
David Valentine	30, 52
Dwayne Cook	33
William Ferland	38, 58
Alice Cook	44
Marilyn Hall	55
Barbara Nasecapow	61, 87
Ted Cook	69
Patsy Jacobson	87

1 WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2015

2 UPON COMMENCING AT 1:00 P.M.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon. We
4 will begin the formal part of our proceedings now.
5 Ms. Turner, councillors and ladies and gentlemen,
6 welcome. My name is Terry Sargeant, I'm the chair
7 of the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission as
8 well as the chair of this panel. At the outset I
9 would like to acknowledge that we are meeting in
10 the traditional territory of the Misipwistik Cree
11 Nation.

12 I would like to thank the leadership
13 of your community for accepting our invitation to
14 host the Commission, so that we can hear from as
15 many of you who wish to share your thoughts or
16 stories.

17 I would just like to say it is nice to
18 be in Grand Rapids again. It has been over 30
19 years since I was last here. I used to come in
20 here about once or twice a year in the early '80s.
21 The last time I was here Alice Cook was the chief.
22 I think also the last time I was here there was a
23 winter carnival going on that included a Carnival
24 Queen contest that Harry Harapiak, the late Harry
25 Harapiak, MLA for this area, and I ended up being

1 judges at. And later on that night there was a
2 dance at the school gym, and I have vague memories
3 of Alice trying to teach me to jig without much
4 success. My two left feet didn't work.

5 I would like to introduce other
6 members of the panel. At the far right is Edwin
7 Yee, next to me is Bev Suek, and on my left is
8 Neil Harden. In addition to the panel we have
9 some staff with us; our commission secretary,
10 Cathy Johnson, our community liaison, Melissa
11 Hotain, and we have technical people with us, Cece
12 Reid, our recorder.

13 We are here today because the Minister
14 of Conservation and Water Stewardship in 2011
15 asked the Commission to provide a forum to hear
16 evidence from the public about the impact of
17 Manitoba Hydro's regulation of Lake Winnipeg. We
18 were asked to hold meetings in communities around
19 both the north and south basins of Lake Winnipeg,
20 as well as in the City of Winnipeg.

21 We have not been asked to provide an
22 opinion on whether or not the final licence should
23 be issued, or whether or not Lake Winnipeg
24 Regulation should have been built in the first
25 place. And while we recognize that Lake Winnipeg

1 Regulation is a key part of the overall Hydro
2 system, we have not been asked to review any other
3 part of the Hydro system.

4 We have been specifically asked to
5 look at the reasons why Lake Winnipeg Regulation
6 came into being in the first place, in the early
7 1970s, whether Lake Winnipeg Regulation has
8 succeeded or failed in meeting the goal initially
9 set for it, and the impacts and effects of Lake
10 Winnipeg Regulation since first operation in 1976.

11 We may make comment on concerns raised
12 about the issuance of a final licence, which may
13 include future monitoring and research beneficial
14 to the project to Lake Winnipeg, as well as to the
15 communities affected by this regulation.

16 We will try to have this hearing today
17 as informal as possible so that you feel
18 comfortable in coming forward and telling us your
19 thoughts. As required by the Environment Act, we
20 will be recording the proceedings today. A
21 verbatim transcript or a word for word transcript
22 of what we hear today will be available on our
23 website within a few days. Anyone who is present
24 is welcome to come up and make a presentation. If
25 you feel more comfortable coming with another

1 person, one or two or three of you, that's quite
2 fine. This is a chance for you to tell us your
3 personal knowledge, your views or concerns about
4 the regulation of Lake Winnipeg.

5 A little more specifically, what we
6 are interested in hearing from participants and
7 presenters today is who you are, how Lake Winnipeg
8 Regulation has affected or benefited you, how it
9 has impacted your community, your views on whether
10 the project has been good for the whole province,
11 as well as any other information you think is
12 important.

13 Typically oral presentations or
14 presentations at meetings like this are about 15
15 minutes long. If you are telling us a good story
16 or if you are giving us good thoughts and it goes
17 over 15 minutes, we are not going to cut you off
18 today. Also if you wish to make a presentation in
19 your own language, that is quite okay, as long as
20 either you or somebody else translates afterwards
21 for us so that we understand what you are telling
22 us.

23 And finally, there are options if you
24 don't feel comfortable making a presentation in
25 public. We also welcome written submissions. A

1 written submission can be something as simple as a
2 letter, an email, or a written presentation that
3 you can mail or email to us. The address and our
4 email address are available on our website.

5 That's all I have to say for opening
6 comments. Before we proceed I would like to thank
7 the women in the back corner who pulled off this
8 fabulous meal. I'm quite stuffed and I couldn't
9 resist taking more than I probably should have.

10 SPEAKER: There is lots, take some
11 home.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: I might. So thank you
13 to all of you for making such a really good meal.
14 It is a good way to get into a community, is
15 sharing food. Before we ask anybody to come
16 forward and make presentations, Manitoba Hydro
17 will make a brief presentation describing the
18 project, so I turn it over to Dale Hutchison.

19 MR. HUTCHISON: Okay. My name is Dale
20 Hutchison. Respected elders, Chief Turner,
21 council, and members of Mispwistik Cree Nation,
22 thank you for the feast, and thank you for
23 inviting me to your territory to speak about Lake
24 Winnipeg Regulation.

25 I have been working with Manitoba

1 Hydro for 15 years to understand the impacts on
2 the waterways -- so I have been working with
3 Manitoba Hydro for 15 years to understand our
4 impacts on the waterways on the people with whom
5 we share it with. I know that you are in the
6 shadow of the Grand Rapids dam, and I won't be
7 talking about that today. Instead I will be
8 talking about the Manitoba Hydro system, Lake
9 Winnipeg and Lake Winnipeg Regulation. I'm joined
10 here today by Warren Taite and Mark Sweeny from
11 our community relations office in Thompson.

12 So, first I would like to talk about
13 the Manitoba Hydro system. So a huge area from
14 the Rocky Mountains in the west, east to the edge
15 of Lake Superior and south into the Red River
16 Valley of the United States drains into Lake
17 Winnipeg. It is -- the shape of this land is like
18 a one million square kilometre bowl, and this
19 makes hydroelectric development possible in
20 Manitoba.

21 There are 15 generating stations to
22 take advantage of the water flowing through
23 Manitoba, and I will use this map. By the way, I
24 will have the banners set up for the course of the
25 day, so if after discussion you want to come over,

1 and you couldn't see anything while I'm speaking,
2 it will be here for later.

3 So we have got -- the size of the blue
4 dots, the blue dots represent the generating
5 station, the size represents how much electricity
6 they produce, either small, medium or large
7 amounts. So on the Winnipeg River we have got six
8 small generating stations. On the Saskatchewan
9 River at Grand Rapids, as you know, we have a
10 medium sized generating station. North, the
11 Nelson River flows north from Lake Winnipeg into
12 Hudson Bay. We have a small generating station
13 located at Jenpeg. Now the Churchill River is the
14 river system just north of the Nelson River, and
15 it also flows into Hudson Bay. Now rather than
16 build stations on this far northern river, instead
17 we diverted the waters from the Churchill River
18 into the Nelson River where it joins at Split
19 Lake. Our newest generating station, Wuskwatim is
20 located on this stretch of river. The main
21 benefit of the Churchill River diversion is that
22 from Split Lake downstream you have got the
23 benefit of two rivers, and this is where our
24 largest generating stations are located, Kettle,
25 Long Spruce and Limestone. These three stations

1 produce 70 per cent of all of the electricity in
2 Manitoba. The Keeyask is currently under
3 construction and will be a medium sized generating
4 station on this lower Nelson stretch.

5 Now to get this electricity from the
6 north to the south, you have got two high voltage
7 bipole lines, and they run 1,000 kilometres from
8 the converter station near Gillam to a converter
9 station near Winnipeg. We have got a third bipole
10 line that's currently being constructed, Bipole
11 III, which you have probably heard about in the
12 news at some point. And from the converter
13 station in Winnipeg electricity is sent over
14 100,000 kilometres of distribution lines to homes
15 and businesses throughout Manitoba.

16 We can also produce electricity using
17 natural gas at Selkirk and Brandon, and in an
18 emergency we can burn coal at Brandon to produce
19 electricity. And we also purchase electricity
20 from wind farms at St. Leon and St. Joseph. You
21 may have seen these when you drive to the States
22 at the side of the highway, this side of the
23 border.

24 The Manitoba Hydro system uses water
25 to produce over 95 per cent of the electricity

1 made.

2 Now I want to turn your attention to
3 Lake Winnipeg. This lake is the 10th largest
4 freshwater lake in the world. It is Manitoba's
5 great lake. As you can see over a dozen rivers
6 flow into the lake, yet there is only one natural
7 outflow, the Nelson River. This makes it easy for
8 the lake to flood. The mouth of the Nelson is
9 wide and very shallow, which causes ice to block
10 the water flow out of the lake over the winter.
11 Historically flooding has caused problems with
12 people living around the lake; highways were
13 closed, farmers crops were lost, homes and
14 cottages were damaged.

15 And this banner shows photos -- that's
16 a nice ringtone -- this banner shows photos and
17 Winnipeg Free Press headlines describing Lake
18 Winnipeg flood events in recent history. So there
19 is pictures and headlines from 1927, 1950, 1954,
20 1955, 1966, 1968, 1969 and 1970.

21 People around the lake put a lot of
22 pressure on the Government to do something about
23 this ongoing flooding. At the same time demand
24 for electricity was growing in the province. In
25 1970 the Manitoba Premier announced a plan to

1 proceed with the Lake Winnipeg Regulation for
2 flood control of Lake Winnipeg and for power
3 production on the Nelson River.

4 So now we will talk about Lake
5 Winnipeg Regulation, which I will call LWR, to
6 save some breath. Before we could build LWR,
7 first we needed a licence from the Province under
8 the Water Power Act. This is similar to getting a
9 building permit, if you were to build a house.
10 Under the Water Power Act this initial licence is
11 called an interim licence. And to get it we had
12 to provide information about what we were planning
13 to build and the effect it would have on water
14 levels and floods. The province granted an
15 interim licence in 1970, which gave us the
16 approval to build Lake Winnipeg Regulation, along
17 with rules on how we operate it. There were three
18 types of rules. The first one was operating
19 ranges for Lake Winnipeg and a few of the
20 downstream lakes. For instance, on Lake Winnipeg,
21 Manitoba Hydro could decide how much water to flow
22 through Jenpeg in order to meet electricity
23 demands between elevations 711 and 715. If the
24 elevation of Lake Winnipeg got over 715 feet above
25 sea level, we would have to let as much of the

1 water as possible out of the lake. This is called
2 maximum discharge. And below elevation 711, the
3 Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship
4 tells us how much water to let out of the lake.
5 The second rule is there must be a minimum flow of
6 water from Lake Winnipeg, and the third rule is we
7 can not change the rate of water flow at Jenpeg
8 too fast. We agreed with these rules and built
9 LWR in 1976.

10 The next step in the licence process
11 is to request a final licence which is good for 50
12 years from the date construction was completed.
13 In this case the LWR final licence will expire in
14 2026, which is only 11 years away. We applied for
15 a final licence in 2010, after many years of
16 negotiations with communities, First Nations and
17 resource users to address impacts from LWR.

18 Before our licence expires in 2026, we
19 will ask the province to review the licence for up
20 to another 50 years.

21 So LWR involved digging a second
22 outlet for Lake Winnipeg, that's shown by this
23 squiggly line here and two other channels, to
24 allow for more water flow out of the lake. These
25 channels alone would drain the lake, so it was

1 also necessary to build Jenpeg, which is shown by
2 the orange box with the blue dot. And that
3 controls the outflow water of the west channel of
4 the Nelson River.

5 So using the example of a faucet, a
6 tub and a drain, if all of these rivers entering
7 Lake Winnipeg were represented by this water drop
8 during flood times, the large yellow drain
9 represents the natural outflow, so this outflow
10 represents the Nelson River. Now you can see that
11 this -- the output of this drop is not as big as
12 this one. So what this means is that during flood
13 times more water enters the lake than leaves it,
14 and the lake level will rise and flood.

15 If you look at the second diagram,
16 there is a second water drop, and this represents
17 the LWR channel that was built at the north end of
18 the lake. Now you can still see that these two
19 water drops together don't quite equal the water
20 drop out of the faucet. It stills means that
21 during flood time times more water will enter the
22 lake than leave it, but it won't cause the lake to
23 flood as high and it won't cause it to last as
24 long. So no doubt that Lake Winnipeg Regulation
25 has reduced the amount of flooding on the lake but

1 it can't outright control the level of the lake.

2 People have different ideas about how
3 the LWR project affects Lake Winnipeg. Many think
4 we keep the water higher, some people think we
5 keep the water level lower. The Federal
6 government has been monitoring water levels on the
7 lake for 100 years. What this water data shows is
8 that Lake Winnipeg still acts the same way as it
9 always did. The water level rises in the spring
10 and through the summer, and falls through the fall
11 and the winter. When there is a flood in the
12 watershed or a lot of water in the drainage basin,
13 the water level will get high and flood, and when
14 there is a drought in the watershed the water
15 level will get lower.

16 However since 1976 when LWR was built
17 there was one noticeable change. Now I apologize
18 for having to rely on a chart, but it is kind of
19 hard to show water information over time without
20 using a chart. So this chart demonstrates that
21 LWR has reduced flooding on Lake Winnipeg. It
22 compares the water level with LWR to what the
23 water level would have been without LWR. On one
24 side of the chart is the elevation above sea
25 level, and the bottom of the chart shows the 40

1 years since LWR was built; so starting in 1977 and
2 ending in 2015. The blue line is the actual water
3 level with Lake Winnipeg Regulation, and the red
4 line is what the water level would have been if
5 Lake Winnipeg Regulation did not exist.

6 As you will likely notice, the last
7 decade in particular has been very wet throughout
8 the Lake Winnipeg watershed, with a lot of water
9 flowing into Lake Winnipeg and down through the
10 Nelson River. What the chart shows is that in
11 1997, 2005, 2011 and 2014 the level of the lake
12 would have been two feet higher during each of
13 those floods, and they would have lasted a lot
14 longer. So this demonstrates that LWR is meeting
15 it's goal of reducing flooding on Lake Winnipeg.

16 Now what happens downstream. 20,000
17 people live along the Nelson River downstream of
18 Lake Winnipeg. Land and water are extremely
19 important to their identity and livelihood. Now
20 all Manitobans benefit from having reliable low
21 cost electricity. And people around Lake Winnipeg
22 benefit from the flood relief provided by LWR,
23 however people downstream of Lake Winnipeg have
24 suffered from having more water flow out of Lake
25 Winnipeg during winter times and flood. This

1 additional water causes significant impacts to
2 people living downstream of Lake Winnipeg.

3 In natural conditions lake levels and
4 river flows gradually decrease over the course of
5 the winter. With LWR, water flows during the
6 winter are much higher, up to 50 per cent higher,
7 than they would have been without the project.
8 This water affects ice conditions on the waterways
9 which makes travel dangerous, and it also
10 negatively affects animals like beaver, muskrat,
11 mink and otter. During the summer, anytime the
12 water level gets close to or above elevation 715,
13 Jenpeg goes to maximum discharge, and this sends a
14 surge of water down the Nelson River causing water
15 fluctuations on the river and lakes.

16 Ultimately this change in water flow
17 from LWR affects the cultural, commercial,
18 recreational and spiritual pursuits of people
19 living downstream of Lake Winnipeg.

20 Working together, in Cree this is
21 called witasosketowin, with the people who live
22 and work along the Nelson River, Manitoba Hydro
23 continues to work to address impacts through
24 agreements and other arrangements with all
25 communities and First Nations on the Nelson River,

1 through projects like the Cross Lake Weir, and
2 through programs for resource harvesting, access
3 and navigation, archeology and heritage resources
4 and recreation, as shown by the photos on this
5 banner.

6 Thank you for inviting me to speak. I
7 hope you have a productive meeting with the
8 Commissioners. Mark, Warren and I will be
9 available after the meeting if you want to talk
10 with us. Thank you.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank, you Dale. Okay.
12 Now it is your turn. We don't have any particular
13 order. If any of you wish to come up and tell us
14 a story or say your piece, please come up now and
15 introduce yourself and say your piece.

16 MS. ANNETTE FLEURY: I have something
17 to say. Good afternoon, my name is Annette
18 Fleury. I would like to know about the damage to
19 the shoreline, what is going to be done in that
20 case? We have had a lot of water come out there
21 from the dam and whatnot, and there has been some
22 damage done to the shoreline, when we have had
23 storms and whatnot too, with that water -- I am
24 just nervous here -- and the weather at Ponton, it
25 really does breakdown the shoreline, and we have

1 lost a lot of shoreline on the other side of the
2 river. So, I wanted to know what was going to be
3 done about even that.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, Annette, is that
5 because of Grand Rapids dam or because of the
6 controls on Lake Winnipeg?

7 MS. ANNETTE FLEURY: I'm asking
8 because, like I said, we have lost a lot of
9 shoreline because of the water coming out and the
10 weather and whatnot, the storms, and it has just
11 wreaked havoc on the shoreline. And a lot of
12 trees have been gone, a lot of the land. I was
13 just wondering what was going to be done about
14 that?

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Is that just sort of in
16 the stretch of the river between the dam and the
17 watershed? Is that what you are talking about?

18 MS. ANNETTE FLEURY: I'm on the other
19 side there.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: But it is downstream of
21 the dam that you are talking about?

22 MS. ANNETTE FLEURY: Yeah, yeah, it is
23 downstream.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: We don't represent
25 Manitoba Hydro, so I can't tell you what might be

1 done to clean or fix that up. But we will -- we
2 have heard you, it has been recorded, and we will
3 take note of that, and we will certainly pass
4 those concerns on to Manitoba Hydro. And there
5 are Hydro representatives here today, so hopefully
6 they heard you. Thank you.

7 MS. HEIDI COOK: My name is Heidi
8 Cook, I'm a councillor of the Misipwistik Cree
9 Nation. And I have a portfolio for resources for
10 the council, I have also worked in the land
11 office.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Is the mic turned on?

13 MS. HEIDI COOK: It seemed like it was
14 on when Annette was talking. So, I had the
15 benefit of actually hearing from a lot of our MCN
16 members about some of the issues with Manitoba
17 Hydro, Lake Winnipeg Regulation and other things
18 that happened in our territory.

19 But before I make some comments, I
20 wanted to ask for verification because, Terry, in
21 your introduction you said that the Commission was
22 here to talk about why Lake Winnipeg Regulation
23 came into effect, whether it has succeeded, and
24 the impacts of Lake Winnipeg Regulation. But you
25 said that you would not be making recommendations

1 on the final licence for Lake Winnipeg Regulation,
2 so --

3 THE CHAIRMAN: We have not been asked
4 to advise or recommend whether or not a licence
5 should be issued. This licence has been in place
6 since 1970 initially, and 1976 is the initial
7 construction. So it is not a matter of whether or
8 not to issue a licence, it is a matter of whether
9 or not to issue a final licence. And what it is
10 open for us to do, once we have heard concerns
11 from people around the lake, is to advise the
12 Minister of those concerns and make suggestions
13 and recommendations on how those concerns might be
14 addressed ongoing.

15 MS. HEIDI COOK: Okay. So, amendments
16 to the licence?

17 THE CHAIRMAN: I can't say yes or no,
18 but it is certainly possible.

19 MS. HEIDI COOK: So you are making
20 recommendations?

21 THE CHAIRMAN: We have been asked to
22 make recommendations based on what we hear, yes.
23 And you know what, it may be that we recommend for
24 studies or for research or further consultation
25 with the communities. It is possible we make

1 specific recommendations about operating rules,
2 but it is also probably a little more likely we
3 may make recommendations about how to alleviate
4 some of the concerns and negative impacts that
5 might have happened.

6 MS. HEIDI COOK: Thank you. Because
7 after you made that comment I wanted to clarify,
8 because one of the other people at the meeting
9 here also asked what is going to happen with the
10 information from our meeting today besides going
11 up on your website. So, I mean, is it having a
12 meeting so that we can talk and feel good about
13 talking and everything happens as planned, or is
14 it going to actually affect the outcome?

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Hopefully it will have
16 some effects. We are traveling in a dozen or more
17 communities, as well as we are going to have three
18 weeks or four week meetings in Winnipeg. We are
19 not doing that just to have meetings and just to
20 talk. We want to hear from people, and what we
21 hear will affect how we make our decisions.

22 And when all of our meetings and
23 hearings are over, probably in early, mid April,
24 we will sit down as a group, the four of us will
25 sit down and start discussing what should be in

1 our report and what we might recommend to the
2 Minister. And that will be informed by all of
3 what we have heard in these various communities.
4 So if we were just here to talk, here for the sake
5 of talking, we would be insulting you as well as
6 wasting a lot of people's time.

7 We do want to hear your concerns. And
8 I have said and I will probably say it again, I
9 typically say it, I can't guarantee that we will
10 recommend everything that you ask us to. But what
11 we do hear will influence what we do recommend in
12 the end.

13 MS. HEIDI COOK: Okay. Thank you. I
14 don't know if I can speak for a full 15 minutes, I
15 don't know if anybody here will, but certainly I
16 will try and get conversation started by bringing
17 up some of the issues that I have heard over the
18 years.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: We don't require you to
20 talk for 15 minutes. That's more or less the
21 limit. If you want to talk for 2 or 5, that's
22 fine.

23 MS. HEIDI COOK: Okay. You have got a
24 hint already of probably one of the main issues,
25 and that's erosion on the lake shores. Where

1 Annette lives, it is actually beyond the mouth of
2 the river I would say, just past, it is on Lake
3 Winnipeg. It could be because of our generating
4 station here, but because of, like, the weather
5 and how that interacts with Lake Winnipeg
6 Regulation, we can't say for sure.

7 But there are also commercial fishing
8 camps that people have on Lake Winnipeg. There is
9 two major ones, I guess, north and south from the
10 community here. And those have been experiencing
11 a lot of erosion, especially the one south at Gull
12 Bay. There is a spit that is being washed away,
13 and I asked one of the fishermen who fishes there
14 to bring some pictures. So I can actually -- I
15 will pass those to you and you can look through.
16 And they are kind of in sequence.

17 So the first one you see this
18 beautiful grassy area and they are actually
19 cutting the grass there. It used to be a really
20 nice, wide open place to camp, and they put up a
21 cabin while it was like that, and then you can see
22 the progression of the lakeshore as it is washing
23 away. And it is quite devastating. The last one
24 is a different cabin that water came up, lifted it
25 up and turned it around and moved it five feet

1 over. So this is our experience with what is
2 happening on the lake. There is also one north of
3 here where it is not as dramatic as this, but it
4 is affecting the fishing camps there.

5 Also, we have a lot of muskeg in this
6 area. Our reserve is mostly muskeg. The muskeg
7 is a good place for picking medicines and the --
8 and that has been affected by the level of the
9 lake. So the water in recent years, it is very
10 high, so we can't get the medicines, and that's
11 having an effect on the way that we use our
12 resources and also on our health. We don't have
13 the medicines because we can't get at them.

14 And the last thing I also wanted to
15 mention was the algae and the issue of nutrient
16 loading in Lake Winnipeg.

17 Now, I read parts of that binder, I
18 didn't read the whole thing, I will tell you right
19 now. But I did read some parts about nutrient
20 loading and devegetation in Lake Winnipeg, and how
21 Lake Winnipeg Regulation has little to no effect
22 on nutrient loading. I will disagree with that
23 statement very strongly. Actually a few years ago
24 I was a member of the Lake Winnipeg Regulation
25 Stewardship Board where we -- I wasn't part of the

1 board that made the recommendations, but I was
2 part of the board that evaluated them in the
3 second report. And so my understanding from that
4 time was that Lake Winnipeg Regulation definitely
5 has an effect on nutrient loading in Lake
6 Winnipeg. Our own dam right here takes sediment
7 out of the Saskatchewan River, settles it in Cedar
8 Lake, so the north basin is much clearer, which
9 allows sunlight to penetrate and algae to grow.

10 But also -- I mean that's Manitoba
11 Hydro, not necessarily Lake Winnipeg Regulation.
12 But reversing the natural discharge and not
13 allowing nutrients to discharge as they naturally
14 would be contributing. And I think from what I
15 saw in that binder, it seemed to be a little bit
16 of cherry picking of quotes and science and that
17 kind of thing to make a picture that Lake Winnipeg
18 Regulation doesn't affect the algae in Lake
19 Winnipeg, where I would say that it definitely
20 does.

21 And I'm going to hand these pictures
22 to you before I forget.

23 So those are at Gull Bay, which is the
24 spit on the southern part of Long Point.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Sorry, where was that?

1 MS. HEIDI COOK: Long Point. You know
2 where Long Point is on -- so on the southern side
3 of Long Point.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: And how far is that
5 from here?

6 MS. HEIDI COOK: 15 kilometres, by the
7 road.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: When were these
9 pictures taken?

10 MS. HEIDI COOK: Three years ago. The
11 cabin was put up maybe three years prior to the
12 water coming up and eventually devastating it.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Now, you mentioned the
14 medicines. How often does high water come up and
15 affect the muskeg and the medicines, or is that a
16 regular thing now?

17 MS. HEIDI COOK: The last few years it
18 has been regular, yes.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: So it is higher when
20 the lake is level as a whole, it has been higher
21 most of the time?

22 MS. HEIDI COOK: Yeah, and we know
23 that the last few years have been high water
24 years, which also leads me to question this 711 to
25 715. Where are those measured? Like, because the

1 entire lake is not 715 feet, right?

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, when they say
3 that, it is wind eliminated. And there are -- it
4 is in that binder that you have, there is a map
5 that shows about eight or nine or ten different
6 measuring stations throughout the whole lake.
7 There is not one far from here, and then there are
8 a number throughout the lake.

9 MS. HEIDI COOK: There is probably
10 lots by the southern beaches, right?

11 THE CHAIRMAN: There is a few down
12 there. I'm not sure it is the majority or not.
13 You can find the map in your binder. But no, it
14 is not the same level at the same time, it is
15 throughout the lake, because of the wind, the wind
16 affects some of the other --

17 MS. HEIDI COOK: I'm sure they do, but
18 it is in the muskeg area, right?

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

20 MS. HEIDI COOK: So it is not like
21 choppy water coming in, it would be more gradual
22 if it is the wind effects, but in general the
23 water is there a lot longer. I am not sure, but I
24 heard about that needed to go, to be drained, to
25 be lowered a lot more than it has been lowered in

1 order to maintain its health. I am not sure, I
2 would assume that the same thing would be for our
3 muskeg around here, and that Lake Winnipeg
4 Regulation doesn't allow those marshes to
5 regenerate the way that they need to naturally.

6 I'm going to just step aside now and
7 let anybody else who wants to come and say
8 something. I don't want to monopolize the
9 microphone here.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Sir, if you
11 could tell us your name?

12 MR. DAVID VALENTINE: My name is David
13 Valentine. I'm a member here at Misipwistik.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

15 MR. DAVID VALENTINE: This is in part
16 for Hydro too; I'm wondering about the water
17 quality data on the river front here and Lake
18 Winnipeg. Where is this water quality data
19 stored, and can it be obtained through the
20 archives? Is it public, is it accessible to the
21 public? And I'm pretty sure this guy over here --
22 I had a few from 15 years ago, I was just
23 wondering if we could get some of that water
24 quality data. I will speak with you a little
25 later, and I would really like to obtain them and

1 analyze them and bring it forward.

2 I don't know, like, we had some spills
3 here in the past, and you know, the toxicity
4 levels weren't brought up to the public. And
5 that's what I mean, is there a place where we can
6 really look and see what really happened. Because
7 I have pictures on my computer, and I see the
8 split break from around Lovers Point all the way
9 out to Lake Winnipeg. So I have physical proof.

10 And I would like to talk to this Hydro
11 guy today. I think we really need to look at it.
12 We are up in the air here. Like there is no,
13 nothing public, nothing given out. And like, like
14 in the winter time, like I was curious too is
15 there something hushed sometimes? Like you see a
16 slick going by, and we see the mist rising, and
17 the mist -- we bring it in, so I was just
18 wondering if there is any possibility of something
19 arising, getting into that mist, the ones that we
20 breathe. And also for the Water Stewardship, were
21 you aware of all of these, and where is the
22 documentation?

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, we don't
24 represent the department. We are an arm's length
25 Commission. We look at specific studies, such as

1 this one now on Lake Winnipeg Regulation. But,
2 no, I haven't heard any of those concerns before
3 today. I can't tell you where the data that you
4 seek might be available. But perhaps Manitoba
5 Hydro can help you find that. If not, you contact
6 us, we could steer you in the right direction
7 hopefully, if it is available.

8 MR. DAVID VALENTINE: It would be a
9 good idea for the Water Stewardship to get into
10 that toxicity level, the aspect of it. Because
11 that is very vital in communities, like it is
12 right in our back door, back door, it is right
13 there. And there is also others down the stream
14 like Fox Lake, they have -- they are right in the
15 middle of all three of them. I believe four now.

16 So, yeah, I think I would like to
17 speak with you guys too, and see if it is in the
18 water quality data in the archives, if you guys
19 know, because I got this information from Hydro
20 myself, and I had it right from 1964 to 1992, all
21 of the data, but I forwarded it to a councillor
22 who is not here, but he was there eight years ago.
23 And I have no idea where it is. I would like to
24 obtain it. And that's -- I pretty well covered
25 everything that I wanted to speak about.

1 Oh, about the erosion, getting back to
2 it, is there any way possible that we could
3 establish some kind of monitoring, either from
4 Hydro or even a joint venture with the Water
5 Stewardship by providing maybe a helicopter and
6 having somebody in that field, and they go out and
7 do monthly or weekly trips just to monitor it? I
8 guess that is a question for both.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: I can't make a
10 commitment to do that today, as I said earlier,
11 but we will certainly take that into
12 consideration.

13 MR. DAVID VALENTINE: Could you write
14 that down? I don't see you write anything down.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: I have got it right
16 here. And also it is being transcribed word for
17 word.

18 MR. DAVID VALENTINE: Okay. That's
19 all I have to say.

20 MR. DWAYNE COOK: Hello, my name is
21 Dwayne Cook from Grand Rapids here. I got about
22 three questions here. It is directly relating to
23 the dam. 2001 is when I understand that the dam
24 finally stopped dumping whatever waste they had
25 into the waterway, they finally put a sewage tank

1 system in to the dam itself. So all of these
2 years what has been going down the river, and I
3 know that for a fact because I helped weld in the
4 pipes that put them in there. So okay, what has
5 been going into the water system all of those
6 years?

7 And then years ago, this is kind of a
8 personal thing, but my father ended up getting
9 Parkinson's disease. And one of the things that
10 causes Parkinson's disease is a mercury spill.
11 And from my understanding is that Manitoba Hydro
12 itself had a mercury spill way back in the day
13 when my dad was younger. And yet nothing was
14 announced or told -- like, back then people used
15 to dip their water pails into the lake and river
16 and just drink from them -- but yet nothing was
17 announced. So I would really like to know why and
18 how much and what period these spills occurred.

19 And one more question I have is that
20 it is kind of directly related to the dam, but not
21 to the waterways per se, but there are things that
22 are buried around the Hydro generating station.
23 And there are things where people dump defoliants.
24 I have seen a long narrow mound in the north
25 spillway area, it is along the dam itself, what do

1 they call it -- anyways, so there is a long mound
2 and they told us not to disturb it, not to bother
3 it. So what is buried there that we can't disturb
4 and not bother it? Is that PCBs or what is it?
5 And from my understanding, Federally all PCBs are
6 supposed to be removed from all landfill areas.
7 So why is that not being looked at? I asked when
8 I used to work there, and basically they said not
9 to bother it. So that's my questions.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Cook, we don't --
11 it is not within our mandate to address Manitoba
12 Hydro issues. We've heard them, or not specific
13 issues like this, we are looking at specifically
14 Lake Winnipeg Regulation, however --

15 MR. DWAYNE COOK: It is waterway
16 related that's why, because eventually this all
17 gets into the water table.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly. But if what
19 you are suggesting is correct, if there are PCBs
20 there, then that's a very serious concern that
21 needs to be addressed. Again, I would turn to the
22 Manitoba Hydro representatives that are here, and
23 hope that they would be making note of this and
24 would address it in terms of getting some answers
25 to you as quickly as possible.

1 MR. DWAYNE COOK: One more thing,
2 since it is Lake Winnipeg related, is that the
3 area where the fishermen use the -- I can't
4 remember the word -- south here by Long Point,
5 what is the Bay called? You know, there is an
6 endangered bird there, but yet they don't mind
7 having the water level so high that their nesting
8 areas are being killed off. It is a Flover or
9 something like that. Yet, the water is so high it
10 is washing away that entire point, their nesting
11 areas and, you know, nothing is being done to help
12 these birds, not to mention our own fishermen that
13 are losing their fishing shacks and fishing area.

14 It is just something that should be
15 looked at as to why these water levels are so
16 high. You know, I know a lot of it has to do with
17 coming from the Saskatchewan area, a lot of the
18 water is coming through The Pas and down this way,
19 but yet we are opening our spillway, which is
20 draining all of that water in there in that high
21 north end area. Now there is only two areas that
22 I know, if you look at the Jenpeg area it is the
23 only other one that flows north, so how often is
24 that water going through there? Do they open
25 their spillway to let all of the water out?

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, I'm not here to
2 answer for Hydro, but I do know that their
3 spillway, particularly the last couple or three
4 years when we have had very high water has been
5 running almost full time.

6 MR. DWAYNE COOK: Yeah, they opened up
7 the Lake Winnipegosis, and now all of that water
8 is coming through here. So where is it all going?
9 It has to go somewhere, and it is flooding our
10 area because we are in the lower end of the water
11 table, and it is all flowing towards us.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: The water from Lake
13 Winnipegosis has always come through Lake
14 Winnipeg. It is just now with these new or soon
15 to be outlet channels, it might take a different
16 direction and come a little more quickly. But it
17 has always flowed south of Lake Winnipegosis into
18 Lake Manitoba, which then flows through the
19 Fairford River I think it is, and Dauphin River
20 into Lake Winnipeg.

21 MR. DWAYNE COOK: That brings more now
22 than ever this flooding over.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, I know.

24 MR. DWAYNE COOK: It is causing, you
25 know, traffic concerns as well.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: I know, it is high
2 water, and some of it is manmade, but a lot of it
3 is just there is more water in the system in the
4 last few years in the north. But I have taken
5 note of your comments about the bird, I think is
6 it is a Plover.

7 MR. DWAYNE COOK: Yes, something like
8 that.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: And also I would hope
10 that Manitoba Hydro has taken note of your
11 concerns.

12 MR. DWAYNE COOK: All right, thank
13 you.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Cook.

15 MR. FERLAND: Good afternoon, my name
16 is William Ferland, band councillor with
17 Mispwistik Cree Nation. The concern I have I
18 guess is being on council and living in this
19 community I wanted to advise the people that this
20 is basically -- like it is not a Hydro community,
21 this is a fishing community. Unfortunately, you
22 know, Lake Winnipeg in the opinion of a lot of
23 these people is nothing more than basically just a
24 lagoon.

25 Now, the concern I have basically is

1 the fact that we are a fishing community, and 100
2 plus commercial fishermen in the community, and
3 that's their livelihood. I guess when the dam was
4 being built, you know, there was a closure of
5 approximately five years where, from my
6 understanding dealing with it today, is that, you
7 know, that closure, because there was nothing
8 offered to the community in terms of an alternate
9 lifestyle, that basically put a lot of people on
10 social assistance. So how many generations? I
11 would say maybe three that are permanently on as a
12 result of, you know, the five year closure.

13 Now the concern I have with this being
14 a lagoon, and talk of it slowly dying, you know,
15 and invasive species moving in, it is going to
16 hurt the industry. What happens when this lake is
17 dead? You are going to have 100 plus families
18 that will be displaced. And that's a big concern.
19 Like, who is going to deal with that? It is going
20 to be the leadership of this community. It is
21 going to go from 85 per cent unemployment rate to
22 100 per cent, and that's a big concern.

23 My father was a commercial fisherman
24 here back in -- started probably in the late 30s,
25 40s, 50s, 60s, right up until the 80s when he

1 retired. And I can recall him telling me that my
2 nets never felt like this before. And I bet you
3 that anything -- those people that had the
4 experience that would go out on that lake would
5 tell you it is not the water, there is stuff
6 flowing underneath, and it is expanding. You
7 could probably -- like, these people know the lake
8 well enough that they could probably draw a line
9 on how far, whatever that stuff is coming out of
10 this dam, it is spreading along the bottom of the
11 lake. Now that's a concern to everyone.

12 Particularly, you know, the species
13 itself. A friend of mine made a comment, like I
14 mentioned the invasive species, how is that thing
15 called, that fish -- smelt or whatever.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Rainbow smelt?

17 THE WITNESS: Right. That's not a
18 common food here in the community. They don't eat
19 that by the way. But, you know, the pickerel, the
20 whitefish, but that's not kind of their normal
21 diet, and it is a bit of a concern. You know, you
22 see pickerel eat it, even whitefish. My friend
23 made a comment that our pickerel in Lake Winnipeg
24 are getting too fat to swim. It is not a natural
25 diet, and like for us it's a natural thing. So

1 that really concerns us.

2 And particularly the fact that it is
3 referred to as a lagoon for Manitoba Hydro. We
4 know all of the farms and all the rivers and
5 everything that runs into this lake, a lot of
6 pollutants are coming in from them, the farming
7 communities.

8 I know there is a water regime, the
9 Western Canadian water regime, or whatever, you
10 know, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba where we
11 get 50 per cent or something like that of the
12 water. But again it is a concern, what happens to
13 our community as a result of this.

14 There is -- people have talked about,
15 you know, how we had that major breakdown at
16 Manitoba Hydro where it flooded the first or the
17 bottom floor. Luckily nobody was working at the
18 time. It flooded that entire bottom floor. Now
19 from what I understand is that a semi-load of oil
20 or whatever was delivered. But where did that oil
21 go? That was, you know, it was replaced, but
22 where did it go? There was no comment. I think
23 Dwayne mentioned that, Mr. Cook, that there was no
24 discussion, no information given to the community.
25 That went somewhere. And it went into this lake.

1 And I think Dave mentioned -- talked about, you
2 know, pictures of oil streams, you can see it, you
3 stand on the bridge you can see streaks of oil,
4 gas, it is floating on top. Those are all going
5 into the lakes.

6 Diabetes, I think we are -- on per
7 capita I think we are probably the highest group.
8 And for us it is directly related to this.

9 The erosion of the river; there is a
10 house just in this bay over here, the guy, you
11 look out -- you can be sitting at his kitchen
12 table and you swear you are on a boat. You used
13 to be able to see grass, but not anymore. And
14 that's just over here by the fish head.

15 So there is a lot of things that are
16 going on that concern us. And like I said, you
17 know, we had one instance, the five year shut
18 down, we still have some people as a result of
19 that, you know, families, generations like I said,
20 are still on social assistance. Any further
21 damage, destruction of our fishing industry, like
22 I said, we are going to be 100 per cent
23 unemployed. And we are 100 miles from no where.

24 This dam has been sitting here for 50
25 years, you would think that local people would be

1 able to work there, have some of these jobs, you
2 know. I don't think we are idiots, very
3 intelligent people in this community, we are
4 capable, we can learn. Why ship people in?

5 You know, you look at these things and
6 the discrepancy -- take a ride up there, you will
7 swear you are in Winnipeg, a little suburb, and
8 then you come and see our community. But that's
9 very -- but what does it matter to them?

10 It is a concern, this not being
11 advised of anything that's going on here, you
12 know, things just happen. So that's what I'm
13 concerned with. Some day some of the young
14 leaders will be having to deal with these people,
15 100 families and their children. What are they
16 going to do with them? It is going to have a
17 major impact on us. It is not something to look
18 forward to.

19 And if we agree to a 50 year licence,
20 is that thing going to stand for 50 more years?
21 From my understanding it is moving forward, I
22 don't know. It is built on Limestone, something
23 is going to happen. It is built on limestone, it
24 moves. Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Ferland.

1 I hope it is not moving too quickly.

2 MR. FERLAND: It is measurable.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Even that's a concern.

4 Anybody else?

5 MS. ALICE COOK: Hello there, my name
6 is Alice Cook. I'm not sure where to start. When
7 Dwayne Cook was talking about the dam and him
8 working when they were putting the line to the
9 lagoon, and he said where did that stuff go all of
10 these years? Well, it went into the river. And
11 it was S-H-I-T that went into the river from the
12 dam, because it had nowhere else to go. We don't
13 know a lot of times what goes on at the dam. The
14 accidents, the spills, what causes some of these
15 things that are going on up there. We are not
16 made aware. We find out later. Maybe we hear
17 stuff here and there.

18 And then the other thing that William
19 talked about, the generations of welfare; it is
20 not three, it is five, it is five years since the
21 dam was built. Before the dam was built there was
22 already welfare here, not much, but it was here
23 already.

24 And the diabetes he talked about, the
25 change in our food, the diet, getting away from

1 the traditional foods. We are living on bologna,
2 we are living on Klik, we are living on ham. The
3 food that does not work for us. And our children
4 are eating that. Like, how many families today
5 live on traditional food? Some of us still do.
6 We have pickerel, we have whitefish, we have moose
7 meat, muskrat, the ducks, the geese, but we don't
8 pass that on to our children as much as we should.
9 We don't do that. We have that responsibility as
10 parents, as grandparents, as great grandparents.
11 I'm a great grandparent. I'm doing the grandma's
12 job right now. I have a two and three year old
13 great grandchild in my home. So that is again a
14 breakdown in the family system.

15 But the water regulation that we are
16 talking about to regulate Lake Winnipeg, the water
17 levels, there are so many rivers that go into the
18 lake, and the lake has to be cleaned up. You know
19 that boat that comes here, that research boat?
20 There is not enough room in that boat to pick up
21 all of the fridges, the stoves, washers and dryers
22 and freezers that are along the shores of Lake
23 Winnipeg. There is not enough room in the
24 research boat if they picked up all of the
25 garbage.

1 Years ago when the late Oscar Lathlin
2 was Minister of Conservation, we asked him to come
3 here, we asked him to come here, come and see our
4 lake, come and see the garbage. He said no,
5 because he knew what he was going to see. But
6 part of that again is our responsibility. The
7 fishermen, the people that use the lake, those
8 little oil things when they put oil in their
9 motors, they put it in their motors, shoo, over
10 the boat into the lake. And there is oil still
11 left in those little bottles. So we are just as
12 responsible for this lake as anybody else. And
13 that is our job as well, to educate the public out
14 there.

15 The community of Grand Rapids, our
16 kids when they went to school, it was the upper
17 class, the middle class and the lower class. When
18 the dam was being built we had a settlement there,
19 Mannix, and the bus used to pick us up on the
20 highway. Well, the little non-native kids were on
21 that bus coming from there. Some of our girls, we
22 were young at that time, we would sit beside these
23 little kids; you Indians stink, that's what they
24 told us. That's still predominant today, not in
25 words but in action. And the kids that grew up at

1 Hydro -- there is not very many kids that live
2 there now, there used to be a bus load, not
3 anymore, because again families have changed,
4 people have moved on. I have a Skidoo, your dad
5 doesn't have a Skidoo, right in the face. That
6 was there, it would be a little more hidden today,
7 but those feelings are still there.

8 So the history of Lake Winnipeg, like
9 William said, it is a lagoon. How much garbage
10 goes into the lake? The pig farmers, you know
11 their stuff goes into Lake Winnipeg. When
12 something happens up here you don't hear about it.
13 But mind you, Victoria Beach and all of those
14 places, a little bit of e. coli, they talk about
15 it for three days on CBC and CTV. They don't talk
16 about us.

17 I will give you a perfect example of
18 the treatment we receive in the north. Not only
19 in terms of from the government, but other
20 organizations as well. Norway House has what,
21 maybe 10,000 people now, maybe more, Cross Lake.
22 If you had 5,000 white folks in Norway House, do
23 you know how fast they would pave that road?
24 Cross Lake same thing. But because it is full of
25 Aboriginal people, oh, well, forget about them, it

1 is not in the budget. It hasn't been in the
2 budget for 20 years. Same thing with Easterville,
3 what is their benefit? Somebody said their road
4 was getting paved, has it been paved, that
5 13 miles? I don't know, I haven't been there for
6 a long time.

7 But those are the issues that impact
8 us from the lake. The fishing industry, like
9 William said, is key, is key to the people in this
10 community, the summertime, the winter time, the
11 fall fishing. It is very important for our
12 community.

13 I'm just rambling here. That's all I
14 wanted to say. Like while you are here, take a
15 drive, go see the Hydro town site, go see that
16 7 million-dollar building, take a look at it, and
17 then drive through the town, go to the trailer
18 park, and then come to the reserve and you will
19 see the difference of levels of living in our
20 community. We have our people that work up there,
21 we have some up there, young people that are
22 working with Hydro, we have a few, but not as many
23 as we should have.

24 I don't mean to be negative, but you
25 know what, all of these worries that we have, you

1 know what my worry is now, and I am talking about
2 the bomb threat at Keeyask. What is going to
3 happen here? It is not even going to take a bomb
4 for this thing to go. When I go to sleep
5 sometimes; full tank of gas, who am I going to
6 save, where am I going to go? Over that bridge or
7 down number 6, you know, which way? Because when
8 it goes, it is going to go. Because the
9 terrorists I am sure already have their mark on
10 this dam. And are we prepared as a community, is
11 Manitoba Hydro, are we prepared, because it is
12 going to happen, probably in our life time, the
13 ones sitting here.

14 So the lake, I mean the regulations,
15 it has to be cleaned up, that's one of the big
16 things. Anyway, thank you.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Alice Cook.
18 Councillor Cook.

19 MS. HEIDI COOK: Hi, I have a comment
20 from somebody else who doesn't want to get up and
21 speak on the microphone. I guess I could have --
22 I was thinking while I sat down that I should have
23 also mentioned that when you come to Grand Rapids,
24 you can't not talk about the Grand Rapids
25 generating station. I know you are here for Lake

1 Winnipeg Regulation, but I hope that in hearing
2 our experience, that you also take something from
3 it as, you know, the relationship that Manitoba
4 Hydro has with the First Nations on Lake Winnipeg.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: No, we do value those
6 comments. I don't think we don't want to talk
7 about it, I just want to make clear that it is not
8 within our mandate to address those concerns, but
9 we will certainly hear them. We won't ignore
10 them, but you may not see those concerns in our
11 final report.

12 MS. HEIDI COOK: I flipped through the
13 binder again and I couldn't find the monitoring
14 station. So maybe if one of the Hydro guys can
15 show me on this map where they are located or find
16 them in a binder for me? The comment that
17 somebody had here, I will point out the area on
18 the map here.

19 So from Limestone bay, this area over
20 to the outlet, that area of the lake, the
21 shoreline is like about a 50-foot bank. And about
22 five years ago they were in that area, and that
23 bank all collapsed into the lake because of high
24 water. And we had experience, like in 1970 the
25 fishery was closed for five years, three years,

1 five years because of mercury after the closure of
2 this dam. And that was because of mercury that's
3 naturally occurring in the soil, and when it
4 becomes inundated then it becomes whatever
5 happens, that is a long story, it becomes
6 methylmercury, and it goes into the organs and
7 tissues, and the question was could mercury
8 contamination be occurring because of collapses
9 like that, and other areas around that we have
10 seen around here where the shorelines are washing
11 away into the lake because of the high water?

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Again, that's something
13 that's beyond my knowledge. There are -- there is
14 natural mercury, how much would come in from
15 something like that, I don't know. I do know that
16 initially when they closed the lake in, was it the
17 early 70's when they closed the lake from fishing?

18 MS. HEIDI COOK: I think it was 1970.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah. Initially they
20 thought it was from natural mercury in the lake,
21 but I believe that somewhat later they determined
22 it was actually mercury that came into the lake
23 from those pulp mills in northwestern Ontario.

24 MS. HEIDI COOK: I would also argue
25 that this flood had something to do with it.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: You could well be
2 right. I won't argue with that.

3 MS. HEIDI COOK: And I wouldn't expect
4 you to necessarily have an answer, but this is a
5 concern. We have had experience with mercury
6 pollution, and it may be an ongoing thing, and
7 that's something that could be addressed in your
8 recommendations for regulation, because we know
9 that -- well, I read in the binder that part of
10 the rationale was to reduce flooding on the
11 southern basin. It hasn't reduced flooding up
12 here.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor
14 Cook. Mr. Valentine.

15 MR. DAVID VALENTINE: I will go one
16 more, yeah, just wondering about, is it Lake
17 Winnipeg Regulation?

18 THE CHAIRMAN: That's correct.

19 MR. DAVID VALENTINE: All I see here
20 is no hand outs, no information about it. Just
21 wondering, about -- I'm pretty sure there is
22 toxicity testing there, and I am just sitting
23 there thinking you guys have got no knowledge
24 about the toxicity levels and that.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: We don't. That doesn't

1 mean that another branch of the Provincial or
2 maybe the Federal government or maybe Manitoba
3 Hydro, one or more of those bodies may well look
4 at it. Now, somebody, I don't know if it was
5 Alice Cook or Heidi Cook, one of them mentioned
6 the Lake Winnipeg Research Consortium, the boat
7 that travels the lake, they may do some of that
8 study. I don't know. And I'm not sure that any
9 of us does know that, but it is something that
10 could be found out.

11 MR. DAVID VALENTINE: Is the Water
12 Stewardship going to implement something like
13 this?

14 THE CHAIRMAN: I don't know that. If
15 somebody is doing toxicity studies, that can be
16 found out.

17 MR. DAVID VALENTINE: Can it be
18 forwarded to me?

19 THE CHAIRMAN: I am sorry?

20 MR. DAVID VALENTINE: If you find out,
21 could you forward that information?

22 THE CHAIRMAN: We will find out
23 something for you. I can't promise that it will
24 be quick because we are on the road, out of our
25 office for most of the next five weeks. But we

1 will try to find out what we can. And we won't
2 get the information for you, we will find out
3 where you can get it.

4 MR. DAVID VALENTINE: Okay, yeah, that
5 would be great. But wouldn't you think in the
6 Water Stewardship there should be somebody doing a
7 toxicity level? I'm pretty sure they do. I know
8 our water system here, we get a complete chemical
9 water analysis from A to Z, plus heavy metals, and
10 I'm pretty surprised that the Water Stewardship
11 doesn't have any of that.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: They may well, but I
13 don't work in that department, so I'm not aware.
14 They may well. And we will find out where that
15 information is, if it exists, and we will let you
16 know where to find it.

17 SPEAKER: (from Conservation) If you
18 want to check out Environment Canada, they are
19 doing research in the north basin, this past
20 summer they have been there doing sedimentation
21 samples. They have all of that data. I'm not
22 sure if it is available to the public, but I'm
23 sure that information can be made available to
24 council, if you guys request it.

25 MR. DAVID VALENTINE: Yes, I'm just

1 curious, I'm really interested about doing -- I
2 would like to get a toxicity testing. If I see
3 that down there, you know, I could do what they
4 call it, a positive -- it will tell you right away
5 if it turns positive. And I'm pretty sure I have
6 seen it before, but I would like for our First
7 Nation to obtain one, because -- not only our
8 First Nations, the fishermen's co-op, I think they
9 should have something, have somebody trained,
10 qualified. I'm willing to train and be qualified
11 for that, because, yeah, we need to be safe here
12 and we need that kind of help and assistance from
13 these entities here.

14 That's my main concern, the toxicity
15 testing. I would like to obtain it, and I would
16 like to know about how Hydro, where do you guys
17 get yours? I see you guys in the summertime
18 collect water samples and -- well, I can have a
19 chat with you after this.

20 SPEAKER: Yes, we will discuss it
21 after.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,
23 Mr. Valentine.

24 MS. MARILYN HALL: Hi, my name is
25 Marilyn Hall. I heard something about talking

1 about fisheries. I want to say something about
2 some of the fishers. My dad was a fisherman. We
3 used to go camping at -- they are talking about
4 Gull Bay or Long Point, it used to be a long
5 island and people used to go and camp there a lot.
6 Every summer they used to go out, they would take
7 their families out there with their kids and their
8 kids would -- like with me, I was there with my
9 mom and dad. My mom and dad are gone now. But I
10 took my kids there and they really enjoyed it.
11 But if you see that place now, that island, it is
12 divided into three sections now. It is so sad to
13 see that because I grew up there with my parents,
14 and then my kids were there, my brothers were
15 fishing over there, and they had their family
16 there too. And that lady that brought those
17 pictures, she was there with her family and her
18 mom and dad. And it is sad to see that island
19 being like that. It is divided into three
20 sections now, it is not an island anymore.

21 And then also talking about the debris
22 that goes out from the powerhouse. I go out often
23 with my husband who is a fisherman, I go out in
24 the lake with him. Every summer I go out with
25 him, and last year I took my phone with me one

1 time, and all the debris that came out of the lake
2 out there, and catching what my husband was
3 catching when he was fishing with his nets. And
4 then a couple of days later I took my camera. I
5 have a lot of pictures that I took out in the
6 lake, that debris that was there. I still have
7 those pictures, right in the -- they call it Jack
8 Fish Point there, there was a big pile of debris
9 coming from the dam. I have pictures of those
10 also.

11 But the saddest thing is our
12 fishermen. When William was talking about the
13 fisheries, what is going to happen with our
14 grandchildren, our children. This is the saddest
15 thing that our fishermen have to go through.
16 Because my mom and dad, my dad struggled to be a
17 fishermen also and I see that, and then now I see
18 again like, you know, all the debris that's been
19 out in the lake. And I have brothers and sisters,
20 brothers that go out there and fish there, they
21 are all fishermen. That's all I wanted to say.
22 Thanks.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Anyone else wish to say
24 anything?

25 MR. FERLAND: William Ferland again.

1 I sent -- I don't know how it ties in, but one
2 time we used to have what is called a water regime
3 with ourselves and Manitoba Hydro that was
4 monitoring the levels of the river, not the river
5 but behind the dam, and that does have impact on
6 this side of the lake as well. It will affect
7 everybody north, right? Release too much water,
8 that type of thing. I can't recall, that was
9 supposed to be an annual thing where we met with
10 Manitoba Hydro, reviewed their plans and they
11 showed us the water level type of stuff like that,
12 so we are familiar with it. That hasn't happened
13 in I don't know how many years now where we don't
14 get any kind of a report. Even then it is not
15 fair.

16 One of the reasons I mentioned this
17 thing is that when Manitoba Hydro signed an
18 agreement with the Grand Rapids First Nation that
19 was part of the agreement, was that water regime
20 be established, and there be regular meetings,
21 reports to the community on what is happening back
22 there. But it also tied into our agreement in
23 terms that if it reached a certain level, our
24 agreement could be reopened for negotiations.

25 But Manitoba Hydro monitors that. You

1 know, that is kind of a fox in the chicken house
2 sort of thing, right? Those are the ones that
3 monitor it. Are they telling us the truth? You
4 know, you can fudge numbers, fix numbers, it has
5 always been done. We don't know if those are
6 facts, but it hasn't been done I would say maybe
7 nine, ten years now that they have never reported
8 that type of stuff to us, and yet it is part of
9 our agreement.

10 And that impacts this side of the lake
11 as well. Like I said, if they have to release
12 water because the water level is too high, it is
13 impacting everybody else now north because it goes
14 to Churchill. So whether that exists or not, I
15 just wanted to make a point of that.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ferland, you
17 mentioned the agreement. What agreement was that?

18 MR. FERLAND: We have --

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Is that the settlement
20 agreement between Manitoba Hydro and your First
21 Nations?

22 MR. FERLAND: It is the 1991
23 agreement. There is a couple of agreements, but
24 this one would be the 1991 agreement, and that was
25 in there for the water regime type of thing, the

1 monitoring. I remember going there --

2 THE CHAIRMAN: And does the agreement
3 sort of set out terms of reference, or general
4 terms of reference for this monitoring committee?

5 MR. FERLAND: Yes.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: We will have a look at
7 that. And you say that that hasn't happened for a
8 number of years now?

9 MR. FERLAND: Nine years. Ron was on
10 council. When were you chief -- nine years ago?
11 I imagine they would have records of it. But it
12 is a concern too.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, thank you for
14 bringing that point up. We have heard similar
15 concerns elsewhere. Joint monitoring committees
16 usually work well in the small communities.

17 MR. FERLAND: This wasn't a joint
18 monitoring, they monitored it and just told us.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Even then it is
20 still a liaison.

21 MR. FERLAND: You know, the fox in the
22 hen house type of thing.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: It still is a liaison
24 committee kind of thing.

25 MR. FERLAND: But it ended.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: We will have a look at
2 the agreement and see what else we can find out
3 about it. So thank you for bringing that up.

4 MR. FERLAND: I was going to ask a
5 question. I don't think I will, though. Should
6 I? I just wanted to know -- nothing. Just a
7 friend of mine had asked me, what did the people
8 say when they swam into a cement wall? Dam!

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Believe it not, I
10 hadn't heard that one before.

11 Anybody else have anything to say?
12 Maybe we will take about a five or ten minute
13 break and then we will see again if anybody might
14 jog some thoughts among some of you, and we will
15 come back in about five or ten minutes and see if
16 anybody else has more to add to this conversation.

17 (Recess taken)

18 THE CHAIRMAN: So we have had a few
19 minutes to think about it. Does anybody have
20 anymore comments, or any other people have
21 comments they wish to make?

22 MS. BARBARA NASECAPOW: My name is
23 Barbara Nasecapow, I am from the Misipwistik Cree
24 Nation. Regarding your visitation today, a lot of
25 people didn't know what was it all about, this

1 meeting, so I was asked by a few members of our
2 community, and I said I don't know, something to
3 do with Lake Winnipeg, I said. But also we don't
4 have that much information. I was expecting there
5 would be some kind of a brochure for our members
6 to be handed out. But I'm not too clarified who
7 you are representing, whether it is Provincial or
8 Federal. I don't know.

9 I have some concerns regarding our
10 community of Grand Rapids. I have been living in
11 the community ever since birth, I guess, and we
12 have children already, all grown up as adults.
13 Now we have grandchildren and some of us are great
14 grandmother's also.

15 So we have been residents here ever
16 since the existence of the dam with our great
17 grandfathers, which enjoyed, you know, the
18 tradition of our land and culture, you know, where
19 we grew up from, you know, our traditional foods.
20 My mom and dad passed away some time in early
21 2000. My mom passed away in 2003, my dad 2010.
22 And they noticed, you know, how the land has been
23 affected right through their life time and years.

24 Now one of the areas that they were
25 concerned about is, and the reason why we are

1 here, is our land and waters, especially Lake
2 Winnipeg. You know, how much, you know, the Hydro
3 has been affecting, you know, our community ever
4 since the existence of the dam. And now the 50
5 year is coming up some time this year, 2015 is
6 going to be 50 years since the construction of the
7 dam. So what we are really concerned about is who
8 knows how long it is going to be, you know, the
9 structure is going to be there. That's one of the
10 major concerns of most of our community members
11 right now, how long is it going to be, you know,
12 but as for us we are going to continue to be
13 residents here as long as we live.

14 And now, as you stated, that you are
15 here for the Lake Winnipeg Regulation, you are
16 just gathering information right now. One of the
17 areas that I'm concerned about is our -- the Lake
18 Winnipeg. We understand that there is algae out
19 there, how much it is depleting the lake, you
20 know, all of the PCBs that are being disposed into
21 the lake. You know, just the other day we heard
22 about the expansion about pig farm. How much --
23 you know there was a woman there concerned about,
24 you know, the nature of where the existing pig
25 farm is being cleared, that area. And they are

1 going to put that manure, you know, when they cure
2 the land, that's where they are going to use the
3 manure.

4 As we see, you know, through the years
5 that's one of the areas, you know, our major
6 concern is regarding the safety of our people
7 around our area, not just the First Nations
8 members. But as one of the members was saying,
9 you know, regarding one of their family members
10 became sick, you know, has there been any studies
11 being done?

12 And I'm here to express my concerns
13 also, you know, there should be some kind of an
14 environmental, you know, each year we should have
15 a report. Because every year that kids are in the
16 water, some of them most of the day, especially on
17 weekends, the kids are in the water. And who
18 knows -- my husband and I came down to the bank
19 here, just down here, you know, there was a group
20 of little kids swimming there, and no one was
21 supervising them. But I'm glad we were there
22 until they left. They were little five year olds.
23 You know, who knows how much -- you know, when
24 they dive, how much water that goes in the body.
25 Is that, you know, will that affect them later on

1 in years? That's the area too that I would like
2 to, you know, there should be some kind of a, you
3 know, study done like in the summertime, whether
4 or not if the water is safe for the kids to swim.
5 Because a couple of years ago there was a number
6 of young children that had rashes on their bodies
7 in the summertime, all because of, you know, the
8 water I guess where they were swimming in our
9 area.

10 So we hear on the news that there is
11 all these e. coli warnings down south. There is
12 Winnipeg Beaches, Grand Beach area. I think
13 that's the area too that someone should look at to
14 see if there are children, especially in the
15 summertime, there should be some kind of an
16 environmental study, you know, be done in our
17 area.

18 So that's one of the things that I'm
19 really concerned about also. Thanks.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Just on
21 your initial question, you said you didn't know
22 who we represented. We are a Provincial agency.
23 We are appointed by the Province of Manitoba to
24 investigate environmental issues from time to
25 time, and this is the one that are looking at

1 right now, Lake Winnipeg Regulation.

2 MS. BARBARA NASECAPOW: So I don't
3 want to take -- if there is an environment study
4 going to be done, I don't think that Hydro should
5 be the ones, you know, to investigate among
6 themselves also. I don't think that should be --
7 there should be, you know, another organization to
8 do that study.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

10 MS. HEIDI COOK: I think we are going
11 to watch a movie soon, or maybe see some more
12 pictures. So I got the map with the monitoring
13 stations, and I wanted to comment on that because
14 there is eight water level gauges on Lake
15 Winnipeg. One of them is actually on our reserve,
16 and that's the only one on the whole -- this whole
17 side of the north basin. The rest of them, there
18 is one at the outlet there to Playgreen Lake and
19 George Island and Berens River on the other side
20 of the north basin. But for this whole big area
21 of the lake, that doesn't seem like a lot to me.

22 So those water levels are being
23 averaged across all of these stations. There is
24 two in the narrows, and then down south on either
25 side, there is two beaches there. To me, my first

1 thought was that's very heavily skewed toward the
2 south basin water level, because for the amount of
3 area that's being mentioned, there is an equal
4 amount of gauges that are being averaged. Dale
5 told me they are weighted somehow, which kind of
6 makes up for that. I still think there is a big
7 gap. Nobody can really see this, but there is a
8 whole bunch of lake that's not being measured, and
9 I guess that's why Lake Winnipeg Regulation is not
10 working for us where we are experiencing high
11 water, erosion and flooding of our wetlands and
12 that kind of thing.

13 You know, Gull Bay, we talked about,
14 and I don't really think that that's a wind event
15 that's taking -- our prevailing wind is from the
16 northwest and Gull Bay is totally protected from
17 the northwest limits on the south side of Long
18 Point. So I think that the natural level of the
19 lake, that doesn't have something to do with that.
20 I think the comment that I wanted to make that
21 could lead to perhaps a recommendation from your
22 Commission is that more monitoring stations around
23 the north basin could be added to make this more
24 effective.

25 I also wanted to make a comment about

1 the timing of the hearing today, and also somebody
2 else brought up a point to me about the timing of
3 some of Hydro's other operations. Because we are
4 a fishing community, you would think that the
5 commercial fishermen would have a huge interest of
6 being at this meeting today. They do, but they
7 are commercial fishing right now. So we are right
8 in the middle of the season. And I was hoping
9 that it would be bitterly cold today so that they
10 would actually not be out on the lake. But it is
11 nice, so they are out there fishing. So that the
12 timing of this doesn't really work for our
13 community. It is probably something that -- I
14 don't know if it was a consideration.

15 But there is also we experienced with
16 the operation of our generating station, similar
17 thing last June, where as soon as fishing season
18 started that is when the spillway opened. And
19 when the spillway opens, it washes a bunch of
20 debris out in to the lake, and we had a big deal
21 with the fishermen, you know, having it ruin their
22 nets and not being able to fish, and all of this
23 kind of stuff. So I think that could be worked
24 into a recommendation somehow also, that, you
25 know, the operations -- consideration of other

1 uses of the lake have to be made in Hydro's
2 operations. I know Hydro can make money on dirty
3 water just as well as they can on clean water.
4 But clean water is important to us too.

5 Those two things are the comments that
6 I wanted to add. Are you ready, Ted?

7 MR. TED COOK: Hello, commissioners
8 band members. My name is Ted Cook. I live in
9 Grand Rapids, I have lived here all of my life.
10 I'm a commercial fisherman, trapper, hunter and
11 whatever else I guess.

12 Anyway, I just stopped by at the
13 meeting here to see what was going on. I knew
14 this meeting was going on, and I thought maybe,
15 well, somebody here would be representing the
16 fishermen. But like Heidi said, they are pretty
17 busy right now so they don't have time to come to
18 a meeting.

19 Anyways, so I have been watching what
20 has been going on in the lake for the last couple
21 of years, and it has been pretty high. And I see
22 the erosion in the lake and a lot of damage, a lot
23 of fish patterns have changed with commercial
24 fishing.

25 So I'm just going to show you some

1 pictures that I took over the last two years, I
2 think. These plants you see there today, they are
3 pretty well in the water from last year's erosion,
4 they are brought into the water. I have pictures
5 that show you that, if I get to them. So I'm just
6 going to scroll through what I have here just so
7 you will get an idea of what has been happening.
8 These are -- this was in 2011, the last time we
9 had high water. Again, that's where the landing
10 here at Jack Fish Point, that's a commercial
11 fishing area. And these two here are elders, they
12 are 65 then. This is what they have to put up
13 with when the water is high. And that's how they
14 load their fish. They have to put half a tub of
15 fish so they can lift them, and that's how serious
16 fishing is for them. That's how bad they want to
17 fish, and they go on the lake every day, check
18 their nets. When they want to load up their fish,
19 that's where the landing is under water.

20 That's Jeannie McKay. That's another
21 issue with debris. It is just part of what they
22 have to pick out of their nets. And this was
23 during the Hydro spill I think in 2011. And again
24 here, when we had another spill, maybe -- there
25 was two spills that I know about. I'm not sure if

1 it was 2011, but this is the first one from last
2 year, and this is how our nets turned out with
3 moss and debris. This is what the fishermen had
4 to deal with. But they were compensated, I think
5 it was \$2,500 per fishermen.

6 Here again is another dirty net. This
7 is our landing at Gull Bay. As you can see here,
8 this is where the vehicles would drive to load up
9 the fish. And this was last year. So the
10 whole -- our road is under water, and this is what
11 we were forced to do, we were just forced to put
12 our boats on soil. And you see the background
13 over here, this is where fishermen have to park
14 their boats on a windy day when they are at Gull
15 Bay. If we get a southwest wind, all of those
16 boats are going to land up on shore because of the
17 high wave action. And the last -- since 2011, I
18 have seen maybe two or three boats that have gone
19 under water because of this high water that causes
20 this high wave action.

21 There is that first picture I showed
22 you. So this is last year, 2013, that thing
23 there, that is probably 20 feet of erosion in one
24 year, last year. That cabin had 20 feet of land
25 to the east of it and now it is all gone. And

1 here too, this guy moved his cabin to Gull Bay on
2 the spit, where we used to camp. I camped there
3 when I was 13 and that whole island was connected,
4 now it is all broken in pieces. And this guy put
5 his cabin there maybe five years ago. And then in
6 2011, maybe ten feet of that shoreline eroded, and
7 this was the result in 2013. And he never got
8 compensated for it.

9 Like most of the fishermen here sent
10 out letters to disaster assistance, and the
11 government rejected them, or the disaster
12 assistance rejected them. Same with the nets, a
13 lot of fishermen lost nets this year and they
14 applied for disaster assistance, and the
15 government rejected all of those claims.

16 And here was last year's high water
17 mark. This is the commercial fishing dock down
18 here. It was under water like that for maybe a
19 month. And fishermen have to come there and
20 unload their fish. And the water is higher when
21 the wave action is blowing in, it is blowing in
22 from the northwest, so water goes higher and it
23 goes into the river here.

24 Again, our elders loading and
25 unloading their fish, standing in the water.

1 That's probably six, eight inches of water. Same
2 thing, commercial fishing nets.

3 There is a completely -- the highest
4 peak I think when Hydro released the water here,
5 the spillway, that whole dock was under water.
6 And not counting what was dumped in from down
7 south through the Portage diversion. So that
8 affected us a lot.

9 And that shack again.

10 This is how good our fishing used to
11 be, the last three years maybe at Gull Bay. And
12 that's when this is full of water. But last year
13 when the high water mark came, that fish was hard
14 to find. A lot of fishermen didn't finish their
15 quotas because the fish pattern changed. So
16 everybody was looking all over the place to find
17 these fish. They weren't there where they
18 normally were. Like Gull Bay where we fish,
19 everybody practically finishes their quota there
20 by September. If they don't have a good season in
21 June or July, they go back in September to finish
22 their quotas, but this year it is different. The
23 pickerel stocks aren't there.

24 And that's how the nets would be on a
25 daily basis in the morning. But you wouldn't see

1 that this year, there will be no pickerel in those
2 nets.

3 And this is what we call Gull Bay. So
4 there is, on a normal day when the water was low,
5 that's our access point for our boats. What you
6 will see on the left and right there, there is
7 actually no break water there to protect these
8 boats when there is a strong wind from the
9 southwest or northeast -- no, southeast. And
10 fishermen have been asking for a break water for
11 this area for years. And, you know, nothing is
12 really done by government. There has been letters
13 written to Ministers. And now we have got Steve
14 Ashton there, Eric Robinson, all of those people
15 were contacted this year to try and do something,
16 and there has been no response from the
17 Government. Just a flat out no for the disaster
18 assistance for now anyway.

19 And you see how those boats end up on
20 shore once the water drops? If the water blows
21 north, it comes from the north, the water is going
22 south, right, so this is how the boats end up.
23 They end up sitting on the shoreline. And the
24 fishermen comes and wants to go on the lake,
25 that's how they would find their boat in the

1 morning.

2 Here again, lots of water pounding in
3 from the back of the boat, the water is getting
4 into the boat. Same thing here. This must have
5 been a north wind.

6 Okay, that's one set of pictures.

7 This was a cabin that was built in
8 2012, and the shoreline, if you see that today, it
9 is probably ten feet of it is gone for this cabin.
10 And who knows if that cabin is going to be there
11 in the next 20 years, if it continues the way it
12 is, this cabin is not going to be there. This is
13 used for hunting, trapping and fishing. So it is
14 used -- when we travel to go fishing north, we
15 leave here by truck, takes us an hour to get to
16 our landing area, then they get on a boat, they
17 travel another 10, 15 miles to get to this cabin,
18 and that's where we fish. So it is -- like, if
19 that high water continues I don't know if that
20 cabin is going to be there.

21 So, I am going to find some more
22 pictures.

23 Here, this area. This area here is
24 called -- it is part of Limestone Bay when you are
25 coming in from the south. You used to be able to

1 come on shore here because the water was kind of
2 deep, well, maybe say three feet. So we were
3 there this year and they were trying to get to the
4 shore, and we couldn't do it because there was so
5 much sediment, sand pushed into shore that it
6 built up the area that we couldn't get our boat in
7 there. So that's some of the effects that
8 affected us.

9 If we were hunting in the fall, this
10 is where we would come and park our boats. I
11 don't think that you can do that anymore. There
12 is moose in that area, but I never hunted those
13 ones.

14 And these creeks, there is a lot of
15 creeks in this area that our people use,
16 especially Long Point, Gull Bay. And this year it
17 was easy to get to them, you could just drive into
18 them with a boat. There is a lot of erosion on
19 these creeks right now and it affects -- like
20 summers if you are on Long Point here and the wind
21 is blowing from the north, that creek is closed up
22 right away because of the high wave action and you
23 can't get into those creeks until maybe when it
24 calms down and the water starts coming back out.
25 We used to get in to these creeks before all of

1 this erosion started happening. You could in
2 years where it was dry years, it was kind of -- it
3 didn't happen very often.

4 Okay, here you go. Here is where our
5 shoreline of that cabin is. When the wind blows
6 from the northwest, I'm sure that everybody is
7 aware that the water flows south, like a south
8 basin, and the water here drops a lot. Probably
9 three feet I think. Like, where there is
10 commercial fishermen, we have to watch our boats
11 when we put them on the shoreline because a lot of
12 ground in this corner here, there is a kind of a
13 little bay, so we would move our boat to that
14 side, but you would have to watch it or you will
15 get stuck in there if you are blown in somewhere.

16 You see that shoreline there, that's
17 where the cabin was built. So here, this pile of
18 debris, the water came right up to there. I would
19 think that's about three or four feet of erosion
20 that happened last year during high water.

21 And where does all of that erosion go?
22 Back into the lake and it affects commercial
23 fishermen.

24 Here you can see where it used to be,
25 now it is at the tip of this siding. All of that

1 is gone now.

2 And this was in May 2014, that's when
3 fishermen started seeing the effects on the lake.
4 We had meetings trying to figure out what to do.
5 And the representatives there, we had a lawyer
6 visit us, see what, you know, what action can be
7 taken against the government. Basically -- well,
8 I sent them an email a couple of weeks ago, what
9 will happen to the fishermen, since they rejected
10 that disaster assistance, we were going to have to
11 try and sue the government, but it costs money to
12 get a lawyer, and the fishermen don't have that.
13 So right now they don't know what to do.

14 There is Jack Fish Point, that's where
15 all of the debris is piled up when Manitoba Hydro
16 has their spills. I have pictures of that. Here
17 again, this road here, this is north, it is called
18 Sturgeon Road where we commercial fish too, summer
19 winter and fall. This road eroded, half the lake
20 eroded last year because the water was so high,
21 the wave action from the northeast took half that
22 road. And that picture is here too somewhere.

23 Here again, commercial fishing at the
24 commercial fisherman's co-op dock. This is how
25 our boats are when high water is there.

1 Then this is June 2014, it was the
2 last spill that Hydro had, and you can see the
3 background there, the debris floating. It is in
4 June.

5 And this is on a good day, this was in
6 July 2014. Well, you can't I guess call it a good
7 day. Our boats, there is always a concern with
8 our boats, you know, there might be a storm, and
9 you are going to find your boat under water maybe.
10 Here again was July 2014, official protest against
11 the spill at Hydro. That issue still hasn't been
12 resolved, but according to Hydro they resolved
13 everything with the community, they have been
14 compensated and that's their stand.

15 And that's the spillway. When Hydro
16 does their spill, all of this debris here, you can
17 hardly see, but this is all shrub. So when there
18 is 20 feet of water coming down that spillway,
19 that's all washed into the lake and it ends up on
20 on those nets that you saw pictures of.

21 There is July 2014. So, Hydro had
22 their employees working, cleaning up this debris,
23 when they first started. Part of that protest,
24 the fishermen agreed that they would work for
25 Hydro cleaning up this debris. But there

1 wasn't -- well, it was two weeks, estimated two
2 weeks of work -- so they agreed to that, but then
3 when they were actually going to start working,
4 the Hydro rep said, well, we are going to pull the
5 plug. You can pull the plug any time you want, as
6 soon as the debris stops flowing. And I think
7 there was an issue with the wages with the boats,
8 and how many boats they are going to put in the
9 water; maybe three or six. I think it was six
10 that day and two shifts, three boats per shift, an
11 eight hour shift, however they wanted to work it.
12 But in the end the fishermen didn't agree with it,
13 so they said no, we are not going to take it.

14 So Hydro had to get their boats to
15 come and do the work. So I think they had two or
16 three boats in the river here picking up debris.
17 And that's how this started. But when their
18 employees were working, the issue there, Hydro
19 didn't want to pay the fisherman maybe 15 bucks an
20 hour, I think it was, I think they only wanted to
21 pay 10. So they got their employees, and when
22 these employees were working, they were getting 90
23 dollars an hour after overtime, some guy was
24 making 90 dollars an hour. And that's the other
25 employee rates, and they didn't want to pay a

1 fisherman 15 bucks. It is crazy.

2 And there is the Hydro boats that were
3 used, there is two of them. And this is the
4 debris that was coming -- this was in July, yeah,
5 July 2014. And that was the spill of July 2014.
6 And that was the debris that Hydro picked up.
7 When the fishermen worked, their pile was 30 feet
8 high, maybe as long as this building. But when
9 Hydro worked, this is all they picked up, probably
10 as high as they got.

11 And these nets here, full of moss.
12 When the fishermen finds his nets full of moss,
13 they try and save them, pull them out of the water
14 and hang them and let them dry for a day or two.
15 They don't just throw them away, they try and save
16 what they can.

17 And this is another fishermen's
18 meeting, and there was a meeting with the rep from
19 Lake St. Martin, Jackhead. But in the end, it all
20 falls down with the government. And we had the
21 Lake Winnipeg Water Walkers come by, support the
22 fishermen, and they heard stories of the effects
23 of fishermen on the lake.

24 Here is water -- the land area at Gull
25 Bay, this was July 25. So about that time is when

1 the spill opened at Hydro, it must have been that
2 time or either the Portage Diversion -- however,
3 it spilled all of that water into Lake Winnipeg,
4 this is the effects they had.

5 And this is our dock at dock six here,
6 it floated over here. That's what you see close
7 up, there is nets there that are dirty.

8 Here is Jack Fish Point, you could see
9 all of the water that came in. This was a
10 northeast wind that did a lot of damage to the
11 lake right there. We don't know all the damage
12 that was done to Long Point. There was a lot of
13 erosion over there.

14 I would think this water is probably
15 two or three feet higher than normal, and this is
16 on July 26. That was the end of the fishing
17 season. We had a big northeast wind, and a lot of
18 fishermen lost nets, and that's when they tried to
19 claim disaster assistance and the government
20 rejected them. But you can see it happened.
21 Because fishing season, commercial fishing season
22 ends here on July 31st. And this is normally dry,
23 and all of the water that came in from the
24 northeast. And that's when Hydro raised their
25 gates.

1 There is another issue. This was
2 July 26, when that spillway is opened, all that
3 fish goes into that pool. And they sit there 'til
4 they can't find no more food I guess. So they
5 probably all died. You can't really see them, but
6 there is probably 1,000 carp that are pooled up in
7 that corner to get away from the rapids. And
8 that's not only carp, there is whitefish in there.
9 Last spring, or this spring, those fish came along
10 the shoreline and there was hundreds of sun fish
11 there, you could see. And there is a lot of dead
12 ones you could see at the bottom. And we are used
13 to -- we were allowed to fish that before, Hydro
14 used to allow us to fish it and clean out that
15 pool. But things change, they don't allow us to
16 do that anymore. I don't know who said they
17 can't, but that fish is just going to waste in
18 there. It is going to die. There is probably
19 hundreds, thousands of kilograms that are dead at
20 the bottom of that pool.

21 And this is part of the wave action
22 from a northeast wind. Ducks. The shoreline
23 here, we probably lost I would say four feet
24 erosion there. And this was on July 26 in that
25 big northeast wind. Then this is how the boats

1 are, they end up. Jack Fish Point, water on the
2 roads, eroding right to the bush line.

3 Okay, I think that it is for those
4 ones.

5 This is what I was talking about, Gull
6 Bay, back here somewhere is where all of the boats
7 are, you see, and at one time all of this was
8 connected and fishermen had camps here. They look
9 at that today, there is big gaps all over that,
10 there is really hardly anything left. What is
11 left here I think is going to be around for a
12 while.

13 And there is another shot of how this
14 used to be connected here. I don't know if there
15 is anything there this year, maybe shrubs, and
16 that used to be maybe 50 to 100 feet, and that was
17 30 years ago because I grew up there, I seen what
18 it looked like, and now there is nothing there.

19 Here again this is one of the creeks
20 we used to come in, high wave action, you can see
21 the waves that are coming in because there is so
22 much sediment there. The boats can't get in there
23 now. But last year it was no problem, because
24 took some people over there, mind you, you had to
25 drag your boat, kind of knee high, but they still

1 got it in there.

2 So here is one of the creeks that we
3 hunt. And I think all of what you see there is
4 washed out. All of this sand bar is washed out.
5 And it opens in the spring time.

6 I don't know if this has anything to
7 do with what is going on in the water, but some of
8 our fish we find have these, you know, tumors or
9 whatever you want to call them, cysts. We find
10 the odd fish that has that, or some with half
11 fins.

12 This has nothing to do with the
13 fishing, but there is a Sasquatch right there. Is
14 there a handful that believe in Sasquatch?

15 Here is a just a picture of a
16 sturgeon. I think this is when the water is high.
17 But there is a lot of erosion that has happened
18 there too.

19 Okay. Here is one, this is Long
20 Point. That's when the water was low, I don't
21 know how many feet it is, but this beach probably
22 goes all the way to Norway House. It is pretty
23 well -- you might be able to walk in a season like
24 this, but last year half of this beach was cut in
25 half. So all of this was eroded. The high water

1 I think took all of the sand back into the lake.
2 And you could go miles on this beach when it was
3 like this.

4 But I guess that's another thing too,
5 the birds that are nesting there, their areas have
6 been taken away from them. The Piping Plover, you
7 know, was that affected, because it is not a
8 stable area for them to nest? There is Nessie --
9 we have a Nessie too.

10 So anyway, I think you have seen what
11 has happened to this lake and there is a lot of
12 concerns. So I don't know if anybody has any
13 questions. I can answer what I know, if anybody
14 has any questions.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: I don't have any
16 questions, Mr. Cook, but I found that very
17 interesting, so thank you very much for bringing
18 that in.

19 MR. TED COOK: Okay. Thank you.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any other
21 people that wish to add to the conversation, the
22 stories we have heard today? I think we have had
23 a very good day, there has been some good
24 commentary -- yes. Come up to the mic, please.

25 MS. PATSY JACOBSON: Hi, my name is

1 Patsy Jacobson, and I fish by around Eagle island,
2 around there. And we have fish camps over there,
3 and they are in the water a couple of times, but
4 we wrote letters saying that we were losing our
5 area, where our camp is, but we were rejected. We
6 have a rejection letter. And there is about five
7 fishermen that have camps there, some of them are
8 just -- they were carried out by the water. There
9 was three cabins that were lost there. Ours is
10 still up, and another cabin is -- the pebbles,
11 they all slide down the cabin, like they have to
12 dig their way back inside there to stay in that
13 camp for another year. We have been going through
14 this off and on for about ten years.

15 I have been fishing for 12 years. And
16 we have to go far to fish, and we have to go far
17 to look for the fish, sometimes there is no fish
18 to be found. And it is really hard for us fisher
19 people. And I hope this helps, because we are as
20 far north as Eagle Island and Limestone Point,
21 that's how far we go to fish. Thank you.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms.
23 Jacobson. Anyone else?

24 MS. BARBARA NASECAPOW: Regarding our
25 member here in our community that runs, what comes

1 from Alberta, Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan River, we
2 hear a lot of these, you know, tar sands, there is
3 a lot of spills out there. And that's the area
4 too that there was a lot of concerns, none by
5 myself, but I hear other community members
6 regarding all of those spills in Alberta, is that
7 going to be, you know, that's questions too like
8 we would like to express to the Government. Is it
9 going to affect the outflow of the Saskatchewan
10 River and the flowing into our Lake Winnipeg?
11 Like, I saw Ted Cook was expressing there, you
12 know, we have had numerous -- most of my family
13 members are fishermen, and there have been a lot
14 of, like, they have been catching fish that aren't
15 normal. There has been a number of fish out
16 there. And that's one of the areas too that we
17 are concerned about, all of those spills in
18 Alberta. Like -- that's the area too, like, our
19 concerns, like is it going to affect our
20 environmental and our livelihood? Egosi.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Where these tar sands
22 are being mined right now is in a different
23 watershed. It is in the Athabaska River
24 Watershed, it goes north and it doesn't mix with
25 the North Saskatchewan River. Who knows about

1 future mining, but at the present there shouldn't
2 be any concerns from there.

3 MS. BARBARA NASECAPOW: So that is
4 the area that we were concerned about, you know,
5 is it going to seep into the Saskatchewan River
6 there, where the Saskatchewan River is coming
7 from?

8 THE CHAIRMAN: I don't know. I don't
9 think it is likely, but I'm not sure. It is
10 something that would be monitored quite closely.
11 Councillor Cook, earlier when you were talking
12 about the monitoring stations on the lake, I just
13 want to note that those stations are not -- that's
14 not Manitoba Hydro that's doing that monitoring,
15 that's Canada Water Surveying, it is the Federal
16 government agency. And they have been doing it
17 for over 100 years on Lake Winnipeg, and their
18 work is usually quite highly regarded.

19 Any other comments? Well, we have had
20 a very good afternoon here, good day here. Again,
21 I want to thank the community for inviting us here
22 and for feeding us so well.

23 As I said earlier, if anybody has
24 anything more they want to add, they can certainly
25 send it to us by email or by letter.

1 We still have about another three
2 months of hearings and meetings throughout the
3 province, for about the next five or six weeks is
4 a number of rural communities, further north,
5 south of here and then later on in Winnipeg. I
6 don't think that our report will get out until
7 probably early summer, being the end of June or
8 early July.

9 So, again, thank you very much.
10 Chief, would you like to have an elder say a
11 prayer for closing ceremony?

12 (Closing prayer)

13 (Concluded at 4:00 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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