

MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

KEYYASK GENERATION PROJECT

PUBLIC HEARING

York Factory First Nation

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Transcript of Proceedings
Held at George Saunders School
York Factory, Manitoba

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2013

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APPEARANCES

CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

Terry Sargeant - Chairman
Edwin Yee - Member
Judy Bradley - Member
Jim Shaw - Member
Reg Nepinak - Member
Michael Green - Counsel to the Board
Cathy Johnson - Commission Secretary

MANITOBA CONSERVATION AND WATER STEWARDSHIP

Bruce Webb

KEEYASK HYDROPOWER LIMITED PARTNERSHIP

Chief Walter Spence
George Neepin
Halina Zbigniewicz
Janet Mayor - Manitoba Hydro Counsel
Vicky Cole
Shawna Pachal

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1 Thursday, September 26, 2013

2 Upon commencing at 1:30 p.m.

3 CHIEF CONSTANT: Hi, good afternoon
4 everybody. We were sort of watching out for our
5 young students who were going to be participating
6 in this hearing today. We will just ask one of
7 our workers here, Evelyn, if she can go check to
8 see where they are. And I know they wanted to
9 make a presentation here to the panel. So while
10 she is checking, we will start. We wanted to
11 start with asking our elder, Obediah Wastesicoot,
12 to open our hearing today, the hearing today in
13 our community with a prayer.

14 (Opening Prayer)

15 CHIEF CONSTANT: So good afternoon
16 everybody. I want to say on behalf of York
17 Factory First Nation, I welcome the Clean
18 Environment Commission, the Commissioners, the
19 Chair, Terry Sargeant, and all the other members
20 of the panel to our community.

21 I want to acknowledge our members that
22 are here with us today to be part of the hearing,
23 to participate either as participants or as
24 presenters in regards to this very important issue
25 here at the hearing today.

1 I also want to welcome representatives
2 of our partners, our Keeyask partners, I want to
3 thank you for being here to listen to our people
4 and their presentations to the panel. I
5 acknowledge Chief Spence and his elders who are
6 here today. We had received word that Chief
7 Garson was going to be here as well, but I don't
8 see him in the crowd yet.

9 I also want to welcome our other
10 partners, Hydro, Manitoba Hydro, representatives
11 of our other partners. So we thank you as well.

12 And we thank all of our visitors and
13 our guests who are here today with us. And I just
14 want to say thank you to the panel for the
15 opportunity, first of all, to make some comments
16 on behalf of York Factory First Nation. I'm just
17 going to be really brief because, you know, it is
18 the people, the opportunity is here for the people
19 to come here today to put forth, you know, their
20 views and their comments, you know, their
21 concerns, their hopes, you know, and the issues
22 that they still have in regards to the project.

23 I'm just going to make my comments
24 very brief. Again, we want to say thank you to
25 the panel, Clean Environment Commission, and we

1 welcome you to our community of York Landing, in
2 Cree we say Kaweechiwasihk, we thank you for
3 coming to our community Kaweechiwasihk. And we
4 appreciate that you are here to listen to our
5 people regarding the project.

6 And also we always highlight this
7 issue regarding, you know, our location, and our
8 location impacts our participation as a partner in
9 this project. But we always want to make sure
10 that we highlight the fact that, you know, we are
11 an isolated community. We are one of the four
12 communities, Cree communities that were isolated,
13 and that affects our participation. So that's one
14 issue for sure that will be raised by our members.
15 It is a bit more difficult for us to get in and
16 out of our community, you know, to get to the jobs
17 and so forth. So travelling in and out of our
18 community is time consuming, as you know. We are
19 in the north, you are situated in the south, and
20 sometimes, you know, depending on the weather, it
21 is even more, you know, impossible and difficult
22 and dangerous to get to our community.

23 We had arranged for our high school
24 students to also participate at this hearing today
25 in our community, but because of weather they

1 weren't able to travel here today. Our school
2 here goes up to grade eight, and then grade nine,
3 ten, eleven, twelve, our students have to go out
4 of the community. So it impacts their
5 participation. And we did arrange for them to be
6 here today, but their trip got cancelled. A
7 representative group of our high school students
8 from Cranberry weren't able to be here with us,
9 and they wanted to be able to be here and make
10 some comments to the panel as well, but we are
11 going to encourage them to make a written
12 submission.

13 First of all, I just want to say that
14 we, as a people, as the people of York Factory
15 First Nation, we were relocated here to this
16 place, Kaweechiwasihk, by the Federal Government,
17 I think it was July 26, 1957, from our traditional
18 homeland located on the Hudson Bay coast near the
19 mouth of the Hayes River. It remains our
20 traditional territory to this day and we continue
21 to be actively protecting and fully exercising our
22 treaty and Aboriginal rights to there, to be
23 there, to have a presence there and on that land
24 in York Factory.

25 Our First Nations name in Cree, in our

1 language, is derived from the Hudson Bay post that
2 was built at that site at our traditional
3 homeland.

4 So anyway, that's just a little bit
5 about who we are as a people. And when our
6 people, our grandparents and our parents arrived
7 here at Kawechiwasuk, the construction of Kelsey,
8 the Kelsey Generating Station had already started
9 in 1957. That's when our people were relocated
10 here to this place, Kawechiwasuk, in 1957 that
11 hydro dam was already being built. We know it was
12 the first plant that was developed on the Nelson
13 River. And I think it was completed in 1961, you
14 know, Kelsey Generating Station. And that dam is
15 approximately 57 kilometres upstream from here,
16 from Kawechiwasuk. So our people that are here
17 that have been, that were relocated here, our
18 grandparents and our parents, and also the adult
19 people that are here in our community, they have
20 been living with Hydro development, you know, on
21 the Nelson River ever since they arrived here to
22 make this their homeland. So that's a little bit
23 more of who we are as a people and our community.

24

25 So now, today, York Factory First

1 Nation is a partner in Keeyask, in this Keeyask
2 project. And so we remain, you know, to be one of
3 the -- continue to be affected. And over the last
4 56 years, we were affected by Hydro development.
5 And we continue to experience the changes by that
6 first dam there, Kelsey, you know, right in our
7 area, and we know that Keeyask will add to this.
8 But I said, you know, I've said that we are a
9 partner in Keeyask. And you know, with the
10 partnership with Keeyask, you know, we are seeking
11 a new relationship with Manitoba Hydro and with
12 our fellow Cree partners, Cree Nation partners.
13 We want to work together like them, like Fox Lake,
14 like TCN, Tataskweyak, War Lake, we want to work
15 together, and we have the same intent within this
16 partnership is to, you know, improve the lives of
17 our people to the best of our abilities. That's
18 what we want with this partnership.

19 We know that Keeyask is not the answer
20 to all of our problems. We know that. And that
21 Keeyask has, you know, the challenge, a lot of
22 challenges, you know, for us as Cree people. And
23 we know that, you know, the benefits are not going
24 to come for a long time. We are not going to
25 fully realize the benefits, you know, all of the

1 benefits from the project for many, many years
2 down the road. But we also know that the benefits
3 will not come without, you know, a lot of
4 consequences, you know, for us as a people
5 because, you know, our people still use the land
6 and are on the waters and, you know, are still
7 resource users. But we are still here, we still
8 are a people that are living, you know, along the
9 Nelson River, and we are going to continue to be
10 here and we are not going away.

11 And also I just want to highlight too
12 that not everyone, not every one of our members of
13 York Factory, not every member of our community
14 supports Keeyask. And others, you know, who are
15 working within the project, you know, who have
16 been part of this whole process for the last
17 number of years, you know, we continue to do so
18 with mixed feelings. And the decision, you know,
19 to become a partner in Keeyask was difficult for
20 everybody. We made the decision after many years
21 of, you know, of participating in the studies, of
22 discussing it among ourselves as a people.

23 And before York Factory, you know,
24 signed the JKDA, our members voted in a
25 referendum. And when the results were counted,

1 you know, the majority of ballots, 86 per cent I
2 believe of the people that voted, they supported
3 Keeyask, to be a partner in Keeyask. But I said,
4 you know, like I said, support is not unanimous.

5 And you can see, if you have seen or
6 if you have studied our EIS, York Factory's EIS,
7 the Environmental Impact Study, a report that we
8 have submitted, if you have seen it,
9 Kipekiskwaywinan, we have tried throughout our
10 statement to ensure that the voices of our
11 members, you know, were incorporated into the
12 report, their true feelings, their concerns, their
13 hopes, their fears, and what their expectations
14 are, you know, from being part of the project.

15 So as a panel, as members of the panel
16 we are hoping that you have taken the time to read
17 the full report. It was a good study,
18 comprehensive study, and it was done by the
19 community and by our team and our advisors. So we
20 are pretty proud of that document that we have
21 submitted, because it incorporates the feelings
22 and the views of our members.

23 And to our people that are here, to
24 the members of our community of York Factory, to
25 all of the citizens that are here, we want to say

1 this is an opportunity for you as members, as
2 citizens, you know, to talk about Keeyask, about
3 the project, to share, you know, with the panel
4 your views, your hopes, your concerns, you know,
5 directly with the panel today. And we want to
6 be -- we want to encourage you as a council, you
7 know, to feel free, you know, we want to really
8 encourage you to come forward and speak while the
9 panel is here this afternoon, to speak quite
10 frankly about your views, about your concerns,
11 about what you hope for and what your expectations
12 are, you know, with regard to Keeyask, the Keeyask
13 project. So we are really encouraging you to be
14 able to come forward and speak. And if you don't
15 feel comfortable, you know, sharing or speaking in
16 public and, you know, like I said earlier, you can
17 also put it in writing and submit it to the panel
18 as well. (Cree spoken).

19 And so at this point, you know, we
20 welcome and encourage your comments, you know,
21 from all of our members that are here today, and
22 we want to open it up, and at this point, once the
23 council, the two councillors have an opportunity
24 to speak as well, so we are opening the meeting up
25 for our members to come forward and speak with the

1 panel. And you know, as a council we are looking
2 forward as a community to have a respectful open
3 meeting here today. Egosi.

4 MR. JEFF BEARDY: All right. Thank
5 you, Chief Constant, for those opening remarks.
6 She has pretty much touch based on a lot of the
7 history and the welcomings from our part anyway.
8 But I would like to welcome everyone that is here
9 today, the panel, the Clean Environment Commission
10 panel that are here today to listen to our people
11 and our visitors from Fox Lake, Tataskweyak and
12 from Hydro. And we want to thank you all for
13 coming and being present here today.

14 As well I want to thank our Elder
15 Obediah for his prayer today. And as he was
16 praying today, I had to think a lot about -- I
17 thought about the people who are not here today,
18 the people who are now in the spirit world, the
19 people who have lived in this community from day
20 one. And I thought about them as he was saying
21 his prayer, and I just wanted to acknowledge those
22 people that have passed on, because a lot of them
23 have spoken very highly about, you know, their
24 concerns about the water and about the
25 environment. So I just wanted to just remember

1 them and acknowledge them. And a lot of them too
2 have worked for the First Nation over the years
3 and have, you know, have been a guide to us.

4 At this time too I want to acknowledge
5 our community members that are here. Like Chief
6 Constant said, we encourage you to participate and
7 to voice your opinions and concerns. This is your
8 meeting and this is an opportunity for you to come
9 forward and to speak, speak about your concerns
10 about Keeyask.

11 So I just wanted to welcome everyone
12 and thank everyone for coming to this meeting
13 today. Egosi.

14 MR. SAM COOK: Hi, good afternoon
15 everybody. I have been living in York Landing
16 since the mid '80s, and ever since I have been
17 here, Hydro has been doing a lot of work, and we
18 started seeing the effects of the damage they have
19 been doing to our lands. I go out a lot, out
20 traveling by boat and motor. I see a lot of
21 debris on the shores that hasn't been cleaned up
22 and should be cleaned up, a lot of driftwood
23 laying all along the shore. Not even that, you go
24 even up river here, which is not even part of the
25 Nelson River, you go up the river here, up Aiken

1 River, when Hydro released saved water, like they
2 stored water and the water goes up here, it goes
3 all the way up river to the end of Aiken River
4 here. We have banks there that are 20 feet high,
5 as high as that wall, and you can see that it is
6 starting to, the mud and everything else is
7 falling down into the river. It is carrying
8 debris all the way down the river, all over the
9 lake here. Our fishermen were having trouble, you
10 know, one year there they were having logs and
11 twigs and all of that stuff in their nets. A lot
12 of stuff going on here, you have to see for
13 yourself, you have to live here to experience it
14 too.

15 Anyway, I just want to welcome
16 everybody here, and I hope we have more people
17 come out to speak about what Hydro has been doing
18 to our land here. Thank you.

19 MR. JEFF BEARDY: That concludes our
20 welcoming from Chief and Council. I am going over
21 to the Chair of the Clean Environment Commission
22 to open the floor.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.
24 Thank you Chief Constant and Councillors and thank
25 you to Elder Obediah. Good afternoon all and

1 welcome to the third day of Clean Environment
2 hearing, or Clean Environment Commission hearings
3 into the Keeyask project.

4 My name is Terry Sargeant, I'm the
5 chair of the Clean Environment Commission of
6 Manitoba, and I'm also the chair of this panel
7 that will be conducting the review of the Keeyask
8 project. At the outset I would like to
9 acknowledge that we are meeting today in the, I
10 guess the new homeland or the relatively new
11 homeland of the York Factory First Nation, and we
12 thank you for the privilege of being here today.

13 I would like to introduce the other
14 members of the panel who will be conducting this
15 review. To my far left is Edwin Yee. Next to me
16 is Judy Bradley. On my right, Jim Shaw and Reg
17 Nepinak. Also with us today are some of our
18 staff, our Commission secretary Cathy Johnson, our
19 administrative assistant Joyce Mueller, and our
20 legal counsel Michael Green and Bob Armstrong, who
21 will be writing the report at the end of our
22 review process.

23 We are here today because last
24 November the Minister of Conservation and Water
25 Stewardship for the Province of Manitoba asked us

1 to hold public hearings to look into and review
2 the Keeyask Generation Project. In particular, he
3 asked us to review the Environmental Impact
4 Statement that has been prepared by the
5 partnership. He asked us to look into the
6 consultation process that has taken place leading
7 up to this exercise, this review.

8 Secondly, he asked us to recommend
9 whether or not we felt an environmental licence
10 should be issued to the proponent, the
11 partnership, in order for them to construct the
12 generation project.

13 And thirdly, he asked that if we did
14 recommend issuing a licence, to recommend measures
15 proposed to mitigate any damages that we identify
16 that might happen to the environmental -- or to
17 the environment in the area. Specifically, he
18 asked us to hold hearings in the area of the
19 project to allow those who will be most affected
20 by the project to share their views. That's why
21 we are here today. That's why we were in Gillam
22 and Bird over the last couple of days.

23 As Chief Constant has described, you
24 are partners with Manitoba Hydro and three other
25 First Nations in this area. This is a unique

1 experience in Manitoba. And because of that
2 unique relationship, we felt it was important that
3 we come into your communities to hear your views.

4 We will next week be going into Split
5 Lake after holding hearings in Thompson, we will
6 be in Split Lake on Wednesday next week. And the
7 following week, at the request and invitation of
8 the Cross Lake community, the Pimicikamak
9 Okimawin, we will be going into that community as
10 well to hold a day of hearings. Later in October
11 we will commence hearings in the City of Winnipeg
12 which will cover a number of weeks.

13 Because we hope to make the
14 proceedings today as informal as possible in order
15 to allow as many of you who wish to feel
16 comfortable to come forward and say your piece
17 about this project. All of our proceedings,
18 including today's proceedings, are recorded. This
19 is a requirement of the Environment Act. These
20 recordings are transcribed and are available on
21 our website within a day or two or three, within a
22 very short time. So if you want to reread what
23 has happened today or any other days during our
24 hearings, you can go to our website and get
25 verbatim transcripts.

1 What we would like to hear from as
2 many of you as wish today is who you are, how this
3 project might affect you, or how it, you know, it
4 may impact you positively or negatively. We would
5 like to know whether you think this project is a
6 good idea for the Province of Manitoba, and more
7 particularly, if it is a good idea for your
8 community. We would like to hear your views on
9 recommendations that we might make to the Minister
10 and any other information that you think is
11 important. Typically, our presentations are about
12 15 minutes but, you know, we won't, unless you are
13 going on endlessly, we won't enforce that too
14 strictly.

15 I would also note that you are welcome
16 to make your presentation in your own language,
17 however, we would hope that somebody could
18 translate -- if you do speak in Cree, that
19 somebody could translate so that the panel members
20 and others in the room who don't speak Cree could
21 know what you say.

22 And that's about all I have. I would
23 note if there are people who are not able to
24 attend, and the Chief has already mentioned the
25 high school students group, if there are others

1 who are not able to attend, or if there are some
2 of you who don't feel comfortable making a public
3 presentation, you are more than welcome to send us
4 something in writing. You can send us a letter,
5 you can email us, or you can go to our website and
6 put your comments online right at our website.

7 And finally, Manitoba Hydro, one of
8 your partners in this proposal, has made available
9 a number of documents which are on the back table
10 over to my left. These include copies of the
11 video, which I think we will be seeing in a few
12 moments, both in English and in Cree, the
13 executive summary of the Environmental Impact
14 Statement, an outline of a partnership
15 presentation that has been made before the panel.

16 With that I would invite, I'm looking
17 to the Chief or to others of the partnership, are
18 we going to be showing the video at this time, is
19 that the plan? No? Okay. We can do it later, it
20 doesn't really matter.

21 So then I will now invite people who
22 wish to make presentations to come forward. You
23 can come forward -- well, I guess we really don't
24 have an area where you can use one of these mics,
25 but we do have a wireless microphone. Groups can

1 come forward and use that table if they wish, or
2 we can give you the wireless mic and you can make
3 your presentation just from where you are sitting.

4 So I believe there are a number of
5 people and groups who wish to go. Who wants to go
6 first? Are we going to hear from a student group
7 first? That's great. Come on forward. I just
8 ask each of you who speaks, could just please
9 state your name.

10 MR. JEFF BEARDY: I want to introduce
11 to you our panel of students from our school, from
12 George Saunders Memorial School. Our first
13 student we have here is Cheryl Flett. She is
14 going to read her presentation she did up. So
15 this is Cheryl Flett.

16 MS. CHERYL FLETT: Hi, my name is
17 Cheryl Flett, I'm in grade seven, I go to George
18 Saunders Memorial School. I know a little what
19 Hydro is and how its impacts, all I know is that
20 it will change everything, and in ten to 12 years,
21 if Keeyask goes through, I know what -- I want
22 good things in this community like a rec centre, a
23 bigger school and a bigger gym and a cleaner
24 community. And I want things to be better here in
25 York Factory First Nation and other communities.

1 And I was wondering what are they going to do with
2 all of the fish and caribou and other animals and
3 plants, berries, will it all be good or will it
4 all be gone? And will the water be black or
5 green, and will it be polluted? Why do we have to
6 wait for ten to 12 years to get benefits? Why
7 can't we get it now? And the water, why are you
8 selling it? Our way of life is our land and my
9 home.

10 MR. ROY BEARDY: Thank you. That was
11 Cheryl Flett. Now we have Brandon Beardy.

12 MR. BRANDON BEARDY: Hi, my name is
13 Brandon Beardy, and I am in grade six here at
14 George Saunders Memorial School. For us youth it
15 is hard to understand all of this Hydro stuff.
16 The way I see this is our water is just like a
17 toilet bowl. When the toilet bowl gets plugged,
18 it floods, and Hydro can flush it any time. When
19 it floods it covers our land and everything that
20 lives in it. This is going to impact us youth who
21 are here today. Being partnership means to me is
22 getting things for our community. I want good
23 things for our community like buildings,
24 recreation centre, more housing, more buildings,
25 more people helping each other. Also I just want

1 to say that this affects our environment, the
2 caribou, the moose, and all living mammals that
3 live on the ground. And I want our environment to
4 be better. And how are you, Hydro, going to fix
5 that? Our history, traditions and culture is
6 going to protect and live as at one with our land.
7 And you know what, you know what they call Hydro
8 here? Hand your dam resources over.

9 MR. JEFF BEARDY: Okay, thank you
10 Brandon. Now we have Pearce Beardy. All right,
11 Pearce.

12 MR. PEARCE BEARDY: Hi, my name is
13 Pearce Beardy, I am in grade five, I go to school
14 here at GSMS. I don't really know what Hydro is.
15 I think Keeyask is a dam and Hydro is in a
16 partnership with our four bands, Fox Lake, TCN,
17 War Lake and us, York Factory First Nation. And
18 I'm worried that our land will be flooded, and
19 worried about how it will affect our Nations, and
20 our land, and how our children and our nephews and
21 nieces and the youth of tomorrow, and what will
22 Hydro do if we get flooded? How will it be in the
23 future? Will it be polluted? And what will
24 happen to the environment? Will the fish be gone?
25 Will be there any more animals for food? And will

1 it be bad for the youth in the future? And will
2 there be food and clean water in the future for
3 our lands and how it will affect the berries,
4 plants? And some people use traditional medicine
5 and some don't. There are so much stuff that will
6 be gone, washed out. And will the trees be broken
7 and knocked down? And the benefits, will there be
8 more houses and buildings and stores? And one
9 last thing, how will we access our hunting areas
10 in Keeyask and Conawapa? Why are we building the
11 dam?

12 MR. JEFF BEARDY: Okay, thank you,
13 Pearce. All right. Now we have Dawson Flett.

14 MR. DAWSON FLETT: Hi, my name is
15 Dawson Flett. I'm in grade seven, I go to George
16 Saunders Memorial School. What I think about
17 Hydro is how it -- what I think about the good and
18 bad partnership is the good -- the good is the
19 benefits which will happen when I'm an adult.
20 Some of the good stuff I would like to see is a
21 bigger school and a rec centre. And when I think
22 about the bad part is when the animals and the
23 fish and caribou, berries and plants, will it be
24 good or will it be destroyed? Is the water going
25 to be black or green? Is it going to be polluted?

1 And why is the dam being built? This is our
2 community and I want it the way it is.

3 MR. JEFF BEARDY: All right. So these
4 are our students here from George Saunders
5 Memorial School. I want to thank them for their
6 courage to come up here to say a few words and to
7 speak on behalf of their student body in George
8 Saunders Memorial School.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you to all four
10 of the students, Cheryl, Brandon, Pearce and
11 Dawson. Those were very good presentations, they
12 were thoughtful and well worked out and well
13 presented. Thank you very much for coming out
14 here this afternoon.

15 Next? Who else would like to -- do
16 you want, you can come up to the front or use the
17 cordless mic, whichever you prefer. Go right
18 ahead, sir. We only have one rule and that's that
19 you identify yourself, please?

20 MR. GEORGE WASTESICOOT: Hello, my
21 name is George Wastesicoot. I'm a band member of
22 York Factory First Nation here. I heard of the
23 meeting and I had to come, because I myself am
24 very concerned about what is happening in the
25 community. I don't see anything in the community

1 happening at all. All I see is riffraff going up,
2 that's it. I don't see anything in the community
3 for our children. What are these negotiators
4 negotiating? I don't know.

5 I read one time that the 1995
6 agreement was supposed to take York Factory First
7 Nations people out of poverty. It is 2013 and
8 people still can't afford to pay for their Hydro
9 and, therefore, they are getting cut off. Very
10 cold last week, children had to sleep in their
11 houses cold. No place to cook. And that's what
12 Hydro is doing for us. It is very sad. And they
13 come here, want us to help them get rich, more
14 richer, while for us there is nothing here. They
15 want Conawapa open, Keeyask open, they haven't
16 even dealt with 1995 agreement. We are still in
17 limbo, poor, struggling, while these Hydro people
18 are living off, living rich off our land. We are
19 right smack dab in the middle of the dams and we
20 have got nothing to show for it.

21 And they come here promise us a lot of
22 things I haven't even seen yet. And so they come
23 here again today to listen to us. But when they
24 leave, what is going to happen? They are going to
25 forget again like the 1995 agreement, that's

1 what's going to happen.

2 I'm speaking for my people. I love my

3 people, I love this land that we are living in.

4 It is going to be destroyed by Manitoba Hydro's

5 greed. They give us little dollars, meanwhile

6 they are making billions. We got no adequate

7 housing. We always have to struggle, fight for a

8 house in order to get a house here in this

9 community. It shouldn't have to be like that.

10 There is no all-weather road, so we are at the

11 mercy of Perimeter Airlines, Northern Stores that

12 went up with its prices really high. If we had an

13 all-weather road we go and get our own stuff much

14 cheaper. There has been talk for many years now

15 about an all-weather road, but I don't see an

16 all-weather road yet.

17 The only ones getting rich and

18 prospering from Hydro are lawyers and consultants.

19 There is no clean running water here in the

20 community, no water for our kids to go swim in and

21 enjoy themselves outside. It is all murky and

22 dirty. And when they do go swimming, they come

23 out and in a day or two they develop sores on

24 their bodies.

25 We got no recreation for our children

1 here. Only thing we got is the arena, and then
2 they get kicked out when their time is up. They
3 freeze outside trying to play, looking for a place
4 to play. I have my kids inside my house, my kids'
5 friends, to come and warm up and come and play
6 whatever they can play in there. But it is not
7 all us that are like that. They need a place to
8 go, they need a place to go have fun, not walking
9 around all hours of the night and getting into
10 things they are not supposed to.

11 Our people can't afford groceries,
12 hydro, et cetera. I remember saying to somebody
13 one time, Hydro can get rich and all I found was
14 those bread crumbs for, I don't know, stuffing,
15 that's all I found. I feel sorry for those
16 people.

17 Okay. Who is prospering from what is
18 going on right now? I said the lawyers, the
19 consultants. We don't see nothing here in York
20 Landing, our people, except for negotiators, but
21 that's their job. We should start negotiating
22 things like for our children and our community.
23 Maybe we need a recreation centre for everybody,
24 not just for adults. And, you know, jobs, there
25 is only a few hired at Keeyask for security,

1 custodians. York Landing Construction is
2 benefiting, but for how long are they going to
3 operate? Until all of the dams are closed,
4 finished, and Hydro is going to forget us when all
5 of the dams are closed. And when we do get
6 monies, where is it going? What are we going to
7 do if we get monies? What are we doing with it?
8 Is it all going to go to the administration? Is
9 it all going to go to the future development?
10 There is only a few benefiting from this. The
11 rest of us, no.

12 And that's all I wanted to say, but
13 what I do say, it is true. They can deny it all
14 they want, but where are their books? Why don't
15 you come and show us your books and see what you
16 have done for us in the 1995 agreement, and what
17 are you going to do for us now? We always talk,
18 talk, promise, and then when we leave here nothing
19 happens. We got to start working together. We
20 are supposed to be partners. I don't feel like a
21 partner. We are always fighting, four First
22 Nations fighting amongst each other, and that's
23 what Hydro wants. Egosi.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,
25 Mr. Wastesicoot. Next?

1 MR. ROY BEARDY: First I would like to
2 introduce ourselves. Good afternoon to the Clean
3 Environment Commission Chair and panel members, I
4 believe they are Terry Sargeant, Edwin Yee, Jim
5 Shaw, Judy Bradley, Reg Nepinak, and legal
6 counsel, Mike Green, and Cathy Johnson. I would
7 like to welcome all of our community members, my
8 brother and sister communities, thanks for coming.
9 And I would like to thank Hydro for coming in.

10 For the record, I am Roy Beardy and
11 I'm joined by my elder and chair of Kaweechiwasihk
12 Kay-tay-a-ti-suk is Florence Beardy, and we also
13 have other board members which are Elizabeth
14 Beardy, Stella Chapman, Doreen Saunders, Obediah
15 Wastesicoot, Edwin Beardy, and regrets to our
16 Elder Eric Saunders who will not be able to join
17 us due to health issues.

18 We are here today representing the
19 intervenors, Kaweechiwasihk Kay-tay-a-ti-suk. I
20 will just say we are going to be calling it KK for
21 now. KK is a not for profit organization
22 incorporated under the laws of Manitoba. While KK
23 has been recognized in our ancestral lands since
24 time immemorial, Kaweechiwasihk Kay-tay-a-ti-suk
25 has incorporated under the laws of Manitoba in

1 order to better engage the other side of
2 Kaweechiwasihk. The KK are a group of concerned
3 elders who question -- who have questions
4 regarding the Keeyask Environmental Impact
5 Statement. They do not wish to oppose the
6 project, they are simply looking after York
7 Factory First Nation's interests. KK Inc. intends
8 to generally examine and test the partnership
9 submissions. The elder group simply wants a fair
10 shake for our people to the benefits of Keeyask,
11 while fulfilling their duties of stewards of the
12 lands and waters.

13 To illustrate the core interest of KK,
14 as well as other matters, we will examine the four
15 major topics reflected on our written information
16 request. The manner and the extent of which
17 Aboriginal traditional knowledge or ATK was and
18 will be in the future considered, included and
19 treated with equal value and importance by the
20 partnership and the regulators in:

- 21 1, the project design, construction and operation;
- 22 2, the Environmental Impact Statement;
- 23 3, the Environmental Protection Plans;
- 24 4, the Environmental Monitoring Plans;
- 25 5, the Environmental Project Management Plans.

1 KK is aware that these plans have been
2 forwarded to the regulators. These plans are
3 still under development, particularly on how ATK
4 will be related to the Environmental Protection
5 Monitoring and the Environmental Management Plans.

6 B, how the difference in the world
7 views and the conclusions between ATK and western
8 science based analysis were and will be in the
9 future? How is it going to be treated by the
10 partners and the regulators? KK will be
11 questioning the difference on how the partnership
12 intends to adjust the difference or the gaps.

13 KK Inc. possesses the knowledge of
14 past Hydro developments. We are concerned of
15 Oschinewin, it is a stated law that we can not
16 disturb nature for the fear it will come back on
17 us. As for western science, it is not a problem
18 until they have to prove it. The consideration on
19 innovation measures to protect the areas of the
20 Keeyask project, as well as the consideration of
21 measures to mitigate the impacts of Hydro
22 development on lake sturgeon, including
23 considerations of the measures to mitigate impacts
24 of the Kelsey Generating Station in part by
25 restoring the seasonal passage of lake sturgeon

1 and other species between Sipiwesk Lake and Split
2 Lake.

3 KK Inc., or rather York Landing
4 elders, participated in the review of dealing with
5 fish mortality studies, quantification of fish
6 habitat for the Kelsey re-running project. The
7 report was prepared by Terry A. Dick, Ph.D, Artic
8 Fish Technology Inc. Terry Dick was retained by
9 York Factory First Nation to review reports
10 dealing with the survival and injuries as fish
11 pass through the turbines of Manitoba Hydro's
12 Kelsey Generating Station on the Nelson River, as
13 well as what we are doing with fish habitat
14 quantification presentation by Richard Remnant of
15 North/South Consultants that was submitted to
16 Manitoba Department of Water Stewardship and the
17 community of York Factory First Nation.

18 At the request of York Factory First
19 Nation, Michael Anderson provided technical
20 support to Dr. Dick, as well as historical
21 reference and imagery and commentary on the
22 potential relevance of the application of ATK to
23 assess the potential effects of the re-running
24 project of the Kelsey Generating Station.

25 The recognition of a distinct herd of

1 residential Boreal Woodland Caribou in the area of
2 the Keeyask project and nearby other projects on
3 the Nelson River, and the consideration of
4 measures to recognize and protect the herd and to
5 mitigate the impacts of Keeyask project on this
6 herd. KK has reviewed the Bipole III transmission
7 project supplement, the caribou technical report,
8 and is preparing an analysis for the Commission
9 and will be reviewed and discussed in the November
10 2013 CEC hearings. The KK Inc. analysis requires
11 consideration and application of ATK.

12 KK is concerned with the Peguis and
13 the Pimicikamak notice of motion that was
14 forwarded to Clean Environment Commission in the
15 matter of the Keeyask Generating Station that was
16 filed on September 9, 2013. To our understanding,
17 the motion intends to delay the Keeyask CEC
18 hearings until a regional cumulative effects
19 assessment called RCEA is undertaken. The CEC
20 wisely recommended this approach in its decision
21 about Bipole III, saying that no new Hydro
22 development licences should be issued until the
23 regional assessment was done. Conservation
24 Minister Gord Mackintosh has said that he intends
25 for this recommendation to be implemented, and

1 that Manitoba will begin discussions with Manitoba
2 Hydro about implementing this assessment.

3 To KK's knowledge, York Factory First
4 Nation has done some work on the cumulative
5 effects based on our own experiences with Hydro
6 development, but we have not collaborated broadly
7 with other First Nations on how that has been
8 affected by the Hydro development. KK agrees with
9 the CEC as set out in the Bipole III
10 recommendations.

11 Furthermore, KK Inc. would like to
12 introduce a snapshot of our experiences with high
13 water levels on Split Lake in 2011. We feel the
14 information is relative to the cumulative effects
15 area of interest and could serve as a discussion
16 paper on this matter.

17 The KK intends to present expert
18 information in support of its perspective and
19 interest on the matters and to participate
20 throughout the hearings. KK Inc. looks forward to
21 presenting its recommendations at the conclusion
22 of the hearings. KK Inc. looks forward to
23 receiving advice and direction from the Commission
24 regarding timing, process and procedural matters
25 regarding these presentations.

1 Also, we can't forget our customary
2 laws. KK Inc. is making arrangements to bring in
3 a colleague who is considered an expert in
4 customary laws relating to dam building. Egosi.
5 Thank you.

6 There is a couple of -- sorry, I
7 mentioned that we had, these are public documents,
8 they were discussed within our community for the
9 last -- since the last three years. One of them
10 is called the Water Regime and Waterway Management
11 Issue, high water levels on Split Lake in 2011.
12 It was submitted on July 18, 2011 by MKO natural
13 resource secretary. And I think what I will do is
14 talk to the Commission about introducing this as
15 an exhibit later on. Also too I would like to,
16 would like the Commission to take a look at the
17 review on the reports dealing with fish mortality
18 studies and the quantification of fish habitat for
19 the Kelsey re-running project. Thank you. I will
20 turn this over to Elder Flora Beardy.

21 ELDER FLORA BEARDY: (Cree spoken).

22 I just sort of covered what Roy had
23 read out of the presentation and I explained that
24 we are not opposing the dam or the project, but
25 that we are going through all of the reports that

1 have been written, and the Environmental Impact
2 Statement and Kipekiskwaywinan, those are the two
3 documents that we use to -- that we are examining
4 now. And anything that we find that is not in
5 there, then we will mark that down and we will
6 make sure that it is talked about. But I wanted
7 to talk a bit about the caribou.

8 I lived in Churchill most of my life
9 and we used to go hunting, I used to go hunting
10 with my husband. And we have what we call (Cree
11 word), these are caribou that live in the -- the
12 barren land caribou, sometimes they call them the
13 caribou from the north. That's the Beverly
14 Qamanirjuaq herd, and they come down, they use to
15 pass the Churchill area. So that's one herd. And
16 then we have the Cape Churchill herd, which is the
17 (inaudible). Those ones stay around Cape
18 Churchill, they don't go very far if they do come
19 south. And then on the west side of the tracks we
20 have the Woodland Caribou. We call them (Cree
21 word). It means inland or where the bush is, and
22 that's where these caribou stay. Those caribou
23 don't travel very far when they move around
24 either. But there are difference in sizes of
25 these caribou. The northern, they are small, and

1 then the Cape Churchill herd are larger, and then
2 the Woodland Caribou are the biggest of all. But
3 I have talked to elders and I have heard from
4 people from Tataskweyak saying that the caribou
5 that live around there, and the ones that live in
6 the bush are (Cree word), that is what we call
7 them, and those are Woodland caribou. I mean, how
8 much more information do you need? The caribou
9 you can tell by the difference in size.

10 The Pen Island herd also, they travel
11 a longer ways, the Pen Island herd, and then they
12 go back to where they come from.

13 You know, we really have to get
14 together and, you know, talk about this. Because
15 the Woodland Caribou are an endangered species
16 from what I understand. And if we are not careful
17 then, you know, we may be helping in destroying
18 them.

19 We also lived in Ponton, along the
20 railroad before the highway was built. And my
21 husband and I used to see the Woodland cross there
22 close to where we lived at the tracks. And they
23 are big, they are big caribou, all of the elders
24 know that. I'm sure all of the hunters know that
25 too, that know their caribou. Even their track

1 size is different.

2 So I just wanted to say a little bit
3 about that because like I said -- sorry, when I
4 was speaking in Cree there -- these animals cannot
5 speak for themselves. Because we are considered
6 stewards of the earth, we have to talk for them.

7 And the same thing with the sturgeon.
8 We have stories from our elders about what a clean
9 fish that is. Once the sturgeon's habitat is
10 disturbed, it will leave, if it can leave. And
11 then they talk to even when there is a forest
12 fire, there is ashes and maybe pieces of wood drop
13 into the river, the sturgeon will also leave that
14 area.

15 So there are so many things that we
16 have to consider regarding traditional knowledge.
17 That is another big area that we have to make sure
18 that traditional knowledge is treated equally as
19 western science.

20 That's all I wanted to say. I just
21 wanted to press, mention those two items.

22 I have a question for the panel. York
23 Factory First Nation and the other partner First
24 Nations have members in the Churchill area, I
25 think we have over 100 members there. And some

1 people here have received calls from our
2 membership that, why is the CEC hearing not being
3 held in Churchill? Some of those people have
4 lived here in the past and moved to Churchill.
5 And right now the Churchill people are greatly
6 affected by the Churchill River Diversion. So
7 that's a question I would like to ask you, as a
8 panel?

9 THE CHAIRMAN: I must admit,
10 Ms. Beardy, that this is the first time we have
11 ever had that question put to us, and honestly, I
12 hadn't even thought of that. I think it is a
13 valid point, but it is just not something that had
14 come to our mind when we were considering
15 traveling in Northern Manitoba. We probably
16 should have given that -- you know, we are going
17 into Thompson because we know that there are a lot
18 of people from these communities who live in
19 Thompson, and we know there are a number in
20 Winnipeg who will come out to the hearings in
21 Winnipeg. I can't give you an answer beyond that
22 today. It is a very good point.

23 ELDER FLORA BEARDY: Okay. We have
24 more members in Churchill than Thompson and
25 Winnipeg put together.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: York Factory does?

2 ELDER FLORA BEARDY: Um-hum.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Do you have any idea of
4 the other three First Nations, how many they have
5 in Churchill?

6 ELDER FLORA BEARDY: Chief Spence, do
7 you know how many Fox Lake members are there?

8 CHIEF SPENCE: Approximately 50.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: About 50, okay.

10 ELDER FLORA BEARDY: Tataskweyak?

11 SPEAKER: I don't know.

12 ELDER FLORA BEARDY: You don't know,
13 okay. So there you go, we are talking maybe 200
14 plus people, maybe 300.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, thank you for
16 bringing that to our attention. We will consider
17 it, I don't know that -- I don't know whether we
18 can do anything about it at this point, but we
19 will certainly consider it.

20 ELDER FLORA BEARDY: Thank you.
21 Egesi.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your
23 presentation.

24 MR. ROY BEARDY: One more question,
25 please?

1 THE CHAIRMAN: No problem at all. Go
2 ahead, Roy.

3 MR. ROY BEARDY: How is that going to
4 impact the hearings with the filing of those
5 motions by Pimicikamak and Peguis? Like is it
6 business as usual or --

7 THE CHAIRMAN: I can't tell you today
8 because we haven't heard the motions yet. We have
9 set aside a day on October 17th, I believe it is,
10 that we will be hearing arguments from the lawyers
11 on those motions. After we have heard the
12 arguments from the lawyers and then the response
13 from the proponent, the partnership, the panel
14 will decide whether or not to accept the motions,
15 which if we did, then we would suspend the
16 hearings, or whether or not we will not accept the
17 motions and we would proceed. But I can't tell
18 you how that will be until after we have heard the
19 arguments and also had our deliberations. That
20 will be on October 17th, and we will try to get a
21 decision out as quickly as possible after that.

22 Thank you both, thank you for very
23 good presentations. Actually, I should point out
24 that earlier when I asked if you wanted to speak
25 in Cree to have a translator so that members of

1 the panel could understand, I forgot that at the
2 far end of our table there is somebody who does
3 understand Cree, so you better not say anything
4 nasty about us.

5 Okay. Next? Are there others who
6 wish to make presentations?

7 MR. FRANK WASTESICOOT: Good
8 afternoon, my name is Frank Wastesicot. I'm from
9 this community and a member of York Factory First
10 Nation. I would like to welcome the panel as well
11 as everyone here in the community to listen and
12 give, get an aspect of the construction of the
13 Keeyask Dam.

14 I have been living here for the last
15 57 years with our members here at the community.
16 I grew up with a lot of members here who have left
17 this community to go back to school, and they come
18 back to this community, and we have been really
19 impacted because of the changes we always have
20 when we come back to a place of your home, and
21 then come back again, it has changed in a way
22 considerably, whether it has changed in good ways
23 or -- I have had several opportunities to listen
24 and also participate in previous meetings in
25 regards to construction, as well as the different

1 things in regards to getting a licence to
2 construct both the Keeyask.

3 And I know that most times, my mindset
4 sometimes is very much in terms of negative
5 because of previous historical issues that are
6 present all of the time within our members. I
7 know a lot of times -- our young people spoke this
8 morning, always looking at something that's
9 useful, that can be used, that can be done in our
10 own community, without the impacts of other things
11 that make us always struggling to get something
12 from where we -- what we want. Our needs are a
13 lot different from needs from other communities
14 down south. And I know that our neighboring
15 communities feel the same way too also, it is
16 always a struggle just to get things done, you
17 know, especially with health, work, employment,
18 even education. And I know that most times as a
19 community we all feel the same thing, we always
20 feel that there is things that need to be done
21 more in terms of having better things for our
22 children than what we have today for ourselves.

23 And I know that Keeyask, previously
24 that there was talk about building, constructing
25 this dam in order to sell power down south. And

1 you know, our mindset, my mindset has always been
2 like, there is something going to happen again.
3 Like the impacts are going to get more and more in
4 terms of how we deal with the issues, with our
5 members who want to follow the traditional way of
6 life.

7 Most times now to get out of the
8 community you need to fly out, you need to -- it
9 costs a lot of money just to get out to pursue
10 your traditional, or your way of life. Because
11 now it is pretty difficult to do anything in the
12 community, to fish, to hunt, the resources that
13 you want to continue to do. And sometimes a lot
14 of people struggle just to get what they want, you
15 know, better food, traditional food, traditional
16 things that we eat on a daily basis. And most
17 times our children are used to eating store bought
18 stuff, and they don't really want to eat that
19 stuff because they know -- they never ate it
20 before and sometimes it is foreign to some,
21 because they never tried eating it. But I know
22 the health of our community also is really
23 impacted by high blood pressure, we have got
24 issues with, like George was saying, skin problems
25 with water, water quality. And I have had, most

1 times try to do -- what should I do, like I used
2 to do before, go hunting and stuff like that, but
3 right now it is difficult just to do that
4 continuously all of the time. And that's
5 something that -- I don't want to see things
6 happening with our young people today also.

7 I have had most times looked at the
8 way the water is -- I always wondered, a friend of
9 mine was talking about like erosion, what is
10 underneath the water? Like when you have
11 something flowing all the time constantly under
12 water, like what is the thing underneath, beneath
13 the water, that gets pulled up? Just like the
14 weeds today, we see weeds growing along the shore
15 line there now that you never seen before. You
16 know, there is things growing. There is no
17 movement in the water, it becomes stagnant and it
18 can't move anywhere other than it stays there, or
19 it gets stored there when it is high -- water
20 levels are high, it gets stored. And then the
21 other time is when the shore line gets low and
22 water is sent out, it gets pushed back out in the
23 lake, and it comes back in again. But you bring
24 the cumulative effects from the bogs, the water,
25 all of the branches and stuff like that along the

1 shore line. So I notice a few times even on the
2 islands there, I seen some members from Split Lake
3 cleaning up along the shore lines of the islands,
4 and this was so much water, like all of the debris
5 is floating onto the islands so it is affecting
6 their way of life if they are fishing, you know,
7 commercial fishing.

8 But like I'm saying, I would like to
9 have more, you know, sometimes agreements, or even
10 the -- like the Burntwood/Nelson agreement, that
11 seems to take precedence over everything. How do
12 you get to work when in order to work you have to
13 join a union? And most times people aren't aware
14 of those issues. And sometimes our workers here,
15 you have to provide some information, and
16 sometimes people are not aware of that. And a few
17 times people have been called to come to work, and
18 sometimes they are not ready because they don't
19 have the things available for them to work. But
20 those issues like that takes precedence over
21 community members to also, you know, the
22 Burntwood/Nelson agreement seems to take
23 precedence over people who don't have the skills
24 to work up in dams like this.

25 So that's one of the biggest things

1 that needs to be identified also, is that as a
2 partner these things should be looked at in terms
3 of how we get work for our members, for all of the
4 Cree members that live around in those areas where
5 the dam is going to be built.

6 And also further down the resource
7 management areas need to be looked at in terms of
8 how that's going to be affected. Because I know
9 that a lot of elders here have identified various
10 places that they have visited and they have lived
11 in, and I don't think they went to see those
12 grounds because of impacts from the dam.

13 Also I wanted to relate to the
14 community members, the people that have negotiated
15 with Hydro and with also the Province in terms of
16 anything that they deal with in order to look at
17 the resources they have to give up. And I know
18 our First Nation people have given up a lot. They
19 have given up a lot of their knowledge to other
20 people. Because as knowledge holders we -- our
21 elders and people know a lot about our own land,
22 where we are living. And I know a lot of us know
23 how our land and our communities are today, the
24 impacts, the various things that we have to
25 constantly work at in order to get what we want.

1 And I have hope that things will
2 improve, things will be a lot better in the future
3 for the next generation of members, our community
4 members, and all of our First Nation people that
5 live in that area on the construction of these
6 dams. But I would like to thank you for coming in
7 and listening, and also to everyone participating
8 in this hearing that came up and said how you feel
9 about certain things that may be positive in the
10 end. Because most times, like I said earlier, I
11 have always looked at how I think about, you know,
12 the next day or next week or next month or next
13 year, how these changes are going to impact with
14 both the young people and also our lands and our
15 communities, and also all the fish and the animals
16 that habituate the lands and the water, especially
17 the water. So thank you.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
19 Mr. Wastesicot, Frank, thank you for your
20 presentation today.

21 MR. TED BLAND: Good afternoon ladies
22 and gentlemen, panel, our sister First Nations.
23 Glad to all see a big turnout for today, it is a
24 very important day for our community. We need to
25 have as much input as possible.

1 My name is Ted Bland. I'm an employee
2 of the Future Development of York Factory First
3 Nation. Future Development is an organization
4 that was established by Chief and Council to
5 negotiate with Manitoba Hydro. I'm also a witness
6 in the panel hearings that are going to be coming
7 up. We are going to be traveling around, you
8 know, as we did, we just came from Gillam and Fox
9 Lake, but we have to go to Thompson and Cross Lake
10 and then Winnipeg for the next few weeks, and get
11 cross-examined by different lawyers and different
12 participants or public interest groups.

13 It is very difficult to move forward
14 with this project. I'm a member of this
15 community, a proud member of York Factory. I have
16 to represent the voting population that decided
17 that we wanted to proceed with this project.

18 I remember going through the process
19 of consultation and, you know, we traveled to
20 Winnipeg, to Churchill, Thompson, York Factory,
21 and we held a lot of public meetings. Turnout
22 wasn't always that great, sometimes we only had a
23 few people. When we had our actual vote, the
24 majority of the voting members were from York
25 Factory First Nation, people on reserve. We had a

1 low percentage and we had a low turnout from the
2 outside community. And I think we had about 86
3 per cent of our population vote yes for this
4 project.

5 The consultation itself was difficult.
6 The ratification of the JKDA was a tough process
7 for everybody to swallow. And throughout the
8 whole process, you know, we sat down and we talked
9 about what was important and how this project
10 might be beneficial to us, though we also had to
11 look at the harmful impacts of what could possibly
12 happen. And that was difficult.

13 So today I sit here and, you know, I
14 hear people's stories and people talking about
15 what is happening here and how Hydro has impacted
16 us and how there is a lot of pain still.

17 I have been a leader in this community
18 before, in 2006 I was a Chief. And I always think
19 about what the Federal Government is doing and how
20 difficult it is for any leader in any community,
21 any First Nation to succeed. And how the Federal
22 Government has a strangle hold on First Nations,
23 they dictate everything, they dictate the amount
24 of money that we get every month. We have to
25 split it up with housing, education, social,

1 infrastructure, and we can barely make it. Every
2 single month it is a fight to make payroll. And I
3 know this, I have lived it, I got a lot of white
4 hairs from being Chief, and that's not a lie. I
5 barely made it. It is a tough job. I look at how
6 they are continuously imposing new bills and new
7 laws on us, it is never getting easier. Our
8 populations are growing, but the money stays the
9 same. Our standards of living are lower than
10 anywhere else in Canada, they are lower in
11 Manitoba. First Nations' living is low,
12 education, health, it is all lower in Manitoba.
13 Our funding we get for individuals per capita is
14 lower than anywhere, as First Nation people.

15 I look at a company, our organization
16 of public interest group, Canadians Taxpayers
17 Federation, you see them on TV all of the time.
18 They are pointing the finger at us down south.
19 Why are they getting so much money filtered to
20 them? What are they doing with it? Is it being
21 used properly? Are they spending the money
22 properly? Are they mismanaging it? Is there
23 misappropriation?

24 These four projects have generated
25 billions, billions of dollars that went down

1 south, billions. It has gone into all different
2 sectors of the south. It has gone into education,
3 business, health, social, infrastructure.

4 Manitoba Hydro is a Crown corporation. And how
5 did that impact us? You know, it took away our
6 livelihood, it took away our way of life.

7 I think about other public interest
8 groups that are going to be questioning us when we
9 get to the Winnipeg hearings. And I think what
10 right do you have, you know, we have suffered
11 enough. It is our opportunity today. I know that
12 if we continue on the path that we are today, we
13 can't rely on the Federal Government to sustain
14 us. We can't live off of what they are giving us
15 today. And I don't want to live off the Federal
16 Government, I don't even like the fact that we
17 have to. These are our resources up here.
18 Everybody else is getting rich from our resources,
19 our oil, our minerals, our water. I'm tired of
20 hearing about the poverty in our First Nations
21 here today in York Factory.

22 When I look at Keeyask, Keeyask is not
23 going to solve all of our problems, it is not
24 going to be the end all and make York Factory a
25 high and mighty community. But it is creating

1 employment, it is creating employment for our
2 young people and some of our older people.

3 I was in Keeyask probably about three
4 weeks ago. I went to see the staff, just to see
5 how they are doing, I wanted to make sure that
6 everybody was being treated fairly from management
7 in our contracts. And you should have seen the
8 light in their eyes, young people, happy, they are
9 contributing to their families, they are taking
10 money home, they are happy people. Like I said,
11 that's not the end all, but, you know, they are
12 doing something and I'm very proud of them. I
13 always hear, you know, what are these contracts,
14 what have they got; catering, security, employment
15 retention, they are mindless jobs. You can say
16 that to their faces.

17 This business arrangement, it is going
18 to give us a step in the right direction. It is
19 going to guide us to independence some day. I'm
20 just trying to breathe here, it is emotional for
21 me. I want people to think about the opportunity
22 for our young people, for our future generations.
23 We can't and we will not rely on the Federal
24 Government. We need to become independent, we
25 need to take control of our own life and our own

1 destiny. We need to take care of our own people
2 and become self-sustaining. If we can generate
3 enough revenue, we invest in our people, we build
4 capacity, we invest in outside businesses that
5 could generate revenue for us.

6 This project has always been a
7 struggle emotionally for a lot of people here.
8 And I think, you know, I think of the big picture
9 of where we need to get. I can't stay back there
10 anymore, I have got to think forward.

11 There has been a lot of impacts in
12 this community, even human life, from Manitoba
13 Hydro. I don't think that I will ever be
14 comfortable with where we are going. I see it as
15 the impacts of the project began in 1957,
16 everything that's happened has already happened,
17 and it wasn't from Keeyask. Keeyask is our
18 opportunity to do something, become independent.

19 As for these public interest groups,
20 you know, they are probably going to read these
21 comments that I'm making today, and I'm fine with
22 it, and I'm prepared to back it up. In my heart I
23 know what I want for this community. I will get
24 cross-examined, but that's fine. If I speak from
25 my heart, I know I will be right.

1 So, I guess, you know, I don't mean to
2 offend anybody, but this is the way I feel, and
3 I'm speaking as a community member. Throughout
4 the negotiations I listen, listen and get, you
5 know, get crap I guess we could say. Over the
6 years we have got a lot of crap, and we just take
7 it. So, I'm speaking for myself as a York Factory
8 member.

9 I guess the last thing I want to say
10 is think about our future again and think about
11 our children, think about taking that right step
12 in the right direction. We can move forward and
13 we can do things in a good way. This relationship
14 we have with Manitoba Hydro is a business
15 arrangement, strictly business, that's the way I
16 see it. Business to me is improving our life and
17 our livelihood.

18 There is an elder that made a quote on
19 the video there, which hasn't been played, but he
20 said -- you know, I'm sure you will see it, I
21 think it is William Beardy I believe -- the water
22 and the earth and the land sustained us for
23 generations and generations. Now the water and
24 the land won't sustain us again going forward. So
25 that makes a lot of sense to me today. Egosi.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
2 Ted.

3 Would this be a good opportunity to
4 show the video, or do we want to take a short
5 break and show the video after the break, Chief?

6 CHIEF CONSTANT: Let's have a break
7 and then show the video.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. We will take
9 about a ten minute break and we'll come back about
10 3:00 o'clock and we will show the video, and after
11 the video, others can make presentations.

12 (Proceedings recessed at 2:51 and
13 reconvened at 3:15 p.m.)

14 THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to come
15 back to order. I thought we had a very good first
16 couple of hours, there were some very good
17 presentations made. I think now we will watch the
18 video, and then following that we will open it up
19 to anyone else who wishes to make presentation.
20 So first the video.

21 (Video playing)

22 THE CHAIRMAN: We may have to carry on
23 in the natural daylight.

24 Now, I will open the floor again to
25 anyone who wishes to make any presentations.

1 Anyone who does wish to make a presentation,
2 please come forward now, and you can either come
3 up to the table at the front, or stay where you
4 are, and we have a cordless microphone.

5 (Video by students in Cranberry)

6 MR. JEFF BEARDY: We have another
7 video that we want to show. This video was put
8 together by our students who are in Cranberry.
9 They couldn't make it today, but we managed to get
10 this video to show. It is a slide video, and it
11 is something that the students had put together.
12 So we want to show this video now, it is from our
13 high school students who are away in Cranberry who
14 couldn't make it today. So this was a video that
15 was done up by our young people, like I mentioned,
16 who couldn't make it here today as they are away,
17 away from our community to attend high school.

18 But these are the young people who
19 have seen the devastation all of their lives.
20 Over the course of 20 years growing up in this
21 community, that's what they have seen and
22 witnessed. The erosion, the water fluctuations
23 over the years, the poor quality of water, right
24 on the land, and then the taps, the water that
25 comes through the taps, these are the experiences

1 that they have experienced and have seen
2 throughout their lives.

3 I think if they were here today they
4 would share that with you, that they have -- the
5 things that they have seen all of their lives, and
6 also that the water today and even over the past
7 ten years has changed the way our young people
8 spend their summertime. Many of them no longer
9 are able to swim in the water. Many of them are
10 no longer able to travel on the lakes, up and down
11 the river where we used to travel to go fish, to
12 go hunt, to go camping, to go swimming, those
13 areas have all been affected. There are very
14 limited resources for them to go and enjoy their
15 summers. There is only one area now where we go
16 to enjoy summer, which is down behind the arena,
17 and it is not a very good place. There were at
18 least seven beaches identified that we used to
19 have when we were growing up, our generation, and
20 those beaches no longer exist.

21 And so I think the message that they
22 want to get across is that they see the
23 devastation, they witness the hardships that our
24 people have had to experience because of the
25 flooding. And I think they are very concerned.

1 Their concern is, you know, what is Keeyask going
2 to do and how is it going to affect our community
3 today? But at the same time they want a better
4 future too for themselves. They want to see
5 things here in the community for themselves and
6 for their children as well. You heard it from the
7 young people that did their presentation, the
8 first group, the first four young people that came
9 up here, who I would like to say I'm very proud
10 of. They seemed very -- they were very
11 courageous.

12 And you hear the material things that
13 they would like to see. These are things that
14 they feel that would, you know, make things better
15 for them, life better for them here.

16 Like right now we are still having to
17 send our young people out for school, our young
18 people as old as 14 are still having to go, leave
19 their families to go get their education. And
20 this is something that is still very much
21 affecting our community. Our young people spoke
22 about this at a youth gathering we had in August,
23 our young people spoke about how hard it was to
24 have to leave their community to go further their
25 education.

1 There was a lot of talk about the
2 quality of our water and how the water has
3 changed, or how it changes throughout the summer.
4 And for the people in York Landing, you know that
5 happens every year and it is always different
6 every year, the water is either brown, or the
7 water is -- you know, you see all of this stuff on
8 top of the water. There is different types of
9 water that we get every year. And the young
10 people see that.

11 And I think that for them they would
12 just like to have a better future. Like everyone
13 else in the community, they want to see something
14 better for the community of York Landing. A lot
15 of them now are out getting their education, they
16 are thinking about careers in environmental
17 monitoring and wanting to be very much a part of,
18 you know, working with Keeyask or with Conawapa in
19 the future.

20 So that shows, like there is potential
21 for them in the future to work in these projects
22 as managers, not only as like labourers and people
23 in these other jobs, but we want to see our people
24 and young people become leaders in these projects,
25 you know, as managers and supervisors, those kind

1 of positions.

2 So with that, I want to acknowledge
3 these students from Cranberry, and I hope you
4 enjoyed their video, and I'm sure that their
5 presentation would have been just as great. So
6 thank you.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor
8 Beardy. I would like, on behalf of the Commission
9 I would like you to thank the high school students
10 in Cranberry who did this presentation. I think,
11 speaking for myself and I suspect my other
12 panelists, it was an excellent presentation and it
13 will contribute to our record. I would also note,
14 just a personal comment, that judging by the young
15 students we saw earlier today, this video or slide
16 show that we saw, the future of your community is
17 in good hands. Just keep them in school.

18 Now, I would like to turn it back to
19 anyone in the audience who has more to say, who
20 would like to add to the dialogue that we are
21 having today, would like to give us your opinions.
22 We have heard from a number of young people, both
23 in person and by slide show and what they think.
24 We have heard from some elders and other leaders
25 in your community, and there is still room and

1 time for more comment if any of you wish to add
2 any more to what we've heard?

3 MR. JOE SINCLAIR: Good afternoon
4 ladies and gentlemen, dignitaries and visitors to
5 our community. My name is Joe Sinclair, I'm a new
6 member of the York Factory First Nation and I'm
7 proud to say I am.

8 You have heard comments from our
9 elders and you have heard the comments from our
10 youth. And being partners with Manitoba Hydro
11 now, I would like to see us all get together if
12 there is difficulty in the communities with our
13 waterways, with our water system, our shore line,
14 I for one would not like to see Hydro throw money
15 at the band and say, okay, here is your money, go
16 find a way to fix it. We are partners. Let's all
17 do it together, all five of us, let's work on
18 getting together and really working on something
19 sustainable so that we can have a safe waterway, a
20 beautiful waterway, not just something that we can
21 use to power up to his house, or some big company,
22 corporation down south. Like somebody was saying,
23 this is our resource, let us all get together and
24 work on sharing that resource.

25 I'm sorry, but there was something

1 else in my mind and I can't really think about it
2 right now, but that is my main concern, let's all
3 work on getting something developed properly for
4 the people, not just our generation but for future
5 generations, because they are going to be our
6 leaders. And they have some valid concerns and I
7 sure would like to see something develop for them
8 so that they will have an easier, I guess easier
9 lifestyle than we have had or are going through
10 right now. Thank you.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for
12 that. Anyone else? Yes? His memory has come
13 back.

14 MR. JOE SINCLAIR: We went on a trip
15 down the Nelson River there a week ago, two weeks
16 ago, and I guess what I was saying about fixing
17 something together as partners in this
18 organization with Hydro, we had -- to me it was a
19 sacred moment out there when we were walking on
20 Reindeer Island and somebody was saying that it is
21 going to be 20 per cent flooded, affected. And I
22 was walking on there, and I don't know, I think it
23 is going to be a lot more than 20 per cent. And
24 if, you know, it really had an impact on me and
25 I'm just kind of wondering now what kind of impact

1 it is going to have or our future generations when
2 they go look for caribou, go look for sturgeon, go
3 visit their relatives down river, will they be
4 safe? We just about lost -- thank goodness we
5 didn't -- we just about lost somebody in that
6 river that day. But I'm thankful we didn't.

7 And anyways, I'm just thinking of the
8 future for the -- our future generation, how much
9 of that land is going to be recoverable? How much
10 of that environment is going to be able to sustain
11 our youth? What kind of impact is it going to
12 have on them? You have heard comments from our
13 youth what kind of impact, how can we solve that,
14 how can we help them? Let's get together, solve
15 it, let's work on it, don't fight each other,
16 let's work hard on it and try to develop it for
17 them. Please, let's work for them.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you again, Joe.
19 Anyone else wish to say anything?

20 MS. NANCY WILLAIMS: Good afternoon,
21 I'm Nancy Williams and I belong to the York
22 Factory First Nation. I traveled from York
23 Factory as a young child, six and a half years
24 old, and I remember that journey coming from York
25 Factory and how beautiful it was being able to

1 travel with my family, and also seeing the land
2 when we were coming down to mile 352 and the
3 Hudson Bay line, and also the first year that we
4 were here in York Landing. I've seen all the
5 changes that have happened throughout the years,
6 coming home from school each summer and the
7 changes, the devastation to the land. Even coming
8 home today on the ferry, just watching as we were
9 traveling, the shore line, the way it looks, and
10 wondering how is it going to be in the future for
11 my grandchildren, for my great grandchildren? Are
12 they going to be able to live on this land here?

13 And you know, even the quality of fish
14 is different. I don't eat fish that much, but
15 sometimes when I am given fish and that, I clean
16 it, and I notice the change in the way it is. And
17 I'm very glad that Flora mentioned, you know, the
18 fish and the animals can't speak for themselves,
19 but I'm sure that they would say that they are not
20 able to breathe in that water, that they are being
21 killed.

22 And also at one time, I think it was a
23 few summers ago, I attended one of the meetings
24 that was here in the gym here, and I had mentioned
25 that, you know, maybe Manitoba Hydro should look

1 at other ways of developing power that can be
2 used. And I had mentioned wind power but, you
3 know, I never explained myself as to why I said
4 that. But now, you know, all of the years that
5 there has been negotiations, we are always told
6 that we can negotiate for what we want, but I
7 believe that's not true, because everything seems
8 to be already set as to what the bands will be
9 given. Because a meeting in the spring, I think
10 it was in the spring or during the summer, I was
11 mentioning that when we went to York Factory in
12 2010, and when we were flying along the way, I
13 noticed there was a road and I asked about that,
14 where does that road lead to? And I was told that
15 it was going to Conawapa. And then at the meeting
16 here I asked, why did they build it way ahead of
17 time? And looking at one of the slides, that it
18 was already planned back in 1970, I think it was.
19 So everything is already in place for what is
20 going to happen in the future.

21 And one of the things that I had said
22 was about that wind power, was -- I didn't want to
23 say it at the time but, you know, there is always
24 so much bullshit coming from Manitoba Hydro that
25 they have enough wind power to I guess make some

1 kind of power for themselves. Thank you.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Someone is over there.

3 MR. ANDREW MOOSE: Hello, my name is
4 Andrew Moose, I am a York Factory band member. I
5 have been living here for about 20 years now. I
6 seen a lot of changes when I have been living
7 here, especially the animals and fish and stuff,
8 shore lines. When I first went exploring I saw a
9 lot of wildlife, but not lately though, the way it
10 used to be, the first time I moved here. And I
11 have been fishing, it has been kind of hard, maybe
12 catching more branches than fish lately. And the
13 nets are slimy. And the fish taste kind of
14 different actually. I usually distribute them to
15 the elders after I'm done, and the community
16 members around there.

17 I have seen a lot of impact since I
18 have been living here. That's all I have to say,
19 thanks.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for those
21 comments. Anyone else? Cathy, right over here in
22 the front row.

23 DOREEN: Good afternoon, my name is
24 Doreen. There was a question that I wanted to
25 ask. My question is, there is already dams, there

1 is already dams all around us, and then they are
2 speaking of getting Keeyask and Conawapa. It
3 seems to me there is more dams going up in the
4 north area than down south. Why is that?

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, I can probably
6 give a bit of an answer, but that is really an
7 answer for somebody from Manitoba Hydro. I don't
8 know if there is anybody here from Hydro who would
9 wish to respond to that? Marc? Halina?

10 MR. ST. LAURENT: My name is Marc
11 St. Laurent, I'm with Manitoba Hydro.

12 So to answer your question, the reason
13 why there is more development in Northern Manitoba
14 than there is in the south is because the water
15 that flows to Hudson's Bay, it comes from the
16 south of Manitoba as well as Saskatchewan and
17 Alberta, and it all flows towards Lake Winnipeg
18 and up toward the north. So it all flows into the
19 Nelson River, so it is a very large river. The
20 rivers on the south are a lot smaller. So a lot
21 of the large developments are in the north because
22 that's where the water is.

23 There has been hydro development in
24 the south on the Winnipeg River, and those are
25 very small, they are quite a bit smaller than the

1 stations in the north. And the Winnipeg River in
2 the south is -- that was first developed a long
3 time ago, and for the most part it has been all
4 developed, there isn't really a lot of other
5 opportunities to develop on the Winnipeg River.
6 So now Hydro is looking at moving north and
7 developing more potential here.

8 So does that answer your question?

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Does that answer
10 satisfy you? I mean it is an engineering -- I
11 guess it is the nature of the rivers, as
12 Mr. St. Laurent said. Thank you.

13 For those who couldn't hear her
14 because she didn't have the mic, she said she
15 understands but she doesn't necessarily like it.

16 Are there any others who wish to
17 provide their point of view? We still have almost
18 about 45 minutes, if anybody else would like to
19 speak? Yes?

20 SPEAKER: (Cree spoken). I'm thankful
21 to be here today, I'm thankful to be part of this
22 community, to be a member of this community, and
23 I'm glad to voice my concerns for my community as
24 a community member of the environment. And also I
25 want to make, I would like to see a lot of

1 activities, like create some activities for our
2 young people. Since I have been here I seen a lot
3 of kids playing in the bush, and there is a lot of
4 animals in the bush here, it is not safe for them.
5 I think it is about time that we have a playground
6 for our children that are up the hill and also
7 here. I would like to see that happening in our
8 community.

9 Also we always talk about winter road.
10 When is it going to happen? We always talk about
11 that. It is about time we have an all-weather
12 road into Split Lake. We have too much money
13 coming from Hydro, from different departments, why
14 can we not build an all-weather road for us?
15 That's what we have been the fighting for all of
16 these years. Let's put our act together and let's
17 see that happening.

18 A lot of us here in the community, we
19 would like to see that access road, all-weather
20 road in our community. That's what I would like
21 to see. That's one of the things that I would
22 like. I know that. I want to stay positive with
23 other things. Yes, we lost a lot of our
24 spirituality in this community. Not many of us
25 worship where we are supposed to worship. That's

1 why under the community approval process, I did a
2 proposal trying to build a church, a new church
3 here in the community. That's part of our lives
4 to have that, to be healthy, to stay healthy in
5 our environment in our own community. Let's have
6 that feeling that we had a long time ago with our
7 elders.

8 Yes, I didn't grow up here, I grow up
9 in Split Lake, Manitoba. Many times people say,
10 why don't you go back to your community? This is
11 my community now, it will stay that way. And I
12 just want to say, you know, there's a lot of
13 changes, like what the young people say, like what
14 we heard here today. Us growing up, growing up in
15 Split Lake there were a lot of -- there has been a
16 lot of changes, and I start working together here.
17 I like to see, like what Joe said, we Cree
18 Nations, we like to work together. Where is the
19 Chief from Split Lake? Where is the Chief from
20 War Lake? They are not here today. This would be
21 working together. That's what I like to see, but
22 I have been to meetings, I never see four chiefs
23 together in a meeting. This is -- this is really
24 what I like to see, voicing our concerns today.
25 Yes, we have the people here that will decide

1 whether we are going to have a licence. We work
2 hard, Future Development team, we put whatever
3 work we had as a team. So we are here today
4 voicing our concern, and we want what is best for
5 our community, and we want what is best for the
6 future generation. Thank you.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.
8 Are there any other comments?

9 MR. GEORGE BEARDY: Good afternoon, my
10 name is George Beardy, band member for York
11 Factory First Nation.

12 One of the things that I, that's been
13 talked about already is the water quality in the
14 community. The community was moved from York
15 Factory to York Landing in 1957, and the only dam
16 that was up was Kelsey. And at that time the
17 whole community that lived here from 1957, until
18 the dam that was built in Kettle, got their water
19 directly from the lake. And there was no need for
20 us to boil it before we can drink it because it
21 was that good. After the dams were built further
22 up north, Kettle, Limestone, Long Spruce,
23 Limestone, the water quality dropped, and we had
24 to get a water treatment plant set up so that our
25 community can have good drinking water, potable

1 water they call it.

2 Now we are having problems even
3 providing good clean water because we can't keep
4 our water up to par sometimes. Because I think a
5 couple of months ago, or a couple of weeks ago,
6 the hydro was cut off in this community, so we had
7 to keep water in pails, pots, whatever. And we
8 had some in the tub so we could use the washroom.
9 And then when we drained that water there was silt
10 at the bottom of the tub. Now, it must have come
11 from the pipes, it must have come from somewhere,
12 but it shouldn't be there. I think, I mean it is
13 a kind of a concern. And we really need good
14 quality water for the people of this community.
15 Otherwise people are not going to be -- they'll
16 get sick and whatnot. And like the other people
17 said, the water down there, the students, the
18 children of York Landing cannot swim in the water
19 because of the effect it has on them. Some of
20 them break out and what have you.

21 And so that's all I really wanted to
22 say, because that's been a big change. That was
23 50 years ago. What is going happen in the next 50
24 years when Conawapa and Keeyask come up? I don't
25 know. I don't think anybody knows here. Thanks.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, George.
2 Anybody else? We're starting to run out of time.
3 Take your chances while you still can. I will try
4 one more time, anybody else? We do have somebody
5 over here.

6 MR. ROY REDHEAD: My name is Roy
7 Redhead. I'm the environmental coordinator for
8 York Factory First Nation. I have been involved
9 in the Hydro negotiations and discussions since
10 Tataskweyak came to us with their AIP for the
11 Keeyask project and wanted us to sign on. It was
12 a BCR, via BCR. We choose not to go that route,
13 we just decided we wanted to go on our own, and
14 that's the way it happened.

15 And the negotiations or discussions,
16 they proved difficult on many levels. I won't go
17 into them here, but at the end of the day this is
18 what we emerged with, this business proposition,
19 this deal that wouldn't generate any money until
20 the first turbine began to generate some revenue,
21 much needed revenue as Ted eloquently pointed out.
22 But the reason primarily that we need to enter
23 into these arrangements, or this agreement is
24 because the Federal Government does not honour
25 their Treaty rights. I find it ironic that the

1 Metis got this huge settlement, and that they
2 advanced their trapping rights, when it took them
3 20 years to get to the Supreme Court and to have
4 their trapping rights recognized and to be, and to
5 have this huge settlement that they could
6 implement their education, their, the things that
7 they desperately need. And it will take us that
8 long and that much longer probably to secure that
9 arrangement. And probably longer because we need
10 to do all of the research, the work necessary to
11 get our -- to get those rights recognized for
12 hunting and fishing. So as Ted says, we need to
13 engage. Because the only kind of economy that we
14 can create, that's readily identifiable, is the
15 hydroelectric power, and that created the
16 situation for us where it has been hard to deal
17 with because of the environmental effects from the
18 past hydroelectric development, the ones at
19 Kelsey.

20 I was born here in '57, and when I was
21 growing up the water was clear, you could see
22 pebbles on the river bottom here, and up the river
23 and down the lake. And the first sign that
24 anything troubling was going to happen when we
25 were young was some cribbing floated into the bay

1 here, and one of our friends ripped his leg open
2 on one of those big spikes that was sticking
3 there. So that was the first indication that
4 something was going on somewhere, or that we knew
5 of anyway. There was no consultation. We were
6 not informed.

7 So through the years the cumulative
8 effects, the 20 years, the 30, 40 years, it is
9 quite evident, the land erosion, the sedimentation
10 in the water that George spoke about. The water
11 is difficult to treat here. And governments,
12 Hydro will say, well, we have settled, you signed
13 the deal, and they will fight us with every legal
14 power they have got to not go any further than
15 what has already been offered and negotiated and
16 what is on the table.

17 And then this arrangement with
18 Keeyask, we have got to wait until that first
19 turbine spins. And then the environmental effects
20 have been really difficult because, you know, at
21 the end of the day we have to live with the
22 adverse effects arrangement wherein we have to
23 think about what has happened to us with
24 hydroelectric development. And for us it is a
25 unique situation because we were relocated and

1 then they gave us just a little community trapline
2 to exercise our hunting and trapping rights, just
3 a little wee trapline. No way, this whole
4 community can't survive on one little community
5 trapline. And then the hydroelectric development
6 occurred where the loss -- or the elders, our
7 people couldn't transmit the knowledge, or the
8 hunting knowledge the way that they could, the way
9 that they could have, had we been out on the
10 coast. So that eroded to the loss, to the loss of
11 our -- to the loss of the exercise of our Treaty
12 rights to hunt, to fish, to live off the land, to
13 know the medicines and the harvesting that we
14 could have lived that way. So we lost that way.

15 And increasingly our people have grown
16 sicker as a result, because we rely on, we are
17 forced to rely on processed food. So that's
18 contributing to our overall health and welfare as
19 a people here in this community. But you know,
20 for me it has been, personally for me it has been
21 a really, really hard exercise, it has been really
22 tough to go through this. On one hand I recognize
23 that for the future we need to do this. We want
24 to do this for the benefit of future generations,
25 for the benefit so that we can create the

1 capacity, we can create a good future for our
2 young people, and that they need to understand
3 what has happened with this. And to look down the
4 road and to say that -- you know, we've been put
5 through a lot as a people, you know, the
6 residential schools for example, and the loss of
7 spirituality that that created. She talked about
8 that, the loss of spirituality. And what do we
9 need to do -- and I believe it is still language,
10 it is still letting that language be our guide.
11 It is our language, we need to preserve our
12 language. We need to get back out on the land, to
13 have those programs for our young people so that
14 they can learn how to live off the land, and to
15 exercise, and to be able to do, to live the way we
16 did at one time, and then to have access to that
17 area, because the land does not sustain anything
18 around here since Kelsey was built.

19 You know, 50 years, the animals have
20 not come back to a large extent. They are just
21 starting to, it has only been in the recent decade
22 or so that we have seen the pickerel start to
23 spawn up river. There is a harvest there every
24 year annually now, just out here. So they do come
25 back, eventually they do come back. And the

1 caribou are starting to be more and more here with
2 the fire, as a result of the fire there is more
3 animals this way. There is caribou out here this
4 summer now. We haven't seen caribou I don't
5 think, at least I haven't anyway, but there seem
6 to be more animals, more caribou out here in the
7 summer now. Because of that fire they were pushed
8 this way. That's what we think.

9 And in terms of the benefits that this
10 business arrangement will accrue over the long
11 term, those are the things that we are wanting, we
12 are looking for. And the benefits aren't
13 immediate. That's the other bad thing about this
14 arrangement is that the benefits aren't immediate,
15 and that's what we will be looking for in the
16 future for Conawapa. Because, you know, this
17 poverty, this lack of housing, the opportunities,
18 they are grinding on us as a people. They are
19 grinding on our quality of life, you know, and
20 people want relief. You know, you can hear it
21 here today when you are out here, they want
22 relief, they want relief from what the Federal
23 Government is imposing upon our people.

24 And over the long term, that's what we
25 are hoping for as a people, is to secure those

1 benefits for our people through this arrangement
2 and others that will follow. We are hoping that,
3 you know, the Clean Environment Commission will
4 hear that and begin to make recommendations to
5 Hydro that, hey, look, you guys need to open your
6 ears and hear what they are telling you, you know,
7 that the benefits from this particular arrangement
8 are very narrow because, you know. And then that
9 we need, that you need to work with the people and
10 to acknowledge that there are damages and that
11 they need to secure those arrangements that will
12 benefit them for the future in the long run. We
13 need to have these arrangements with them, not
14 just for us, but for the whole province. Because
15 it is primarily the province that will benefit.

16 Those are my comments today. Thank
17 you.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
19 Roy. Any other comments? One person over here.

20 MR. WAYNE REDHEAD: Good afternoon, my
21 name is Wayne Redhead and I'm a York Factory First
22 Nation member. I also work for the First Nation
23 under the Future Development Program as the
24 project coordinator. I had some doubts and
25 speculation about whether I should make some

1 comments this afternoon, because I have already
2 felt that I'm already part of a relationship with
3 Manitoba Hydro, and a partnership, and I didn't
4 want to speak ill of that partnership, of that
5 relationship. But I think that, well, I certainly
6 feel that -- the majority of the time I do feel
7 that I have a lot of great concern about the
8 relationship that we are going into with Manitoba
9 Hydro and the other Cree Nations. But I don't
10 want to speak for all the Cree Nations, because I
11 certainly feel that they can speak for themselves.
12 But this time I can only say a few words for
13 myself and express some of those concerns.

14 I've always had a concern about the
15 environment, concern about our people. As a Cree
16 person living here in York Landing, as some of
17 these other people here, I have lived here pretty
18 well all of my life. I was born in York Factory
19 also, and I was one, not quite one when we arrived
20 here in York Landing, so I have lived pretty well
21 all of my life in York Landing. But my
22 understanding as a Cree person is that we were all
23 children of this land. We come from this land.
24 And I grew up understanding that all things are
25 made equal, all things are equal. And from my

1 Cree Worldview I can ask, do we have dominion over
2 all? There is a question that I can ask of
3 everybody, and I certainly can feel that everyone
4 would have their own answer or view of that. But
5 as a Cree person, and being a steward of this
6 land, that is how I feel and know.

7 What I hold out for is hope for a more
8 honourable future in which the resources can be
9 shared. And I think that Terry or some other
10 person has expressed that in going into this
11 relationship is a step in that direction. But at
12 the same time I feel like it is just the best way,
13 it is just the best direction that our people can
14 take. What has affected us is that the treatment,
15 so to speak, like the destruction of this land and
16 the environment, and this is something that we
17 want to go into and contribute to that. Is that a
18 step that we want to take to heal, when we look at
19 healing ourselves? That is the dilemma, part of
20 the dilemma that we face, is the disease -- what
21 do you call that -- the medicine, so to speak.

22 I also have continued concern in this
23 relationship and this partnership, the respect and
24 trust. Over the last -- like I have been involved
25 in this for about seven years now, and I have

1 always had issues with respect and trust myself.
2 But I lost -- it has come back where I felt that
3 we weren't getting that respect and trust from
4 Manitoba Hydro. We weren't getting that respect,
5 but trust issues come into play in that when there
6 is no respect. So those go hand in hand, there is
7 no respect, there is no trust. And those issues
8 continue on even though we have signed an
9 agreement, a JKDA.

10 We still have differences of opinion
11 on how those things are understood. You can get
12 two lawyers in a room and they can argue all day
13 about what a certain line means, or a certain word
14 means, or a certain interpretation of a word in
15 any legal document, and some judge or somebody
16 will decide what the heck it means. But to me,
17 from my view, from where I sit, I can read a legal
18 document and try to understand what that means. I
19 put my own interpretation to it, and have my
20 lawyer, our lawyer interpret it from our, try and
21 interpret it from our view.

22 Traditional knowledge, there are
23 principles that are in the JKDA, and one of them,
24 one of those principles is equal weight of that
25 traditional knowledge in the JKDA, or I should say

1 the EIS. I have read through a lot of that
2 material along with some of our negotiators, and I
3 agree there wasn't equal weight given to that,
4 many of those other principles fall in traditional
5 knowledge principles. There isn't too much -- if
6 you take a read on it and you look at traditional
7 knowledge, and you try to understand what it is,
8 what traditional knowledge is, and you read
9 through there, you can certainly realize and know
10 that there is an equal weight in the EIS, as
11 compared to western science.

12 I also wanted to comment on Cree world
13 view. As I said earlier, do we have dominion over
14 all? But that's just kind of a restating what I
15 said earlier. We put a lot of time and effort
16 into, us the four Cree Nations, into preparing
17 that, putting that together. The Cree Worldview
18 just came from the four First Nations. It wasn't
19 speaking for all of the Cree Nations, but it
20 certainly spoke from our view as the four Cree
21 Nations. We had a lot of people involved in there
22 where there was elders, youth, and middle age guys
23 like me in there, putting our thoughts into
24 creating it, the Cree Worldview. And the
25 Environmental Impact Statement and the studies

1 that went into it certainly have been leading up
2 to, they still go on somewhat, not as actively as
3 they used to in the past years. But the JKDA was
4 signed back in 2009, and the negotiating process
5 that took place prior to that, and we were still
6 caught up in doing the negotiations for the JKDA
7 that we had very little time to do our studies.
8 And we had a lack of resources also in doing a
9 proper study during those years. But the JKDA was
10 signed, like I say in 2009, and then the studies
11 kept on going. But now we have a better
12 understanding of the effects and impacts, but that
13 was after the JKDA was signed.

14 So for me, the way I look at it, the
15 process was backwards, it was flip-flopped. There
16 was more promises and money put on the table
17 first, before a full understanding of impacts and
18 effects. So, like I say, to me, I saw it as
19 backwards. It was putting -- how do you call
20 that -- the cart before the horse, so to speak.
21 That's how I felt, that's how I seen it, that's
22 how I still see it. And if we were to do -- if we
23 had done the environmental studies prior to the
24 signing of JKDA, I'm sure that -- I'm pretty
25 positive we would have got different results than

1 we had back in 2009.

2 I recall during the days leading up to
3 the Northern Flood Agreement, I just got out of
4 high school, and we stayed here, my parents and
5 grandparents talk about what was happening there,
6 and I used to go attend those meetings too. I
7 used to make myself available at the band office,
8 trying to gather information on everything and
9 anything that I could get at the time. I was
10 still young but I wanted to get involved in
11 things. They recall hearing, my parents and
12 grandparents, the elders of the community saying
13 to the people that were involved in negotiations
14 to bring back something, don't bring back words,
15 or paper, words on paper. And other people have
16 expressed that here, George, that we don't really
17 have -- we haven't really had anything in the way
18 of proper structure, infrastructure here in the
19 community. We have money on paper, but we don't
20 have that transmitted into infrastructure. Like I
21 see what George had expressed earlier about
22 housing, roads, water -- I just got stuck there --
23 like water treatment and water delivery, all of
24 those things that you need to make a community
25 worthwhile living in and not having to live in

1 poverty, but to have a better way of life.

2 Our way of life has been taken away
3 from us and we need to adapt to another way of
4 life on the reserve, in the community.

5 When you look at cumulative effects of
6 all of the Hydro development activities coming
7 from Southern Manitoba all the way to the mouth of
8 the river, including the Hudson Bay, and you
9 really take all of the activities and look at all
10 of the effects and impacts that that activity has
11 done, the impacts on fish, wildlife, birds,
12 medicines, plants, trees, soil, everything. To
13 me, I can wake up sometimes, or go to bed
14 sometimes thinking that I'm going to wake up and
15 the river is dead, that all of this activity is
16 going to eventually kill the river. If you
17 compare it to how the river was 50 years ago to
18 what it is now, to what it is going to be 50 years
19 from now, that's exactly where this river is going
20 to end up. It is going to be devoid of life,
21 devoid of fish, devoid of everything.

22 So I will leave you with what I have
23 said before, we are all children of this land and
24 all things are made equal. Egosi.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: This might be our last

1 commentator, unless others are very keen on it.

2 We have one more I believe.

3 MS. GEORGINA BEARDY: Hi, my name is
4 Georgina Beardy, my spirit name is (Cree spoken).
5 I come -- well, I was part of the Future
6 Development team, but I come to talk as a mother,
7 grandmother, auntie, a sister and a friend. Being
8 a mother living in York Landing is a struggle.

9 It is hard for me to say what I want
10 to say about the Hydro dam developments. It lays
11 heavy on my heart for my children, my
12 grandchildren. And I voted no to both, but I
13 still continue to work for our community. When
14 you see our children, our youth in our community,
15 they struggle for shelter, education, recreation,
16 employment. They still have to leave to go away
17 to school. It was hard to even -- I was one that
18 went away to school, and then on top of that you
19 have to let your own children go at a young age
20 away to school. You know, there has got to be
21 more to what there is than there is now.

22 And a lot of our traditional knowledge
23 keepers are gone, a lot of them have passed on.
24 We are just in the process of collecting a lot of
25 oral history and knowledge with what we have now.

1 You know, all of these impacts affected us,
2 including our environment.

3 And as a mother, I love my community,
4 I love the land, it connects me to my very being.
5 It doesn't matter if I go anywhere else, my
6 community is my home and I belong here.

7 We went for a trip to Keeyask by boat,
8 it was so beautiful being on the water. It just
9 took me back to when I was a little girl and I
10 used to travel on the river with my grandparents.
11 And at the same time you see the water, how
12 powerful it is. I'm always amazed how powerful
13 water is when I see it.

14 And when in prayer you give thanks for
15 the water, it sustains all life. Without water no
16 one would be here. And for us women, we give
17 life, we carry babies in the water in our bodies.
18 We have to respect the water. We need to reclaim
19 our spirituality, customs, traditions for our
20 community and our future generations.

21 And what does Hydro want to do?
22 Control it. There is a change, and now is the
23 time to -- sitting here listening to everybody
24 talk, you know, I have to move forward. And I'm
25 thinking about the benefits that they dangle, you

1 don't get those for years. And the kids, the
2 youth in our communities, they struggle, why can't
3 they get it now? Little kids were asking for
4 that. Why do you dangle it 12 or 10 years down
5 the road?

6 Thank you. I wanted to say what is in
7 my heart. Thank you.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,
9 Georgina.

10 Are there any others who wish to share
11 their views or feelings on this matter?

12 Well, I think we have had a very good
13 afternoon. We have had a number of people speak
14 on a wide range of points of view, and I think we
15 have heard from a wide range of people in your
16 community, everywhere from 10 or 11 year olds
17 right up to elders in your community. I want to
18 thank you all for coming out here today, for
19 participating today in a way that's important to
20 us as a Commission.

21 I can't -- well, some of you -- I
22 obviously can't please all of you, or we the
23 Commission obviously can't please all of you,
24 because some of you would like us to say no and
25 some of you would like us to say yes. At this

1 point I can't tell you what we will say, it is
2 still a long way down the road. But I will tell
3 you that all of the points of view that we have
4 heard expressed today will be part of our
5 considerations when we get into our deliberative
6 period.

7 Our role is -- in this whole very
8 complex process that some of you have spoken of,
9 has been going on for well over a decade now,
10 moving towards the construction of Keeyask -- our
11 role is a relatively small and short one, but it
12 is a fairly significant one. I know that most, if
13 not all, of you in this room have probably
14 attended dozens of meetings, and at times you
15 probably wonder why you need to attend another
16 one, but I thank you for coming out today and
17 choosing to attend this one.

18 Finally, I would just like to thank
19 the leadership in this community, the Chief and
20 Council for giving us the privilege of coming into
21 your community today. I would also like to thank
22 everybody in the community for their very fine
23 hospitality.

24 Now, Chief Constant, do you wish to
25 have an elder close with a prayer at this point or

1 later? At this point we will just close. Elder
2 Beardy will close our portion of the day.

3 ELDER FLORA BEARDY: I too would like
4 to thank everybody that is here today. It was
5 wonderful to hear all your concerns and thoughts,
6 especially the youth, and I want to make sure they
7 thank the youth of Cranberry. I would like to
8 thank our guests for being here today. And we
9 will close now, I will say my prayer in Cree.

10 (Closing prayer)

11 (Concluded 5:00 p.m.)

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REPORTER'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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