

MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

LAKE WINNIPEG REGULATION REVIEW
UNDER THE WATER POWER ACT

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Transcript of Proceedings
Held at the MultiPlex Centre
Norway House First Nation, Manitoba
THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2015
FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2015

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APPEARANCES

CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

Terry Sargeant - Chairman
Edwin Yee - Commissioner
Neil Harden - Commissioner
Beverly Suek - Commissioner
Cathy Johnson - Commission Secretary
Joyce Mueller - Administrative Assistant
Bob Armstrong - Report writer

MANITOBA HYDRO

Dale Hutchison

NORWAY HOUSE FIRST NATION

Chief Ron Evans
Deputy Chiefe Gilbert Fredette
Councillor Loretta Bayer
Councillor Samantha Folster

Ms. Loretta Mowatt

Mr. James Dixon

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1 THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2015

2 UPON COMMENCING AT 9:00 A.M.

3 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: We are going to
4 get going, some people want to attend the funeral.
5 We are going to ask Elder Eileen Apetagon to come
6 up and open with a prayer.

7 (Opening prayer)

8 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Thank you,
9 Eileen.

10 Our agenda for today, we are going to
11 have welcoming remarks by our chief and council
12 that are present. We will introduce the guests,
13 and then we will have presentations from the Clean
14 Environment Commission and Manitoba Hydro, at
15 which point I think we will take a lunch break,
16 because we have some questions for our guests.
17 And then we will have our presentation, our Cree
18 Nation presentation this afternoon, beginning with
19 the elders, fishermen, trappers and youth, and I
20 believe that will take us to supper break. And
21 then we are going to just leave the floor open
22 this evening, we will go until 9:00, just to
23 accommodate those people that are attending the
24 funeral and can't attend during the day because of
25 work. And then we will close for this day and we

1 will continue tomorrow for half a day, to see if
2 there is anybody that we have missed. And Norway
3 House Cree Nation will be doing a presentation as
4 well on behalf of our First Nation.

5 And I'm going to ask -- we are going
6 to introduce the guests now -- maybe just stand up
7 and introduce yourselves. With the Clean
8 Environment Commission, we will start with the
9 Clean Environment Commission. Maybe, Cathy, you
10 can come and introduce the guests, and then stand
11 up.

12 We will be providing lunch around
13 12:00 and we will have supper around 5:00. So
14 those meals are provided. Once we figure out our
15 coffee machine, we will have coffee. But there is
16 water and refreshments, there is juice there. And
17 washrooms are out this way, and you just go across
18 the main area and they are by the lobby.

19 So we will ask Cathy to come -- we
20 will ask the chairman to come and introduce the
21 Clean Environment Commission.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Loretta. I
23 got caught out there, I saw this big map on the
24 wall of Norway House communities and I was
25 studying it, that's why I was out of the room when

1 you started the proceeding.

2 Good morning. It is nice to be here
3 in your community. I was telling the chief just a
4 few minutes ago how impressed I am by this
5 community. It is a beautiful setting on the
6 river, it must be quite stunning in the middle of
7 summer. It also looks like a very prosperous and
8 progressive community, and that is a testament to
9 your community leadership. And I would like to
10 say well done. We're glad we are here. We had
11 planned on being here last year, but because of
12 some unfortunate circumstances, we had to postpone
13 until this week. I think we got a break on the
14 weather by coming this week, it was beautiful
15 yesterday, and today it is supposed to be as well.

16 I would like to introduce, for those
17 that don't know me, my name is Terry Sargeant.
18 I'm the chair of the Manitoba Clean Environment
19 Commission. On the panel with me are, at the far
20 end, Edwin Yee, Bev Suek, and Neil Harden. We
21 also have staff with us in the front row, Cathy
22 Johnson and Joyce Mueller, as well as our
23 technical staff, Cece Reid on the recording and
24 Bob Armstrong who is our report writer.

25 We are here today because a couple of

1 years ago the Minister of Conservation and Water
2 Stewardship asked us to conduct a review of
3 Manitoba Hydro's application for a final licence
4 for Lake Winnipeg Regulation.

5 Now, Manitoba Hydro has been operating
6 since 1976, so 39 years, with what is known as an
7 interim licence. About ten years ago the Clean
8 Environment Commission, in its Wuskwatim report,
9 suggested that it was probably time for Manitoba
10 Hydro to apply for a final licence, which they
11 did. And the interesting thing is that, although
12 it is called final, it actually will not be a
13 permanent licence. This licence will only be in
14 effect for another 11 years, and in 2026, which
15 will be the 50th anniversary of their initial
16 licence, they need to reapply for an entirely new
17 licence.

18 So the Minister asked us to conduct a
19 review into this request, and he specifically
20 asked us to visit communities in Northern Manitoba
21 and around the shoreline of Lake Winnipeg, both
22 north and south basins. So to date we have
23 actually been in a number of communities in the
24 north and all around the south and central basins
25 of Lake Winnipeg. As well as we have held some

1 hearings in, I think it was five weeks of hearings
2 in the City of Winnipeg, which concluded a couple
3 of weeks ago.

4 The most convenient time for us to
5 visit this community was initially last week, and
6 now this week. So we are here today to hear from
7 people, today and tomorrow morning to hear from
8 people in your community who may have concerns
9 about Lake Winnipeg Regulation, who can relate to
10 us personal or extended experiences with the
11 effect and the impact of Lake Winnipeg Regulation.

12 I won't say too much more by way of
13 introduction, but I think now we want to call on
14 Dale to give the presentation of Manitoba Hydro?
15 I'm sorry -- that's what you get when you are out
16 of the room, you don't know what is going on. I
17 will turn it back to Loretta who obviously knows
18 what is going on.

19 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: We are going to
20 ask chief and council to come up and open with
21 some comments.

22 CHIEF EVANS: Thank you, Loretta.
23 First off, I want to thank Reverend Eileen
24 Apetagon for the opening prayer, and thank our
25 staff, I guess, for preparing the place. And I

1 want to take this time to welcome you, Chairman,
2 Clean Environment Commission, and all of your good
3 people with you.

4 We have our elders here from the
5 Elder's Council, Leslie Apetagon, Winnifred
6 Balfour, and others will be joining us.
7 Councillor Loretta Bayer, we will also get her to
8 welcome you.

9 We welcome the opportunity for you to
10 be here, and I want to thank you for your
11 comments, your observations about our community.
12 As I've stated to you, we work hard to keep it
13 that way. And actually like too, there is people
14 that work hard that like to hear that. It is
15 important that we make -- we do our best to keep
16 our environment around us, you know, clean and
17 positive.

18 So, anyway, I know that you were
19 supposed to be here last week, and then we
20 postponed it, we had a death. And that was the
21 reason, that was one of the reasons why we
22 postponed it because we knew that -- we don't
23 really want to go on the radio and get people to
24 come here. There was no -- if we didn't have any
25 bereavement in the community, that's why the

1 radio -- and council would go on the radio
2 encouraging our members to come and be part of
3 these very important hearings. So, therefore, we
4 want to be sensitive. So right now we have three
5 of our elderly people that have passed on. There
6 is a funeral today, and then there is wakes
7 tomorrow as well, and two funerals on Saturday.
8 So we want to be sensitive, but we also understand
9 the importance that things do have to move on.

10 We know that we are a big community,
11 we can't always shut the community down when we
12 lose loved ones. There are times when we do, but
13 more times than not we proceed with business.

14 Unfortunately, that's not in our
15 control, but we will do our best. We do have
16 people that are coming to do presentations. It is
17 taped, so we will get to air it and others will
18 get to see it that can not be here at this time.

19 I know last time I was in your
20 presence was at Black River. I was invited there
21 by Chief Abraham, Frank Abraham. And so I had an
22 opportunity to see the process as it happened.

23 So we are hoping that we can,
24 hopefully the presenters will provide the
25 information that will help determine what the

1 recommendation will be that will be going forward.

2 So it is an opportunity for all of us to do that.

3 Again, it is regrettable that we don't
4 have the kind of turnout that one would expect.

5 Actually, the turnout in Black River was more like
6 what we are having here today, and we are a bigger
7 community. But, again, you know, it really has to
8 do with what is happening in the community.

9 With that I want to thank Loretta and
10 James for working on our behalf, we have our
11 leadership council there. Also we are fortunate
12 to have her as part of a member of council. She
13 has worked, you know, with the province in these
14 areas, in areas that are important, you know,
15 where we need people with experience and skill to
16 do that stuff.

17 With that, thank you, and I will call
18 her up. And I will be excusing myself, I will be
19 attending the funeral, but I will be in and out
20 during the course of the day. I don't know how
21 many times I will be, but at least -- I will be
22 around after the funeral for sure.

23 So with that, I want to again thank
24 you, and enjoy your stay. Please feel welcome.
25 If you need anything, please let me know, if you

1 are not getting a response from the staff or
2 councillor, let me know and then I will see what I
3 can do. Councillor?

4 COUNCILLOR BAYER: Thank you Chief.
5 Thank you Loretta and James for the organization
6 of this event, and welcome to our community. I
7 would like to reiterate the comments from our
8 chief, and it is a honour to have you here, to
9 have the Clean Environment Commission travel
10 through the north, and in particular to our
11 community to hear the voices of experience on the
12 lake and around the lake over the many decades
13 that have passed. And expressing, having the
14 opportunity to express concerns for future
15 generations is critical and important to us. With
16 knowing that the hearings are coming to a close, I
17 guess April 30th is the last day, or around that
18 day.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Tomorrow.

20 COUNCILLOR BAYER: Which is tomorrow.
21 Then hopefully most people who aren't able to be
22 here will be able to sit here and we can document
23 their concerns and comments and submit them to
24 you, once they are able to do that with us.

25 And Loretta, the other Loretta and I

1 have talked about this a little while ago. So it
2 has been a difficult decision that we have had to
3 make in the delays, and knowing that there are
4 this number of deaths again, and funerals that are
5 folks who are related to virtually all of the
6 members of their community, then we determined
7 that it was important to proceed and to have this
8 process under way. Like the chief had said, it is
9 important to be involved and to get our voices out
10 there.

11 You know, being one of the most
12 affected communities in Northern Manitoba, along
13 with the southern part, our southern First Nation
14 folks -- is it little Black River -- yes, little
15 Black River where the chief had went. We have had
16 discussions with their members and their council
17 members on the impacts that we suffer at the
18 furthest end and the southern most point. And it
19 is important that our words are documented
20 accurately and clearly and that our voices are
21 heard throughout this process.

22 So welcome. And I'm sure that I'm
23 going to respond to your needs, whatever it is
24 that you want to have, you know, another tour
25 while people are out, we can make those kinds of

1 arrangements to keep your time occupied until you
2 can -- so you can understand and see our community
3 in a little bit more depth. You know,
4 unfortunately you will be here tomorrow when we
5 are having our mock opening for the Salisbury
6 House that our chief lead in the development. We
7 are looking forward to those nips.

8 So I'd just like to say welcome, and
9 acknowledge the elders, Elder Apetagon, Elder
10 Balfour, and thank you Eileen for the opening
11 prayer. And I would like to acknowledge the
12 councillors, Samantha Folster, who just joined us,
13 as well as our Deputy Chief Gilbert Fredette.
14 This is what is going to be happening in the next
15 few days. People will be coming in and out, and
16 that includes all of us. So bear with us,
17 welcome, and we hope to have a real strong
18 deliberative discussion here. Thank you.

19 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: I know they just
20 walked in, but we are going to ask councillors
21 Folster and Fredette to come up, welcome, and make
22 some opening comments. Okay.

23 COUNCILLOR FOLSTER: I would just like
24 to say good morning to everybody, welcome to
25 Norway House and enjoy your day. Thank you.

1 DEPUTY CHIEF FREDETTE: Good morning
2 everybody. Welcome to our guests to Norway House
3 Cree Nation. I would like to acknowledge our
4 Chief Ron Evans is here, along with the other
5 councillors. I'm hoping that we have a good
6 discussion on a very important issue that affects
7 our community for now and for the next generations
8 to come. Welcome, and I'm hoping that we can have
9 a good day of consultation and a good discussion
10 of what we can do to better the situation. Thank
11 you so much.

12 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: So I just wanted
13 to say that I know they are going to, the Clean
14 Environment Commission is going to clarify their
15 role when they speak, but I just wanted to, I know
16 that some of the calls that I got in my office
17 about this process, because our office is also
18 doing a section 35, the Crown consultations, so
19 there is a little bit of confusion there. So I
20 just wanted to clarify that, because it is going
21 to be aired, that it is two separate processes.

22 Consultation is -- so the Minister of
23 Conservation and Water Stewardship will be
24 responsible for issuing the final licence. And he
25 has used a variety of mechanisms or processes to

1 determine his decision, to make his decision. And
2 so one of those, it triggers, because of the
3 project it triggers an environmental process on
4 how our Aboriginal Treaty rights are affected. So
5 that's the purpose of the section 35
6 consultations.

7 And the Clean Environment Commission,
8 the Minister commissioned this group here to hear
9 experiences of communities and residents around
10 the lake, and he will use the consultations and
11 the Clean Environment Commission report, which you
12 say you have about 90 days to prepare, and other
13 information as well. So it is really important
14 that we portray and we show the impacts that we
15 have experienced through this process. It is a
16 little bit repeated during the Crown
17 consultations. But I just wanted to clarify that,
18 because a lot of the calls, like I said, the
19 questions that I was getting, that's what they
20 pertained to.

21 So I'm going to ask Terry Sargeant
22 again to come up and talk a little bit more about
23 the function of the Clean Environment Commission,
24 their role, their responsibility, and what happens
25 at the next steps after this process is completed?

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. Thanks, Loretta,
2 and you actually captured it pretty well. There
3 are probably, well, there is definitely two,
4 perhaps even three different tracts that lead into
5 the Minister's ultimate decision. One of them is
6 the review that we are doing, the Clean
7 Environment Commission review. Another one is the
8 section 35 consultations that you are involved
9 with here for your community. And in addition to
10 that, the Minister will get advice from his
11 bureaucratic staff on this issue as well.

12 Our role is to look at, to look at
13 sort of the broad environmental effects and
14 impacts that have occurred. And this is a
15 different review for us in that this project has
16 been sitting there in operation for -- well, it
17 has been in operation for 39 years, it started
18 construction over 40 years ago, the main
19 construction started about 1971 or '72. And at
20 the time that it was built there was no -- the
21 current Environment Act was not in place. The
22 current Environment Act requires an environmental
23 assessment before a project is built.

24 In the '60s and '70s, when the
25 planning for these Hydro projects took place and

1 when construction started on them, environmental
2 assessment was not required in Manitoba. And in
3 fact, in most of the modern world it is still a
4 fairly new science or art. It wasn't done very
5 much in those days. The Manitoba Environment Act,
6 which was one of the first in Canada for requiring
7 environmental assessment, didn't come into effect
8 until 1988, and that was long after this dam was
9 built.

10 So for us it has posed a different
11 kind of challenge. Normally, on most of our
12 projects, such as Keeyask or Wuskwatim ten odd
13 years ago, the proponent, Manitoba Hydro has
14 conducted an environmental impact assessment. And
15 we look at that and we try to determine whether or
16 not they have done a good job, or an adequate job
17 in conducting their environmental assessment.

18 This one, because it was built before
19 environmental assessments were required, there is
20 no environmental impact statement for us to look
21 at. So we have to talk to people who have some
22 sense of what it was like before the project was
23 built, and who have had experiences over the last
24 four decades with the impacts. So that's one of
25 the reasons why these community hearings are

1 important to us.

2 Another significant difference is that
3 the licence that is issued does not come under the
4 Environment Act. It comes under the Water Power
5 Act, and also more than anything under the Water
6 Power Regulation. The Water Power Act itself is
7 only a handful of pages, the Water Power
8 Regulation is 70 or 80 pages. So it is licenced
9 under that act and regulation.

10 And again, as noted, even that act
11 doesn't require an environmental impact
12 assessment. So even if environmental impact, even
13 if this were just starting out now because it is
14 under a different act, it might not require an
15 environmental impact statement.

16 Those are some of the issues that we
17 are looking at. We are looking at whether or not
18 in the future in these types of projects, and even
19 for the next go-around when they have to reapply
20 for the licence, there shouldn't be some degree of
21 environmental assessment before they go in.

22 Coming back to sort of the opening
23 question, and what you spoke about, Loretta, once
24 the Minister gets these sort of three main streams
25 of advice from us, from the section 35 process,

1 and from his departmental staff, he will then sort
2 of look at all three of them, weigh the impact,
3 maybe toss them in the air and juggle them a
4 little bit, and then come up with a decision as to
5 whether or not to issue a final licence to
6 Manitoba Hydro.

7 Under the terms of the water power
8 regulation, Manitoba Hydro could continue to
9 operate under an interim licence. However, for
10 commercial purposes, the State of Wisconsin, which
11 has agreements in place to buy a lot of power from
12 Manitoba, has asked that, in effect I think they
13 have made it a requirement in law, that the final
14 licences be in place before they start to purchase
15 Manitoba Hydro power.

16 So unless anyone has any questions,
17 I'm not sure that -- yes? If others have
18 questions about what I've just said, I'm glad to
19 answer them right now.

20 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Does anybody have
21 any questions? Because I have some. I will
22 just -- is there, will there be a similar process
23 for CRD? Like will the CEC be involved with the
24 Churchill River Diversion?

25 THE CHAIRMAN: No. I will explain

1 that. No, the Clean Environment Commission
2 doesn't take on reviews on its own, we only
3 conduct a review when the Minister asks us to.
4 And the Minister has chosen, for whatever reasons,
5 and we are not involved in that at all, but the
6 Minister has chosen not to subject CRD to a full
7 review as we are conducting for Lake Winnipeg
8 Regulation. CRD is going through a departmental
9 consultation process, they are going through the
10 section 35 consultation process, but not a public
11 CEC assessment.

12 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Okay. In this
13 process, like you are in the community here today,
14 is there room for us, for our First Nation to make
15 recommendations on how we see, and how the
16 Minister, can he put conditions in response to our
17 experiences and impacts that we've seen? Because
18 we have the diverted channels in our area.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. In fact, we would
20 welcome recommendations from you in that regard.
21 I can't promise you that your recommendations will
22 end up in our report the way you would like them
23 to, but I can promise you that we will seriously
24 consider your recommendations, and that your
25 recommendations will certainly inform our decision

1 making. But there is -- there is certainly room
2 for us to make recommendations as to conditions
3 that might be attached to the licence. Whether
4 the Minister accepts them is not our decision, but
5 we can certainly make them if we feel they are
6 necessary.

7 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Thank you. I
8 have one last question. What would be the next
9 steps if the Minister decides not to issue the
10 final licence, what are the -- what would be in
11 place, like in terms of licensing or permits?

12 THE CHAIRMAN: If the Minister chooses
13 not to issue a final licence, Manitoba Hydro would
14 continue to operate under the interim licence that
15 they have had for 39 years, or almost 39 years.
16 That could have impacts, in fact, it probably
17 would have impacts on Manitoba Hydro's contract to
18 sell power to the State of Wisconsin. I suspect
19 that if the Minister decided not to issue the
20 final licence, that it would probably be just on
21 an interim basis. He would ask Hydro to do
22 certain things and once they were done, then the
23 final licence would be issued. That's my
24 guessing, but I can't speak for the Minister.

25 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Thank you. Does

1 anybody have any questions for the Commission?

2 Okay, we will go --

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Could I add one thing?

4 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Okay.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: If you, Loretta, or
6 your community are going to make substantive
7 recommendations, we will need to see them pretty
8 quickly. They don't have to be on the table today
9 or tomorrow morning, although that would
10 certainly -- we wouldn't object to that. But I
11 think we will be closing the record on the 8th of
12 May, so that's a week Friday. So if you are going
13 to make recommendations that are not fully
14 prepared today, then we need to receive them by
15 next Friday at noon. And you can email them,
16 that's not a problem.

17 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Okay, thank you.

18 So, the next presenter on our agenda is Dale
19 Hutchison from Manitoba Hydro.

20 MR. HUTCHISON: Hi, my name is Dale
21 Hutchison. Can everybody hear all right? Okay.
22 Good.

23 Respected elders, Chief Evans,
24 Councillors Bayer, Fredette and Folster, President
25 Saunders, members of the monitoring agency, and

1 people of Norway House Cree Nation, thank you for
2 inviting me to your territory to speak about the
3 Lake Winnipeg Regulation project.

4 I have worked with Manitoba Hydro for
5 15 years to understand the impacts of the waterway
6 on the people that we share these waterways with.
7 Today I will be talking about the Manitoba Hydro
8 system, Lake Winnipeg and our Lake Winnipeg
9 Regulation project.

10 So first I will talk about the
11 Manitoba Hydro system. A huge area, east from the
12 Rocky -- or west to the Rocky Mountains, east to
13 the edge of Lake Superior and south into the Red
14 River Valley of the United States drains into Lake
15 Winnipeg. The shape of the land is like a million
16 square kilometre bowl, and that's what makes
17 hydroelectric possible on a large scale in
18 Manitoba.

19 There are 15 generating stations in
20 Manitoba to take advantage of the water that flows
21 through Manitoba. On the map these are shown by
22 the blue dots. So we have got small, medium, and
23 large dots for each of the generating stations,
24 and that shows how much electricity they can
25 produce. So the big dots produce a lot more

1 electricity than the medium or the small.

2 So starting on the Winnipeg River, we
3 have got six smaller generating stations. Across
4 the lake at Grand Rapids, there is a medium sized
5 generating station that takes advantage of water
6 from the Saskatchewan River. Of course, the
7 Nelson River flows north into Hudson Bay, and 100
8 kilometres north of Lake Winnipeg at Jenpeg we
9 have got a small generating station.

10 Now, north of the Nelson River is the
11 Churchill River. It also flows into Hudson Bay.
12 Rather than putting generating stations on this
13 river -- so rather than putting generating
14 stations on the Churchill River, instead its
15 waters were diverted in a project known as the
16 Churchill River Diversion. The Wuskwatim
17 Generating Station is located on this route.
18 That's right there. So the main hydroelectric
19 advantage of having waters from the Churchill
20 River Diversion put into the Nelson River at Split
21 Lake, is that from Split Lake down to Hudson Bay
22 the river has the benefit of two rivers
23 essentially, and that's where all of our big
24 generating stations, Kettle, Long Spruce and
25 Limestone are located. Those three stations

1 alone, shown by the three big dots, produce 70 per
2 cent of all of the electricity in Manitoba.
3 Keeyask is currently being built and it is also on
4 this lower Nelson River area.

5 To get the electricity down from these
6 generating stations there are two high voltage
7 direct current, lines. And they follow this green
8 line, they go 1,000 kilometres from Gillam to a
9 converter station just outside Winnipeg. And from
10 there, there are 100,000 kilometres of
11 distribution lines that take this power to homes
12 and businesses throughout Manitoba.

13 We also produce energy using natural
14 gas at stations in Brandon and Selkirk, and we
15 purchase wind from wind farms at St. Leon and
16 St. Joseph. So the Manitoba Hydro system uses
17 water to produce 95 per cent of all of the
18 electricity made.

19 Now we will look at Lake Winnipeg.
20 This is the tenth largest freshwater lake in the
21 world. It is Manitoba's great lake. Over a dozen
22 river flows into Lake Winnipeg, yet there is only
23 one natural outlet, the Nelson River. And the
24 mouth of the Nelson River at Warren's Landing is
25 quite wide, but it is very shallow, it is only

1 about 15 feet deep. This means that the river is
2 susceptible to -- or the lake, it makes the lake
3 susceptible to flooding, because in the winter ice
4 can block the flow of water out of the lake, so
5 the lake rises and floods.

6 Historically, flooding has caused a
7 lot of problems to people living around Lake
8 Winnipeg, to the point where highways have been
9 closed, farmers have lost their crops, and people
10 can't get to their homes and cottages around the
11 lake. So this put a lot of pressure on government
12 to do something about this historic flooding.

13 Now, these are Winnipeg Free Press
14 headlines, showing the impacts of flooding around
15 the lake. Floods occurred in 1927, 1950, 1954,
16 1955, 1966, 1968, 1969. So as I mentioned, people
17 put a lot of pressure on Government to do
18 something about this.

19 At the same time the demand for
20 electricity was growing in the province in the
21 late 1960s. So in 1970 the Premier of Manitoba
22 decided to proceed with Lake Winnipeg Regulation
23 for two purposes; one was for flood control on
24 Lake Winnipeg; the other was for hydroelectric
25 generation on the Nelson River.

1 So now I will talk about the Lake
2 Winnipeg Regulation project. Before we could
3 build Lake Winnipeg Regulation, first we needed a
4 licence. As Commissioner Sargeant mentioned, this
5 is an interim licence, it is the first step. This
6 is similar to if you want to build a house, the
7 first thing you do is get a building permit. In
8 order to get this licence, we had to show the
9 Province what we expected to build and the effects
10 it would have on the water levels and flows.

11 So in 1970, the Province gave us an
12 interim licence which gave us the approval to
13 build Lake Winnipeg Regulation. They also had
14 conditions in this licence, and there were three
15 types. The first were ranges, operating ranges
16 for Lake Winnipeg and a few of the downstream
17 lakes. So, for instance, as you see in this
18 chart, between elevation 711 and 715 feet above
19 sea level on Lake Winnipeg, Manitoba Hydro can
20 decide how much water to flow out of the lake in
21 order to meet electricity needs for the Province.
22 If the elevation of Lake Winnipeg gets above
23 elevation 715, we have to let as much water as
24 possible out of the lake. It is called maximum
25 discharge. If the elevation of the lake falls

1 below 711, it is the Minister of Conservation and
2 Water Stewardship that tells us how much water to
3 let out of the lake.

4 The second type of operating rules
5 from the licence was that there must be a minimum
6 flow of water out of Lake Winnipeg. And the third
7 is that we can't change the rate of flow at Jenpeg
8 too fast. So we agreed with these licence
9 conditions and Lake Winnipeg Regulation was built
10 by 1976.

11 The next step in the licence process
12 is to apply for a final licence, which is good for
13 50 years from the date of construction. So
14 because Lake Winnipeg Regulation construction was
15 concluded in 1976, our licence will end in 2026,
16 which is only 11 years away. At that time we will
17 have to request a licence renewal.

18 So building Lake Winnipeg Regulation
19 involved digging three channels, 2-Mile, 8-Mile
20 and Ominawin bypass. These three channels
21 increase the amount of water that could flow out
22 of Lake Winnipeg. And of course, you wouldn't dig
23 all of these channels without having a way to
24 control the water flow, otherwise you would drain
25 the lake. And that's where Jenpeg comes in, it

1 was built as a control structure, and later on it
2 was also decided to put in a generating station.

3 So here is another way to look at Lake
4 Winnipeg and what Lake Winnipeg Regulation did.

5 If you remember the picture of all of
6 the rivers entering Lake Winnipeg, if all of those
7 rivers are represented by the faucet, by the drop
8 under the faucet, then the drain on the top
9 diagram, the drop under there represents how much
10 water could flow down the Nelson River. Once Lake
11 Winnipeg Regulation was built, you can see that
12 there is a second drop. It is half the size of
13 the drop representing the Nelson River, and that's
14 because the three channels together can allow up
15 to 50 per cent more water to flow out of the lake.

16 Now, you can still see, though, that
17 the two drops on the drain aren't as big as the
18 water drop on the faucet. And what that means is
19 that during a flood, the level of Lake Winnipeg
20 will still rise because not enough water can flow
21 out of the lake as flows in, so there will still
22 be flooding. However, there is one major
23 difference, and that's because with Lake Winnipeg
24 Regulation the lake won't get as high and the
25 floods won't last as long, and that was one of the

1 purposes of Lake Winnipeg Regulation.

2 So people have different ideas about
3 how this project affects the water level on Lake
4 Winnipeg. Some people think it keeps the level
5 higher, some people think it keeps it lower. We
6 have got water level gauges, there are about eight
7 water level gauges around the lake, and they have
8 data that goes back to 1913. And what these
9 gauges tell us is that the lake is still behaving
10 like a lake, this is Lake Winnipeg I'm talking
11 about, it still rises in the spring and early
12 summer and it falls throughout the fall and the
13 winter. When there is a drought, the lake gets
14 low. When there is a flood in the watershed, the
15 lake gets high.

16 What this -- I apologize for using a
17 chart but it's really the only way to kind of
18 demonstrate the effect of water levels over time.
19 So what this chart looks at, it has got the water
20 levels on the one side of the graph, so 709 feet
21 up to sort of 717. Then it's got all of the years
22 that go from 1977, the first full year of
23 operation of Lake Winnipeg Regulation, to the
24 present time. The blue line represents what is
25 actually the water level of Lake Winnipeg over

1 that time span. The red line is a simulation of
2 what the water level would have been if Lake
3 Winnipeg Regulation wasn't there.

4 You probably all noticed that there
5 has been a lot of wet years in the last decade
6 plus. There has been a lot of water flowing
7 through Lake Winnipeg and down the Nelson River.
8 What this -- the information from all of these
9 water level gauges shows, though, is that if Lake
10 Winnipeg Regulation wasn't here, the lake would
11 have gotten about two feet higher during floods
12 like 1997, 2005, 2011 and 2014. So the
13 information that we do have is showing that Lake
14 Winnipeg Regulation is meeting its goal providing
15 flood relief on Lake Winnipeg.

16 Now, what happens downstream? As you
17 know, there are a lot of people that live along
18 the Nelson River downstream of Lake Winnipeg,
19 there are about 20,000 people. And land and water
20 are extremely important to your identity and
21 culture. All Manitobans benefit by having low
22 cost reliable electricity, and people around Lake
23 Winnipeg benefit by having this flood relief
24 provided by Lake Winnipeg Regulation. However,
25 people downstream of Lake Winnipeg have suffered

1 by having more water flow out of the lake during
2 the winter and any time that there is a flood.

3 In natural conditions, lake levels and
4 river flows gradually decrease over the course of
5 the winter. However, with Lake Winnipeg
6 Regulation, water levels can be much higher during
7 the winter, up to 50 per cent higher than they
8 would have been without this project. And this
9 water affects ice conditions on the waterways,
10 which will make travel more dangerous. It also
11 negatively affects aquatic fur bearers, like
12 beaver, mink, muskrat and otter.

13 During the summer months, whenever the
14 level of Lake Winnipeg gets close to or above
15 elevation 715, we have to go to maximum discharge
16 at Jenpeg, which sends a surge of water down the
17 Nelson River, which causes fluctuations on the
18 rivers and lakes. So, ultimately, this change in
19 water flow affects the cultural, commercial,
20 spiritual and recreational pursuits of people
21 living downstream of Lake Winnipeg.

22 By working together, in Cree this is
23 called witasosketowin -- I hope I got that
24 right -- with the people who live and work along
25 the Nelson River, Manitoba Hydro continues to work

1 to address impacts through agreements and other
2 arrangements with First Nations communities and
3 resource user groups, through projects like the
4 Cross Lake Weir, and through programs for resource
5 harvesting, access and navigation, heritage
6 resources and recreation, as shown in the photos
7 on this banner.

8 So that's my presentation. I hope you
9 have a good meeting with the Commissioners of the
10 Clean Environment Commission, and I will be
11 available to talk over there after the formal
12 part. Thank you.

13 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Thanks, Dale.
14 Does anybody have any questions? I got some
15 questions. Is there -- I got three questions and
16 one comment.

17 Is there -- is Hydro considering and
18 planning for -- like, we all know about climate
19 change and unusual events that occur. What
20 happens if that, like Jenpeg at the control
21 structure, there is so much water, like is it
22 safe? Can we depend on it that it is not going to
23 burst and cause problems to us here, and along the
24 Nelson? Is there a risk plan or contingency plan?

25 MR. HUTCHISON: Thank you, Loretta. I

1 can assure you that Jenpeg is safe. There is a
2 dam safety protocol that Manitoba Hydro has in
3 place. And if we haven't shared that with Norway
4 House, we can certainly make arrangements to do
5 that.

6 As far as climate change goes, we do
7 have a section at Manitoba Hydro that looks at
8 climate change, and it is forecast that over time
9 the watershed will get wetter. However, the
10 variability that we have right now is, you know,
11 you think of 2003, we had a significant drought,
12 we have been in a very wet period since then,
13 flooding. That's more than what sort of the
14 models for climate change show will be changed.
15 So it shows there will be a trend to get wetter,
16 but the amount of variation that we have got right
17 now is more than what it is forecast to be, and
18 the design of Jenpeg can handle any flow.

19 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: It would be
20 interesting to see that plan some time.

21 You mentioned the licence renewal,
22 okay, because this final licence, if issued, will
23 expire in 2026, so at that point there will be a
24 licence renewal. What do you think it is going to
25 look like then? Will it be like another 50 --

1 like nobody has really addressed that, because
2 that's 11 years. So what happens after 11 years?

3 MR. HUTCHISON: I guess at this point
4 we don't really know what the renewal process will
5 have in store. I think the Province, as a
6 regulator, will tell us how they -- what they want
7 to see for the renewal. It is likely that they
8 will want to have an assurance that the, you know,
9 Lake Winnipeg Regulation and Jenpeg, they will
10 want to know sort of how well it is operated and
11 how long it continued to operate efficiently,
12 those sort of things. Beyond that, I think we are
13 also going to assume that there will be some more
14 environmental sort of analysis that will have to
15 happen before the renewal.

16 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Thank you. I
17 notice in your presentation you talked about Lake
18 Winnipeg and you talked about Nelson River, but
19 this is Playgreen Lake. Like if you look outside,
20 our waters, it is Playgreen Lake. And we had a
21 commercial fishery there, and we had our families
22 lived along the islands and stuff on Playgreen
23 Lake. Those would be, those are big concerns of
24 ours, in addition to Lake Winnipeg and Nelson
25 River. So, therefore, I think those impacts need

1 to be addressed, and they will come out in the
2 next -- in the afternoon and tomorrow.

3 But I think for the record, I would
4 just like to mention that, that Playgreen Lake is
5 right in the middle, and we've done eons of,
6 practiced our culture there and our livelihoods.
7 That's the comment that I wanted to make. So is
8 there anything that they are doing on Playgreen
9 Lake in terms of studies? Because that's where we
10 have seen a lot of the impacts.

11 MR. HUTCHISON: I definitely
12 appreciate that Playgreen Lake is very important
13 to Norway House Cree Nation. We had a very good
14 presentation by the Norway House Fishermen's Co-op
15 earlier, a couple of weeks back in Winnipeg -- two
16 or three weeks back, hard to say. And I know that
17 we are in discussions with chief and council and
18 also with the -- as far as 2-Mile, 8-Mile, erosion
19 issues, we have monitoring that's going on through
20 a coordinated aquatic monitoring program with the
21 Province, so we are looking at these issues.

22 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Does anybody else
23 have questions for Dale?

24 COUNCILLOR FOLSTER: Good morning, I'm
25 Councillor Samantha Folster. I guess the question

1 that I had was, because of the cleanliness of the
2 water, it is obviously not clean anymore. So when
3 the process began with Manitoba Hydro and up to
4 this date, has it been monitored as to -- because
5 there is pollution obviously, and has that been
6 monitored also, or is it just the levels of the
7 lake that is looked at through Hydro, with Hydro?

8 MR. HUTCHISON: Thank you, Councillor.
9 I guess, it is a bit of both. We obviously have a
10 lot of information about water levels and flows.
11 You have probably seen some of the gauging
12 stations around the lake and near your community.
13 There is this coordinated aquatic monitoring
14 program that I mentioned that does look at other
15 parameters in the water. I can't offer a lot of
16 details about the water quality information that
17 happens, but I know that certain parameters are
18 monitored. And I think I would just like to add,
19 I think on Lake Winnipeg itself there are a lot of
20 factors that are affecting water quality, and that
21 water does flow through Lake Winnipeg and down the
22 Nelson River, and so there is a lot of other
23 factors that are also affecting water quality.
24 You know, agriculture runoff, all of the
25 municipalities and cities and wastewater and such,

1 and that's a very big issue that's being looked at
2 on Lake Winnipeg right now as well.

3 COUNCILLOR FOLSTER: The other
4 question that I had was, I noticed in your
5 presentation you talked about Hydro bills. We pay
6 a very high number for Hydro bills, a lot of the
7 community for -- me, for example, of course I use
8 myself as an example, my Hydro bill in January,
9 February was \$700 a month. So we are paying high,
10 high Hydro bills here in Norway House. It is not
11 just me, it's probably the community itself. So
12 that's one of the questions that I had. Because
13 we have pretty much given up water, you know,
14 cleanliness of our waters to have Hydro build
15 their projects, right? And this is how, I'm just
16 thinking of how I feel about it, right? So when
17 we are paying Hydro bills of \$700 a month, you
18 know, it is a concern when you look at the map
19 that, you know, we are very central to the impacts
20 of the dams.

21 And I guess the other thing I would
22 like to mention also is, I'm not sure if everybody
23 remembers, but about 15, maybe 15 years ago -- do
24 you remember Dr. Suzuki? Anyways, he had a -- he
25 did -- one of his shows was based on Lake

1 a concern I have for my grandchildren down the
2 road, not just mine, but yours and everybody else
3 that lives in Winnipeg, and everybody that lives
4 in this area. But thank you.

5 MR. HUTCHISON: I guess on the Hydro
6 bill side, I just want to point out that everyone
7 in Manitoba pays the same rate for electricity, it
8 is roughly seven cents per kilowatt hour. It
9 doesn't matter if you are in Winnipeg or Norway
10 House, you pay the same rate. You've probably
11 heard of Manitoba Hydro's Power Smart Program
12 where we do want to work with communities to bring
13 down costs, because you are obviously not using
14 natural gas, you are using electricity for all of
15 your heating needs, as well as lighting and
16 electricity. So I'm not sure if Norway House Cree
17 Nation has taken advantage of our Power Smart
18 but --

19 COUNCILLOR FOLSTER: I have a question
20 about that.

21 MR. HUTCHISON: Okay.

22 COUNCILLOR FOLSTER: Well, the Power
23 Smart, one of the leaders in the community and
24 other community members have requested, like for
25 the doors and the new windows. And for some

1 reason, anybody that lives on reserve didn't
2 qualify. So that's -- I would love to have new
3 windows and a door if you can get them for me.

4 MR. HUTCHISON: And I guess the second
5 question -- yes, looking at Lake Winnipeg and, of
6 course, the waters from Lake Winnipeg flow north,
7 we share in the concern with that, and that's why
8 we are supporting a lot of research, policy
9 development, education, and we also recently
10 supported the Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective,
11 which is a group of First Nations around Lake
12 Winnipeg. I'm not sure if Norway House Cree
13 Nation is included, but it sounds like they are.
14 But that's what that -- because there are so many
15 different factors affecting the lake, and if we
16 are going to change it for the better, it is going
17 take everybody sort of working together.

18 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Any other
19 questions?

20 DEPUTY CHIEF FREDETTE: Good morning
21 once again everybody. I would like to try to put
22 some of this into an artistic kind of view. With
23 our guests that are here in Norway House, it is
24 nice to see them with a nice bottle of clean
25 drinking water. As guests of this community, 40

1 years ago we would be able to get water from the
2 lake and you would be able to drink that water,
3 which we can't today. We will get sick, rashes,
4 and some other things that happen since the Hydro
5 project in the '70s have been developed. That's a
6 fact. So today we are forced to drink our water
7 through plastic bottles, or a boil water advisory,
8 and to the treatment plants.

9 The illustration that Manitoba Hydro
10 presented is a nice kind of view of how things go
11 on charts, but I want to talk a little bit about
12 the human impact, the fishermen, the elders, the
13 trappers, the people that live here today, and our
14 grandchildren that continue to live here long
15 after we are gone.

16 All of the water that comes through
17 Lake Winnipeg is like a bathtub. And we are
18 situated at the bottom of that bathtub. When the
19 cork is pulled, all of the sediments, all of the
20 junk, all of the pollution comes right through our
21 community. Our waters are not as pristine as they
22 were 40 years ago. Our kids can't swim in the
23 water without having effects to their bodies.
24 There is a lot of environmental impacts, and the
25 human factor has to be put into consideration

1 here. We can talk about flows and we can talk
2 about money that's being spent, and how much money
3 is generated through Manitoba Hydro, but when you
4 take away the cultural life of the First Nations
5 people that are directly impacted, that's what I
6 want you to realize today. There is a human
7 component to this. This is not about dollars and
8 cents, this is about a way of life that has been
9 slowly stripped away from us, and continues to be.

10 In 1970, in the '70s there was a lot
11 of fishermen, a lot of trappers, a lot of our
12 individuals playing on the water, having a lot of
13 recreational time and a lot of things to do
14 naturally. Now that is coming to an end. What is
15 Manitoba Hydro going to do? We need
16 infrastructure within this community. We need
17 swimming pools, which we didn't have, we didn't
18 need 40 years ago, because it was natural to us.

19 All of these impacts play a huge
20 factor. The families in the '70s that can't fish
21 or trap anymore, it doesn't show on the graph, but
22 now they are lining up for social assistance, for
23 welfare, because the way of life has been taken
24 away from them.

25 They want to renew this 50-year

1 licence. I for one, as a leader in this
2 community, will not agree to this licence unless
3 there is concrete proof that our Cree Nation,
4 along with the people that live along these
5 waters, are compensated as long as these waters
6 continue to flow. That's our God given right, and
7 nobody has the right to make a judgment call in
8 Winnipeg, Ottawa, or wherever it may be to say,
9 oh, we are going to put dams up here for the
10 better of our economic future, without the
11 consideration of our people. That is a
12 disgraceful act, but now we are forced to live
13 with that. It already has been put through,
14 because of one person's signature saying that we
15 as Water Stewardship make that call, without
16 coming to see the small kids in the community that
17 are suffering, and the continuation that's going
18 to be going for the next generation, that's a
19 fact.

20 Like I said, I would love to have
21 provided water for you, but we can't drink it.
22 How do you put a price tag on that? How do you
23 throw millions of dollars and say, oh, we already
24 gave you your money. That's not the point here.
25 The point is that now this process is taking

1 place, we have to have a social way of conducting
2 ourselves, through programming, for our next
3 generation to continue to contribute to this
4 country.

5 And with that big source taken away
6 from us, we are more dependent on social services.
7 Lack of jobs -- they put up Jenpeg, big project,
8 but it takes 20 people to run it now. As you
9 know, the hydro power is being sold to the States.
10 Why isn't there a collective agreement for we,
11 revenue sharing with that?

12 The gentleman from Hydro said, oh, we
13 are purchasing wind. Is that right? You are
14 still buying that wind power from these
15 communities? What about the water that
16 continuously flows through our channels and
17 pollutes our waterways? We got compensated but we
18 need more. We have to sustain ourselves as First
19 Nation people, becoming more educated, and that
20 only happens if we have a healthy environment to
21 live in. It puts a strain on all of Canada when
22 the First Nations suffer because they don't have
23 the purposes of life, the clean water, the
24 educational purposes to move forward.

25 And I will stand and I will talk and I

1 will always fight against this licence if that's
2 not going to be provided. In our treaties it
3 says, as long as the waters flow, but now we don't
4 even control that. Stroke of a pen and Manitoba
5 Hydro control how the waters flow. So if they are
6 going to take that step in saying, we are going to
7 do that, who is going to say we are going to
8 compensate them? Who controls the water? Do we
9 have the right to say we, as human beings, have to
10 say for the betterment of the people in Winnipeg,
11 for the betterment of hydroelectric power and
12 sales, you guys don't matter? No. And I will
13 continue to say that as First Nations leader, and
14 as a human being that has every right to the
15 qualities of life as you do down in southern
16 Manitoba.

17 If we are going to be affected, we
18 have to be consulted. I see all of these
19 consultation people from Winnipeg. I don't see a
20 First Nation representative sitting here. Where
21 is our voice being heard in the top boardrooms of
22 all of these Manitoba Hydro, and any other
23 Provincial or Federal areas? It seems like
24 everybody is making decisions for the betterment
25 of our lives except us.

1 When you guys -- hang on, I respect
2 you and I'm glad you are here in the community,
3 but it has to change. There has to be an equal
4 representative on each side. And this 50 year
5 licence is going to continue to affect us. So,
6 please, I encourage you, before this licence is
7 issued, we have to make sure that within that
8 agreement the continuation of funds still flow
9 into the communities.

10 There is a copious amount of effects
11 that are happening that you don't see. The
12 fishermen are suffering, the trappers are
13 suffering, the fluctuation of waters, as you said,
14 it greatly impacts the fishermen of our community
15 and our trappers, which to me is cultural genocide
16 in a way, because when you take away a people's
17 way of being for a thousand years, and just rip it
18 apart, that's taking away their culture, that's
19 taking away their way of life, that's taking away
20 their identity.

21 Like I said before, I speak here not
22 just for myself as a leader, but as a father and a
23 grandfather and a community member and a First
24 Nations person. I do a lot of business in
25 Winnipeg, I pay taxes. And people always think,

1 you guys don't pay taxes, what are you guys
2 complaining about? We are complaining about a way
3 of life.

4 I respect everything when I travel all
5 over this country. I think it is about time where
6 Canada, the Province of Manitoba, Manitoba Hydro,
7 the Federal government start to really look at it.
8 When these deals were all signed, they were signed
9 hastily. We didn't have the proper education to
10 consult and say, wait a minute, we are going to
11 get top lawyers to look at this, we didn't have
12 that. It was almost a forced documentation that
13 was pushed in front of us. Now we are becoming
14 educated, we are saying enough is enough, we are
15 standing up for our rights. Before this agreement
16 goes on, you will see a lot more of Norway House
17 Cree Nation. As the illustration showed,
18 everything flows through our community, right to
19 our front door, everything. Millions of dollars
20 in sales through Manitoba Hydro, I don't hear any
21 compensation agreement with Norway House to help
22 us alleviate some of the social problems. And I
23 think it is about time that we really look at that
24 as human beings, not as papers in front of us, not
25 as flow charts, not as how much gigawatts of power

1 can be generated. We are talking about human
2 rights here.

3 For the sake of all of us working
4 together as indigenous people, you are all
5 Canadians, we have to come to an agreement and
6 respect each other. It is about time. I still
7 think it can be done, but it is going to take an
8 effort on both sides, a Provincial perspective, it
9 is going to take a Federal commitment to say, if
10 we continue with these programs, let's compensate
11 and let's build a First Nations capacity so we can
12 become a part of this great province. But we
13 can't do that if we are unhealthy. Our kids can't
14 do that if they can't swim. Our kids can't do
15 that if they can't drink the water from the lake
16 and eat the fish from the water. It becomes a
17 strain on the health of our country. It affects
18 many different areas. That's what we have to
19 remember, it is not all about power, this is about
20 human rights, human beings, First Nations people's
21 rights.

22 We all have kids, we have grandkids
23 here, I respect that. But just for a minute put
24 yourself in my place, come sleep in my community.
25 I would take you for a swim and drink some water,

1 but you can't. So that's the human factor that
2 has to be remembered here.

3 I'm sick and tired of looking at
4 charts telling us this is what we are doing. I
5 understand that already. I'm a very educated man,
6 I understand the concept of economic development
7 and the process of hydroelectric power. But I
8 come in here as a human being talking about our
9 rights.

10 So with that, I hope you take that
11 into consideration. We have to go back to the
12 drawing board before this next licence is issued,
13 for the sake of Manitobans, for the sake of all of
14 us becoming a stronger province. And we can't do
15 that with all of these divisions. I use dams as
16 the metaphor there. So, please, take that into
17 consideration. When you see your grandkids, think
18 of my grandkids. We all have that right.

19 With that, I hope you enjoy your day.
20 And like I said before, before this licence is
21 renewed, I will be standing there -- if I have to
22 stand just at the legislative building, I will do
23 so, because it is for the future. And I want us
24 to have a healthy future, just like every Canadian
25 has, for our people.

1 So with that, thank you so much for
2 listening. Welcome once again to our community,
3 and have a great day. Thank you.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

5 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Thank you,
6 Councillor Fredette. Do we have any other
7 questions for either the Commission or Hydro?

8 So lunch is not for about another half
9 an hour, and I was just texting our caterer, she
10 hasn't texted me back. I am just wondering, if we
11 follow the agenda, we will have those
12 presentations from the elders this afternoon. So
13 do you want to have a bathroom break and mingle
14 and we will wait for lunch?

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Yep.

16 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Okay. We will
17 wait for lunch and then we will set up over there,
18 in the back.

19 (Recessed at 11:25 a.m. and reconvened
20 at 1:30 p.m.)

21 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: We will go with
22 the presenters that we have here, Elder Apetagon
23 is here, and we have Langford Saunders from the
24 Fishermen's Co-op, and we have Brian Captain
25 Junior, who is going to present on behalf of the

1 youth. So I will ask Elder Apetagon to come up.

2 ELDER LESLIE APETAGON: Good afternoon
3 everybody. My name is Leslie Apetagon. I'm from
4 Norway House here. I'm one of the commercial
5 fishermen here, one of the elder active fishermen.
6 I'm 68 years old.

7 I believe you guys were in Winnipeg
8 when I -- at the convention centre there. Anyway,
9 I want to talk about similar stuff here. I just
10 want whoever is here from locally, you need to
11 hear me. I want to talk a little bit of history
12 back, you know, when I was a young lad, you know,
13 when my dad was fishing out in Lake Winnipeg. I'm
14 going to talk on Lake Winnipeg, Playgreen Lake.
15 Being one of the resource users, I'm going to talk
16 about what I've seen in my lifetime.

17 First thing I want to say is, growing
18 up, you know, you spend a lot of time, in the
19 summer, summers on Mossy Lake on Lake Winnipeg.
20 You know, we lived there sometimes a month, month
21 and a half, you know, until our parents, you know,
22 my dad or uncles were done fishing. In 1958, you
23 know, they were -- I will say they got kicked out
24 of Lake Winnipeg.

25 Playgreen Lake was open for them in

1 '58, first time I've seen it open. I was about 11
2 years old then. There was about four private fish
3 buyers in Warren's Landing. You know, there is so
4 many fishermen, you know, we are fishing for each
5 fish buyer. The Apetagon family, all of my
6 uncles, my grandfather, they were -- he was still
7 fishing. My father, you know, their in-laws, we
8 all sit in one camp on Playgreen Lake. I --
9 knowing, you know, or seeing at the time it was a
10 very clean lake, you know, clean water, clear
11 water, and that's the way I recall it. And where
12 we stayed, we stayed on a -- pretty well on the --
13 it is on the west shore of Playgreen Lake. West
14 shore was mostly, it was all, you know, mostly
15 nice beach, beaches all along that shore where we
16 stayed, you know, it is where, you know, a 40 mile
17 portage came in from number 6 highway north of
18 Grand Rapids. Where it comes out, you know, there
19 is a point there, that's where we stayed in
20 summers. We stayed there for many years. It was
21 nice beaches there.

22 Now, you look around there now and it
23 is all -- you don't see any more beaches. That's
24 what erosion causes, water, you know, fluctuating,
25 going up and down, you know. Wind changes, north,

1 south, you know, wherever the wind blows, that's
2 where the current goes now. Whereas before 2-Mile
3 and 8-Mile, you know, the current went north, no
4 matter what wind there was, you know, it went
5 north. And like I said, you know, Playgreen Lake
6 was open in 1958. And our present Fishermen's
7 Co-op was formed in 1962. We just celebrated our
8 50 years anniversary I think two years ago.

9 I commercially fished myself as a
10 young, very young, 16 years old I had a commercial
11 licence, 16, 17 years old. An old man, maybe not
12 that old then, but his name was Charlie Evans, he
13 ceased fished, so I was given that opportunity to,
14 you know, to take over that licence at the time.
15 I fished for two years when I was at that age, 16,
16 17. But I left home, I went to work somewhere for
17 many years as a miner. I moved back, my wife and
18 I -- I got married along the way, I moved back in
19 '84, '85 I started fishing again, and I have been
20 fishing ever since. That will be going on 30
21 years this coming summer. So after the summer, I
22 have been fishing for 32 years. And what I seen
23 on Playgreen Lake, that's over 50 years, there has
24 been a lot of changes. Like I mentioned earlier,
25 we had a nice clean lake at the time, nice

1 beaches, clean water.

2 Now after these two channels that were
3 built here, 2-Mile and 8-Mile, everything changed.
4 I recall they were dredging that 2-Mile in the
5 summer of '73. I know that very clearly because
6 that's the year that I got married. But I don't
7 really know when it was open, when the cut was
8 open. And after that, I guess 8-Mile was dredged
9 after that.

10 I seen a lot of changes when I started
11 fishing again in '85. In 1985 there was still
12 fish, there was still -- fish was still plentiful
13 on Playgreen Lake. But years, you know, not too
14 long after that, you know, fishing started
15 dropping off. There was more debris flowing
16 through it, 2-Mile. Water got dirtier. The lake,
17 it is getting shallower. It is on account of this
18 Playgreen Lake being used as a reservoir.

19 Wind changes, like I said, you know,
20 it just goes back and forth. There is no natural
21 current. And this plantation, you know, or
22 whatever you call it down there, it keeps building
23 up. I notice that through my travels on the lake,
24 on my depth finder, fish finder. I know the
25 bottom looks different. It is not solid any more

1 like it used to. I traveled every day fishing,
2 used to be about, at one area it was ten feet, now
3 it is about eight feet. And that's a normal water
4 level. The level of the lake is, you know, it is
5 the same, but the bottom, the bottom is what
6 causes, you know, the different depth.

7 I haven't set a net on the south end
8 of Playgreen Lake for, I believe since 1996.
9 Because I know that year I lost my brother. He
10 was one of the fishermen as well. I lost him that
11 year. I used to fish on Lake Winnipeg, which we
12 fish now, I fish on Spider Island area, Little
13 Black River. And we fished there every summer.
14 And after I lost my brother, I think I went back
15 there once. So, I moved to my camp in Sandy
16 Island it is called, not far, it is a nice island,
17 nice beaches used to be there. It is where my dad
18 used to live, you know, he had a camp there. It
19 is a nice area, nice beaches, just about, you
20 know, right around that island. Now it is
21 different -- it is different now. Like I said,
22 water gets dirtier, every year it gets worse.
23 Used to have, you know, our children come there,
24 grandchildren come there on the weekend to spend
25 time with us and swim. Now, you know, you can

1 hardly come there. You know, they come but they
2 can't swim like they used to.

3 Late in the summer, as you probably
4 all know, this green algae comes in from Lake
5 Winnipeg and it flows right into Playgreen Lake,
6 and it is, you know, you can -- even traveling,
7 you know, in the lake, just like, you know, you
8 look back at your trail, that's how bad this green
9 algae, you know, it is very thick.

10 Another thing I would like to mention
11 is our water, you can't drink it anymore. Maybe
12 in early spring it is nice, you know, it is clear,
13 I can make my tea with it. But, you know, it
14 doesn't take long, not even a week, and the water
15 changes and we have to haul our water from home
16 here. It is really hard, you know, to trust that
17 water. You wouldn't wash your face with it
18 either, that's how bad, you know, this lake gets
19 worse and worse.

20 Myself, most of the fishing I do is
21 just outside of 2-Mile towards Limestone Point
22 area over there, it is the only place that I can
23 fish now. And also north part of Playgreen Lake
24 towards Whiskey Jack area, Jenpeg area, that way.
25 Out there, you know, you would still, you know, it

1 is still okay, I guess I can say that.

2 Yeah, I seen a lot of changes as far
3 as, you know, Playgreen Lake. Trappers are
4 affected too. I trap, you know, I try to trap,
5 I'm not a trapper, but I just do it as a hobby.
6 My dad was a trapper and also a commercial
7 fishermen. Apetagon name was a big history name
8 at one time, there was a lot of -- I had a lot of
9 uncles and they were all fishermen. Now I'm the
10 only Apetagon fishing. And I don't know if I will
11 be the last one, I don't know who else can fish.

12 What else was I gonna -- yeah, this
13 debris, I'm talking about 2-Mile, 8-Mile, you
14 know, it is bad, it is very bad. The shoreline
15 erosion, it is very -- they started cutting the
16 shoreline here, you know, a few years ago, I had
17 the opportunity to help, with my younger
18 fishermen. And this clearing, it helps, it helps
19 the erosion I know. I said before, I travel
20 through the area every morning, I know seeing it
21 from my travels that it, you know, it helps, the
22 shoreline clearing. I hope, I only hope it is
23 continued, you know, do it every year, because it
24 is a long, long shoreline and the erosion is, like
25 I said, it is bad. And just like wind changes,

1 you know, the water fluctuates, you know, it goes
2 up and down. You know, it is what causes erosion.

3 And water levels, you know, it seems
4 too from time to time, you know, every time there
5 is a big south wind and you have got lots of
6 water, we have to replace our docks. Myself, I
7 just about do it every year. Not replace the
8 whole thing, but I have got to fix it up somehow
9 and I have to repair it.

10 To do these things it costs money.
11 And as far as we are concerned, Norway House
12 fishermen, we haven't seen a penny from Hydro, or
13 the government, you know, to help us with our
14 costs. Traveling after freeze-up, it's dangerous
15 as well. It takes a while before you can trust
16 the ice, you know, to travel on it. And every
17 year I used to set nets, you know, on a river, you
18 know, for fish to eat. Now, you know, you hardly
19 do that. Myself, I haven't set a net down, I
20 don't know, in about 10 years. I go inland, you
21 know, to get my fish to eat. And where I go is,
22 you know, it is where my dad used to trap, and
23 there is a good lake not far from there, and
24 that's where I get our fish.

25 I don't know what else -- like I

1 mentioned here the first study, bottom, you know,
2 building up, or the lake keeps getting shallower.
3 The other thing, it is damaging our equipment,
4 hitting debris, hitting logs. I haven't had a
5 major damage to my own yet, but I have heard my
6 fellow fishermen here, you know, hit logs and
7 damage their equipment. Just about everyone of us
8 have big motors, you know, we have two motors
9 each. That's the only way now is, you know, to go
10 into a big lake, you need, pretty well need two
11 motors in case you have trouble with one.

12 You know, I mentioned water
13 fluctuating, going up and down. You know, you hit
14 rocks, you hit rocks as well. And Playgreen Lake
15 is getting to a point now where there is less fish
16 and it is all -- we blame it all on, you know, the
17 water, dirty water.

18 Sometimes, you know, when I mention
19 Hydro -- you know, sometimes I don't like talking
20 about Hydro because our son works for Manitoba
21 Hydro, he works in Jenpeg Generating Station. He
22 has been there about 16 plus years already. At
23 the time, you know, they wanted young fellows to
24 apply, you know, it was -- the reason for that is
25 so eventually they can take over, you know, the

1 stations, because they are from up north. You
2 know, and guys tend to transfer out from up north,
3 they want to go south where they grew up. That's
4 why, one of the reasons I feel for him, being his
5 employer, and us, you know, having problems with
6 Manitoba Hydro, you know, damaging our lake. You
7 know, it is a feeling I have in me, although I
8 shouldn't feel that way, but that's how I feel.

9 And, you know, before I finish I want
10 to mention 2-Mile and 8-Mile again. There is work
11 to be done here in these channels, just to stop
12 this erosion. There's a lot of work to be done
13 and it is going to have to be done soon, because
14 if you don't do it, like I mentioned this already
15 many times, if you don't do it now, the cost is
16 going to be way up in another ten years, and brush
17 cutting has to continue.

18 And one last thing I wanted to say
19 was, I always hear this saying, you know, don't
20 fix something that's not broken. But I want to
21 say now, this lake, Playgreen Lake, it's not the
22 right word to use, but I would say it is broken,
23 and you will never fix it. I don't think you will
24 ever fix that problem, not in my lifetime anyway,
25 I don't think that I will see. The way it is, it

1 is going to get worse, worse, worse.

2 And I was put up here to, you know,
3 being an elder, to talk about what is, you know,
4 the history. But that's the main thing I want to
5 talk about is our lake, our fishing.

6 Fishing has been good to me, it has
7 been good to me and my family. It helps me to
8 support myself. And I would like to see it that
9 way, you know, for my young fellow fishermen. I
10 hope they can continue to fish like I've done, and
11 I wish them the best of luck.

12 Fishing, one last word about fishing
13 is we get our fish from inland lakes now in the
14 winter. Sometimes you get fish from different
15 communities. They seem to taste different, taste
16 good, taste better, you know, being from inland
17 they are not, you know, they are not yet -- they
18 still have clean water, these lakes inland.

19 So that's pretty well all I have to
20 say. Thank you for allowing me to, you know, to
21 say a few words. And I wish you a safe trip home
22 when you go back. And I hope God will look after
23 our families. Thank you.

24 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Elder, I have a
25 question. How would you compare the shorelines,

1 like on Playgreen Lake, like as you are going and
2 you are docking, from before the channels to now?
3 Like how would you compare that? If you were
4 driving your boat and you were going to put ashore
5 say in one of the -- Weasel Point, how would you
6 compare long ago to today?

7 ELDER APETAGON: Like, growing up, you
8 know, growing up with my dad lifting, you know, he
9 used to take me. He used to take me all the time,
10 I don't know why me, when he goes out and set the
11 net and that, he would take me. Lifting, he would
12 take me. Sometimes we had our camp, you know, we
13 had smaller motors back then, places he used to go
14 and set his nets, you know, it took a while to get
15 there, so we would camp over there, and he used to
16 allow me to drive the motor. That's one of the
17 reasons why I enjoyed going with him, me being
18 able to drive the motor. I know, pretty well I
19 knew the lake pretty good. When I started
20 fishing, you know, I knew the channels pretty
21 well, I knew where all of the main rocks were. So
22 I had an opportunity to, you know, not hit
23 anything.

24 Now there is an island there where I
25 travel through every day when I fish, it used to

1 be a big island, poplar trees. That island is
2 not -- there is no poplar trees anymore, there is
3 hardly anything in there. That island is split,
4 it is two little islands there now. That's part
5 of the erosion that I'm talking about. Maybe in a
6 few more years there will be nothing there. But I
7 don't know if that answers your question, what you
8 asked me.

9 Having big motors myself, I travel
10 where I trust the channel, you know, I don't hit
11 any rocks. I use that one channel to go and lift
12 my nets. Lake Winnipeg, you don't worry about
13 Lake Winnipeg, there is no rocks. The only thing
14 you worry about over there is the wind, big waves.

15 So I don't know what else to say about
16 your question.

17 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: So we are still
18 on -- I will get Langford to come up and talk now.

19 MR. SAUNDERS: Tansi, good afternoon,
20 welcome, I think we met in Winnipeg.

21 What to say. First of all, I'm a
22 commercial fishermen and also I'm the president of
23 the Fishermen's Co-op Association. We have
24 enjoyed 52 years of the work of our fellow -- the
25 first board of directors that had the insight to

1 start up a co-op, a cooperation, a cooperative in
2 our area to protect the rights of our commercial
3 fishermen. Under that the Manitoba Government,
4 Manitoba Cooperative Act, we are our own governing
5 system for our members. We protect our members,
6 we fight for our members, we advocate for our
7 members wherever the need be.

8 When signing of the agreement, the
9 MIA, I'm not going to repeat what I said, the
10 presentation I said in Winnipeg, but what -- I
11 didn't know if this is the place to talk about
12 this, but it is part of the record, to show the
13 impacts of the MIA when it was signed, how it
14 impacts us commercial fishermen, how it is going
15 to determine our lively -- our survival in the
16 future.

17 I hear Mr. Knudson there -- Hutchison,
18 sorry, talk about 2026. That's a different start
19 right away, he is talking about 2026. Us, our
20 livelihood, our life is at stake as commercial
21 fishermen as of 2018. The reason being is that
22 2018 is when the Hydro bonds will mature, and to
23 us the responsibility of Manitoba Hydro has been
24 taken away, almost 50 per cent of the
25 responsibility to the agreement.

1 The MIA spells out that everything
2 that those -- first of all, Norway House
3 Fishermen's Co-op is not a member of the MIA.
4 They are not the signatories of the MIA. There is
5 four signatories, there is Canada, Manitoba,
6 Manitoba Hydro and the Norway House Cree Nation.
7 Under that little book, we are a sub committee.
8 Section 14 of the MIA talks about the sub
9 committee. Sub-account they call it, the
10 commercial fishermen. Anything that is coming
11 through Norway House goes through the Norway House
12 Cree Nation, then the sub committee.

13 When I -- since I met in Winnipeg, I
14 did meet with the lawyer for Manitoba Hydro to
15 bring out some of the concerns that we had. And
16 there it seemed loud and clear that MIA will be
17 used for the Norway House Fishermen's Co-op,
18 because they are not one of the signatories, they
19 are just a sub committee in the MIA, therefore, we
20 don't need to communicate. We can communicate
21 with you, you can say whatever you want to say,
22 but we don't have to step forward to meet your
23 concerns.

24 And that's the understanding I have,
25 even though that ongoing communication, or just

1 meetings and putting our concerns out are being
2 heard by Hydro, because they give me the
3 opportunity of the day and time for me to meet
4 with them, and they give me their time to say what
5 I want to say. But any time when I come to start
6 saying, okay, we have got to do something when
7 2018 comes around, oh, section 14, you are part of
8 the MIA, so you go to the Cree Nation.

9 Elder Apetagon said, talked about the
10 docks, an example of our docks being lost. We
11 have not seen a dime out of that. But 2012 there
12 was an agreement signed, again, it was to the --
13 nothing to say bad things about the Cree Nation,
14 but I just said to Mr. Hutchison at lunch time, it
15 is easy for Hydro to implement that, to use that
16 section, that MIA, as a screen for themselves from
17 us. But they say we give to the Cree Nation. But
18 the Cree Nation has to look at their health, the
19 health of their community, the recreation of their
20 community, their needs for their community people.
21 Then they got to look at the trappers, then they
22 look at the commercial fishermen. What is left?
23 The youth of our community need assistance, the
24 importance of where are they going to spend the
25 dollars that they get.

1 So the Commission, I ask you when you
2 do your recommendations to hear us, the Norway
3 House Fishermen, that we need to be communicated
4 with and we need to be dealing with the
5 remediation, mitigation of the issues that we know
6 are out there. And also we need for us to be
7 negotiated, to negotiate with Hydro. Because we
8 are the ones, 365 days of the year, we are the
9 ones dealing with issues that have lived down the
10 river, that live off the land, that work the land,
11 we know what it is like. You are hearing it from
12 firsthand peoples, not from me being told by what
13 to say.

14 I'm not that kind of a person to have
15 a powerpoint presentation, or to have something in
16 front of me, I speak from the heart. That was
17 given to me and that was taught to me by the
18 elders, that if you want to be advocating for your
19 people, you have to talk from the heart and
20 experience what your people are going through.

21 And what I'm saying here is what the
22 commercial fishermen are going through, because I
23 live with them, I fish with them, you know, and we
24 go through a lot. We go through a lot as
25 commercial fishermen. I can tell you briefly what

1 the life of a commercial fishermen is going to be.
2 It starts on May 15, about there, getting our
3 stuff ready, getting our nets, our boats,
4 everything ready. Then getting to our camp, and
5 getting our camp ready, to look at our docks, the
6 infrastructure that we have around there, around
7 our area. Some docks need to be fixed. And just
8 a little quick picture of what to repair a dock
9 takes, it takes you to repair your dock, it takes
10 you hours and hours, maybe five, six days, because
11 you have got to harvest the logs from the bush,
12 the shoreline, wherever you can find the logs to
13 repair your dock. Then you have to haul rock to
14 your area. Then you have to haul lumber to your
15 area. Then you have to have your guys, your men,
16 help you to repair your area. Any repair goes
17 from \$1,000 to \$5,000 a year. So that's a big
18 impact right away.

19 And then look at a net, one net costs
20 up \$140 a net. That's just the net, that's not
21 talking about the sideline, that's not talking
22 about anything else that you need for the net.

23 So, in a way our commercial fishermen,
24 I'm the president of the co-op, I see what a
25 commercial fishermen goes through, the financial

1 hardships that they go through just to try to go
2 and make a living, but also exercise the right
3 that was given to them way, way, way back before
4 contact of survival of commercial fishing. That's
5 the life of a fishermen.

6 We are resource users. We need to be
7 heard. We need to be talked to, need to be
8 communicated, and we need to address the issues of
9 what is going on around the lake.

10 The MIA is a good thing. I'm not
11 saying anything bad about it. We benefited from
12 it. But 2018 will come around, and Hydro's
13 responsibility is that 10 per cent of the bonds
14 will no longer be there, we will be at the mercy
15 of the interest rate that's going to go down to
16 about 3 per cent.

17 Under the MIA, it talks about, section
18 14 of the MIA, I think it is .9, 14.7 or .9, it
19 talks about how to use the monies from that
20 sub-account, it talks about the number of
21 fishermen that have to be there yearly, which is
22 number 40, number 40, 40 members. When 2018 comes
23 around, I know for a fact we are going to go down
24 to -- 25 per cent of our fishermen are going to
25 go, because right now those fishermen are relying

1 on the compensation, I will use that word
2 compensation very loosely, because we get about
3 \$5,000 a year compensation, but at the end of the
4 year, that's what the fishermen go home with.
5 What about their helper?

6 I see, I see the struggles of
7 commercial fishermen because I'm there. I take it
8 upon myself to know what the needs of my
9 commercial fishermen are. That's why it is a --
10 it drives me to continue asking for shoreline
11 stabilization for the fishermen to work off
12 season, and to do right with the erosion that is
13 happening around the shoreline. And it does help.
14 You know, the shoreline that we did in 2012, we
15 just finished another one close to -- right where
16 we finished off in 2012, we started off in 2015.

17 We are standing around, the Hydro rep,
18 Hank McIvor was there, and Conservation. I was
19 standing there and looking at that 2012 section
20 that we did, and then I turned around, looked at
21 2015, what we did. You know that there is ten
22 feet of shoreline missing? You can tell there is
23 a big difference. You can tell that that
24 shoreline actually worked. Because where we
25 stopped off and where we began, there is ten feet

1 of shoreline missing. And that's two years. Look
2 at the life span of the project, where it start,
3 where it began, the opening of 2-Mile, 1977 to
4 now. Two years, ten feet erosion, times that by
5 how many years now? You see about 100-foot land
6 has been lost. I'm not exaggerating when I say
7 this, because they seen it.

8 And I know -- you can tell where, you
9 look at your GPS, you use your GPS, you go along
10 the shore and you will be driving on land, but
11 land is still about 30, 40 feet away from shore
12 where you are actually driving.

13 There is a lot of impacts, there is a
14 lot of issues of traditional land, of medicine
15 that is lost because of the erosion that's going
16 on. There is lots of it happening.

17 You know, when I talked to my
18 commercial fishermen, I say come to this assembly
19 here, come here and talk. One of the guys said,
20 why would I bother, nobody is going to listen to
21 me. We signed the MIA. They are not going to
22 listen to us. They listen to chief and council.
23 That's the way of the government -- what do they
24 call it -- to divide and conquer, let the people
25 fight amongst themselves, throw them the bone and

1 let them fight amongst the bone, amongst
2 themselves. And that's what one of the members
3 said to me. And I said, but, no, for me, I'm
4 going to go there, I'm going to go there and I'm
5 going to go speak, I'm going to be your voice,
6 because I have taken that job, if you want to call
7 it that way, because you don't pay me, but I still
8 do it. I'm going to be your voice, I'm going to
9 go speak on your behalf.

10 And I will go back about the
11 compensation part, when I say I use that very
12 loosely. Because anywhere else, compensation is
13 you get compensated for something that happened to
14 you. We only use, we use compensation because it
15 is in the blue book. But realistically we don't
16 get compensated unless we go out there to fish, to
17 get the poundage, and that's how we get the money
18 that is given to us. So to us it is not
19 compensation. You don't work for compensation,
20 compensation comes to you.

21 So it is an issue with us. It is
22 getting more clear, I start to see. You know, a
23 long time, a way back about ten years ago, I used
24 to talk to the elders of our community about the
25 signing of this agreement. They said we signed

1 everything off. But then I feel that, no, that's
2 not the case, there is that unforeseen, there is
3 that adverse effects in that blue book that can be
4 exercised. There is people in Hydro that are
5 willing to listen to you, that can do things for
6 you.

7 You know, the reason why I didn't ask
8 Mr. Hutchison any questions, because I know there
9 is higher above him that make decisions. I don't
10 want to put him on the spot where I will continue
11 harping on him, harping on him, you know, I didn't
12 want to do that to him, because I know there is
13 higher ups.

14 So, in short, I guess I will finish
15 off, is that recommendations will come from you,
16 and this is part of the three steps that you said
17 is consultation for us, for the Cree Nation to
18 consult to their people. But also we said this
19 before, and I know there is a submission being
20 done by our lawyer, that's going to be done, and
21 I've said this to him also, that it is going, I'm
22 hoping it is going to be there, what I'm saying
23 right now, in the submission.

24 But just for the record that I'm
25 saying this, that your recommendation should be to

1 help our fishermen. We are a big enough
2 organization that we can be advocating for
3 ourselves and negotiating for ourselves. You
4 know, because Hydro needs to come and negotiate
5 with us, talk to us. You know, it is not just
6 because of goodwill that they open the door for us
7 to go spend five minutes, ten minutes with them.
8 But we need to be very productive in our
9 discussions.

10 So with that, thank you, and if you
11 have any questions --

12 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Anybody have
13 questions?

14 THE CHAIRMAN: I have a couple, I have
15 two or three.

16 You mentioned in your presentation
17 now, and earlier when we were talking, something
18 about if the number of fishers in the co-op goes
19 below 40. Where is that and what is that? Could
20 you give us just a little more description about
21 that issue?

22 MR. SAUNDERS: Good question. In our,
23 in that section 14 of that sub-account for
24 commercial fishermen, it talks about 40 commercial
25 fishermen, there has to be 40 commercial fishermen

1 every year. And if that number goes down, the
2 dollars or the monies that go, there is a formula
3 there that's going to be used to -- so the money
4 goes down anyways, if it is less than 40, the
5 money goes down. So when 2018 comes around, 25
6 per cent of our fishermen leave, we are below that
7 40. And when I talk about survival of our
8 commercial fishery, that's what I'm talking about.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I would
10 also like to ask a question about erosion. And
11 you mentioned just now that there is about
12 100 feet of land that's been lost since 1977. Is
13 that in any one particular area around the lake,
14 or is this in general around the lake?

15 MR. SAUNDERS: I know that both sides
16 of 2-Mile, the north and the south side in
17 Playgreen Lake, I can easily say that it is there.
18 And then you will go along the west channel all
19 the way to 8-Mile, there is areas that used to
20 have points, the peninsula, it is called Pea
21 Point, it is no longer there.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: You spoke about that in
23 Winnipeg.

24 MR. SAUNDERS: Yeah. It is no longer
25 there. And then also along that west channel,

1 west side of that Playgreen Lake, we can easily
2 say that it is 100 feet of land. Because there
3 used to be Hydro lines, and we mentioned that in
4 Winnipeg, that are no longer there, they have been
5 taken out. And the Hydro line cut you can see
6 ends somewhere and begins somewhere else, you can
7 tell how much of that has eroded.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. One more
9 related question. Elder Apetagon spoke about this
10 as well, about 2-mile channel. I think he also
11 referenced 8-Mile channel. And he said that if --
12 I think he said that Hydro needs to do something
13 about the erosion in those two channels. What
14 will happen if they don't attend to this concern,
15 to the erosion in these channels? What will be
16 the long term repercussion?

17 MR. SAUNDERS: Well, negatively,
18 Playgreen Lake is not going to be there anymore.
19 The Playgreen Lake is no longer going to be there
20 because of all of the sediments coming in because
21 of the erosion. And it is going to be a benefit
22 for Manitoba Hydro, because they are going to be
23 having a wider channel, and it is going to be one
24 big lake instead of two lakes, Playgreen Lake and
25 Lake Winnipeg, because the channel itself is

1 becoming wider, and it is getting narrow -- well,
2 it is getting wider, plus it is getting shorter,
3 it is no longer 2-Mile. So again, GPS tells you
4 that you are driving, when you turn to the west
5 you are driving on land, where land is still, the
6 GPS is not updated yet, but land is supposed to
7 be, you are supposed to be going further out. So
8 there used to be a weir coming into Playgreen
9 north. So to make the water come out more, that
10 weir is no longer there. That is all sediments
11 collecting and erosion is more greater on the west
12 side of Playgreen Lake. Long term, Playgreen is
13 not going to be there anymore.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: What can be done to fix
15 it?

16 MR. SAUNDERS: Well, I don't know if
17 you can fix it, but you can stop erosion if you do
18 shoreline -- what do you call those things, the
19 mouth of 2-Mile, riprap -- riprap it and block it
20 off and see what happens. And one of Hydro's
21 staff in 2003 did mention about dredging in the
22 near future of Playgreen Lake. Because with all
23 of the sediments happening, well, Hydro is going
24 to say no, we are not going to talk about
25 dredging. But eventually, because of the erosion,

1 because of the sediments build-up on west, the
2 west shore, it will take the purpose -- that
3 2-mile will be no purpose of it, because it will
4 come into Norway House more, it won't be
5 traveling, the current won't be traveling towards
6 8-Mile. So, therefore, they will need to be doing
7 some work. And that came from their engineer, but
8 I won't name the name, I don't think he is no
9 longer an engineer, but he did mention something
10 like that, eventually, something like that will
11 happen.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. That's all
13 of my questions.

14 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: I don't have
15 questions.

16 I think I would like to, I see Chris
17 Clark walked in and I'm hoping he will speak on
18 behalf of the fishers and the trappers. Mike,
19 Mike Muswaggon, can you come up -- a resource
20 user.

21 MR. MUSWAGGON: Good afternoon, my
22 name is Mike Muswaggon, I'm a commercial
23 fishermen, third generation commercial fishermen
24 on Playgreen Lake and Lake Winnipeg. I've been a
25 resource user pretty well most of my life, whether

1 it be just set a net for myself, or go hunting
2 ducks, geese, whatever, off the land. So the
3 resources and environment that I had is what I was
4 brought up on. But I still practice that today.

5 But I also have been privileged to
6 have an opportunity to be a commercial fishermen
7 in my community. And I used to commercial fish
8 with my late grandfather, and all we did was used
9 to fish Playgreen Lake before 2-Mile was there.
10 And Elder Apetagon, who happens to be his
11 father-in-law, was my grandpa. Anyway we used to
12 fish in that bay there where 2-Mile channel is
13 today. And I always remember how clear the water
14 was all of the time. And I always remember, I
15 used to -- I knew the channel, I pretty well knew
16 the lake pretty well like the back of my hand.
17 And when 2-Mile came on and the environment and
18 everything all just went down in terms of mud and
19 everything else. I stayed away from there, and I
20 actually went to the inland lakes to go do my job
21 of using the land, Molson Lake, and I stayed there
22 for many years. And then I came back to Playgreen
23 Lake and, you know, I don't even remember the
24 channels, how I used to get around. Thank
25 goodness for GPS today. Because I was a

1 commercial fishermen, and when I first started
2 fishing I had to follow the fishermen around just
3 to know exactly where I was going, but I now have
4 kind of mastered that a little bit I guess.

5 The question that I have, and that I
6 have for -- I have numerous questions, but one is
7 this process that the Clean Environment
8 Commission, this consultation or whatever that you
9 folks are doing, could we as First Nations,
10 resource users, look forward to something in terms
11 of something that would be better and try and save
12 some of our environment that we are losing every
13 day? We are losing, like with the previous two
14 speakers, Elder Apetagon and our president of the
15 co-op mentioned, that erosion is happening in our
16 traditional areas. Even though the governments
17 don't say and recognize that water is our right,
18 but we claim otherwise, and we practice otherwise,
19 How can you as people in here as a Commission do
20 something for us to save actually our lake?

21 Because what Langford mentioned to you
22 folks was that, the question you asked was, well,
23 what will happen if we don't do anything? Well,
24 Lake Winnipeg becomes part of Playgreen Lake
25 pretty well. And that will be, that will be, I

1 don't know, a major disaster for us and our people
2 and for the people that are down the line. And I
3 don't know what it entails for us for future, for
4 future generations, for future resource users,
5 lands and water users. So that's a question that
6 I have for you folks in terms of what can you do.

7 And as a former -- I'm also a former
8 leader of this community. I'm a signatory to the
9 Master Implementation Agreement that has been
10 mentioned, and probably in some good forums and
11 some bad forums as well. And I will be the first
12 to tell you as a signatory that agreement was not
13 a perfect agreement, we knew that at the date, at
14 that time we signed the agreement. That gentleman
15 that's standing behind over there is also a
16 signatory to that, he works for the environmental,
17 James Dixon, he is also signatory to that. And we
18 went in there with a plan of trying to get as much
19 as we could today.

20 After signing the MI agreement, we
21 knew there was a lot of flaws in there, we knew it
22 wasn't a perfect agreement. We also even went to
23 a gentleman by the name of Matthew Coon Come, who
24 happened to be the leader of James Bay Cree, the
25 Grand Chief at that time, and then he became

1 National Chief, and I believe he was Grand Chief.
2 Anyway, we went to him to seek his advice.
3 Because we knew -- I wasn't satisfied when we --
4 at the end of the day in terms of the dollar
5 figure that we had. None of us were satisfied,
6 the leaders anyway that were there at the date.
7 But nevertheless we did meet with him. And one of
8 the things we asked him, we gave him the whole
9 concept, we laid the whole agreement in front of
10 him. And we had his people review it. And then
11 he came back to us. We met him in The Pas
12 actually, and we asked him, we said, we are
13 looking for your advice. Because they went
14 through this before, they had the history, they
15 had the experience.

16 What he told us was, go ahead and sign
17 the agreement, you can always go back for more,
18 because they did. Obviously, you have to
19 understand the history of James Bay and Hydro
20 Quebec and whatnot over there, and where they are
21 at today in terms of what they are doing for their
22 people.

23 So that was the plan and we did that.
24 That was one of his recommendations and we did
25 bring it to the committee as well too. We did

1 have open forums like this. We had plastered a
2 lot of things around the arena. And the sad part
3 was not a lot of people came. You know, it was
4 sad because there were a lot of times in our
5 discussions that we had, and I looked at James was
6 there too, there was a lot of times we walked out
7 of that meeting as well too because we weren't
8 satisfied in terms of the way things were going.

9 But today it is, when you look back in
10 terms of what you were able to do with the dollars
11 that we got, you just take a good look at this
12 community. It is because of the work that was
13 started back then. And it wasn't one individual
14 person that did the work, it was a collective of
15 us that did that, the majority of us in council at
16 that time. James and Larson Anderson, at that
17 time, they were the two youngest councillors on
18 council at that time, and myself, and we had two
19 elderly council members, they stuck around with us
20 too. They were there every day with us. It
21 wasn't an easy process. It wasn't an easy
22 process, but I know I have to say this, I pissed
23 some people off, but I don't care, but I know that
24 Hydro wanted that deal, they wanted it bad. They
25 got it.

1 But nevertheless, the dollar figure
2 that they said -- and people said, well, you sold
3 out, you sold out. Well, maybe in a way we did --
4 what did we have to begin with that we did not
5 have to sell out to begin with? When we started
6 this whole process to the MIA at that time, we
7 invited some people, some have passed on, and we
8 approached them to come and help us, because he
9 was a resource user, fisherman, trapper. And
10 another one we asked, I don't want to bring names
11 into the discussion, but he was a trapper and a
12 fishermen as well. We asked him to come and help
13 us during this process, just because him being a
14 resource user, so there would be more advocacy in
15 the part. But that didn't happen, but we went
16 ahead, and like I said, we did what we could at
17 the time.

18 And I'm not here to defend that
19 agreement, don't get me wrong, that wasn't a
20 perfect agreement, but it was the best that we got
21 at the time.

22 And we got people now today that are
23 educated, we have elected leaders in this
24 community that are more educated than we were at
25 that time. You know, so the time is now to do

1 something more for our community. What we did was
2 for the benefit of the community. That's always
3 been the way I looked at it.

4 When ten years came, at that time I
5 asked for -- talk about educated people, we had a
6 lawyer for a chief. And at that time I said,
7 let's do a ten year review, let's go see where we
8 were ten years ago versus where we are at today in
9 terms of the environmental, the components of like
10 where are we at environmentally, what kind of
11 damage has happened to date. The review ended up
12 being only -- they set up a whole bunch of sub
13 committees, and they pretty well just went line by
14 line of the MIA agreement. Well, like I said
15 before, that wasn't a perfect agreement to begin
16 with, so it is easy to be critical and criticize
17 the work that was done. But that wasn't the point
18 what I asked for. I wanted to know, okay, can we
19 go back for more? But that never happened. And
20 that was a missed opportunity then. And I say
21 then, because like I said today, to challenge our
22 educated leadership that we have today for them to
23 go and do something that's beneficial, more
24 beneficial for our people. And also that
25 challenge is there for them now.

1 And for me, I will continue to be a
2 resource user probably until the day I die. It
3 just about happened last year, but through the
4 grace of God I'm still here today.

5 I will need to know from you folks,
6 what is it that you have, or the ability that you
7 have with your recommendations that will save our
8 area, our traditional area? Because I am
9 concerned. You know, as Langford mentioned that
10 when you drive through 8-Mile, 2-Mile, it is not
11 2-Mile channel anymore, it is a mile and a quarter
12 now, if that. That's how much erosion has
13 happened. What are you people, what can you
14 people do for us, for our people here, and also
15 the people downstream?

16 You know, the Cross Lake people, they
17 don't have an agreement, but then I find it funny
18 that they are able to work year round, and they
19 call it forebay I think -- Langford, is that
20 forebay -- they have a forebay agreement. They do
21 like shoreline cleaning and all of that stuff.
22 And why can't they do that for us too in this
23 community? Like why is it that we are not working
24 towards cleaning up our shoreline? All of our
25 shoreline, I don't know, I would even hate to

1 guess how many kilometres or mileage we have in
2 our shoreline in our traditional Norway House. So
3 can we -- I would like to get an answer in that
4 regard.

5 There was something too that I was
6 going to mention. When we were going through our
7 process of the MIA agreement, negotiating, James
8 will remember this too, we wanted land selection
9 of 2-Mile Channel. People fought us on that,
10 Manitoba Hydro fought us on that, the Province
11 fought us on that. They wanted us to do selection
12 in Warren's Landing, but the Province and Hydro
13 fought us on that. The community council -- and I
14 am not jealous what happened -- community council
15 had a better negotiator than we had I guess, I
16 don't know, but they were able to get land
17 selection at Warren's Landing, and why couldn't
18 we? We were looking at that as for long term, and
19 probably for using it for treatment programs or
20 whatever it is that we thought we could do that,
21 but they won't allow that.

22 And our land selection that we done
23 back when we did the agreement, we signed off in
24 1996, or '98, right -- '97, yes, even I'm
25 forgetting here. A lot of our land selections

1 that we did, a lot of those lands are eroded
2 already, they are under water now, our land
3 selections are in the water right now. So we need
4 to, and I will look to leadership on this, to make
5 sure that there is more advocacy and more, in
6 terms of final licence that they can look at for
7 compensation on that.

8 There is a lot of things that are
9 still out there that needs to be looked at. You
10 know, you need to do something, I believe riprap
11 might be a chance of saving, you know, the erosion
12 out the Lake Winnipeg area, the Lake Winnipeg
13 site. And also we will be doing some in our,
14 within our Playgreen Lake as well too. If you are
15 here for environmental, I think that's part of, I
16 think you guys need to respond to that. And I
17 guess that's all I have.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: I just want to respond
19 to your question about what we can do for you and
20 what we can do for your community and for your
21 environment. And we don't have any authority, we
22 don't have any power to order that certain things
23 can be done. We have an authority to make
24 recommendations. I can't guarantee that our
25 recommendations will fix Playgreen Lake, but

1 hopefully our recommendations will move things in
2 the right direction, will address some of these
3 concerns and perhaps improve things a little bit.
4 But at this point we don't have the authority to
5 order that things be done. But the Minister
6 usually accepts our recommendations, and we will
7 certainly consider seriously what kind of
8 recommendations we might make in respect of your
9 lake.

10 MS. SUEK: I have a question -- I have
11 two questions actually. The MIA, you signed that
12 in what, 1998 is that -- '97?

13 SPEAKER: December 31, 1997, New
14 Year's Eve.

15 MS. SUEK: So Jenpeg was built in,
16 finished in '75. It seems it took a while before
17 you got an agreement. Did you have another
18 agreement, or is this the first agreement?

19 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Actually, I'm
20 going to be doing that presentation, and I'm going
21 to take you through the history of the NFA and
22 that, but I'm not doing that until tomorrow. But
23 do you want to go ahead?

24 MS. SUEK: I have a question that goes
25 with that. What did you think, how much of the

1 effects had you seen when you signed that
2 agreement, and how much did you think would happen
3 in the future? Did you have a good understanding
4 of what had happened and what was going to happen?

5 MR. MUSWAGGON: I didn't have a --
6 because I didn't think that we will have that much
7 impact on erosion, until what I see today versus
8 then. So, yes, it is more of a, there is more
9 damage being done more so today, because while the
10 channel is widening or whatever, we get more,
11 bigger flow I would think. I'm not an engineer, I
12 don't proclaim to, but common sense tells me if
13 you open up things a little wider, things are
14 going to flow wider and faster. Common sense
15 tells me that's the reason why we are losing our
16 land.

17 And I hope that you continue to, or
18 Hydro continues to do those programs in shoreline
19 cutting, at least try and save as much of our
20 lands as possible.

21 In terms of your question regarding
22 the signing of the NFA agreement, the Northern
23 Flood Agreement, when we got into council, one of
24 the things that we looked at was consultants were
25 getting rich, lawyers were getting rich, and

1 people were dying away, a lot of our resource
2 users, people were dying away. And that's why we
3 didn't think that -- or for myself anyway, I
4 shouldn't say on behalf of the other people that
5 were leadership at that day, but at least we would
6 try to get them something before their passing.
7 And we were able to get as many as we could at
8 that time. Like they got some -- the normal
9 people, like my age, got a certain amount of
10 dollars, but then the elderly people, the ones
11 higher up there, they got a different size of a
12 dollar figure that went to them as well too.
13 So -- but white people, more white people were
14 getting rich off the backs of our people basically
15 is what I'm saying, because that's what happened.

16 MS. SUEK: I have one more question,
17 this is A completely different question. It has
18 been mentioned that some people have observed a
19 different flow of the current in the 2-Mile
20 channel, that it has, it sometimes shifts a little
21 bit and goes a different direction. Have you, as
22 a fishermen in that area, have you noticed any
23 difference in terms of the flow of the current or
24 is that not -- you haven't seen that happen?

25 MR. MUSWAGGON: Yes, I know a guy,

1 even though I have been fishing for the better
2 part of five years now, five years I have been
3 fishing now, I guess, so I noticed a difference,
4 yeah, especially when you get the wind, strong
5 north wind, and the way the flow should be going.
6 So, we are in trouble here -- yeah, there is a
7 change, but there is also a lot of, I actually set
8 a net last summer in the middle of 2-Mile,
9 Whitefish Island it is called, I set a net there
10 last year because I was going up north to take
11 some pickerel for my in-laws. And all I got was
12 trees off that. So, then fall fishing is the
13 same, just fighting with the trees and whatever,
14 the debris that comes with it. Now, is that
15 enough compensation we should get for that? I
16 don't know. I don't think so.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: I have one more
18 question, a quick one. You said earlier that you
19 used to fish in the bay where 2-Mile Channel is
20 now. Is that on the Lake Winnipeg side or on the
21 Playgreen Lake side?

22 MR. MUSWAGGON: Playgreen.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Playgreen, thank you.

24 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: We have got some
25 coffee from the Salisbury House, but Brian Captain

1 Junior has to leave by 3:30. So do you want to
2 take a short ten minute break, and then you can,
3 you will be done by 3:30. So let's break to 10
4 after 3:00 and grab some coffee while it is fresh.
5 There is tea here. We are their first customers.
6 So they were out there and we needed coffee so
7 they said, yeah. So thank you.

8 (Recessed at 3:00 and reconvened at
9 3:15 p.m).

10 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: So our next
11 presenter is Brian Captain junior, he is a youth
12 in our community.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: What is his name?

14 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Brian Captain
15 Junior?

16 MR. CAPTAIN: Hello, welcome
17 everybody. I wrote my speech on my phone here,
18 because Loretta told me last minute last night to
19 come give a speech here.

20 Okay. Hello, my name is Brian Captain
21 Junior, I'm from Norway House, I'm 16 years old.
22 I go to school here, I was born and raised, I was
23 not one of those ordinary 16 year olds. I am the
24 youth representative of Norway House Cree Nation.
25 I'm also, I also won three out of five awards in

1 the last nine months. I won two provincials, and
2 one local. I recently got nominated for Youth
3 Ambassador of Canada. So if I do win that, I get
4 to go to the States and meet the President of the
5 United States.

6 A couple of weeks ago I just got back
7 from Paris, France, for a couple of weeks. And
8 today I'm going to talk about the youth, what we
9 see and how we see it, and what is the future for
10 our youth.

11 Many years ago -- I wish I had stories
12 to tell you, but I'm just too young to tell you
13 any stories. But when my parents were young, they
14 could swim, they could drink, they could do a lot
15 of many things. Only the world -- only one per
16 cent of the world is freshwater. We have to take
17 advantage of this, not to pollute it. And Lake
18 Winnipeg, as my father was a commercial fisherman
19 for ten years before he found a new job, but his
20 time there as a commercial fisherman, he saw a lot
21 of pollution in Lake Winnipeg, the waters going
22 down, up, a lot of sticks floating there. There
23 is a lot of garbage thrown and big sticks thrown in
24 the water.

25 When I was maybe eight years old, I

1 used to swim in the water, but now I'm kind of
2 afraid to swim because the water is all dirty. We
3 have a lagoon that goes straight into the water,
4 which is not very good. I'm not saying it is a
5 bad thing but -- what is going to happen for the
6 next 20 to 40 years in the future? What is going
7 to happen to my grandchildren's children, how they
8 are going to be affected, and how I'm affected by
9 it right now? I can't swim, I can't drink, what
10 is going to happen next for my kids?

11 The way I see changes to Norway House,
12 that many, many youth barely swim in the water.
13 Many youth barely swim in the water because it is
14 contaminated, it's pollution, and especially what
15 is going to happen to them, if there is going to
16 be any causes, any damages to the kids, which I
17 don't want to see happen. As a youth
18 representative of Norway House, I would look after
19 the youth, represent them, and that's why I'm here
20 today representing them here today.

21 I really have not much to say because
22 I didn't prepare for this, as I was saying. But,
23 yeah, there is many changes. And I wish I had
24 more stories to tell you, but I'm only 16 years
25 old. I wish I had a lot of stories like Elder

1 Apetagon was saying, all the stories he was
2 telling, Langford Saunders. Maybe in the future I
3 will tell you more stories about what is going to
4 happen to our kids, and I hope there is a good
5 future for our children in the next 20 to 40
6 years.

7 I have to get going pretty soon, but
8 if you guys have any questions, I will be more
9 than welcome to answer them. Thank you.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Where do you and your
11 friends see their future? Do you see it going out
12 and getting educated or trained, and then coming
13 back into your community, or do you see it leaving
14 your community for greener pastures? Not
15 necessarily greener, but for other pastures?

16 MR. CAPTAIN: That's a good question.
17 We plan to go to school, come back, get an
18 education, maybe become one of the future leaders
19 to make changes. Yeah, just like come back, fix
20 our community, and hopefully for the best for our
21 children, and our waters to be safe and clean,
22 hopefully. But, yeah, but many years to come.

23 MS. SUEK: It was mentioned before
24 that the number of trappers and fishers is
25 probably -- is dropping. Is this, are young

1 people taking that up, or are they looking for
2 other stuff? Like is that something that they are
3 interested in, or not many, or how is that -- can
4 you see an increase in the future or not?

5 MR. CAPTAIN: In my point of view, I
6 probably won't see it, because many of our youth
7 are not getting an education, they are not looked
8 after. And basically some of them are going to
9 jail and doing bad things. And we hope that they
10 realize it is going to affect their kids, our land
11 and our waters, and they need to, they sure need
12 to get an education.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Just on the education,
14 are many -- I mean, you are 16, you are still in
15 high school. Are many of your friends still in
16 high school? Are they going to graduate from high
17 school? I mean, we hear, and it is true that in
18 many of the northern communities, particularly
19 First Nation communities, high school graduation
20 rates are not high. But, I mean, I get a sense
21 just from what I know about Norway House, but also
22 just from the little bit I've seen in just a day,
23 you have got one of the most beautiful schools I
24 have seen anywhere, at least from the outside. Is
25 that encouraging people to stay in high school and

1 finish high school?

2 MR. CAPTAIN: Well, the average grade
3 12 Provincial grads usually become, like 112
4 students graduate a year. But this year there is
5 only going to be like 35 to 40 potential grads
6 this year. Because some of them don't want to
7 come to school, some don't want to wake up, they
8 don't want to go to school. And it's very hard to
9 get them to come to school and get an education
10 and further their education in the future.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: How can we make that
12 better, or have you thought about it?

13 MR. CAPTAIN: I really don't have an
14 answer to that, but hopefully they -- it's kind of
15 hard to answer that question.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: I don't have any more
17 questions.

18 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: I have a
19 question.

20 MR. FREDETTE: Thank you very much
21 Brian Captain Junior, one of our youth, up and
22 coming young people that we are very proud of in
23 our community. And I had the youth portfolio last
24 year. And the stories about the education, and
25 Brian was trying to answer, there is lot of

1 stories that I heard with the youth. When the
2 trappers, the fishers and way of life is taken
3 away from a generation, the impacts, the ripple
4 effects continue. And that's why I said, if we
5 have more programming, if we have more facilities
6 like swimming pools, and job opportunities, and to
7 advance our young people even further than what
8 some of them are doing now, is essential. Because
9 when you pull the carpet from beneath a culture,
10 it is very, very hard and difficult, as you can
11 tell from residential schools, to the '60s scoop,
12 to the continuation of trying to rebuild our
13 identity as First Nations people. It is our young
14 people that tell the story of the future.

15 Brian was elaborating on not having
16 stories, and the stories that he is hearing from
17 our elders now are very devastating. And even my
18 daughter, who is 16, they are pretty good friends,
19 asked me, well, what happened? So when we are
20 trying to tell our young people our stories, it is
21 one of, you know, hopelessness, of the transition
22 of what we used to be, self-sustaining, we used to
23 hunt and fish and feed our families without any
24 social assistance at that time. And now the high
25 rate of dependency and not having that culture, it

1 affects our young people, it is a process that we
2 have to continue to try to get better at
3 fulfilling those needs.

4 And that's going to be done through
5 getting a healthy community. And that's what I
6 see, with all of the things that happened within
7 our community, and continue to happen because of
8 the effects of the water and everything else, we
9 can not continue on this path. There has to be a
10 good partnership there that continues to say we
11 understand, we know this happened, how can we work
12 together in adjusting these future endeavors?

13 So I hope that I answered some of
14 those questions for you. Thank you so much.
15 Thank you, Brian.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor,
17 for those comments. And that's a discussion
18 that's clearly outside of our terms of reference,
19 but it is a discussion that at some point I would
20 love to sit down and talk a lot about. Because,
21 you know, from going into a number of First
22 Nations in the last two or three months, and it is
23 certainly not the first time that I have been on
24 First Nations, I can probably go back 35 years
25 when I first went to First Nations. But it is a

1 subject that I would really like to know more
2 about, but it is off the record for this.

3 I would just like to also thank Brian
4 Captain Junior for coming out here today and
5 sitting here for most of the day and for making
6 your presentation. And we wish you well in your
7 schooling, but also in your application to be a
8 youth ambassador, so we wish you well in that.
9 And thanks again for coming out.

10 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: I just want to
11 add to that. I think -- I don't know if it is as
12 much like apathy and all of these distractions
13 that the youth have nowadays that's preventing
14 them from going out on the land. It is expensive,
15 it is really expensive to go. And travel time is,
16 you have to travel further to do things than we
17 did with our parents. It was like we could go for
18 a 20-minute boat ride and we would jump in the
19 water right from there. And our youth, they can't
20 do that anymore. So that has something to do with
21 it, you know, as a parent, because we didn't let
22 our kids swim either. But there is a variety of
23 things, but that has something to do with it as
24 well.

25 So I'm going to ask Chris Clark to

1 come up. Chris is a fisher and a trapper, but he
2 also works with us on our Safe Ice Trail Program,
3 that is a cooperative project with Manitoba Hydro.

4 MR. CLARK: Good afternoon, my name is
5 Chris Clark. My Cree name is Dark Thunderbird.
6 And today, I thought about this a lot, like I'm
7 kind of in an awkward situation being a seasonal
8 employee of Manitoba Hydro, but I felt it was
9 important that I come here on behalf of my people,
10 and most important my children, my grandchildren.

11 And I don't even know where to start,
12 we could sit here for ten hours telling you all of
13 the experiences that I have had on the lake, but I
14 will just tell you the main things, I guess, my
15 recollection of Manitoba Hydro coming into our
16 territory.

17 The first thing I can remember is my
18 little sister being born, August 30th, 1973. I
19 got up that morning and went outside, the water
20 was high, there was patches of lawn floating
21 around all over the place. And my mom and dad had
22 been at the hospital for the last couple of days,
23 so it was our eldest sister taking care of us. So
24 I got really scared and thought the world was
25 ending. And my sister told me, don't worry about

1 nothing, your little sister will be home soon.
2 And today where my sister's house sits, there is
3 about 300 feet to the river. On that day there is
4 only like 30 feet to where my dad pulled up with
5 my mom and my little sister, Jenn. I often get
6 her mad because I call her the Hydro kid.

7 And the other thing I remember after
8 that was about 1975, 1976, around that area, I
9 went with my dad to 2-Mile Channel. A couple of
10 his friends were working there as labourers. At
11 that time my dad was fishing and drove bus in the
12 winter. We went there to look for scrap metal to
13 use for his anchors in fishing. I remember we
14 parked the boat right at the mouth of the 2-Mile
15 Channel on the Playgreen side, and we walked up to
16 the camp, there was about probably 500 metres.
17 And there was a garbage dump there northwest. I
18 remember he went to see his friends in the
19 bunkhouse there, that would be late George
20 McDonald and late Stanley Sinclair. So they told
21 him where to go, where he would find the metal he
22 was looking for. So he found some pieces of
23 railway ties and rebar. And one of his friends,
24 the guy that was driving, one of their friends
25 drove all of that metal down to the shore for us.

1 That dump would have been about probably 500
2 metres, 600 metres. That was a long time ago, so
3 I know there is a dump there.

4 Well, I'll touch on trapping first I
5 guess. I have trapped on trapline 39, that would
6 be north and west of 8-Mile Channel. My brother
7 holds that line. Anyways, I think that was about
8 2004, we were going up the river, so my brother is
9 setting his nets, go ahead of me. So I went up
10 ahead. A few minutes later I broke through ice.
11 I guess what happens at freeze-up is the river and
12 the lake freeze, and as soon as it gets cold,
13 Hydro let's out more water, and there was air
14 pockets, stuff stuck in between the water and the
15 ice. And that's what I had hit, put a brand new
16 Skidoo through the ice. And it was minus 30
17 weather. Good thing my brother was with me that
18 day because I wouldn't be here today.

19 Anyways, I used to set along the shore
20 at Kiskittogisu Lake too, and I would set my traps
21 and go check my traps the following week. And I
22 would have to climb five, six feet of shoreline.
23 That's what happens, the water drops, and the
24 water drops with the wind shift, or the Manitoba
25 Hydro releasing more water.

1 Today I trap a community line from
2 Warren's Landing to 8-Mile. It is pretty much
3 impossible to trap the shoreline. You have to be
4 a mountain climber or a monkey to climb through
5 all the trees along the shore, and stumps. And it
6 is dangerous when you are by yourself, because
7 most times I'm by myself.

8 And the pressure ridges that happen,
9 like right in the middle of the lake, crossing the
10 lake. I don't go out there when it is a south
11 wind because those pressure ridges open up. And
12 that's what I was told by the elders, to watch for
13 them when the south wind comes, and north wind
14 they come together and south wind they open up
15 again.

16 But the other thing I wanted to talk
17 about is about the fishing, my fishing
18 experiences. I have been around the fisheries
19 since I was born, I guess. My father commercial
20 fished, my uncles, and my brother, pretty much I'm
21 a third generation commercial fishermen. And like
22 Mr. Saunders had talked that our GPSs show us
23 driving on land. And we have had to upgrade our
24 equipment to heavier anchors, the current is so
25 strong. There is this place called Paupanekis

1 Point, that's the first point coming north from
2 2-Mile, I won't travel there when there is a north
3 wind, because all of that silting that's happening
4 there is -- we are losing water there, the depth.

5 And at 8-Mile channel too, like right
6 at the bay there, I used to catch pickerel there.
7 I remember when I first started fishing in 2002
8 there was about ten feet of water there, that
9 fishing ground. Now there is only about four or
10 five feet. All of that silting that's happening,
11 all of that sand and clay is coming in.

12 And my dad's fish camp sits on ruins
13 at Sandy Bar Point. What you call -- with the
14 erosion happening, and I talked to Hydro about it
15 and they said it has to come from the leadership.
16 And like my mom keeps asking me about it, but I
17 told her to phone the trust office. Like I put in
18 a claim on your behalf, and I told her I have done
19 my part, I have talked to Hydro about it, and they
20 keep telling me about some agreement that happened
21 in 2011 or 2012, that that cabin was compensated
22 at that time. And I don't know anything about it.

23 But anyways, the main thing I wanted
24 to say here to this Commission is, our people have
25 always been fishermen, trappers, hunters, and you

1 know, Manitoba Hydro has altered the way we
2 travel, altered our lake structure, our land
3 structure, somewhat made it difficult to make a
4 living out there now. And you know, as Cree
5 people, we never claimed ownership to the land,
6 but the land and the lake came with us before
7 settlers got here. You know, it has always been
8 our duty and we have been the natural stewards of
9 this land and this water. And today I will tell
10 that I will continue to advocate and respect the
11 land and the lake, because it has given our people
12 life for a long time, and that's where I provide
13 for my family from. And if we lose that, you
14 know, our people will be lost. There goes our
15 identity. Basically that's our culture there, the
16 fishing, trapping, hunting or gathering. Our
17 people have always been land based.

18 I just wanted to make a comment there
19 about the 2-Mile Channel, if the shoreline
20 mitigation doesn't happen there, if the riprap
21 doesn't happen, it will expose that dump that is
22 there. And you know, it is within the Provincial
23 guidelines that no garage dump could be situated a
24 kilometre from any body of water, and that's
25 probably less than a kilometre there. And there

1 is a dyke that's there, you know. That's where I
2 think that dump is, under that dyke under water
3 there. I know it is somewhere there, because I
4 was there.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: That's at 2-Mile
6 Channel?

7 MR. CLARK: Yes, 2-Mile Channel, yep.

8 Basically, that's all I have to say.
9 Like I said, I'm kind of in an awkward position
10 being a seasonal employee of Manitoba Hydro, but
11 at the same time I have to speak on behalf of my
12 people.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

14 MR. CLARK: If you have any questions,
15 I will gladly answer them.

16 MS. SUEK: You talked about the ice
17 when the north wind comes and the south wind
18 comes, some kind of a break in the ice. I have
19 heard of hanging ice. Do you get hanging ice
20 here? And can you just describe that a little bit
21 more, I don't know what that looks like, the kind
22 of ice that you were talking about there, the
23 pockets, what you fell into you said.

24 MR. CLARK: Okay. Pretty much any
25 creeks or rivers from 2-Mile to all the way to

1 Jenpeg I guess, mainly the creeks, hanging ice,
2 you don't know unless you, whatever, you actually
3 break through with your Skidoo. That's when the
4 lake freezes, the ice is formed, and then the
5 gates are opened, and there is a pocket of air
6 there.

7 MS. SUEK: So you are talking about
8 the hanging ice? You talked about pockets?

9 MR. CLARK: Air pockets.

10 MS. SUEK: That's the same thing,
11 right, as hanging ice?

12 MR. CLARK: Yeah. It is dangerous.
13 When I trapped with my brother on trap number 39,
14 we started avoiding those creeks, we started
15 making trails through the bush. And I think we
16 cut about 25 miles of -- by chain saw.

17 MS. SUEK: I thought it was different
18 than the hanging ice, but that's what you are
19 talking about?

20 MR. CLARK: That's what I'm talking
21 about, yeah. Once again, I have to touch on our
22 traditional goose hunt in the spring. By the
23 early '90s there used to be 100 hunters at 8-Mile
24 Channel, it used to be like a little town or a
25 little community. Now that's lost. That's

1 altered the way we travel. We used to stay there
2 about a week at a time with our late father and
3 hunt geese, just stayed in the cabin. Now, today
4 we have to commute, commute daily to see the ice
5 conditions on the lake. Because it goes so fast,
6 what you call, it is not visible because the
7 current is so strong from under, that's what is
8 eating away at the ice from under. And you have
9 to visually see the lake and river on a daily
10 basis. And there is probably maybe not even five
11 to ten of us that hunt there now.

12 And traditionally, traditionally our
13 people have always hunted there. Prior to family
14 allowance, social assistance, what you call the
15 Northwest Company used to send hunters there to
16 pay off their bills that they accumulated during
17 the winter, the families, like their store bill,
18 and that's how they paid off their store bill with
19 the geese that they harvested. And this was
20 shared with me through traditional knowledge, or
21 oral history that was shared with me by one of our
22 local elders.

23 MS. SUEK: Okay. Thank you.

24 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Thank you, Chris.

25 Do we have any -- I'm going to share a

1 story as well. I'm going to take off my hat as a
2 band employee and share a story as well.

3 I too come from a long line of fishers
4 and trappers, but my family traps away from the
5 impacted area, so I'm not going to talk about
6 trapping. But I'm going to talk about fishing.
7 As a girl my uncle owned Molson Lake Lodge, and it
8 is un-impacted by Hydro. So my dad would take us
9 out of school in May, and our cousins. And my
10 uncle was a teacher, so he would teach us May and
11 June, and then in September, because we would
12 start school like at the end of September. And
13 this was a pattern that continued at eight, nine,
14 ten, until he sold the lodge. And so we grew up
15 seeing what it was like.

16 We played all kinds of games there to
17 keep ourselves occupied, and there was four of us
18 kids, and then there was six of my cousins, so
19 there was ten of us kids there, lodge kids, we ran
20 wild and we did whatever. So we had a lot of
21 water games, we spent a lot of time in the water.
22 We used to get these rocks and we would throw
23 these rocks, and we would dive for them because
24 you could see it, even as it was sinking into the
25 fine sand.

1 And then my dad was a commercial
2 fisher as well and my grandfather. So we would
3 come back, and they would fish, I'm imagining
4 June, July, because by York Boat Days, which
5 happens in August, we would be back from fishing,
6 or we would come for York Boat Days. So we would
7 go from Molson Lake to Playgreen Lake. And my dad
8 had a -- we had a tent there. Actually, we had
9 several little areas where we would stay depending
10 on the time of year and depending on whether we
11 were all there, and if my grandfather was there.
12 My grandfather had a preference of staying in his
13 cabin, around Paupanekis Point, I will just say
14 that, it is on the west shore of Playgreen Lake.

15 And I remember in that little cabin,
16 where it was situated, I will say before I was
17 eight, before I was ten years old I will say,
18 because I was born in '66, we would be able to go
19 there and we would be able to put a tent between
20 that cabin and the tree line, and there was enough
21 room. And we would have -- my mom would have,
22 whoever was the baby at the time would have a
23 little bed there with a mosquito net, and there
24 was enough room there, and we would play and
25 whatever. But I remember, I must have been about

1 ten years old, and we would go out there and we
2 always wanted to swim. And before my dad even
3 docked the boat, we would be trying to get in the
4 water and we would bug him, and he would finally
5 let us just jump out of the boat and we would go
6 swimming. We would be undressing in the boat, I
7 have four brothers.

8 And I remember this one, like I said,
9 I was about 10 years old. Of course, he let us
10 out, and we got in the water, my brother and I.
11 We stepped on something, I felt it, like it hurt
12 my feet, and he had this look on his face, my
13 older brother I am talking about, because the
14 younger ones weren't allowed. So we just kind of
15 lifted up our feet and we swam ashore, and we got
16 out of the water. And my dad was kind of
17 surprised, why are these kids getting out of the
18 water, they are there until we have to tell them
19 to get out and force them to come out. I remember
20 our feet were all cut up, and we had hit -- well,
21 we looked, of course, and there is little sticks
22 all over. And I remember that from that time that
23 we went and swam there, unless we were on, like
24 rocky shore, like the islands, my dad's island --
25 I call it my dad's island even though he

1 doesn't -- he dresses fish there. But when we
2 swam on the beach, we would have to wear shoes.
3 And I remember my mom worrying about, well, they
4 are going to wreck their shoes, and the York Boat
5 Days is next week and they are not going to have
6 shoes. But that's how we had to swim. I was
7 about ten years old.

8 The other memory I have again, I must
9 have been about nine or ten, we used to play that
10 game at Molson lake, and we used to play that too
11 out at Playgreen, when we would swim. And I
12 remember that one year, when we are trying to do
13 it, and we were looking, because the water was so
14 murky, we couldn't see the stone. So we tried a
15 white stone as opposed to dark stone. We couldn't
16 see it. So then it was more fun because you are
17 feeling. But that's another memory I had.

18 And I remember when I became aware,
19 when I started getting scared of water. And we
20 always wanted to stay in a tent, my old brother
21 and I. And my dad would be, okay, you can stay in
22 the tent then, and my mom and the little kids
23 would stay in the cabin. And my grandfather, if
24 he came -- and he was old, like he was already old
25 when I was born, late 60's maybe, but he was very

1 indulgent. And he would come sleep with us in the
2 tent. And I remember having to get up at night,
3 because just the way the wind was, we were soaking
4 wet, our bedding was soaking wet, and it was a
5 storm. So we had to get up, and we went in the
6 cabin and it was flooding, that cabin was
7 flooding. And I remember that, it was the most
8 uncomfortable night, the baby was crying. I don't
9 remember which one of my brothers it would have
10 been. I'm thinking it was my brother Danny
11 because he was born in '74, so around there,
12 that's how I can date it. So that's another
13 memory, I remember that, I was so scared of the
14 water that night. Because we got up and we just
15 kept watch, right, because you couldn't sleep, our
16 bedding was all wet.

17 And another thing we used to do with
18 my grandpa, we would troll the shores looking for
19 corks, like old fish nets. Sometimes they are
20 wooden, sometimes they are plastic. Do you
21 remember those? They were all different colours.
22 Or nets that wash up along the shore, and my
23 grandpa would take them and he would fix these
24 nets, or use the sideline, whatever. So I
25 remember we must have been close to 2-Mile and we

1 were trolling slowly. And we never got out, my
2 grandpa never got out, he was elderly. I remember
3 we came upon this area and we saw this black
4 stuff, this black water coming out of the bush,
5 and we just stopped and we looked, and my grandpa
6 was just amazed. And we asked him, my older
7 brother asked him, and he said he didn't know what
8 it was. And I know where that is now, because
9 there is a ditch at 2-Mile on the west side and it
10 drains into Playgreen Lake. And that was coming
11 from that garbage dump that Chris was talking
12 about, because I remember what it looked like. My
13 grandpa is standing there and just like, with a
14 puzzled look on his face. And he died about two
15 years later, I believe that was the last time we
16 spent out there doing that kind of stuff.

17 And I remember the 2-Mile Channel, I
18 used to think there was a store there, like a
19 hardware store, because they would go and get
20 metal, like that rebar and whatnot to make those
21 anchors. I actually thought there was a store,
22 that 2-Mile was a store. You know, I didn't know,
23 I didn't really know what it was, I thought it was
24 just part of the geography of the land or
25 whatever.

1 Those are pretty much my memories.
2 And it wasn't long after that my uncle sold the
3 lodge, so we didn't go to Molson Lake very much.
4 I don't think we ever went back after my uncle
5 sold the lodge. But my dad still fishes today and
6 he is 71. He is 71, and he talks a lot about the
7 differences and about -- I remember if it was
8 storming and my mom, and we were out on the lake
9 and they were fishing, my mom wouldn't stay on the
10 island alone because bears come around, so we
11 would all go. And I remember a few times, quite a
12 few times actually there would be sturgeon in the
13 net, and we would pet it and whatnot, and we would
14 eat it. But that was kind of a common thing, like
15 to see the sturgeon. And I remember about maybe
16 six, seven years ago, a couple of the fishermen
17 caught sturgeon. But they weren't old, they were
18 maybe this long and they were about that big. But
19 those are my memories of the lake.

20 And today when I go out there, I go
21 out there frequently for work, I go -- I actually
22 married a gentleman who was raised at Warren's
23 Landing, so I got familiar with that area too, and
24 those tributaries of Warren's Landing where they
25 would hunt ducks. And I know it is not just those

1 people that did, because a lot of people from
2 Norway House would go and hunt there. But I do
3 know, yeah, that's another thing I wanted to talk
4 about. My grandpa, we would go to islands and we
5 would get eggs, like duck eggs and seagull eggs,
6 and that's what we would eat. We didn't take
7 eggs, we got eggs out on the lake. And I remember
8 not being able to find eggs where we went. And I
9 didn't realize at the time -- I remember these,
10 like the shorelines used to be full of those
11 weeds, when I go out there I never see those weeds
12 anymore, like dry weeds, you know, we used to pick
13 those and we would cut them, we would break them
14 and pretend we were smoking those weeds. I never
15 see those now when I go out.

16 So it is kind of hard for me to talk
17 about it, because I was really close to my
18 grandfather, and I will always be grateful for the
19 things that he taught me, that I forgot about as I
20 got married and had kids and went out to
21 university and that. But, no, it never really
22 leaves you, it's always in you. And you come out
23 and you look at places and you are like, I was
24 here, we had a picnic here, we had a wiener roast
25 here, and my dad threw us in the water here

1 because we wouldn't stop bugging him. We wanted
2 to go in the water and he said, okay, and he wet
3 us and he put us back in the boat, now be quiet
4 until we get to our destination.

5 But I remember on Sandy Island, we
6 called it Sandy Island, there was a full community
7 that lived out there, the fish packers and the
8 fisher people, and they had tents all over the
9 place. If you like to go visiting, you went to
10 Sandy Island. I don't even know if anybody stays
11 there anymore, Chris, like to put up a tent there?
12 Yeah, Elder Apetagon, but it's not like it used to
13 be.

14 You know, it hurts to remember these
15 things, it really does. Because if I took my
16 grandson out and I wouldn't let him swim, I
17 wouldn't let him swim even if he had his shoes on,
18 there is so much more in the water that's scary.
19 We take bottled water. We would drive out in the
20 middle of the lake and we would get water, and
21 that was our good water, because we weren't
22 dipping it off the shore, because you wouldn't get
23 that algae that sits on, hangs on to the rock.

24 But those are my memories, and that
25 would have been around like the '70s. Because by

1 the time you are 14, you are too cool to go and do
2 stuff out there. So I would say between '74 and
3 '80, I would say, about six years there that we --
4 yeah, my parents took us out on the land quite a
5 bit, not so much in the winter, we were more
6 summer. That's my story. Thanks.

7 So, I don't know if anybody else wants
8 to say anything. What time is it? Almost 4:00.
9 Supper is not coming until 5:00. So do we want to
10 have a little break, and then we will see who
11 shows up? But that's my personal story, and then
12 tomorrow I'm going to do a presentation for Norway
13 House Cree Nation and speak to a lot of the
14 history since 1976. So we will break now.
15 Yeah, let's break until supper time, and supper
16 should be here by 5:00, so let's meet back here at
17 5:00 and have supper and see who comes, who shows
18 up. Okay.

19

20 (Recessed at 4:00 p.m. and reconvened
21 at 6:15 p.m.)

22 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Okay, we are
23 thinking that we will start now, and then we will
24 stick around here until 8:00 o'clock, and then we
25 will shut her down for the day, and start tomorrow

1 at 9:30. And it is pretty much just, if there is
2 any other people out there that maybe couldn't
3 make it today, and then I'm going to do a
4 presentation, and then council will speak again,
5 and we will close for the day. And then we will
6 have lunch at 12:00, and then we will drive you to
7 the airport.

8 So I'm going to ask James Dixon, he
9 works for Norway House Cree Nation. He has got a
10 trapping license in one of the impacted traplines.
11 He is also a commercial fisherman for several
12 years and he is a very active resource user. So,
13 James Dixon.

14 MR. DIXON: Good afternoon, James
15 Dixon. I have been working with Loretta for the
16 past, ever since she came back, how long now, six
17 months, maybe something like that, but I have been
18 there trying to fulfill her, the work that she has
19 been doing before she took her leave. But before
20 then I was working for the Aboriginal Northern
21 Affairs as the consultation coordinator. I worked
22 with Dale in some areas and different issues that
23 came up. And Councillor Bayer was my supervisor
24 at that time. So we all know Tom. So all of
25 these ex civil servants sitting around here, so we

1 were having a good time.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anybody left
3 in Northern Affairs?

4 MR. DIXON: I think so, a few anyway.
5 But I wasn't expecting to do a presentation. I'm
6 heading the charge as the consultation coordinator
7 for Norway House Cree Nation, and I had some
8 urban, a couple of urban sessions, Winnipeg and
9 then Thompson, with our members. So it has been
10 good. There is probably like 30, 40 people
11 showing up at each session. So it was good
12 information coming out, in regards to section 35
13 Aboriginal and Treaty rights. I have got a
14 question, so your terms of reference is only on
15 the environment, right, solely on the environment?
16 Physical impacts, right, that we see?

17 THE CHAIRMAN: And public policy, but
18 not the Treaty or Aboriginal rights. Specifically
19 not those.

20 MR. DIXON: But at the end of the day,
21 it is the impact, right, the reason?

22 THE CHAIRMAN: I mean, they do cross
23 over. Something can be both an environmental
24 impact as well as an impact on Aboriginal and
25 Treaty rights at the same time.

1 MR. DIXON: Yeah. Okay. That sounds
2 good.

3 I guess a little bit of history from
4 where I come from. I grew up a few years in
5 Norway House with my grandparents, solely with my
6 grandparents, I guess, grandparents, my great
7 grandparents and stuff like that. So they have
8 been out on the land ever since I can remember.
9 And I have about eight siblings. I'm the oldest,
10 I'm 48 in July, so you can see a difference there.
11 So, we did a lot of, I guess, my parents sent me
12 out to be with my grandparents in Warren's
13 Landing, just by the lake, Lake Winnipeg, between
14 Lake Winnipeg and Playgreen. So I've seen a lot.
15 I have experienced a lot in my time there,
16 trapping, fishing, hunting, for sustenance, right,
17 that's how we lived and operated out there. We
18 also did commercial fishing. I helped out with
19 the commercial fishing program. I seen the Gimli
20 fishermen, they move up north to Warren's Landing,
21 it used to be a big business back then. Some
22 person mentioned that Warren's Landing would be --
23 how many buyers -- four or five buyers, Canadian
24 Packers, PC Packers, all of those Canadian fish
25 people back then. I seen all that in my younger

1 days, and that's where everybody flocked from
2 here. Especially my dad, he used to go every
3 summer to get employment with one of the gas
4 boats. The fishermen, you know, they worked day
5 and night over there. I seen the fish come in and
6 all of that.

7 But growing up a bit later, that kind
8 of disappeared along the way a few years after.
9 This was about '75 through '80. But growing up on
10 the land, I seen a lot of devastation, I guess I
11 can say. On the shorelines, we used to trap along
12 the shorelines for otter and the aquatic animals,
13 right, fur bearing animals. Today you don't see,
14 they don't exist, those spots, those hot spots
15 that we used to call our favorite spots, they
16 don't exist anymore. You have to go further into
17 the bush to try to get that. Trying to get close
18 to that thinking that it will be the same thing,
19 right, the animals would come around the same way
20 as they used to from that previous spot, but, no,
21 they don't.

22 So that kind of altered the way of
23 thinking there and made us go further and further
24 away from our homestead, where we grew up, our
25 camp, just across from the Warren's Landing

1 community establishment. That's where we grew up,
2 I grew up, along with my uncles, my grandparents,
3 it was a good time in those years, so on and so
4 forth. We used to travel, we used to run to
5 school across that lake, that little open space,
6 the narrows, you know, from Lake Winnipeg to
7 Playgreen, we used to run there comfortably. And
8 today you can't even walk across there. It is,
9 the ice is unsafe, open water all over. And the
10 flow is so, it is fast, the current is fast today.
11 You know, it is unbearable. So there is no
12 crossing there, you have to cross further in, in
13 Playgreen, and make a detour if you want to go
14 visit across back then.

15 So ice flow. And you know, also the
16 ice in the spring time, nobody talks about the ice
17 because they haven't experienced the ice. When it
18 comes in, my grandparents thought it was a living
19 being, when these icebergs type of thing come from
20 the lake, they just climb onto the shorelines and
21 they just damage, like a heavy equipment operator,
22 bulldozer, bulldozing along the line there, along
23 with the current behind them. And I don't know
24 how much ice is behind them forcing it. You know,
25 it just erodes away.

1 The Purvis Point is getting smaller.
2 That's where the fish plant was, that's where you
3 took your fish in. Purvis Point is very small
4 now. It doesn't exist really, you know. And
5 those kind of things, when you are on the land,
6 you get to see these, you know. At night when we
7 are in bed, we can hear like tractors working
8 because of the ice moving in, climbing on the
9 islands and reefs. In morning we look up and
10 there is a big, like you are in Churchill
11 somewhere and there is a big iceberg sitting there
12 on the reef.

13 So those kind of things happen and
14 they destroy your fishing. You try setting a net
15 just on a bank where we lived, and it is just
16 dangerous, you know, it was dangerous. Lucky not
17 to fall through, to successfully check your nets,
18 all of those hardships at the time.

19 And yeah, trapping, that was my
20 experience growing up on that piece of land there.
21 Also currently saturation, you know, trappers
22 mention when we see pieces of land floating on the
23 lake, like you see a little island, you know,
24 floating along the lake where it never was, it was
25 saturated along the shoreline. I don't know where

1 some of it came from, along the creeks and rivers,
2 because it is saturated.

3 I don't know, the muskeg, off the
4 muskeg land there, there is even ponds developing
5 where there is no ponds before. And it kind of
6 alters our safe trails, right. You expect to
7 drive on land, on muskeg, thinking it is safe, you
8 are off the lake. So all of a sudden you come up
9 with this piece of a pond or a little lake up on
10 land. So those kind of things are unforeseen. We
11 never expected that to come about. Floating
12 debris, floating islands, pieces of islands, you
13 know, trees and all of that coming into play.

14 What else can I mention? Somebody
15 said -- Chris talked about the annual goose hunt,
16 it is happening right now, and it is kind of too
17 late for Skidooing, but the project also, we are
18 going to find out that we have to alter our
19 routes, traditional routes, you know, each year.
20 We think it is the safe way, our grandparents
21 taught us to travel on this route, how to approach
22 an island, you know, considering the current and
23 all of that, you have to approach it from behind
24 and try and go over along the edge. But that
25 seems impossible nowadays. Those, they are very

1 dangerous now. And so water on top of the ice,
2 you know, the ice would be thick but, you know, it
3 is just like a foot or two. You're Skidooing, you
4 are just like on a Sea-doo, you are swaying and
5 everything is behind you. All of that is coming
6 up that really we never really seen before, you
7 know. To even get stuck during slush, you know,
8 the slush buildup, to get off your Skidoo above
9 your knee, you know, you are all wet, you're
10 soaking wet.

11 So a lot of -- during the
12 consultations we hear all of this, right, about
13 the water flow, the velocity of the flow,
14 especially when there is a point, right, when
15 there is a point there. This water flow comes
16 pretty fast and there is no way to turn, so it has
17 to come up on top of the ice. So that's where
18 these trail normally go, our safe trails. Now
19 they are full of water. So I guess the increased
20 flow of water from the lake also is damaging our
21 safe trails.

22 Yeah, we are hunting there. It is
23 just opening up now. It used to be a smaller
24 lake, it has gotten bigger. And then you can
25 drive in there by boat now, so that saturation is

1 taking a toll on everything.

2 Fish spawning areas, you know, they
3 begin to be silted in. Creeks, rivers, the silt
4 begins to cover the mouths of the rivers and
5 creeks, so the fish can't spawn there normally
6 because of the silting that's happening. Right?
7 It is just, like I said, we are going further and
8 further and further away.

9 And dredging would be kind of a good
10 example to try to save the spawning grounds, I
11 don't know, to be sensitively -- dredging these
12 areas, that will kind of improve, again, the
13 spawning areas along the lake and also Lake
14 Winnipeg too. That's where the big spawning areas
15 are on the lake, along the lake and rivers and
16 stuff like that.

17 You know, I used to drive in there
18 full throttle, you know, your boat. Now you have
19 to kind of stop or come to a dead stop and then
20 just push in. Yeah, those are the types of
21 difficulties we face now.

22 It is too bad I didn't prepare that
23 template I had. I could have been, you know,
24 point to point here. But I'm just trying to
25 remember how I did it.

1 But anyway, yeah, I seen at a younger
2 age, in the '70s, the early '70s during
3 construction, I had a chance to see 2-Mile
4 constructed way up, passing by Bombardier from
5 Warren's Landing coming on the west shore of
6 Playgreen Lake there, along the land, from our
7 school there. And it was just starting to be
8 worked on. I just looked out of the Bombardier
9 window with amazement. I didn't see so much
10 construction in my life. You can see the big
11 barge and all of that. They had some kind of a
12 vacuum system blowing out the silt, the ground,
13 and everything like that. I seen all of that
14 there at the time, and I was just amazed. And
15 there it is, it just started, the time, it just,
16 the lake just kind of slowly, you know, it's just
17 slowly disappearing from its normal -- the water,
18 how the clean water was and everything like that,
19 it is just slowly dissipating, I guess,
20 disappearing, you know, the pristineness of the
21 lake, the shorelines. And how the beaches were,
22 you know, there was miles and miles of beaches.
23 Loretta was mentioning that. I experienced that
24 myself.

25 Also when Lake Winnipeg Regulation, we

1 are the reservoir, Norway House Cree Nation, right
2 here. And when the Jenpeg Station is closed, you
3 know, in the fall time, especially in the fall
4 time you can see the water flowing south again,
5 because of the north wind, you can see the water
6 flowing, because of the bridge. You stand here
7 one day in the fall when there is a great north
8 wind, you can see the current normally goes north,
9 right? The rapids, it is kind of a speedy rapids,
10 you see. But it goes the other way in the fall.
11 So it doesn't have anywhere to go over there. So
12 the trappers are saying, in our consultations,
13 that there is a washboard effect, the water is
14 washing back and forth in our front door, in our
15 lakes and rivers here. So there is a washing back
16 and forth.

17 And the elders used to say that when
18 you see the river flowing the opposite direction,
19 it is supposed to flow north, it is kind of an
20 omen, you know what I mean, it is a bad luck, it
21 is an omen. So just to let you know on that one.
22 So it is supposed to flow north in the normal way,
23 how it was created to flow, that was the way it
24 was supposed to flow, right?

25 And basically I hold the trapline 28,

1 which is right before Jenpeg. And we basically
2 use maybe a quarter of our trapline. Forget
3 trying to cross the rivers and lakes, you know
4 what I mean. Along the lake here by Cross Lake on
5 a bank, we only use a quarter of it probably, just
6 for safety reasons, staying along the land, along
7 the shoreline, this is what we do. And there is
8 no way to cross to the other side. Because of
9 the -- it doesn't freeze up, the current, the
10 rivers, they don't freeze up over there, and it
11 prevents us from producing for our families,
12 right, to sustain our families appropriately.

13 So even trappers are asking that they
14 be provided with safe travel in collaboration with
15 Manitoba Hydro, a helicopter ride to their spot.
16 I mean, some trapline camps are on islands, on big
17 islands. It is impossible to go there before
18 Christmas, until maybe second week in January,
19 first, second week in January, that's the only
20 time you will reach your trapline, some of them.
21 That's our neighbours there on 25, I believe. So
22 it is impossible to provide for your family in
23 trapping in that area, and it is only good for
24 maybe two, three weeks. You are just finished
25 setting your traps in two, three weeks, you know,

1 and it is time to go now, you know.

2 So those are the hardships that we
3 face along the project footprint, I guess we can
4 call it.

5 The Ominawin bypass, along there,
6 Ominawin is just behind us, that's where my camp
7 is, Ominawin bypass, one of the channels
8 constructed. So it is very difficult, dangerous
9 at the same time, yeah, basically.

10 And also, I guess you have heard, they
11 kept referring to James Dixon, and I was sitting
12 over there, about the MI 1997 agreement. But at
13 that time, there was no mention of a 2004
14 agreement with the Province of Manitoba and
15 Saskatchewan coming up with an agreement allowing
16 Saskatchewan to drain water to Manitoba. In 2004,
17 they came up with an agreement, I forgot the name
18 of it. But that's when the great droughts
19 happened, 2003, 2004 in Manitoba, so Manitoba
20 needed water for the Manitoba Hydro stations here.
21 They ran out of water. So a few years down the
22 line came, we had too much water. Farmers were
23 flooded out. Cottages were flooded out, right.
24 And we had to do something. And they had to make
25 the St. Martin channel inlet immediately to save

1 farmer's fields and the cottage country in Lake
2 Manitoba. What ended up happening is they had to
3 remove St. Martin First Nation, Little
4 Saskatchewan, Dauphin River, you know.

5 St. Martin doesn't exist anymore, they
6 are in hotel rooms in Winnipeg. And I feel for
7 them. I knew some people from there. They are
8 still there after three, four years. I see this
9 old lady still at the Victoria Inn when I go for
10 breakfast when I do my business there, she is
11 still there, an old lady from St. Martin. But
12 that's what I mean, these inlets weren't accounted
13 for, they were unforeseen.

14 And also there is plans to do another
15 one by Fairford. And our colleagues over there
16 are, our brothers and sisters over there, they are
17 fighting that this won't happen, because the inlet
18 was an environmental catastrophe. It impacted
19 wildlife. You can see caribous, you can see deers
20 floating on that inlet when it was open. And we
21 haven't seen any reptiles, snakes, frogs, and all
22 of that that came along with it, right. And it is
23 just an environmental concern.

24 And where does that all go? Norway
25 House again. So we are the catchers of

1 everything, the contamination and all of that that
2 comes from all of the watersheds that come in.

3 We wrote a letter stating, to the
4 consultation unit, stating that we wanted to know
5 what was happening in that area, the proposed
6 Fairford River. So when that happens, there is
7 more contamination opening up, there is probably
8 no accounting of how many, you know, the water,
9 how much water would come through those channels,
10 what the effect that the Lake Winnipeg
11 Regulation -- you know, it is unforeseen, it just
12 happened like that. So we have a problem with
13 that, because all of the calculations to hold the
14 715 and the 711 benchmarks, without knowing that
15 there will be other channels coming into play
16 instead of the regular rivers and creeks that come
17 into all of the water sources.

18 So those kind of things, the 2003/2004
19 agreement, the new developments with the inlets,
20 and other projects that might hinder, there is a
21 void, there is no communication with Norway House
22 in those aspects.

23 We have a concern with increased
24 health. There is a lot of, there is a rise of
25 cancer in our reports from the doctors, high

1 increase of miscarriages could come from mercury
2 levels, high increase in different areas of the
3 health field. We are trying our best to try to
4 identify any sources or triggers that might --
5 that we could find, you know. We check our fish.
6 We are in the process of doing hair sampling for
7 mercury levels. Water testing our treatment
8 facilities, there is an abundance of silting that
9 we can find there, I forget the terminology there
10 with the water, because of the increased flow
11 coming towards, from 2-mile to Norway House,
12 instead of floating out towards 2-mile north, it
13 is coming towards the rivers into the system here
14 at Norway House.

15 So because of the silting and the
16 water levels, the water levels, like they said it
17 used to be ten feet, now it is eight feet, and it
18 is going out further out, and then pushing out the
19 water and the contamination and algae and all of
20 that stuff that's coming in. That's the concern.
21 And it is going to flow right into the Norway
22 House rivers here instead of floating north.
23 Those are the concerns that we have to date.

24 And we have our engineers that are
25 going to look at that, our specialists. We

1 collaborate with the University of Manitoba in
2 many areas to try to identify any sources,
3 problems and all of that, that we could tackle, I
4 guess, in many ways.

5 I did eight years of commercial
6 fishing on my own, like a few years ago and, oh my
7 goodness, our nets were dirty, we caught trees, we
8 caught everything.

9 I forgot to mention that ever since
10 that inlet or that channel was open, we find cedar
11 trees that are not natural to our environment. We
12 find different things that look very alien, you
13 know, structures under the net, the fishermen will
14 pull up from the -- and formations of different
15 things that the fishermen will pull up is pretty
16 scary.

17 And natural good spot, hot spots, they
18 no longer exist with pickerel, with different
19 types of species that you are targeting, they
20 don't exist. Sturgeon don't really exist anymore.
21 Traditional camp sites eroded away, like the Sandy
22 Bar. Sandy Bar Point there, it is gone, never to
23 return.

24 And all of this, when you look at it,
25 it is kind of like Loretta said, you will feel it.

1 When you are connected to the land, when you are
2 there and you are connected, you know, when you
3 don't see it anymore it is like a piece of
4 something in your life is missing, you know, and
5 that's the important part here. Our identity and
6 our culture and our way of life, it is affected.
7 We are losing it if nothing is happening.

8 And that's our strength, our land is
9 our strength, our land is our identity. It is --
10 we are mixed with it, we live with it in a
11 holistic manner. If there is no land, if we can't
12 exercise our way of life, what can we expect?

13 And just to let the Commission know
14 that all of these are the reality up here in the
15 north. And I hope that you take the message clear
16 that it is a serious thing. It is not about Hydro
17 projects, economic development, you know, jobs for
18 everybody, for Manitobans. It is life and death
19 for certain Manitobans, individuals, you know, it
20 is life and death. And I don't know if you want
21 to -- I don't know if we are going to react in
22 time.

23 You know, it looks pretty hard to fix
24 things, right, the way things are right now. But
25 if we really try and work together, collaborate

1 together with government, Hydro, we can do it. We
2 can do it for sure.

3 And I guess that's basically what I
4 could say here this evening. I'm grateful to have
5 the opportunity to stand before the Commission and
6 the people this evening, just to pour my heart
7 out, our experiences. In moving forward, I hope
8 that we would come up with something solid for
9 generation, our kids, our children, future
10 generations to survive and thrive on their land.
11 Egosi, thank you very much.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: James, you talked about
13 a dredger, you talked about silt, and it's I guess
14 negatively impacted spawning areas. And you think
15 that if this area is dredged it would help?

16 MR. DIXON: Um-hum.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Where -- is that just
18 inside I guess the 2-Mile Channel, is that where
19 you are speaking of?

20 MR. DIXON: Yes. Not only 2-Mile
21 Channel, it is along the Lake Winnipeg too, these
22 rivers and creeks and inlets.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. So it happens in
24 other areas? It happens at the mouth of --

25 MR. DIXON: Yeah.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: -- rivers and creeks
2 which are bringing silt down?

3 MR. DIXON: Yeah.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: I guess one problem is,
5 is there a dredge on Lake Winnipeg anymore?

6 MR. DIXON: No.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: That would be the big
8 problem, wouldn't it?

9 MR. DIXON: Um-hum.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: I think in 1979 the
11 Feds stopped dredging the Red River, and I don't
12 think there has been one since.

13 MR. DIXON: Um-hum.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: But you believe that if
15 the silt were removed, the spawning areas would
16 recover?

17 MR. DIXON: I believe so, yes. You
18 have to go back to the habitat the way it was, and
19 we certainly hope that it will return, the
20 habitat.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.

22 MR. DIXON: Yeah.

23 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Thank you, James.

24 We are down to -- everyone has spoken.

25 But one of the things, as James was speaking, I

1 know what has been brought to my attention over
2 the years is the 2-Mile Channel, and it is the
3 outlet, right, that drains into Playgreen Lake.
4 And it has often been recommended by the fishermen
5 and other resource users to go underwater and see
6 what is there. Because when we -- Hydro funds us
7 every year to do a timber debris program at 2-Mile
8 Channel, and basically what we do is we just catch
9 the logs that are coming through the channel. And
10 some of them are pretty big, and we clean up the
11 shorelines. Because when there is a buildup of
12 logs, maybe a 100 to 200 logs, it let's go and it
13 all comes in a rush.

14 What I did one year, it was in 2004,
15 we had been at it for 10 years, this will be our
16 11th year, I sat on the shore and I watched the
17 logs. And you can see them as they -- on Lake
18 Winnipeg and they get carried in that current and
19 they are pulled down. And then you will watch and
20 it goes so the fast, you know, they pop up
21 somewhere as they are coming through the channel.
22 So that's a real concern, because that channel,
23 the fishermen use it as access to Lake Winnipeg.
24 It is shorter. It makes sense, you know, to get
25 to their nets. So that's why we do the timber

1 debris program at 2-Mile run, it is a shoreline
2 cleanup to get that timber debris, to prevent this
3 log release of 100 to 200 logs. Because they
4 build up.

5 Like we had a lot of water this year,
6 high levels, and there was one, it was providing
7 some protection on the inlet side, on the east
8 side, and that let go this year. And we were
9 hoping that we would be able to do some kind of
10 cabling. Because it seemed to be protecting the
11 shores where there was buildup. Where there was
12 no debris buildup, it is eroding quite fast. That
13 was one of the observations that we made this
14 year. So we to have a timber debris program at
15 2-Mile Channel that we will be submitting a
16 proposal.

17 I think it was Mike Muswaggon that
18 mentioned Cross Lake the cleanup they do in the
19 forebay area. We have land there in the forebay
20 at Kiskitto, Kiskittogisu, that's where our
21 boundary is with Cross Lake, right across the
22 lake. So we are putting a proposal into Hydro to
23 do a cleanup on our side of the lake. It makes no
24 sense that they are cleaning up everything on this
25 side and then nothing is happening on our side.

1 So James and I went, it was in
2 September, we went with Hank McIvor from Manitoba
3 Hydro. Because the gates were wide open, we could
4 actually see, like just looking at the shoreline
5 and the water line, it was about four or five feet
6 at least lower this fall in September when we went
7 out there. And I was so surprised at all of the
8 debris I saw sticking out. Like they call them
9 spiders. Real dangerous situation, so I was
10 surprised to see it. But we will be submitting a
11 proposal to Hydro. Like I will leave it out of my
12 presentation tomorrow, but that's one of the
13 programs that we would like to see, we want to
14 expand the program to include that area. But we
15 also would like to do, like the fishermen are
16 doing, and I guess they have already presented to
17 you guys, they are doing that stumping, like we
18 call it stumping, and it is winter work. And it
19 appears to be working, because they started doing
20 it at 8-Mile Channel, and just looking at it
21 because it has been a couple of years, it seems
22 effective.

23 We also have a grave site that we
24 found during the 8-Mile Channel cleanup, we
25 confirmed a grave site there. So we used a gabion

1 basket, the mattress, and that seems to be
2 providing some protection. So we are thinking
3 that maybe one of the recommendations is, because
4 Playgreen Lake is so, it is important, and we are
5 stating it here in this forum, maybe a shoreline
6 classification on that lake and what would work in
7 what areas, I think would be a good thing.

8 Because as Chris Clark mentioned, his
9 family has a cabin on Sandy Bar, and that cabin,
10 the pictures I saw was from August of this year,
11 and I don't know if it is -- did it fall in yet?
12 So that cabin, it was -- so it erodes. And that
13 was one of the recommendations, while I think of
14 it for the record, I guess, that's what we would
15 like to do in some of the areas, like those lakes
16 that come in up towards Jenpeg, to do some more
17 investigation on those shorelines.

18 We haven't even considered what is
19 happening on the outlet of 8-Mile Channel, because
20 we have been so busy with the cleanups at 2-Mile
21 and 8-Mile. And we have been at that for over ten
22 years too. So it is not, it is ongoing, and there
23 is limitations, but that's in terms of debris.

24 We also have, I guess I might as well
25 mention this, we have a safe ice trails program

1 that Hydro does in other communities. And what we
2 have to do is, we have to put a proposal in, and
3 then we have the safe ice trails where people go.
4 We have one that goes to Warren's Landing, one
5 that goes to 8-Mile, and then one that goes to --
6 is it Black Water, Chris? Like towards the ferry.
7 And those are, people actually depend on these
8 trails, because you don't know where to go
9 anymore. And that shows that it is not just
10 towards on the west channel, like the impacts are
11 felt on the east channel as well. So it is -- we
12 hope to expand that safe ice trail, just based on
13 our discussions with the trappers.

14 There is the one trapline that is
15 vacant today, right now. The trapper let go of
16 the line because of his safety concerns. And it
17 is specifically because of safety concerns. So it
18 is vacant, it is a vacant line.

19 And James was mentioning one of the
20 things that the trappers have mentioned was a fly
21 in to those areas so they could do their trapping
22 activities without fear of drowning or, like I
23 don't know if anybody went through that ice there
24 if we would ever find them.

25 So those are real concerns that have

1 been coming out. Like I know -- it is sad to see
2 because really they are not that far compared to
3 other traplines that take like the entire day to
4 access. These ones, they would take how long to
5 get to Ron's trapline, Chris, if it was just -- a
6 couple of hours?

7 MR. CLARK: About an hour, hour and a
8 half.

9 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: An hour, hour and
10 a half, compared to those real far traplines. But
11 access is definitely a concern in the winter time.
12 And that's due to a variety of things, flows and
13 levels.

14 And one thing that I always hear Hydro
15 say, and Dale and I have had this conversation
16 many, many times, and yes, Hydro operates between
17 711 and 715 feet above sea level. So that's good,
18 statistically it shows that they are keeping these
19 limits. But when you are here, it is not so clear
20 that that's actually what is happening, because
21 that's an average, that's an average, depending on
22 weather conditions. The conditions can be very
23 different across the lake, right, with weather as
24 a variable -- I almost forgot the terminology.
25 But it looks good in levels, but based on flows

1 and what we experience here, it is the sum, it is
2 the sum. The outflow of Lake Winnipeg is based on
3 the sum of the west and the east channel. So even
4 though it says, okay, this is what is flowing out
5 of Lake Winnipeg, and they measure it on either
6 side, believe me, if you go on one channel and it
7 is rapid, then you go on the other side and it is
8 not, the impacts are very different. And it can
9 be vice versa too, right. Open the gate, it slows
10 down here and it is rapid here, close the gate.
11 And that's what happens and that's what we see.

12 So those are my observations. It is
13 not just numbers. We feel it, we see it. But
14 those are the programs that we work on with
15 Manitoba Hydro.

16 And some of the things that the
17 trappers have asked for, the safe transportation
18 program, I guess safe transport to those ones
19 where it is really dangerous, and then other
20 things that we've talked about is a harvester
21 program. Because as we consider, like our moose
22 population and our waterfowl population and stuff
23 like that, the areas that we can access, they are
24 getting over -- there is some pressure there. So
25 then we are leaving certain areas, like they are

1 not as popular, I guess, to hunt at. So we are
2 proposing that we use those areas on a rotation
3 basis to save our resources. And that's because
4 of safety, safety factors too.

5 Those are some of the recommendations
6 that have come from some of the smaller group
7 sessions that James has scheduled and organized
8 with our smaller impacted groups.

9 So if you wanted to know what we want,
10 we sort of have a list of what we think might
11 work, like a dredging. There is other areas as
12 well, like on Lake Winnipeg that we think are
13 impacted. And 2-Mile Channel, like I was saying,
14 it has been recommended so many times over the
15 years, why don't you ask Hydro or whoever to go
16 into that cut area as it comes into Playgreen Lake
17 and see what is happening there. Because it has
18 been dredged so far, like what is under there?
19 Maybe there is a bunch of trees under there that
20 are just waiting to -- maybe they are waterlogged
21 and soaked. We don't know what it looks like
22 under there. But that's been mentioned many times
23 since I have been at the Cree Nation, 17 years,
24 and it has been mentioned a lot. Like where are
25 those logs going? That would be an interesting

1 project to do, I think. We've talked about
2 sending a diver under there just to see. I know
3 this past year there is a dredge pipe still that
4 just became exposed in 2014, at the outlet of
5 2-Mile Channel on the east side. And it is like
6 Hydro is aware of it, the pictures have gone to
7 Shawna.

8 So we need to have a protocol for
9 reporting these construction debris hazards,
10 because obviously it is a safety concern. And
11 there needs to be a protocol in place for us to
12 deal with those, and not under like a remediation
13 or groundwater monitoring program. Like there
14 needs to be something, it is just unsafe, it is a
15 potential hazard. And we have never -- we have
16 talked about, we have mentioned it, but we have
17 never, ever, ever agreed on a protocol.

18 And we haven't even gone to Ominawin
19 Bypass. So we have dealt with some of the issues
20 at 2-Mile and 8-Mile, but I will talk about that
21 more tomorrow in my presentation.

22 And there is still cable that
23 routinely actually, all of a sudden you will see
24 this cable and it is there, and then it is gone.
25 It has gone somewhere, like we don't know where it

1 has gone. It shows up at the channels.

2 So there is, even the impacts like
3 when they dredged it out, when they pretty much
4 scoured the bottom, especially noticeable at
5 8-Mile, so they shot that stuff out onto the land
6 and nothing grows there anymore. It looks like a
7 constructed -- like a construction site, like
8 somebody went and laid very fine gravel on the
9 land. That's what it looks like. And I know
10 that's from the dredging.

11 So those are some of the things.
12 8-Mile, it is a long channel, so it is like that
13 all along the channel on either side. And I know
14 as it erodes, like at 2-Mile especially, there is
15 these little pockets of water, like a little lake,
16 and so as it erodes further and further, and those
17 things -- they are already wrecked, because it is
18 a little lake and it erodes there, and that land,
19 it just falls, like a whole chunk of it. So it
20 is -- we have often said that, like how long, how
21 long does Hydro think that that land is going to
22 last? Like how many years do we have before
23 that's all gone, and then Playgreen Lake becomes
24 Lake Winnipeg? So I suspect that will happen at
25 some point in time, we just don't know when. And

1 then what happens to Norway House? Because at
2 that point there will be Playgreen Lake and then
3 it goes right into the Nelson River. So just a
4 lot of stuff like that.

5 Anybody want to say anything, Loretta,
6 Councillor Bayer?

7 MR. CLARK: Good evening, I'm back. I
8 forgot to mention one thing which is concerning
9 and affecting our fishermen right now. I don't
10 know what section it is of the Fisheries Act, but
11 it states that you cannot fish 1.5 kilometres from
12 where a river flows into a lake. What you call
13 2-Mile Channel is man-made, constructed around
14 1975, around that area. Anyways, just recently
15 last fall, this section of the Fisheries Act is
16 being enforced upon our fishers, where the 2-Mile
17 cut flows into Playgreen Lake. And that bay,
18 traditionally our forefathers, our fathers used to
19 fish there. There is a spawning ground, a
20 predominant spawning ground for whitefish. My
21 father used to tell me, like spring time and fall
22 time it was, what you call the fishery, they used
23 to try to beat each other there to set their nets,
24 because the first few lifts were crucial for you
25 to pay for your equipment and whatnot, to cover

1 your costs of doing business as a fishermen. And
2 he told me those first few lifts were crucial.
3 And now we are being forced out of there, and it
4 is not a natural river, and it wasn't mentioned in
5 the agreement of 1997.

6 And the other thing that I forgot to
7 mention was all of the other trappers, myself I
8 seen it too, working and on my weekends off, like
9 my mother wanted muskrat this spring, but I
10 couldn't find no muskrat push-ups. And it seems
11 somewhat the last few years they have disappeared.
12 And for whatever reason one of the elders figured
13 that with the water fluctuating up and down, what
14 you call it, he figures the young ones have
15 drowned after the muskrats have given birth
16 because of the water coming up. And the other
17 thing he figures is, with the water being so low,
18 that ice has compressed these muskrats right to
19 the bottom of the river. That's what he figures,
20 with the ice thickening, and it has killed the
21 muskrats.

22 And prior to me, I took over my dad's
23 fishing licence in 2002, but prior to that I
24 worked as a log home builder and a line cutter
25 prior to that. And I worked for Pollock & Wright,

1 I believe that was 1999, 2000. We cut that
2 severance line in the selection at 8-Mile and
3 Whiskey Jack. But anyways the severance line back
4 then, we used to be able to go 200, 250 metre walk
5 from shore. I forget when I went back, 2008 or
6 2009, I went back with surveys from Hydro that
7 showed where those bars were, like where the
8 severance line deflects, you know. Anyways it
9 wasn't that far of a walk now, maybe a 50 metre
10 walk. From that ten year period we lost about 100
11 metres, 150 metres of land, particularly on that
12 selection at 8-Mile there on what you call the
13 west side of the channel.

14 One other comment I wanted to make
15 was, it is not our people issuing this
16 environmental licence, it is the province or
17 the -- our people need to be involved every step
18 of the way, especially our resource users, because
19 we are the eyes and ears of the land, like we are
20 part of the land. And you know, all too often,
21 once the damage is done, that's when the
22 government comes to us, when the moose are
23 declining, the fish are declining, the waterfowl,
24 all of the animals, everything out there is
25 declining, and that's basically when they come

1 running to us, want our help, want us to find a
2 solution for the damage that has been done.

3 What we are saying right now is work
4 with us. I know we can't turn back time, but we
5 can mitigate the damage that's been done, and
6 maybe have our people help with this too, have a
7 sense of belonging to the land. Because a lot of
8 our youth, a lot of our youth are growing up
9 without fathers, and single mothers, you know. I
10 would like to see a program where -- we have a lot
11 of talented fishermen, trappers, and hunters,
12 resource users in our community. I would like to
13 see a program developed some day to take these
14 young boys or young women out there to show them
15 the ways of the land, show them who they are. And
16 that's something I would like to see some day.

17 With that, thank you.

18 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Do you have any
19 questions for us? Anything you want to --

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Not right now.

21 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: So it is 7:30
22 now. Charlie, did you want to come up and make
23 some comments?

24 MR. ETTAWACAPPO: My name is Charlie
25 Ettawacappo. I'm a teacher here at HBO, I teach

1 high school, and I teach native studies and grade
2 12 Aboriginal studies, current topics. And this
3 is one of the issues that we had discussed last
4 week. And we had a chance for my students to come
5 down, but because of the changes in the fire
6 equipment, and for myself, I had other things I
7 had to do. So a few questions, I don't know, a
8 few questions.

9 For me, I grew up in this territory of
10 ours, Norway House. I have been traveling in this
11 lake, Lake Winnipeg for many years. I seen how
12 clean our water was, how safe it used to be to
13 drink, and I seen how safe for us to travel in
14 these lakes. But after the dams that have been
15 built, after the canals that have been in place,
16 all of those things we had, I seen we had lost.

17 We have to be really, really careful
18 every time we travel on that lake. And our lake,
19 when we travel to our hunting grounds in little
20 Black River, we have our cabins there, and we have
21 to be really careful when we travel these lakes.
22 And you can't just take off any time like we used
23 to, we have to be mindful of the level of the
24 lake, because it is always fluctuating. We have
25 to be mindful of the trees, the debris that is

1 coming from the lake, into our travel. And I have
2 seen all of those things, from clean water to what
3 it is now that you will be able to see.

4 I was wondering how many of you guys
5 ever traveled in this lake of ours, in the north,
6 and in the south? Then you pretty well see the
7 same damage, same issues that you guys see here,
8 whenever the wind, wherever the wind is going to
9 be blowing from.

10 I have also been a fishermen's helper,
11 and I seen how the nets were always clean. And
12 now when I go and help, now the nets are just
13 dirty, filthy. And I seen that some of the fish
14 that we do catch are kind of, what can you say,
15 deformed, not normal. And I seen how the fish
16 didn't grow as large as -- the fish that we see,
17 the pickerel that we catch, it's very, they were
18 bigger than they were before. When we used to
19 catch them a long time ago they were kind of
20 smaller. And I believe we know the reason they
21 are getting bigger is because of the algae that
22 they are eating, because there is plenty of it
23 now, and the fish are going for it a lot faster.

24 And the main thing that I'm worried
25 about is our future for my kids and my grandkids.

1 I want to be able to see this lake to be the way
2 it is, and to be able to find ways for use. I
3 don't even know what kind of government officials
4 are here, I don't know if you are Provincial or
5 Federal or whatnot. But anyway, it has to come
6 from all levels of government to try and deal with
7 this water pollution that we have, and the
8 fluctuation of the lakes, and the species that we
9 do catch are getting to be for myself worrisome.

10 I remember one time talking to the
11 late Cooper Paupanekis, that's my wife's
12 grandfather, we used to sit down and talk outside
13 early in the mornings, just talk about anything.
14 And he said one time, you see that water? Yep.
15 One day you are going to be paying for that water.
16 And I said I don't think so, that water is going
17 to be clean forever. Why should we pay for that
18 clean water? I don't think that anything is ever
19 going to happen. But next thing you know, how
20 many years ago, I'm buying water now because we
21 can't trust our water.

22 When we go, when you want to boil tea
23 when we go for our hunting trips, we have to take
24 water, or you try and take it out of the lake, but
25 we can't even drink that water from that lake

1 because it is already full of algae.

2 And the shorelines, you can see the
3 blue algae too. We know it is dangerous now to
4 drink the algae because it can affect our stomach,
5 and possibly if you had too much it can kill you.
6 I know that animals have died from it, because
7 they drink the water, and when they drink the
8 water they are drinking the algae. And the
9 animals tend to drink water from our lakes and
10 they are dying from it too. I believe they are
11 dying from it too, because they are drinking too
12 much of it.

13 So I have told my students, do you
14 care about this lake that we have? No response.
15 So I went ahead and taught my lesson, told them
16 the consequences of this water, of this lake, if
17 it is not going to be controlled, if it is not
18 going to be protected, and I told them what is
19 going to happen. And after three days, I asked
20 them the same question, do you care about this
21 lake? And they do care about this lake because I
22 told them, you guys are going to be affected by
23 it, you guys have to find a way to help out, to
24 clean our water. You might not think that you are
25 not going to be -- a little bit of your words

1 might not come into effect right now, or your mind
2 might not be useful right now, but down the future
3 you have to be aware because it will affect you,
4 and it will affect my grandkids. So you guys have
5 to be aware, you have to be aware of what is
6 happening in our surroundings, in our territory.

7 I teach Outdoor Ed also, and I come to
8 learn a lot of things of hunting, trapping and
9 fishing, and how to live off the land. How to
10 travel on this land, the water, where it is safe,
11 where it is not safe, where is the best place to
12 go hunt, catch fish, everything I teach them. And
13 I teach them how to fillet, cook and prepare this
14 fish and whatever we catch. And that's most --
15 one thing I noticed is that there is not much fur
16 bearing animals that are being caught, especially
17 this year, there is not much in the people
18 catching any fur bearing animals, and it could be
19 due to pollution that they are getting from the
20 water, or being drowned by the water, or the lack
21 of water that they might need. So there is these
22 things that I have been concerned about.

23 And if you are going to regulate the
24 water, it only benefits, to me what I see, it only
25 benefits for the people in the south, it doesn't

1 benefit for the people in the north. Because when
2 anything happens in the south, first thing you
3 want to do is try and take care of non-aboriginal
4 people and Aboriginal people down south, and you
5 don't care about up north.

6 For example, the great flood we had,
7 in Winnipeg, what do we have to do about it?

8 Well, we got to do some changes, we will make sure
9 that doesn't happen again. What about downstream,
10 down the lake up north, what about them? What I
11 don't see, I don't care, it is not my problem.

12 What about those people that live in the cottages
13 out there, they are worried about waves coming in
14 and the lakes are too high for them. And in Lake
15 Winnipeg, Winnipegosis, and they said let's drain
16 it, let's make them a canal, let's drain out some
17 of that lake and let it spill into Lake Winnipeg.

18 And again, there is some concerns there. There is
19 species that might not be needed in Lake Winnipeg,
20 or other chemicals that are going to be spilling
21 into the Lake Winnipeg, and the chemicals, all we
22 see is the pesticides, the phosphorous, all of
23 those things, and they are just draining into our
24 lakes. And again, they didn't take no concern,
25 consideration about the people, of the effects of

1 what is going to happen downstream for us people
2 that live in the north.

3 Again, one more thing I wanted to
4 point out is that the people that live at
5 Waterhen, they have been living there for many
6 years, but they are getting flooded out, and they
7 can't move back, and they are still living in the
8 city, and nothing much being done for them. But
9 when you will see the cottages, the runoffs of the
10 erosion, and the waves, quickly you, quickly the
11 non-aboriginal and Aboriginal people in the south
12 are taken care of. And here in the north, they
13 don't really care what is going to happen to them.

14 If you guys want to make some changes
15 for better of your lakes, of our lakes, you guys
16 have to really think about what is best for
17 everybody. You guys might have a job that you
18 guys have to do, and you might be who cares what
19 happens down the road, but you have to be
20 sympathetic about everybody that's living in this
21 lake of ours and that river system of Nelson House
22 that drains into Hudson Bay. We have to be
23 mindful of everything.

24 We are also human and we also want
25 what is best for our kids and our grandkids.

1 I would like to mention one thing.
2 There is a rock painting in Paimusk Creek, it is
3 located in Molson Lake, it is not far from here,
4 about an hour's drive, there is this one painting
5 that we recognize. I don't have a drawing for you
6 to clearly see it, for you guys, but I will just
7 try and describe it the best way I could. And
8 these rock paintings are 300 to 400,000 years old,
9 and they are dated by the University of Manitoba,
10 that's where I got the date from.

11 In one of those rock paintings, there
12 is many of them, one of the rock paintings
13 describes, shows a lightning bolt just going down
14 like this, straight up and down, just a lightning
15 bolt. Then on top there is a teepee, teepee on
16 its side, it is not the right side up, the teepee
17 is on its side. The teepee is on its side. The
18 teepee is on its side, then we have a moose in the
19 middle, then we have our canoe at the bottom, and
20 one person driving that canoe, paddling the canoe.
21 Then that line, that lightning bolt that you see
22 represents energy. And that energy, where do you
23 think we get energy from? We get that energy from
24 the dams that we built. And the dams that we
25 built, we get that energy and everybody's house is

1 lit, everybody is happy, and everybody can turn
2 their lights on, whatever, whatnot. And you can
3 see that teepee on the top, it is on its side, it
4 is not straight up the way it is supposed to be.
5 Can you see that moose in the middle? That's our
6 animal, representing our animals, the fish. And
7 the bottom is the canoe, and that's our
8 transportation system. And you can see how it is
9 being wiped out, wiped out, scribbled, and that
10 says it is telling us that Manitoba Hydro is going
11 to be coming to your territory, our territory, and
12 they are going to come here and they are going to
13 destroy your land.

14 And that's why you see the teepee on
15 its side, because of the erosion, because of the
16 flooding. And then you see the animal, that
17 moose, that also represents the fish that we have,
18 our food system, the food supplies that we who
19 live in the north here, that we depend on, that's
20 going to be destroyed, that's going to be affected
21 by it.

22 And that's why we see sometimes that
23 moose are -- would not rather eat, just leave them
24 alone, especially in the summer, we see animals
25 dying because of the lake, the river going up and

1 down, the fluctuations of the river. And the fish
2 that lives in there, in our water system, and they
3 are also getting poisoned and they are also
4 getting affected by it.

5 Then we see the canoe at the bottom,
6 and that canoe represents our traveling system,
7 our traveling system around our territory. In the
8 summertime, you know, when the water is low, we
9 know we have to take it easy and slow down. When
10 we see the water is high, that's when we, right
11 on, we can travel it a lot faster and safer.

12 And in the winter time, we travel by
13 Skidoo. And again you have to be really careful,
14 you can't just travel anywhere, because of the
15 water again fluctuating. There has been people
16 going through the ice, because there is only ice
17 on top, nothing in the middle, then the water.
18 People have drowned for that reason.

19 And as you can see, the painting, the
20 rock painting that was made by little people, it
21 is telling us, it is a prediction, that's what is
22 going to happen in your future. And that
23 prediction, it is not going to wash away, I don't
24 think it is ever going to wash away. The only
25 time that thing is ever going to wash away is if

1 it stopped happening, things have been corrected,
2 and that painting will wash away.

3 There is one painting that already is
4 washing away, or fading away, they are fading
5 away, not washing, fading away. So there is one
6 painting that's fading away already, and that's
7 (Native language), the cradle that we use to carry
8 our babies. All right. And that cradle is fading
9 away, it is not as bright as it used to be.

10 The first time I seen those paintings
11 I was ten years old, and I have been visiting this
12 site for many years already and taking my students
13 to tell them about these sites. And we give our
14 offering on these paintings. We take our people
15 to go there, singing, drumming, prayers. And
16 that's one thing that's washing away, our cradle.
17 And when the cradle washes away -- the cradle used
18 to be a good tool, a good parenting skill for our
19 parents back then. Because when you are in a
20 cradle, the child is just looking, observing what
21 is happening, observing his territory, observing
22 how to prepare food. And he is also listening,
23 the parent is talking at the same time and
24 explaining what, what needs to be done to prepare
25 food or prepare their house and everything. And

1 that child is learning. So the child is looking
2 and listening, the child will easily learn. And
3 those are the three things I always try and do
4 with my students, look, listen and you will learn.
5 But that cradle system is washing away, and slowly
6 we are going to be losing our way of life, I
7 believe, and it is already happening.

8 And I just wanted to quickly touch on
9 those two things, because that rock painting about
10 the Manitoba Hydro, I don't think it is going to
11 wash away or fade away. Since it is not going to
12 fade away, and since it is our water, since it is
13 our land, I know through the years, we have to do
14 the right things for our lakes. We have to be
15 really mindful, careful what is best for the
16 future, not what is best for now that's going to
17 be dollars on your pockets, dollars on your
18 Federal government or the Provincial Government.
19 You guys have to be mindful and careful to look to
20 the future for making sure our water system is
21 going to be able to be safe to travel on, and be
22 able to make a living with it, and to be able to
23 drink it, safely drink this water.

24 I know I'm talking about Norway House,
25 but it is a big lake. We have to be mindful,

1 careful, what you guys decide for yourselves for
2 now and for the future. I thank you for
3 listening.

4 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Thank you,
5 Charlie. Well, it is 10 to 8:00, I think
6 everybody has spoken, so I think we should just
7 close it for the night. Councillor Bayer?

8 COUNCILLOR BAYER: So good evening
9 everyone, thank you so much for all that you've
10 shared today. And I know that, and we know that
11 everything that was shared here today came from
12 deep within your heart and your soul. You know,
13 welcome to our world, you know, this is where we
14 live. And for me myself, I need to just share a
15 little bit about where I come from.

16 And I come from here, from Norway
17 House. I was born here, but I lived on West
18 Island, and when I was a little girl there, my
19 brother, we used to trap muskrats down at the bank
20 of the river there, and we could eat those, and
21 our dad would cook them. We could go down the
22 bank and my dad would bathe in the water. The
23 kids, us kids, us five kids that were there at the
24 time, we have six all together, we had our water
25 hauled up and we would bathe in that water, taking

1 turns from the smallest to the largest child. And
2 my dad would bathe in the water down the bank.
3 But you couldn't do that today.

4 I left when I was about six or seven
5 years old. And when I came back and went down to
6 the water, you go down and you look in there, and
7 the water is so different, you know, it is filled
8 with algae. And you know that you can't just run
9 your hands through it. And it is gone and you
10 wonder what has happened here, you know. And then
11 that was probably about 30 years ago. And like I
12 said, I left when I was about six years old, and I
13 had to keep coming back to find out what was going
14 on, because our family moved away, and now I'm
15 back here again. And I know that that happens,
16 that these -- that the south is always more
17 protected than the north. And all of the time
18 that I was gone, what I craved for was this land
19 and this water, and to be back home, because it
20 truly is inside our souls, inside our hearts, and
21 it never leaves you. And if you don't ever go
22 looking for it and you don't find it, you will
23 have that emptiness inside of you. And you have
24 to know what I mean, you have to know what I mean
25 when I say that. You have heard our members, our

1 trappers, our fishers, our teachers, our
2 specialists talk from their heart today.

3 So, tomorrow you will hear formalized
4 presentations from the folks who come. I hope,
5 Charlie, if you are able to bring the students
6 tomorrow morning so that they can listen, if
7 that's at all possible. I hope that other people
8 that were tied up today could come. And I wish
9 that we could get our recording, our recording in
10 place. I know that you will be preparing a
11 verbatim documentation of today's testimony and
12 presentations, and they will be posted on the
13 website. So that will be a resource that we can
14 access after.

15 We were informed today too that this
16 process is coming to an end in the next day, well,
17 the end of the month which is today I think?
18 Right, tomorrow is May 1st. However, we can send
19 submissions in up until May 8th. So it might be
20 an idea for your students to write in, or your
21 classes, or we will try to get others from other,
22 the other courses of UCN, like your daughter
23 there, James, and the folks over there. I know
24 that Leonard's class has an outdoor cooking
25 session planned tomorrow, so they are not able to

1 come, so they are preparing geese and ducks
2 tomorrow. And with this rescheduling, it has been
3 really challenging for everybody to be able to
4 come and make their commitment.

5 The other thing too about today, some
6 of us are a bit scattered in terms of the losses
7 in our community. So we are really happy, we are
8 really happy that you were able to be here and to
9 bear with us, and to share a meal with us. And we
10 will call it a night for tonight and get our rest
11 and then come back refreshed tomorrow. But before
12 we do that, we will ask for a closing prayer from,
13 I will ask for a volunteer before I identify
14 somebody to come up. So there is five of us
15 community members here, so we can either pick a
16 straw, and everybody is pointing at each other.
17 So James is going to do it for us. Just again,
18 thank you so much.

19 (Closing prayer)

20 (Adjourned at 8:00 p.m.)

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1 FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2015

2 UPON COMMENCING AT 9:30 A.M.

3 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Good morning. So
4 we are going to start our second day today, our
5 half day. The Commission has their plane coming
6 in at 1:00 o'clock, so we will try and wrap up by
7 12:00, lunch is coming right at 12:00, so they can
8 eat and then we can drive them to the airport.
9 And we are sad to see them go. It is a nice day.
10 But we will start with an opening prayer, and we
11 will ask Elder Scribe to come and open our meeting
12 with a prayer.

13 (Opening prayer)

14 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Thank you, elder.
15 Just following with the agenda, do Chief and
16 Council want to come and say a few words or do you
17 want -- Chief Evans?

18 CHIEF EVANS: If you didn't hear what
19 I said yesterday, I will repeat it. I just want
20 to take this time -- I actually don't have very
21 much to say other than to say good morning to each
22 and every one of you on behalf of the council. I
23 regret I was not able to come back yesterday, we
24 had a lot of things happening in the community,
25 and I hope that yesterday went, you know,

1 hopefully justice was done and that information
2 was shared, and others came. And hopefully the
3 information you have received will help and aid in
4 the work that you have been tasked to do. So with
5 that, I just want to say that, and hopefully your
6 stay has been pleasant. And we welcome you back,
7 you know, next time you have been given a mandate,
8 maybe something will come from the information
9 gathered.

10 I just want to thank the elders for
11 being here, and I thank Elder Scribe for his
12 prayer, and look forward to whatever is left of
13 this morning. So with that, thank you very much.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Can you guarantee good
15 weather every time we come?

16 CHIEF EVANS: I can pray.

17 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Thank you, Chief
18 Evans. Did you want to say a few words, the
19 Commission?

20 THE CHAIRMAN: I don't think so.
21 Carry on.

22 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Okay. We have
23 Reverend Eileen Apetagon, she is going to come and
24 say a few words on her experiences as well out on
25 the land and waters. She was going to come

1 yesterday, but she was out with the families and
2 stuff. So I'm going to ask Eileen to come up.

3 MS. EILEEN APETAGON: Good morning.
4 My name is Eileen Apetagon, I am, I guess one of
5 the members of the Norway House Cree Nation. And
6 I work in the political office as the chief's
7 assistant, and I'm also a Reverend of the Anglican
8 Churchill of Canada. And I had been asked by
9 Loretta to come and share my own experiences of my
10 childhood experiences as it relates to Lake
11 Winnipeg and Playgreen Lake, as a child. Because
12 I always talk about that, you know, and when I
13 think of, and when I look around, you know, the
14 damages that have been done as a result of the
15 Manitoba Hydro projects, I have -- I feel a need
16 to share what we had back then, and what my
17 grandkids and my great grandkids will never
18 experience.

19 And I have been asked to speak on
20 behalf of the elders. I consider myself an elder
21 at this time, I'm only two and a half years away
22 from reaching the number and towards retirement.

23 So, like I grew up in a very clean and
24 healthy environment, and I had the great
25 privilege, you know, and the opportunity to

1 experience the wilderness life. Because my dad,
2 our dad was a trapper, he was a trapper and a
3 fishermen. And we survived on, you know, on wild
4 food growing up. And I have a deep conviction,
5 you know, to that kind of life.

6 And the one thing I want to share at
7 this time, you know, you talk about preserving a
8 clean environment, that is your commission. And
9 that is something that, you know, will never
10 happen, you know, that will never happen now,
11 because what I see as a clean environment is now
12 gone. You know, as a child -- my sister, I have
13 older siblings, and I only share this story
14 because it came to me, this memory came to me one
15 time. My grandmother and I were sitting in a
16 tent, and the flaps were open and I was facing the
17 lake. And in my mind, there was white sand, you
18 know, in front of us, and there was clear blue
19 water. And my granny and I were sitting there
20 having tea and moose -- bannock with moose lard,
21 which she used to make. But that's all I can
22 remember. And I knew that my grandfather had gone
23 out to lift his net. And when I asked my sister,
24 my older sister about that, she told me there is
25 no way that you can remember, because you were

1 only two years old at the time. But I said I
2 remember, I know what I saw, and I know what I
3 remember. But that was the only time that I can
4 remember of the -- apparently this was out in Lake
5 Winnipeg, the north basin of Lake Winnipeg.

6 But as years went on, as I got older,
7 we got to spend summer months out on the lake at
8 Playgreen Lake. And where my cousins and I, and
9 other families that lived, you know, on the
10 islands with us, used to enjoy, you know, that
11 clear, clean water, you were able to see the
12 bottom, you know, that's how clean it was. And we
13 used to swim from island to island, because you
14 are able to see the rocks where you can rest
15 before you reach the next island. That was our
16 recreation and that's what we did all day, you
17 know, from the moment that -- probably when we
18 finished our breakfast, we would get together, and
19 that's all we did all day, or we would go hiking
20 around, you know, just enjoying the land at the
21 time.

22 And then we located to an area across
23 from the 8-Mile Channel, I don't know if you are
24 familiar with that area. But that's where we got
25 to spend a few summers as well. And that had to

1 be the greatest time of my life, because there was
2 miles and miles of beach, you know, you could just
3 walk down to the lake front and you were able to
4 see, you know, miles and miles of beach. And
5 that's where my cousins and I, you know, used to
6 play every day, go swimming every day.

7 You know, and it just, I get emotional
8 sometimes when I think about that because -- and
9 why I get emotional is that I know that my
10 children never got to enjoy that, and my oldest
11 child is 42 years old, and my youngest being 31,
12 they never got to enjoy that. And my
13 grandchildren will never enjoy it and neither will
14 my great grandchild, I already have one great
15 grandchild, will never get to have that same
16 experience that I had growing up.

17 And there were trees along these
18 beaches where we used to pick berries, there were
19 raspberries and all sorts of other berries. And
20 all of these things are gone. And it was clean,
21 that's what you call a clean environment. And we
22 actually used to share those berries with bears,
23 we would be picking these berries and the bears
24 would be picking berries from the other side. And
25 that's what our life was all about, you know. And

1 I know that we will never get all of that back,
2 ever.

3 You know, and our elders, you know,
4 our elders used to prophesize to as we were
5 growing up that all of this destruction was going
6 to take place, that some day we would drink out of
7 bottles, drink water out of bottles, which didn't
8 make sense to us at the time. Because we didn't
9 understand that these things were going to happen,
10 and that we wouldn't have to get water from the
11 river anymore. Like I shared with other people
12 different times, we were the running water growing
13 up, me and my older brothers. We used to take our
14 pails, go down to the river, and that's where we
15 used to drink our water from. The water was so
16 clean, you know, we didn't have to worry about
17 boiling the water or, you know, and that's all
18 gone, that's all gone. And so when these
19 prophecies were told to us, you know, there were
20 times, I guess, we didn't believe them.

21 And I just did a presentation here
22 back in February, you know, of teachings and
23 prophecies of an elder, you know, that told me,
24 that told us how it was going to be like in the
25 future as a result of industries that are popping

1 up all over the world, and how it is impacting
2 Mother Earth. And that's the reality of today.

3 You know, you look around this
4 community, even this community, all you used to
5 see was green grass, you know, there were no roads
6 back then. You know, the front, the lake front,
7 that was all beach. And even back then I was just
8 a toddler, you know, spending time with my
9 grandmother who used to live in this area, there
10 used to be beach. Now we only have man-made
11 beaches that are not even healthy for our children
12 to play in and swim.

13 So, that's what, that's the reality,
14 you know, that's the reality of today. Today I
15 don't even take my grandkids out in the lake where
16 we used to spend many summers as well, called
17 Sandy Island. Sandy Island was called exactly
18 what it was, it had sand, it had a beach almost
19 all the way around the island. Now, we will be
20 lucky if we can find a quarter mile of a beach on
21 that island. And our kids can't, my grandkids
22 can't even swim in the water because the water is
23 so dirty. There is a little beach maybe about six
24 feet from the water and already there is mud,
25 there is weeds, which tells us that the water, you

1 know, has been damaged to that extent. So I don't
2 even bother to take them there anymore.

3 Today I have a swimming pool in my
4 yard so my grandkids can enjoy the swimming that
5 kids do in the summertime. You know, because I
6 don't trust the water anymore, the water is not
7 clean anymore. I don't want my grandkids to get
8 sick from the water of today, you know. And
9 somebody -- when I was telling this story to a
10 relative of mine, and what he said, he asked me
11 was, well, what do you expect? What do you expect
12 from all of the damage, you know, that was done to
13 the livelihood of your people, the recreational
14 activities that you once enjoyed, what do you
15 expect as a replacement for all of that? And I
16 said, you know what, I don't really know what to
17 expect anymore. But I said what I would, what I
18 would want, I said, for my grandchildren and my
19 great grandchildren to come, I said, is a good
20 recreational facility with a nice swimming pool,
21 you know, that would be fully maintained, you
22 know, by the people that did the damage to our
23 lands and to our waters. And that's what I would
24 like to see.

25 We can try as much as we can, you

1 know, to attain, maintain a clean environment, but
2 it will never meet the standards, you know, that I
3 expect, you know, and the standards would be what
4 I experienced as a child, you know. But, you
5 know, the damage has been done, and all we can do
6 at this time is do the best we can, you know, to
7 try to maintain what is left, the cleanliness of
8 our environment. Because that's what our --
9 that's what my teacher had told me 20 years ago,
10 you know, that we were made stewards of our land
11 and waters and it was up to us to make sure that
12 we try and take care of our Mother Earth to the
13 best of our ability.

14 And that's what I'm asking today and
15 that's what I wanted to share here today as an
16 elder for Norway House Cree Nation. Thank you
17 very much.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

19 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Hello students,
20 Mr. Ettawacappo and his students. We will just
21 wait for them to sit down.

22 CHIEF EVANS: Was that February? When
23 did we do that, January? February 18th, we
24 brought some people together, it was a message
25 basically to the youth mainly, and others, and it

1 was a theme based on visions, dreams and beyond,
2 and it actually dealt with the -- Joyce Smith was
3 up here talking about human trafficking, she is on
4 that video, and Eileen talked about climate
5 change. And we had Billy Mills, the 1964
6 champion, Olympic gold medalist, he was here to
7 share his, to inspire those that were in
8 attendance. And Frank Whitehead was here to share
9 his life after death experience. So we did a
10 professional video of it, so I have sent for it,
11 so we are going to show, we are just going to show
12 Eileen's part, it is about 15 minutes I think. So
13 we will get a chance to air it. We can probably
14 give you a copy to take with you. And if you
15 should decide to watch the other parts of the
16 video, I would encourage you to do that as well.
17 So with that I will give this back to Loretta.

18 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: I will continue
19 with my presentation and we will share it after.
20 I'm not sure, should I sit there?

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Wherever you wish.

22 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Okay. So, the
23 Environmental Monitoring Agency has been and was
24 established under the Master Implementation
25 Agreement. And the roles, the role of the

1 Environmental Monitoring Agency, it is to monitor
2 environmental conditions on reserve and within our
3 resource management area. And I was hired in
4 1998, and I won't go over everything that we've
5 done, but we talked a little bit yesterday about
6 the Northern Flood Agreement, and I was going to
7 give a little history, not much, but we are one of
8 the signatories, Norway House Cree Nation, to the
9 Northern Flood Agreement, along with four other
10 First Nations. And it was an agreement that was
11 signed by four parties in 1977, including Canada,
12 Manitoba, Manitoba Hydro, and the Northern Flood
13 Committee, which was comprised of the five First
14 Nations, the Cree First Nations.

15 So, the intention of the Northern
16 Flood Agreement was, it was intended to compensate
17 the five northern Cree Nations for adverse
18 environmental and socio-economic impacts resulting
19 from the projects, including the Lake Winnipeg
20 Regulation and the Churchill River Diversion.
21 Some of the claims under the NFA were loss of
22 land, navigation issues, water quality, cemeteries
23 and burial grounds, potable water and others. So
24 I'm just going through some of the common ones.
25 I'm sure you have seen this in Cross Lake.

1 The bands, the First Nations started
2 their own negotiations to implement provisions of
3 the Northern Flood Agreement in the 1990s, late
4 '80s. And we signed, Norway House Cree Nation
5 signed in 1977. Again, the parties were
6 Government of Canada, and Manitoba, Manitoba Hydro
7 and Norway House Cree Nation. The beneficiaries
8 of the agreement included band members, all band
9 members, the commercial fishers and commercial
10 trappers. And you heard the presentations from
11 the fishermen and trappers yesterday.

12 So, 1997 to present, despite the
13 signing of the MIA, impacts continue to be brought
14 to the attention of Chief and Council, and our
15 office as well, the Resource Management Board,
16 which is a co-management board and it is made up
17 of members of the Cree Nation and the Province.
18 And members, normally they attribute it to the
19 project, which includes Lake Winnipeg Regulation
20 and all of the other projects that are coming up.
21 And this is 40 years after Lake Winnipeg
22 Regulation.

23 So, unbeknownst to Norway House Cree
24 Nation, impacts experienced by us have gradually
25 increased. They have gotten worse since the

1 signing of the MIA approximately 18 years ago.

2 So my presentation, it actually speaks
3 mainly to changing environmental conditions in our
4 territory as observed and reported by our
5 membership. Because I liaise a lot with the
6 fishers and the trappers and the hunters,
7 gatherers, and that's where I get a lot of my
8 information from and then I -- we try and work on
9 dealing with the impact. A lot of times it is not
10 possible because it is not in our power to do so.
11 So that's what the majority of this presentation
12 is about.

13 So, there are physical impacts to the
14 waters, I guess is the main -- not the main thing,
15 but it is the one that is brought up mostly in our
16 office. And the waters we are talking about are
17 Lake Winnipeg, of course, because that's the focus
18 of the project that would control the level of
19 Lake Winnipeg for hydroelectric development, and
20 like Hydro says, to reduce flooding, Playgreen
21 Lake, which I mentioned yesterday, the Nelson
22 River, west and east channels.

23 So these are some of the things that I
24 just -- under waters, it is a totally altered
25 water regime due to construction of the three

1 channels that were designed to increase flows on
2 the west channel. We have observed unnatural
3 flows, and the natural cycle of floods and
4 droughts has been disturbed, as we were told by
5 the elders that Mother Earth has her way of
6 keeping things clean, and therefore, she subjects
7 the land to floods and droughts on a cycle. But
8 now the lakes are controlled between a certain
9 level, lake level, and we don't get those droughts
10 and floods like we would and we should.

11 There are seasonal changes from
12 pre-project conditions. I remember in the spring
13 we would go look for things washing up on the
14 shore and that, and in other areas in the fall.
15 It is very different now. We are having high
16 water levels in the spring.

17 Lake and river bed conditions, those
18 are different. The bottom of the lake, due to the
19 channels, like we are getting a lot more of
20 materials, suspended materials coming into the
21 channel that would have been -- there was sort of
22 a natural barrier at Warren's Landing, and it
23 comes straight through the channel. And we see
24 that, if you fly over it you can just see -- and
25 even with aerial photographs, you can see the

1 stuff that's coming off of the shoreline. And the
2 impacts on waters too, it is in the winter, those
3 are experienced in the winter. We have unreliable
4 ice formation due to the Jenpeg dam. And I know
5 that Chris Clark mentioned those, so I took some
6 of that stuff out of my presentation so it
7 wouldn't be so long. But definitely ice formation
8 is different since the channels. A couple of our
9 late elders that used to come in and phone me on a
10 regular basis and tell me different stories, and I
11 wish they were here today, because they would be
12 able to tell you.

13 Physical impacts on our lakes and
14 rivers. The natural channels of our rivers have
15 been impacted with sedimentation and deposition of
16 suspended earthy materials, affecting the lake
17 bed, which affects the aquatic eco-system. I know
18 the weeds are different. There is certain
19 medicines that our traditional people used to
20 harvest in the area in Playgreen Lake, and they
21 have to go to other lakes now because they don't
22 grow there, because they need certain conditions.

23 And it is the silting, those are
24 covered now because of all the earth, the earthy
25 materials that are settling on the bottom of the

1 lake. And increased algae, I know algae has been
2 around for a long time, it is a common phenomena
3 on Lake Winnipeg. But with the opening of the
4 channels, it comes in more rapidly. It is
5 actually, it is pulled in. And then we have
6 Jenpeg dam on the other side, so it comes in and
7 it just hangs around if the gates are closed. And
8 we have seen this in the fall, and it is there.
9 And I know fishermen that set nets through the
10 ice, like the ice fishing, they pull those nets
11 and it is just black, it's dead algae. Because I
12 know they have brought in pails of stuff and they
13 want it sampled. Well, we know it is algae, but
14 by the time it gets to me it has been frozen and
15 handled and -- but that's what we have observed
16 since the channels, like algae is really bad.

17 And if the gates are closed at Jenpeg,
18 it comes right into the community, because you can
19 see the turquoise on the shorelines in our bays in
20 the community. And it is very dependent on what
21 is going on at Jenpeg, how fast it goes. Like it
22 would be nice if it would just go away, but that's
23 not what we are seeing.

24 There are also physical impacts on our
25 lands. The shoreline erosion, north shore of Lake

1 Winnipeg, Playgreen Lake, the 2 and 8-Mile
2 Channels, erosion is very bad. We have been told
3 it is natural on Lake Winnipeg, it is natural for
4 that shoreline to erode. But I've been told again
5 by elders that there used to be beach shorelines
6 on the north shore of Lake Winnipeg and Mossy
7 Point, and now it is just steep cliffs. That's
8 what our shorelines are on the north shore of Lake
9 Winnipeg.

10 Playgreen Lake, the west shore is
11 really vulnerable to erosion in an area known as
12 Sandy Bar. And as well the inlet and outlet of
13 the channels is very, very bad, especially at
14 2-Mile Channel. The impacts to the land include
15 submerged and disappearing beach areas. Like
16 Eileen had mentioned, Sandy Island used to be a
17 popular area for -- people camped there, they
18 lived there in the summertime as they engaged in
19 their commercial fishing activities. And I
20 remember going to visit there, and we used to swim
21 anywhere, we could swim anywhere, but it is a very
22 different island now. You have to travel far to
23 get to a beach nowadays. Even when you dock, you
24 are right into the tree line. So it is very
25 different.

1 Increased timber debris entering
2 Playgreen Lake due to 2 and 8-Mile Channels, we
3 notice there is an ongoing cycle of erosion and
4 timber debris. Timber falls and then it erodes,
5 it takes the earth with it, and it is unstable and
6 it just never stops. That's what I have observed
7 on the north shore of Lake Winnipeg.

8 Also with impacts to lands, we have
9 loss of valuable riparian areas. And I have been
10 told by our traditional people that these areas
11 used to be very good for certain medicinal plants.
12 Even adjacent, like low areas, like I said, things
13 used to grow in there, but those are gone. We
14 used to pick berries and those are gone, and teas,
15 because what grows now in those shoreline areas,
16 it is a lot different. We have got different
17 kinds of trees, they are there one year and they
18 are gone the next.

19 And another impact is loss of
20 wetlands. We have -- although it is a boggy area,
21 or a soggy area, it is waterlogged, those
22 wetlands, they are drowning. And we all know what
23 wetlands do to help the environment, it is a
24 natural filter. And those wetlands have been
25 flooded, they are at the bottom of the lake now

1 between here and Jenpeg.

2 The last impact to the lands that I am
3 going to mention is the confirmed petroleum
4 hydrocarbon contamination of our lands at 2-Mile
5 Channel and 8-Mile Channel. Those are some of the
6 main ones.

7 Here are some pictures. This is the
8 north shore of Lake Winnipeg. We took this in
9 this past summer, and that's the slumping. There
10 is a marker there for navigation, that's been
11 moved several times over the past year, and I
12 don't even know where that would be this year. It
13 could be in the water because of the levels and
14 the flows that we experienced this year.

15 The picture on the right, we got there
16 at the right time, that's that collection of
17 timber debris that I mentioned yesterday. And it
18 was protecting the shoreline from erosion because
19 it was all piled up and intertwined, and I believe
20 it was in June. And then we went back in August,
21 that had let go and all of that was gone. It
22 resembled a beach because of the sand that was
23 washing up there, that let go and the logs came
24 through the channel at some point in time. That's
25 what our shorelines look like, this is the inlet

1 of 2-mile channel.

2 The other physical impacts are the
3 fish and wildlife. And I am just including a very
4 abbreviated summary here, because the fishermen, I
5 know they made a presentation in Winnipeg. So we
6 think that the project has impacted fish habitat
7 because of the silting, because of the flows, and
8 also on their traditional spawning grounds, the
9 effects to fish, what they eat. Because those
10 things are covered, those little organisms. And I
11 have been told, and I was out there doing fish
12 test netting, and our pickerel are large, they are
13 very large, but they are not mature spawners. So
14 while fishing statistics show that we have
15 pickerel plentiful in our area, they are not
16 spawners, so the fishery is very vulnerable. And
17 that's worrisome.

18 And also the whitefish, the texture is
19 different. They are soft, they spoil quickly.
20 And that's what I've noticed, and then there are
21 some that have these tumors, just the odd one,
22 like it is still -- I still eat the fish, the
23 whitefish, the jackfish, the pickerel.

24 And Chris mentioned the habitat of fur
25 bearing animals, like the muskrat. I hear it was

1 quite hard to find muskrat this winter, this
2 spring. I remember as a child, and my grandpa
3 had -- I live in Crooked Turn, right in town, and
4 he had those muskrat traps set, and he ate muskrat
5 every day in the spring. And I hear that people
6 weren't really catching muskrats this year.

7 So I know that Chris mentioned a lot
8 of that, but we have seen beaver houses that ended
9 up -- they are a house on the water, and then the
10 water goes down and then they are not a house
11 anymore, the water comes up. So those things
12 we've seen physically.

13 And waterfowl, and I guess this has a
14 lot to do with the wetlands and where they nest
15 and where they breed, it is different, it is a
16 different area altogether.

17 We have some -- I mentioned these
18 yesterday, those are most of the physical impacts
19 and those are the important things, the fish, the
20 wildlife, the water and the land. Special
21 considerations, I think, to Norway House Cree
22 Nation that I think are unique to us because of
23 our location.

24 Playgreen Lake, I mentioned yesterday,
25 it is important to our culture for the economy,

1 spiritual, and spiritual reasons. I always say
2 this, it is the forgotten water body, because
3 everyone talks about Lake Winnipeg, they talk
4 about the west channel of the Nelson River,
5 because they want that water to flow fast through
6 Jenpeg. And then they talk about past Jenpeg,
7 like towards Keeyask and that. And when you ask
8 people about the Nelson River, they think about
9 Churchill. And that's not the only place that
10 Nelson River -- it starts here, and it has been
11 and continues to be used for commercial and
12 domestic fishing and hunting, fishing, trapping,
13 harvesting, camping, and a variety of other
14 activities.

15 And as Eileen said, recreational
16 activities are limited. You can still go have a
17 wiener roast, you can still go camping, but it is
18 not the same without being able to just jump in
19 the water, drink the water. We have to haul water
20 from the community. We are scared to get sick.

21 We have outstanding NFA and TLE
22 selections in the Hydro licence area. We have
23 selected a number of islands on Playgreen Lake
24 under our TLE, and NFA we have Sandy Bar, we have
25 a selection at 8-Mile Channel. And they are not

1 transferred yet, but they will be subject to a
2 Hydro easement. Even though they will be reserve,
3 the land, Hydro will have an interest and they
4 will have a right to flood on our reserve lands.
5 And that's a special consideration to the First
6 Nations.

7 I have nine slides left. Should I
8 finish my --

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

10 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Okay. The other
11 one is, special consideration to Norway House is
12 the contamination of our lands. The condition of
13 lands at 2 and 8-Mile Channels, it has been an
14 ongoing concern to Norway House Cree Nation since
15 contamination was confirmed in 2004 and 2006. We
16 had long suspected there was contamination there,
17 just from the stories that the elders and people
18 who were employed by Hydro during the dredging, we
19 had suspected that, because they told us some
20 stuff that -- so contamination was confirmed.

21 And the difference is at 2-Mile it is
22 Provincial Crown land, but at 8-Mile we have NFA
23 selection there, we have two parcels. So there is
24 a difference, but it is still our territory. And
25 2-Mile is especially relevant, because it is

1 closer to the community and, therefore, more
2 visible.

3 Soil and groundwater monitoring
4 programs have been ongoing since 2004 and 2006,
5 and they continue today. We will be doing
6 sampling in July or August of this year at both
7 channels. We are also doing remediation. We have
8 contaminated soils at both channels, and it
9 continues this year. We still have to excavate
10 some contaminated soil at 2-Mile and treat it, and
11 then let it sit for a few years before we can put
12 it back in the earth.

13 Elders have indicated and they have
14 always said it, that there are additional sites
15 that we might have to investigate, but we haven't
16 done this at present. We are dealing with what
17 has been confirmed first.

18 The other special concern is there is
19 two approved landfills located in our territory,
20 there is one at 2-Mile Channel, there is one at
21 8-Mile Channel. And these received metal and
22 other debris that were left on site from
23 construction of the channels in the 1970s. And
24 this remains an ongoing concern for our
25 membership, especially at 2-Mile Channel, due to

1 how close the landfill is to the adjacent
2 waterways and the rate of erosion. And 8-Mile
3 channel, the landfill is located about 2
4 kilometres away from the water, 2 to 4 kilometres
5 I would say. There is some of the construction
6 debris that was uncovered during 8-Mile -- there
7 is a lot more, there was -- we found several
8 little individual garbage dumps, little sites, and
9 we pulled a lot of stuff out of there. And those
10 are in the landfill at 8-Mile, in the bush. And
11 debris continues to become exposed as the soil
12 erodes. So it is something, and it is a safety
13 hazard. We are concerned about snowmobilers and
14 trappers, and animals as well. Because there were
15 uncapped wellheads that we had removed. It was a
16 large job, we were out there three years just
17 picking the construction debris.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Where is it now, still
19 there?

20 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Yeah, it is there
21 in the landfill at 8-Mile. There was a lot of
22 different types of construction debris. I'm just
23 listing what we -- because we weren't involved, we
24 weren't involved with the 2-Mile cleanup. It was
25 Hydro was coming in, and they were going to be

1 there for two weeks and just basically pick up
2 what was on the surface.

3 But once they got up there, they
4 started pulling stuff, and then they applied for a
5 licence to re-open a vintage dump from the '70s,
6 and they opened it up and they started putting
7 stuff in there. And that's when we got involved.
8 And anyway, we had a dispute, but we were involved
9 at 8-Mile Channel so we were able to inventory
10 what was dug up. And there was all kinds of stuff
11 there, styrofoam and fiberglass, tires, all kinds
12 of metal, sheet metal, plastic pipes, steel cable,
13 aluminum wire, a lot of fuel barrels, fuel drums,
14 dredge pipes, just an assortment of metals,
15 batteries and household garage. Those are some of
16 the things that we pulled out at 8-Mile. I'm not
17 sure what was removed from 2-Mile, because we
18 weren't there.

19 Another concern we have, during the
20 8-Mile cleanup we found, it is approximately ten
21 graves, and they were discovered on one of our NFA
22 compensation parcels at 8-Mile. It is in a
23 low-lying area. So at minimum we requested that
24 the graves be protected from further erosion. And
25 Hydro funded our gravesite protection project.

1 But I know this year we have to go and look at it,
2 because where we placed the Gabion baskets, it
3 sticks out now, so the adjacent shoreline, that's
4 eroding. And it shows us that those Gabion
5 baskets do work in those types of low-lying areas.
6 So that's part of the plan, is to go out there
7 and -- because right now we want them protected.

8 So those physical impacts, they have
9 altered our rights to a number of the treaty --
10 the traditional activities. And I just put down a
11 few, safe navigation, both winter and summer,
12 traditional commercial and fishing areas at
13 Playgreen, Kiskitto and Kiskittogisu Lake have
14 undergone massive change since the opening of the
15 channels.

16 I will tell you a story about my Uncle
17 Joe, he used to fish at, we call it the north end
18 at Kiskittogisu, Kiskitto. We thought he was --
19 he used to like his beer, and he came home one
20 time and he said, I can't lift my nets, I set a
21 net and I went back, and it is like a clothesline,
22 where I tied it from the tree and it is hanging in
23 the air. So we kind of thought -- but I didn't
24 understand at the time, so that was --

25 Trapping of fur bearing animals,

1 including muskrat, has been impacted. And Chris
2 talked about this yesterday. And I know Hydro
3 recognizes that there are about seven traplines
4 that are impacted due to the project. Access is a
5 real issue there, safety. They report and they
6 say that every year the safe trail, safe access,
7 it varies, you have to watch the conditions.
8 Whereas last year you could travel safely, there
9 is open holes. So it is changing there, like the
10 winter conditions. So they prefer overland
11 access. And sometimes you still have to cross the
12 waters to access those traplines. I know one
13 trapline is vacant right now because of the safety
14 conditions. He just felt not safe to trap there
15 anymore. So that's a flag in our office.

16 Like I mentioned before, the ability
17 to harvest traditional medicines from plants and
18 willows, and aquatic and riparian areas, that's
19 been impacted due to eroding shorelines and
20 washing away of the land. And those weeds that we
21 used to use on the bottom of the lake, a lot of
22 those don't grow anymore, or our membership feel
23 they are not as potent as they used to be, so they
24 prefer to go to other areas to pick those same
25 plants.

1 And loss of former beach areas, it is
2 a different type of family outing now. And it
3 makes no sense that we can't swim when there is
4 water all over the place. We have to take water
5 to boil water to make tea out there.

6 But having said all of that, we have
7 been in discussions with Manitoba Hydro, and we
8 have a number of initiatives that we conduct with
9 Hydro. We have an annual timber debris management
10 program at 2-Mile Channel, and we just, basically
11 we clean up the shoreline of the suspended, the
12 suspended timber debris. We don't touch what is
13 on the land that is maybe providing some
14 protection. And if they can catch it while it is
15 floating, they will do it.

16 But the last two years have been very
17 challenging due to levels and flows. We are
18 really concerned for our crew's safety, because
19 the water is flowing so fast, and they try and
20 catch those logs. Some of them are really huge,
21 they have to be cut with a chain saw. And even
22 to, we have a central disposal site at 2-Mile,
23 like even to access the shore at 2-Mile was hard
24 these last two years.

25 We have a safe ice trails program to

1 get to certain popular sites, I guess, I will call
2 them popular sites. And we are hoping to expand
3 the trails to go to other areas in the resource
4 area, at our membership's request. But basically
5 they go out and they measure the ice, and if they
6 have six inches of black ice they can put a trail
7 there, and it is safe ice. So we are discouraged
8 from using any overland trails in the program.

9 So we have been working with Hydro on
10 the 2-Mile Channel soil remediation program, the
11 surface and groundwater sampling program. 8-Mile
12 Channel, we have been involved with the soil
13 remediation program. That was a shoreline
14 cleanup, we did it in the winter time, we built,
15 we put an aqua dam in and we moved a lot of soil
16 there. It was quite the project. And we are
17 still treating those soils, we still have -- I
18 think Conservation requires two years of below
19 acceptable limits of detect of those parameters
20 before they will allow us to proceed with the
21 decommissioning.

22 And also the 8-Mile channel, we have a
23 surface and groundwater sampling program there.
24 Some areas that we found that, just suspicious
25 areas during the cleanup and around the waste

1 disposal ground.

2 So the last couple of slides. We have
3 some recommendations, and they are not all mine,
4 but these are things that people have raised in
5 the past. So the recommendations by Norway House
6 Cree Nation: Shoreline erosion strategy at 2 and
7 8-Mile Channels and other areas that are
8 susceptible to erosion.

9 Continued timber debris collection at
10 2-Mile Channel. We need to expand our staff
11 there.

12 Timber debris program at Kiskitto Lake.

13 One request that came from the
14 trappers was a trappers' assistance program for
15 those traplines, those seven traplines, so they
16 could actually go and trap there, like a fly in,
17 that's what they are proposing.

18 A wildlife harvesting program.
19 Certain areas are not really that good for hunting
20 now, and I know certain areas of our resource
21 area, they are getting -- there is more hunters
22 flock there because it is safer, and it is just
23 better to go to. So that's a recommendation
24 that's made, especially for our elders and our
25 single mothers.

1 We've recommended dredging at certain
2 areas, but these areas to be determined by Norway
3 House Cree Nation. But I would like to see what
4 is at the bottom of the channel on the outlet end
5 of the 2-Mile Channel. I suspect it is full of
6 waterlogged timber debris. But it would be
7 interesting to see what is in there.

8 Fisheries enhancement strategy at
9 Playgreen Lake, due to our habitat, our fish
10 habitat concerns, like government, DFO and the
11 Provincial Fisheries Branch to look into options
12 where we can restore the fish habitat at Playgreen
13 Lake.

14 And a proper sweep for remaining
15 construction debris, especially at 2-Mile Channel,
16 because there is one dredge pipe that's sticking
17 out. And that became exposed last year. And
18 because we weren't involved in the cleanup in
19 2003, there wasn't a concentrated effort to sweep,
20 like not that we needed at 8-Mile Channel. So
21 that's one of our recommendations.

22 Another recommendation, right now when
23 we want to talk to somebody in Hydro we have got
24 to talk to -- he works out of Cross Lake and
25 Thompson. So we would like to have our own

1 community liaison officer from Hydro to work here
2 in Norway House. We have a big membership and we
3 have these programs, and like I said, these unique
4 conditions. Why can't each of the communities
5 have their own liaison officer?

6 And another recommendation, and this
7 is the elder that told me, that the lake needs its
8 cycle of droughts and floods, and a recommendation
9 was made to advise the Minister to consider flows
10 and levels in Lake Winnipeg that would simulate
11 droughts and floods, instead of just keeping it at
12 711 and 715 feet, because the fluctuations are a
13 lot less and a lot higher than that. That was
14 another recommendation.

15 But this doesn't capture all of the
16 recommendations that are brought, these are just
17 the main ones. And that's it. Any questions?

18 THE CHAIRMAN: That was very good,
19 Loretta, thank you. Will we be able to get a copy
20 of that?

21 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Yes, I noticed
22 one typo, I will just change that.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Sure. That would be
24 very helpful.

25 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Okay, thanks. We

1 will play the video now. We will take a short
2 break and then we will get set up and present the
3 video.

4 (Recess taken)

5 CHIEF EVANS: Welcome everyone back to
6 their seats. And I want to thank Loretta for all
7 of the work that they did to do that presentation,
8 I want to thank her.

9 One of the things I want to stress
10 from the presentation is, when we talk about the
11 northern flood communities, there is York Landing,
12 Split Lake, Nelson House Cross Lake and Norway
13 House. The other three communities, York Landing,
14 Split Lake and Nelson House, they have benefited
15 further because they partnered with Manitoba Hydro
16 in Keeyask and Wuskwatim. Cross Lake and Norway
17 House were left out, like we are not even
18 considered, there is no further benefit that comes
19 to the Northern Flood Agreement community. So we
20 see that as unfair. And so we -- I'm happy to be
21 able to present it, you know, it is recorded here,
22 because I do raise it with the president, or the
23 chairman of Hydro, president and vice president,
24 and it doesn't seem to resonate with them that
25 this is an issue for us.

1 One of the things we have not done as
2 of yet is convene a meeting between ourselves and
3 Cross Lake to see how we are going to address it.
4 But when that time comes, I'm sure it will make
5 waves somewhere, it is going to be an issue that
6 needs to be addressed. We see that as unfair.

7 But anyway, I want to again introduce
8 the presentation that was done by Reverend
9 Apetagon. She mentioned in her presentation
10 earlier about the elder she spoke about, she
11 shared this information with myself, and I believe
12 it was Frank Whitehead at the time. And so we
13 hear about it, we hear about the climate change
14 and everything else that's happening, so we
15 encouraged her to share that information. It
16 should be kept somewhere, recorded, documented.
17 And so that's what, in essence, what happened.
18 And so it is about 15, 20 minutes.

19 This is what we created. And there
20 is, you know, the speakers are on the back, the
21 information is on the back. I will give it to
22 chairman here, Terry, and you can -- it will be in
23 his safekeeping.

24 And so with that, I will get the
25 technician. I don't know where they are back

1 there. So just play -- the whole video is 90
2 minutes long, but we are just doing the one that
3 fits your work, it addresses climate change. So
4 with that, please show it now.

5 (Video playing.)

6 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: So, we are on
7 item number 4 in our agenda, we will do the
8 closing remarks, and then we will have closing
9 prayer and then we will -- food should be here by
10 then and we will bless the food and have lunch,
11 and then we are finished. Does the Clean
12 Environment Commission want to do some closing
13 comments?

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. Thank you,
15 Loretta. Chief Evans, elders, council members,
16 members of your community, I would like to just
17 close by thanking you very much for a very good
18 couple of days in your community. I think the
19 presentations that we've heard have been just top
20 notch. We have also heard about issues here that,
21 quite frankly, we hadn't heard before, and they
22 are issues that are relevant to our mandate. So
23 it is very good that we did come in here. It is
24 good that even though we had a delay, that you
25 were able to find time for us to come in at

1 another time and hear these stories, because they
2 will be important to our deliberations over the
3 next few weeks. And you will see some of the
4 concerns that you've raised today, perhaps many of
5 them, today and yesterday, reflected in the report
6 that we make to the Minister.

7 So, again, thank you for all of the
8 work. Particular thanks to Loretta and James for
9 organizing, doing the organizational work to put
10 these couple of days together.

11 Before I close I should like to
12 acknowledge something that I usually do at the
13 beginning of the proceedings, and that is just to
14 acknowledge that we have held these hearings in
15 Treaty 5 territory and in the traditional
16 territory of the Norway House Cree Nation.

17 Today, in fact the next few moments
18 will be the formal end of our proceedings on the
19 Lake Winnipeg Regulation hearings. As I said
20 yesterday at the outset, we have had a number of
21 weeks of hearings in other northern communities,
22 southern communities around the lake, as well as
23 in the City of Winnipeg. It is now our job to
24 digest all of the information that we've heard,
25 and for the four members of the panel, including

1 myself, to meet with our staff and talk about
2 these issues, talk about which ones we believe to
3 be important, and talk about the issues, or
4 identify the issues that we will highlight in our
5 report and the recommendations that we will make
6 to the Minister.

7 As I said in response to questions
8 yesterday, I honestly can't remember from whom, we
9 don't make the final decision on whether or not
10 the licence is issued. That's the Minister's
11 decision. We do make recommendations.
12 Historically, the Minister has accepted most, if
13 not all of our recommendations. The Minister will
14 also consider other factors in his decisions,
15 including the section 35 consultations that are
16 going on with your community right now, as well as
17 advice that he gets from his officials in the
18 department.

19 Our timeline for this is that we will
20 accept commentary from participants up to and
21 including next Friday. So we discussed yesterday
22 whether or not you have more to submit, or more
23 information to attach to the report or the
24 presentation that Loretta made this morning,
25 please have it to us by noon next Friday.

1 Following that we will take about
2 three months to write our report. It will go to
3 the Minister early to mid August, and then it is
4 up to him to make a decision.

5 So, again, thank you very much to all
6 of the members of your community. Thank you for
7 welcoming us into your community, hosting us, and
8 for putting on a couple of very good days of
9 presentations. Thank you.

10 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: I will ask Chief
11 and Council to come up and do their closing
12 comments.

13 COUNCILLOR BAYER: Good morning. Good
14 morning everyone again on the final day of the
15 Clean Environment Commission hearings in Norway
16 House Cree Nation. First of all, I just want to
17 acknowledge the process that we are engaged in.
18 There are a couple of different avenues in which
19 Norway House Cree Nation presents our information
20 to the government as they make a decision, as the
21 Minister makes a decision on the Lake Winnipeg
22 Regulation final licence, or licence to the period
23 of -- is it 2018 -- 2025, okay.

24 And this is the Clean Environment
25 Commission hearings. We are also engaged in the

1 process of Crown consultation. We hope that that
2 consultation session will take place around the
3 26th of this month -- I mean of May -- oh yeah, it
4 is May -- on the 26th of this month, and we urge
5 our community members to take part, the high
6 school students, the university students that we
7 have here. And hopefully that you will receive
8 some submissions, or at least one submission from
9 UCN students, who are in post-secondary education,
10 before the 8th at noon.

11 I talked a little bit about myself
12 yesterday, about where I came from and how I was
13 born here, and our family lived on the Nelson
14 River. And how the water was so pristine at that
15 time. And how, when I came back after many years
16 of living in the city and other places, that I was
17 dismayed at the impact on the water and the
18 quality of it in our community, and how the
19 waterways looked so different than I had recalled,
20 even though that it was quite some time ago. And
21 I made it my intention to find out what was going
22 on.

23 And having worked in government in
24 different areas and with the political
25 organization, you know, you are very well aware of

1 what is going on and that, but not so much aware
2 of all of the daily impacts. And I told you that
3 as we are First Nations people, we are born here,
4 and this water, this land is the depths of our
5 soul.

6 And as we are talking throughout the
7 last couple of days, I couldn't help but think
8 about the analogy of us as women, as keepers of
9 the water and the land. It is our responsibility,
10 our responsibility as First Nations women, you
11 know, to pray on for that water, to offer our
12 tobacco, to say our prayers out there when we are
13 out on whatever water it is.

14 Because we carry babies in water, and
15 when that water around that baby is upset, if it
16 is polluted, if it is diluted with other
17 substances or chemicals or anything like that, you
18 know, our children that we deliver may have
19 impacts, just as our waterways do in our
20 community. So we take this responsibility very
21 seriously.

22 In particular, as leaders in the
23 community there are three of us women, three of us
24 women councillors. And Councillor Osborne is out
25 of the community today, she sends her regrets, but

1 we have Councillor Folster and myself. And as
2 traditional women, as traditional women we take
3 our prayers very seriously, and our
4 responsibilities very seriously. And as
5 Councillor Fredette had said earlier at the
6 opening of these sessions, we will continue to
7 make our prayers heard, make our voices heard, and
8 stand up for our land and our water.

9 So with that, I just wanted to again
10 say welcome to our world, and bid you farewell as
11 you leave our community. And we do have a few
12 mementoes for you to take with you. And perhaps
13 this late in the year, or anything like that, but
14 there are calendars and the book from a previous
15 leadership. But they are things about our
16 community that is very vital, that is very real,
17 and very vibrant, should I say, vibrant, you know.
18 And we also -- I have a book that's Lake Winnipeg
19 Regulation -- no, Lake Winnipeg, I don't know if
20 you have ever seen that.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Frances Russell's book?

22 COUNCILLOR BAYER: Yes, that's it.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: I have it.

24 COUNCILLOR BAYER: Okay, you have it.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: I was actually looking

1 at it again two weeks ago.

2 COUNCILLOR BAYER: Okay, good. Look
3 at the video that Councillor Folster mentioned
4 before related to Dr. Suzuki and, you know, keep
5 us in mind as you are giving your recommendations
6 forward to the government. And all of the
7 comments that were made here, I don't remember
8 that there was a lot of comments related to the
9 issue of mussels, you know, and the invasive
10 species that are coming into our territory, and
11 what is government doing in that aspect?

12 And when James and I were talking
13 yesterday, and he talked about the video, what is
14 it called -- not Zemo -- Nemo. And remember the
15 snake in Nemo, and remember when he was talking
16 about Lake St. Martin inlet and the other ones
17 there, and how that snake -- you know if you have
18 grandchildren, you have seen that movie perhaps.
19 But that snake in that movie, how it was trying to
20 make its way to a certain place, and in its
21 journey there got caught up in the current. And
22 the current is what takes you where you end up,
23 the current in that water, you know. And if
24 that's what we are to end up with, you know, many
25 of the snakes and the other reptiles that go along

1 with that in our community. Like these are things
2 that we have to think about, you know, we have to
3 give consideration to. So pay attention to all of
4 those factors.

5 And I just can't help thinking about
6 my baby, you know, and how that will be affected
7 once this regulation continues and that it is
8 altered in any way. When we alter that water, we
9 affect that baby.

10 So I guess that's all I can say,
11 that's my final comment. I want to thank the
12 staff for the work that they did, and I want to
13 thank the people who provided us with the food to
14 eat. We took the leftovers, for your information,
15 to the wakes and to a shelter for single men in
16 our community who were homeless, so they were
17 really, really happy, and they said if we have any
18 leftovers to take them today.

19 I'm really glad that you came and
20 thank you so much.

21 COUNCILLOR FOLSTER: Good morning
22 everyone. I am sorry I couldn't be here this
23 morning, there was a situation I had to deal with.

24 But I guess at the tail end of this
25 meeting today, I would like to mention thank you

1 for meeting my daughter yesterday. She is an
2 inspiration to me. That's why I stand here today,
3 and I look at her future. So as I brought her
4 here today, I wanted you to see, you know, who I
5 work hard for. And it is for her and for her
6 children. You know, I think down the line of how
7 we need to, as a leader, think about the future
8 generation.

9 I too have worked with youth in the
10 community, and I spent 14 years working with
11 families and children. And empowering them is
12 very important, our young people. And I'm hoping
13 that some day that we have future leaders who will
14 stand and believe in the same thing that I do, and
15 that everybody else believes at the Chief and
16 Council level.

17 And it is my role, I guess, you know,
18 as Councillor Bayer has mentioned, is the care
19 that I need to do for Mother Earth. You know, and
20 it has been given, these teachings have been given
21 to me by my elders. It is something that I carry
22 sacred to my heart. And I have integrity in
23 everything and anything that I do, and to do what
24 is right for them and for my grandchildren.
25 Because I want them to have something. And I had

1 mentioned this the first day that we were here.

2 So when I'm making decisions or when
3 I'm speaking, it is always on behalf of them. It
4 is a given, you know, it is a role and
5 responsibility that I have been given by my higher
6 power to do. Even though at times I speak very
7 loud, I'm a very vocal person, you know, when I
8 need to be and when I have to be, and that's just
9 who I am, I guess. It is a teaching that I have
10 been given by my father also, and my mother, and I
11 take those values and beliefs very seriously.

12 With that I would like to thank you
13 for being here and listening to us, because it is
14 always important to have that connection with one
15 another, and some understanding of, you know,
16 where we come from as First Nation women and as
17 First Nation people all together. Thank you for
18 being here. I really appreciate you taking the
19 time to come and listen, and hopefully we will
20 meet down the road again sometime. Thank you.

21 DEPUTY CHIEF FREDETTE: Good morning
22 everybody, I would like to say a special good
23 morning and thank you to our elders that are here,
24 our representatives, our Chief Ron Evans, who
25 inspires us as a leader to continue to advocate

1 for our people in a very respectful and healthy
2 way, which is needed. Because when you have two
3 groups of people, you have to have mutual respect
4 to understand each other in a good way. I would
5 like to thanks James and Loretta for doing a great
6 job and continuing to do a great job when it comes
7 to advocating for our waterways and our lands in
8 our community. I would like to thank the youth
9 that are here.

10 For myself as a councillor and as one
11 of the leaders in the community, I spoke on a lot
12 of personal levels yesterday. And I did that for
13 a reason. You know, we as leaders sometimes have
14 to step back and just be community members, and be
15 fathers and grandfathers and uncles, and continue
16 to walk, not in front of our people, but side by
17 side, united as one. And that is what makes a
18 strong community. And these are the teachings
19 from our elders that we continue to use every day.

20 I'm hoping that in the future with the
21 Manitoba Hydro and the Provincial and Federal
22 government, that a lot of these issues that are
23 coming up continue to be talked about in a healthy
24 way, with respect. First Nations people, as you
25 are aware of in this country, have had devastating

1 effects to them culturally with their language and
2 way of life. Now it is threatening our waters,
3 and the way we sustain ourselves as First Nations
4 people. You can't put a price tag on something
5 like that.

6 When you look at our elders and what
7 they have taught us and what we are trying to
8 teach our next generation is going to be a very
9 tough lesson. But as long as we move forward with
10 continuation and consultation and intent to make
11 sure that our First Nations generations will be
12 compensated correctly, so we can move forward with
13 programming and other recreational opportunities
14 that our kids deserve. We can never replace what
15 has been taken away, but you can move forward in
16 working together as Manitobans, as Canadians, and
17 as First Nations people.

18 I would like to thank all of our
19 guests that came here to listen and share some
20 meals with us. And as you can tell, with the
21 respect and the honour that we have given you,
22 that's how we treat our guests. Even though we
23 are having some very crucial times with our
24 economic and social issues in our community, we
25 still have the grace to do that. That's another

1 teaching from our elders, to make sure that you
2 treat your guests how you would treat your family.
3 And I'm hoping that same courtesy comes back to us
4 from the Provincial, the Federal, and from a
5 corporation as big as Manitoba Hydro.

6 So with that, I would like to once
7 again say thank you very much. I'm hoping that
8 all of these statements and testimonies play a
9 crucial role in what is going to be happening with
10 the livelihood of our First Nations people that
11 live on these waterways. And I think that if we
12 do the right job, we can all look at each other
13 down the road and extend our hand and say, we made
14 the best possible outcomes of a very touchy
15 situation.

16 So thank you so much. Have yourself a
17 great day. And I hope you are joining us for a
18 meal at noon. And then I wish you all safe
19 journeys when you go home to your families and
20 grandchildren, and keep us in mind, and we will
21 always be here. Thank you so much.

22 CHIEF EVANS: I just want to thank the
23 council for their kind, generous and thoughtful
24 comments, remarks, about the purpose of the
25 gathering. I just want to thank as well the

1 elders that are here, members of the elders
2 council, I think they are pretty much all here
3 with the exception of one. And then, of course,
4 the youth that are back there, and Mr. Ettawacappo
5 is with the youth. He is celebrating his birthday
6 today, not sure how many years. I guess we will
7 win a free trip to Winnipeg and back if we guess
8 it right.

9 I just want to thank again the
10 coordinators, James and Loretta, and I want to
11 thank Councillor Bayer and the councillors who
12 were here yesterday on our behalf, on my behalf,
13 for their input as well sharing the perspective
14 from a leadership perspective as well.

15 I just want to give you my thoughts
16 on -- I think it is in the transcript, but I just
17 want to do it very -- I won't be lengthy. I just
18 want you to take note that we are not
19 closed-minded people here, we are quite aware of
20 what is happening around us globally. We don't
21 live in a small world here where we just look at
22 what happens to us, but we are mindful of what is
23 happening in Nepal, the disaster of the earthquake
24 that took place, and all of the pain and
25 everything that's happening there. And our

1 thoughts and our prayers go out to the people that
2 are struggling and that are hurting. And it is,
3 you know, unimaginable. And there is other
4 places, you know, they are dealing with racial
5 issues and so on.

6 Because through technology we are
7 aware of what is happening, and not only through
8 technology, but through our other personal
9 experiences in traveling abroad. So we try to
10 extend that and we try to take as many of our
11 young people abroad, whether it is to Israel -- we
12 have a group of young people that were taken to
13 France that came back a few weeks ago. So we try
14 and organize and get our people more broad-minded,
15 more open-minded as to the things that are
16 happening elsewhere in other parts of the world,
17 and to give them that experience.

18 But while we are doing that, we are
19 also mindful of our own history as a people, as a
20 First Nations people. And I'm very glad that you
21 are able to come and visit our community, whether
22 it is the first time or whether it is your second
23 or third visit. But as you can see from our
24 community we do our best to -- we do our best to
25 create a community such as yours, you know, where

1 our people can have the means and the resources
2 and the opportunities to be able to develop
3 themselves, develop their talents. Each of us,
4 each individual is given a talent, and it is how
5 we are provided to develop those talents and use
6 them for greater purposes. And so we do our best
7 to do that.

8 However, we do struggle, you know, as
9 First Nations people. We are not looked upon by
10 government policies perhaps, there is always these
11 jurisdictional issues. Well, we are not
12 responsible for them. It is a Federal
13 jurisdiction, it is a Provincial jurisdiction, it
14 is this, it is that. And in the words of the
15 Federal Government, you know, we are looked upon
16 as such, we are not looked upon as mainstream, but
17 we have historical injustices that were done.

18 You know, a councillor mentioned that
19 we never got to vote until very recently, when you
20 really think about our history. So we are dealing
21 with all of these injustices that happened over
22 the years. However, that's not to say that we
23 focus on them, but we try our best to move forward
24 at the same time, but not forgetting what has
25 happened and these things need to be dealt with.

1 If these projects were to happen --
2 and we are actually pleased that policy change, we
3 are actually happy that things do change and
4 people do get recognized. Things need to be done
5 in the way that others are respected and listened
6 to, and then we have to move forward. Because
7 there is always change that comes, and we have to
8 move with it, and we have to adapt to the changes
9 that are ever before us. So we have to be ready
10 for them. We have to be ready to educate our
11 young people, which is one of the reasons that the
12 video was created, which is to be able to do
13 exactly that, so that it is retained.

14 And we move forward, we are always
15 facing challenges, we all are as a people. I
16 mean, you take even prayer, you know, it looks
17 like, it sounds like there is going to come a time
18 when maybe we will be penalized if we say a prayer
19 in public, right? I mean, it is starting to
20 happen. These are frightening times really, when
21 you think about it. When you think about what has
22 happened to the climate, as was expressed in the
23 video that you just witnessed, and hopefully the
24 video does give you something to think about what
25 is really happening all around us, and how that

1 may impact us here in our, in our own individual
2 communities wherever we all -- wherever we all
3 reside.

4 And so in Norway House, you know, we
5 are -- I know Hydro takes the position that we are
6 far away from the projects up north, but really we
7 are the gatekeepers. Because this is where it
8 starts, you know, it starts in our community. And
9 water flows, you know, to the other communities
10 down -- either it is up the river or down the
11 river, depending I guess which direction one is
12 looking.

13 But we are very pleased with where we
14 are. We love our environment. We love our land.
15 We love our community. And we wouldn't want to be
16 elsewhere for that matter.

17 And let me just quickly share with
18 you, in Ethiopia, I was there ten years ago, 2005,
19 and we were brought there by people, there was
20 people from I think 23 other countries brought to
21 this -- we were out, it was a ten hour bus ride
22 from the main airport. Actually it wasn't even
23 the main airport, we were taken to the capital of
24 Ethiopia and then we flew another hour, and then
25 ten hours to get to where we were meeting.

1 People from different parts of the
2 world, it was called the gathering of the
3 pastoral -- it wasn't ministry, it was people that
4 still live off the land really brought together.
5 And they were brought to this place because these
6 people, the people in that region, that particular
7 part of the world would never leave their lands.
8 You couldn't get them to go on an airplane. So
9 the organizers brought the people from other parts
10 of the world to them, right, so they could
11 actually hear and experience what it is like in
12 other places. So that was -- our presence there
13 was their first experience to people in other
14 parts -- you know, that there is a world beyond
15 theirs.

16 And so we were breaking into groups,
17 you know, there was about 300 of us, so we were
18 breaking into groups of 20, and sat down in -- it
19 wasn't a meeting room. And the reason I was
20 there, and a couple of people that I traveled
21 with, was because we had to take our sleeping bags
22 with us. It wasn't a five star, it wasn't one of
23 those trips where you were treated like royalty.
24 And so it was leaving the comforts of your
25 environment, and then going back in time to where

1 you -- we slept in a tent on a mat, and we were
2 told to check our shoes every morning for
3 scorpions, that kind of -- then there was no
4 outdoor, there was no running water, just a little
5 bucket in a tarped setting, that's where you had a
6 chance to cleanse yourself. So I was there for a
7 week. Needless to say I lost ten pounds in that
8 one week, but this story is not about me. But it
9 is about what I learned, though.

10 And so the question was asked, and
11 there was a fellow, I think he was an old German
12 fellow, pardon how I am describing him, but he
13 had -- these things were about this long.
14 Obviously when he landed there, he would go there
15 a couple of weeks at a time, and the children
16 would run up and hug him and they became very --
17 he bonded well. And so that was a good thing. So
18 when he listened to everyone's comments about how
19 we would help these people, and everybody had
20 their ideas about how they would help, you know,
21 the people there. And then he listened, you know,
22 he went to the different groups. And he finally
23 came to ours, and everybody is giving their
24 thoughts and opinions. And then all of a sudden,
25 you know, we are seated on the ground, so he is

1 standing like this over us, listening. And he
2 said, can I interrupt for a minute? And of
3 course, you know, he was allowed. And then he
4 said, why do you people come here? Why do you
5 come here and try to take away the happiness of
6 these people? Don't you know that these people
7 here are happy?

8 And we looked at each other puzzled,
9 how can they be happy? I mean, they are poor, in
10 our eyes they are poor, they have hardly got any
11 clothes and they live in mud huts. So how can he
12 say that they are happy? And that's really the
13 thinking when, you know, we just thought, well,
14 yeah, he is just trying to protect his little
15 kingdom, you know, he probably likes people
16 running up to him, and he doesn't really want
17 nobody to take that away from him, right, it is
18 more selfish than anything else. That is the way
19 we thought after, of course, after he left, we
20 didn't say that when he was standing over us.

21 So I came back, and then I became
22 Grand Chief shortly thereafter. And then our
23 people, the people that leave Norway House or the
24 communities in the north that have to go to
25 Winnipeg and stay there for medical reasons,

1 those -- our people that go to the city, they
2 don't want to die there, they don't want to be
3 there, they would rather come home where they are
4 happy, because it is really about the happiness of
5 the person, it is about the happiness of the
6 individual. So that's why we try, as leadership
7 we try to provide that happiness.

8 It is not about taking somebody and
9 taking them over there. Yeah, you can take me to
10 Disney Land or you take me -- if I was to win a
11 lottery myself, I wouldn't go and live in a fancy
12 place somewhere, I would rather be right here,
13 because my happiness is here, my family is here,
14 my friends are here, my community is here. So for
15 us that is our -- that's our -- it is just who we
16 are.

17 And I admire those that are able to
18 leave their environment, you know. We do have
19 people that leave and never come back. And they
20 can succeed out there, and if they can find their
21 happiness out there, then that's a good thing as
22 well. It is no different than other people coming
23 from other parts of the world, you know, and they
24 find their peace and happiness here in Canada. I
25 mean, that's not a bad thing, that's a good thing.

1 But the majority of us, you know, if there is
2 opportunities here, then that's where we want to
3 be.

4 I came back from Edmonton just the
5 other day, two days ago. And I met a fellow at
6 the airport waiting for the plane, he is going
7 home to Halifax, he was in Edmonton, he worked
8 there. And he made the same comment that, because
9 there is no opportunities out there, he has to
10 leave his family and go work in Edmonton, you
11 know, because there's nothing, no economy in Nova
12 Scotia. So he says, we just want what everybody
13 else has, you know, high paying jobs, good paying
14 jobs so that we can ensure that our children have
15 the opportunity. He said I could easily stay in
16 Nova Scotia and just make bare minimum, but we
17 would never advance.

18 And so all of us as a people, we think
19 that way. So we are having our Sals opening,
20 there is 40 jobs there, actually there is about 45
21 right now, so that's 45 to 50 people that are
22 going to have jobs, sustainable jobs. It is not a
23 construction job, it is not a seasonal job that
24 they will make a big wage for six months to a
25 year, two years, three years, and then it is over.

1 But these are jobs they can -- and Salisbury
2 House, I know in the city we have been told that
3 many of their employees stay there 20 plus years,
4 because they are treated well. And we have other
5 opportunities that are happening as well.

6 So those are the kind of jobs that we
7 try to create, long and sustainable jobs. We are
8 not after a quick construction, you know, go to
9 take the minerals out of there, and gone.

10 And so with that, again, we thank the
11 Creator for your time that you spend away from
12 your own family and come and be part of our
13 community for the small amount of time that you
14 have been here. But we hope that you have enjoyed
15 it, and we ask the Creator to bless your work,
16 bless you with good health, both for yourselves
17 and your families, your loved ones. And hopefully
18 that we can continue to move forward together in a
19 good way, understanding and respecting each other,
20 that is the only way we can respect each other
21 with understanding and take the time, which you
22 have done. So with that we say thank you.

23 And I want to thank you to all those
24 that prepared the food, all the workers that have
25 made things happen, to the technicians, to all of

1 the talent that we have in our community, we are
2 grateful and we give thanks for that as well.

3 With that, I say thank you and I will
4 turn this over to Loretta. I don't know what is
5 next on your agenda. Is it a prayer? Have you
6 got closing comments?

7 MS. LORETTA MOWATT: Yes. I'm just
8 going to be brief. We had had this meeting
9 scheduled for April 22 and 23rd, and the
10 Commissioner, we were aware that the Commissioner
11 is trying to wrap up by April 30, so we pulled it
12 together really fast. And I'm really glad you
13 came. We are the last community that you are
14 hearing from, so this officially concludes your
15 hearings, so I'm glad it is done here. I hope you
16 take our comments and make some good
17 recommendations on our behalf.

18 That's it. I don't have much else to
19 say, and I ask Elder Frances Ettawacappo to come
20 up and do the closing prayer and do the blessing
21 of the food at the same time.

22 (Closing prayer)

23 (Concluded at 12:00 p.m.)

24

25

OFFICIAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Cecelia 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 Reid

Official Examiner, Q.B.

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