

MANITOBA CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

LAKE WINNIPEG REGULATION REVIEW
UNDER THE WATER POWER ACT

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Transcript of Proceedings
Held at Grand Marais Community Centre
Grand Marais, Manitoba
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2015
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APPEARANCES

CLEAN ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

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

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

CONSERVATION AND WATER STEWARDSHIP

Chris McCombe

MANITOBA HYDRO

Dale Hutchison

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1 MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2015

2 UPON COMMENCING AT 3:30 P.M.

3

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, I think we will
5 call the afternoon session to order.

6 Good afternoon, welcome. My name is
7 Terry Sargeant, I'm the chair of the Clean
8 Environment Commission. I'm also the chair of
9 this panel.

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

15 Let me introduce the other members of
16 the panel. On my left is Edwin Yee; to my
17 immediate right is Neil Harden; and next to him is
18 Bev Suek. We also have some Commission staff with
19 us; our Commission secretary, Cathy Johnson, our
20 Commission administrator, Joyce Mueller, and our
21 technical staff, Cece Reid who is the recorder and
22 Bob Armstrong is our report writer.

23 We are here today because in 2011 the
24 Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship
25 asked the Commission to provide a forum to hear

1 evidence from the public about the impact of
2 Manitoba Hydro's regulation of Lake Winnipeg. We
3 asked to hold meetings in communities around both
4 the north and south basins of Lake Winnipeg, as
5 well as in the City of Winnipeg.

6 While we recognize that Lake Winnipeg
7 Regulation is a key part of the Manitoba Hydro
8 system, we are not, or we have not been asked to
9 review any other part of that Hydro system other
10 than specifically Lake Winnipeg Regulation. We
11 have been asked to review the reasons why Lake
12 Winnipeg Regulation came into being with the
13 issuance of an initial licence in 1970. We have
14 been asked to review whether Lake Winnipeg
15 Regulation has succeeded or failed in meeting
16 those goals, and also to look at the effect and
17 impacts of Lake Winnipeg Regulation since first
18 operation in 1976.

19 We hope to make these community
20 meetings as informal as possible in order to
21 encourage as much local participation as we can
22 get. The hearings are recorded, as is required by
23 the Environment Act. Within two or three days a
24 verbatim transcript will be posted on our website.

25 Anyone who is present may make a

1 presentation, and if you feel comfortable making a
2 presentation with somebody else, that's fine as
3 well. What we would like to hear from you is who
4 you are, how Lake Winnipeg Regulation may have
5 impacted or benefited you, how it has impacted
6 your community, your views on whether or not the
7 project has been good for the whole province. You
8 may suggest to us decisions that you think the
9 panel should make in our report to the Minister,
10 and any other information that you think is
11 important.

12 Typically, we limit oral presentations
13 to about 15 minutes. We have also found in our
14 community meetings so far that often people will
15 talk for four or five minutes, and then somebody
16 else will talk, and then a few minutes later the
17 first person may think of something else, and we
18 have no real problem with that, as long as there
19 is no line-up of people wanting to get to follow
20 you.

21 And there are options to an oral
22 presentation. If you don't want to make a
23 presentation today, but still want to let us know
24 what you think, you are more than welcome to
25 submit something in writing. That can be as

1 simple as a letter or an email sent to our email
2 address, which is available on our website. We
3 read, the panel will read all written submissions
4 that we receive. They are as much a part of the
5 record as any oral presentations that we hear in
6 any of the communities that we go into.

7 That's all I have to say by way of
8 opening comments. We will now have a presentation
9 from Dale Hutchison of Manitoba Hydro, who will
10 explain just what Lake Winnipeg Regulation is all
11 about. Dale?

12 MR. HUTCHISON: Hello, everyone can
13 hear?

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

15 MR. HUTCHISON: Thank you, Terry.

16 My name is Dale Hutchison. Thank you
17 for inviting me to Grand Marais to speak about our
18 Lake Winnipeg Regulation project. I spent a lot
19 of time just down the road at Belair and Lester
20 Beach. I worked for 15 years with Manitoba Hydro
21 to understand our impacts on the waterways and the
22 people that we share these waterways with. My
23 presentation will, over the next 15 minutes, will
24 cover Manitoba Hydro's system, Lake Winnipeg and
25 our Lake Winnipeg Regulation project.

1 I'm joined here today with Murray
2 Neufeld, who is from our customer service
3 operations office in Lac du Bonnet.

4 First let's look at the Manitoba Hydro
5 system. A huge area, west to the Rocky Mountains,
6 east to the edge of Lake Superior, and south into
7 the Red River Valley of the United States flows
8 into Lake Winnipeg. The shape of the land is like
9 a million square kilometre bowl, and that's what
10 makes hydroelectric development possible on a
11 large scale in Manitoba.

12 There are 15 generating stations to
13 take advantage of this water as it flows through
14 Manitoba. These are shown by the blue dots on the
15 map. And the size of the dot, small, medium and
16 large, shows how much electricity they can
17 produce. So we have got six small stations on the
18 Winnipeg River. We have got a medium sized
19 generating station on the Saskatchewan River at
20 Grand Rapids. The Nelson River flows out of Lake
21 Winnipeg into Hudson Bay. On the west branch of
22 the Nelson River we have got a small generating
23 station at Jenpeg. The Churchill River is the
24 river system just north of the Nelson, and it also
25 flows into Hudson Bay. Rather than building

1 generating stations on this far northern river,
2 instead its waters were diverted into the Nelson
3 through the project called Churchill River
4 Diversion. This project involved putting a dam at
5 the outflow of Southern Indian Lake, raising the
6 level of that lake by nine feet and flowing most
7 of its waters into the Nelson at Split Lake.

8 Wuskwatim is the newest generating
9 station and it is along this Churchill River
10 Diversion route.

11 So the main hydroelectric benefit of
12 Churchill River Diversion is that Split Lake
13 downstream, the Nelson has the benefit of two
14 rivers. You can see by the large blue dots that
15 are our largest generating stations are on this
16 river, Kettle, Long Spruce and Limestone. These
17 three stations alone produce 70 per cent of all
18 electricity in Manitoba.

19 Keeyask is a medium-sized station
20 that's currently being built right now on this
21 stretch of river downstream of Split Lake.

22 To move the electricity from these
23 stations to the south, we have got two high
24 voltage bipole lines that go 1,000 kilometres from
25 Gillam, right here, from Gillam down to a

1 converter station near Winnipeg. From this
2 converter station there are 100,000 kilometres of
3 distribution lines that take the electricity to
4 homes and businesses throughout Manitoba.

5 There is a third bipole line currently
6 under construction, you probably heard about it at
7 some point, called Bipole III. And we can produce
8 electricity from natural gas at stations in
9 Selkirk and Brandon. In an emergency, we can use
10 coal at our station in Brandon. And we purchase
11 wind electricity from wind farms in St. Leon and
12 St. Joseph. You have probably seen them if you
13 have gone south into the States recently. The
14 Manitoba Hydro system uses water to produce 95 per
15 cent of the electricity made.

16 So now let's look at Lake Winnipeg.
17 This is the tenth largest freshwater lake in the
18 world. It is Manitoba's great lake. Over a dozen
19 rivers flow into the lake, however, there is only
20 one outflow, and that is the Nelson River. This
21 makes it easy for the lake to flood.

22 Historically flooding has caused
23 problems for people living around the lake,
24 highways were closed, farmers couldn't get their
25 crops out, homes and cottages were damaged. These

1 are photos in Winnipeg Free Press headlines
2 showing recent flooding events, like 1927, 1950,
3 1954, 1955, 1966, 1968, 1969, 1970. This constant
4 flooding put a lot of pressure on the government
5 to do something about it from the people living
6 around the lake.

7 In 1970 -- oh, at the same time the
8 demand for electricity was growing in the
9 province, so in 1970, the Premier of Manitoba
10 announced plans to proceed with Lake Winnipeg
11 Regulation in order to get flood control on Lake
12 Winnipeg and for power production on the Nelson
13 River.

14 So in order to build Lake Winnipeg
15 Regulation, which I will call LWR so I can save
16 some breath, first we needed a licence from the
17 province. This is similar to getting -- before
18 you build a house or a cottage you have to get a
19 building permit. So under the Water Power Act,
20 this initial licence is called an interim licence,
21 and to get it we had to provide information about
22 what we were building and the effect that it would
23 have on water levels and flows.

24 In 1970, the Province granted us an
25 interim licence, which gave us the approval to

1 build LWR. They also provided rules for how it
2 could be operated. There were three types of
3 rules. The first were operating rules for Lake
4 Winnipeg and some of the downstream lakes, or
5 operating ranges I should say. For instance, on
6 Lake Winnipeg, between elevation 711 and 715,
7 Manitoba Hydro could decide how much water would
8 flow through Jenpeg in order to meet electricity
9 demands. Above elevation 715 feet, we have to let
10 as much water as possible out of the lake, this is
11 called maximum discharge. And below elevation
12 711, the Minister of Conservation and Water
13 Stewardship tells us how much water to let out of
14 the lake. So we agreed with these rules, and by
15 1976, built Lake Winnipeg Regulation.

16 Now, LWR involved creating a second
17 outflow for Lake Winnipeg, as well as two other
18 channels that would increase the flow of water out
19 of the lake. Now, these channels alone would
20 drain the lake, so it was necessary to put in a
21 control structure at Jenpeg to regulate the flow
22 of water out of the west branch of the Nelson
23 River.

24 Okay. So using the example over here
25 of a faucet, basin and drain, if all of these

1 rivers are represented by the water drop under the
2 faucet, then this drain represents the natural
3 outflow of Lake Winnipeg, the Nelson River, and
4 the water drop under it, the amount of water that
5 can flow out. You can see that the water drop
6 under it, under the drain or the Nelson River, is
7 a lot smaller than the one entering the lake. And
8 this means that in flood, more water can enter the
9 lake than can leave it, which causes the water
10 level to rise and the lake to flood.

11 You can see in the lower diagram here,
12 the second drain which represents the LWR channel,
13 it is half the size of the channel, or of the
14 drain representing the Nelson River. But we can
15 still see that these two droplets alone are
16 smaller than the faucet drop. So even with LWR,
17 in floods you can still get more water entering
18 the lake than can leave it. So it still means
19 that the water level will get high and the lake
20 will flood, only now it won't get as high as it
21 would have and it won't be in flood as long.

22 Now I have to go to a graph to kind of
23 demonstrate change in water levels over time.
24 This graph shows that LWR is helping to reduce
25 flooding on Lake Winnipeg, by comparing the water

1 level of the lake with LWR and what the water
2 level would have been if it didn't exist. So on
3 the one side of the chart we have the elevation
4 above sea level. On the bottom of the chart we
5 have got the roughly 40 years, from 1977, the
6 first full year that LWR was in operation, up to
7 2015 now. The blue line represents the actual,
8 with LWR level, and the red line represents an
9 estimate of what the water level would have been
10 if LWR did not exist.

11 You probably noticed the last ten
12 years in particular have been very wet, with a lot
13 of water flowing into Lake Winnipeg and down the
14 Nelson River. What this diagram shows is that in
15 flood years like 1997, 2005, 2011 and 2014, the
16 lake would have gotten two feet higher and the
17 lake would have been in flood a lot longer than it
18 was. So this information is demonstrating that
19 Lake Winnipeg Regulation is meeting its goal to
20 provide flood relief on Lake Winnipeg.

21 So in the last banner, we want to look
22 at what happens downstream of Lake Winnipeg.
23 20,000 people live along the Nelson River. Land
24 and water are extremely important to their
25 identity and livelihoods.

1 Now, all Manitobans benefit from
2 having reliable low cost electricity, and people
3 around Lake Winnipeg benefit from the flood relief
4 provided by LWR. However, people downstream of
5 Lake Winnipeg have suffered by having more water
6 flow down the lake during the winter and during
7 times of flood. And this additional water has
8 caused significant impacts to people downstream.

9 In a natural state, over the course of
10 the winter, lake levels and river flows tend to
11 decrease. With LWR, water flows can be a lot
12 higher during the winter, up to 50 per cent more
13 than they would have been without LWR. And this
14 water can cause impacts, ice problems on
15 waterways, and it can make travel on waterways
16 more dangerous. Also it can negatively affect
17 aquatic mammals like beaver, mink, muskrat and
18 otter.

19 In the summer, anytime the water level
20 elevation of Lake Winnipeg gets close to or above
21 elevation 715, Jenpeg goes to maximum discharge,
22 sending a surge of water down the Nelson River,
23 which causes water level fluctuations on the river
24 and lakes. Ultimately, this change in water level
25 with LWR downstream has affected the cultural,

1 commercial, spiritual and recreational pursuits of
2 people living downstream of Lake Winnipeg.

3 Working together, in Cree this is
4 called witasosketowin, with the people who live
5 and work along the Nelson River, Manitoba Hydro is
6 working to address these impacts through
7 agreements and other arrangements with communities
8 and First Nations on the Nelson River, through the
9 Cross Lake Weir, through programs for access and
10 navigation, resource harvesting, archaeology and
11 heritage resources, and recreation, as shown by
12 the pictures in this banner.

13 I want to wish you a productive
14 meeting with the Commissioners of the Clean
15 Environment Commission. And Murray and I would be
16 pleased to speak with you when you are on a break
17 or whenever your meeting is done. Thank you.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Dale.

19 Now it is your turn. Anybody here
20 wish to make a statement? Give us any thoughts?

21 MR. MEAGHER: I would.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: We have a hand mic that
23 we will pass around. We need to have you on mic
24 so the recorder picks it up.

25 MR. MEAGHER: My name is Jerry

1 Meagher, Jerry with a J, Meagher, M-E-A-G-H-E-R.
2 I live in Grand Marais, and my concern is with
3 shoreline erosion.

4 From the time I was a child, along the
5 shoreline there used to be tons and tons of
6 willows, and they stabilized shoreline, and they
7 seem to be disappearing. And it is my
8 understanding that willows need a low water level
9 every number of years in order to regenerate,
10 something about their roots or their seeds or
11 something. But if the water levels are always
12 high, they don't get a chance to. And I figured
13 that that's got something to do with the Lake
14 Winnipeg levels that you keep.

15 I believe it was David Suzuki who said
16 that if it was every five years, a drawdown on the
17 lake, that that would allow the willows to
18 regenerate and protect the shoreline.

19 And I guess that's about it.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Meagher.
21 I think this gentleman at the front.

22 MR. MATTERN: My name is David
23 Mattern, I live in Grand Marais. How much power
24 is currently being generated, and is any of that
25 being sold or going outside of the province?

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, I can't tell you
2 exactly how much is being generated. It is
3 probably close to 4,000 megawatts. Dale? And a
4 certain amount of that is being sold to the United
5 States, some of it under long-term contract, some
6 of it on the spot market, which means if Manitoba
7 Hydro has excess and the Americans need it, they
8 just buy it on a day-to-day basis.

9 MR. MATTERN: So what would the
10 primary focus be of the whole process that you are
11 going through? Is it to generate more power or to
12 control the water level? What is the real focus?

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, as Dale said
14 earlier, when the announcement was made in 1970
15 that the Province and Manitoba Hydro were going
16 ahead with Lake Winnipeg Regulation, they had two
17 principal purposes. Initially, and I know this
18 from the research that we've done over the last
19 number of months preparing for these hearings, I
20 read documents that were written in the 1950s, and
21 there were a number of studies done looking at how
22 to control flooding on Lake Winnipeg. And they
23 determined that regulating the lake was one way of
24 controlling the flooding on the lake. However, on
25 a stand-alone basis, it wasn't cost effective, it

1 would have cost too much to regulate it just for
2 flood protection.

3 They also noted then, in the late
4 '50s, that if at some time in the future Manitoba
5 Hydro was to develop the Nelson River and need
6 additional water, then using Lake Winnipeg as a
7 reservoir would make Lake Winnipeg Regulation cost
8 effective.

9 So those two reasons, controlling
10 flooding on the lake, as well as generating
11 hydroelectricity, are the two reasons that have
12 been given all along as to why Lake Winnipeg
13 Regulation came into being.

14 Did you have any other questions?

15 MR. MATTERN: No, that's fine for now.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

17 MS. VAL BURCH: My name is Val Burch
18 and I live here in Grand Marais vicinity. One of
19 the things that I am noticing is we are always
20 using the term Lake Winnipeg, but in fact Lake
21 Manitoba and the rivers that enter it also affect
22 Lake Winnipeg and the output, because they come
23 through. We have had a lot of flooding recently
24 coming from the west. We have had major flooding
25 from the south, and we have major flooding from

1 Ontario over time. So we get it from three
2 directions. And there is, you are telling me
3 there is only one river basically right now that's
4 an output river, which sounds very ominous if we
5 are the tenth largest lake throughout the world.

6 With that in mind, I also go to the
7 view of Jerry, who spoke about the willows, but
8 the lack of marshes in the area to control the
9 water so it doesn't go as quickly is gone because
10 of the flooding of the rivers that lead into all
11 of the lakes here. And therefore, we are
12 affecting all of Manitoba, we are not just
13 affecting Lake Winnipeg. Yes, there is other
14 areas of concern, but those areas are also a huge
15 part.

16 And as Jerry is noticing here with
17 willows, so too are they on both sides of Lake
18 Manitoba, since the flooding has been particularly
19 bad there, and along the rivers that come through
20 the Assiniboine area has seen huge losses along
21 there.

22 So a lot of the water that's coming
23 through, it is large flood plains. In fact, I can
24 clearly remember one in 1990 that flooded
25 basically all of southern Manitoba. So we are

1 doing multiple damage with regulating the water.
2 I've also heard people say that at Gimli and
3 Winnipeg Beach and areas like that, they recall
4 times when the lake was a good 20, 30 feet further
5 receded from the current level that it is now up
6 on the higher area. Are we just having all of our
7 banks and things going because the high area is
8 consistent? Are we losing not only our land and
9 our swamps and creating our own flooding by what
10 is happening with the regulation of the lake?

11 Thank you.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: You are correct that
13 there was a time along the western shore of Lake
14 Winnipeg where the shoreline was quite a bit
15 further out. I mean, there are places in Gimli
16 and north of Gimli where, under the water, there
17 are the remains of roads. But that land was lost
18 long before, that land was lost long before Lake
19 Winnipeg Regulation came into being.

20 Also, as Dale noted, those pictures of
21 flooding, I think most, if not all of them, are in
22 or near the town of Gimli. They were also before
23 Lake Winnipeg Regulation came in.

24 MS. VAL BURCH: '50s and '60s
25 basically.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. I grew up in
2 Gimli, and I remember 1966 when there was water
3 three blocks, I guess three, maybe even close to
4 four blocks into town at some points from the high
5 lake level. I think that particular time I
6 remember, I believe was the highest ever on Lake
7 Winnipeg, somewhere up around about 719.

8 Anybody else? Sir?

9 MR. GREENWOOD: I just have a
10 question.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: You need to get the
12 mic.

13 MR. GREENWOOD: My name is Ron
14 Greenwood and I do have a presentation for this
15 evening scheduled. Just your last remarks there,
16 that high water level in Gimli, was that a wind
17 related event or was that a natural high water
18 level?

19 THE CHAIRMAN: You know, I think it
20 was probably both, but I don't recall
21 specifically.

22 MR. GREENWOOD: Because I notice in
23 some of the publications, like the wind related
24 has been as high as three feet above the water
25 level. So, I mean, if it is a wind related event,

1 regulation has got really nothing to do with it,
2 other than keeping the lake high. Anyway, I will
3 talk to you later.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: I think you are right,
5 I believe that that 1966 flood was a combination
6 of both. I think without the wind it was close to
7 719, and with the wind it was over 721 or
8 something, I think, somewhere in that area. But I
9 do recall flood waters right into town.

10 Mind you, in 2010, that October 2010
11 weather bomb that hit the lake, there was flooding
12 about the same distance into the Town of Gimli,
13 about three odd blocks into town. That was mostly
14 wind, I mean, that was an exceptional storm.

15 Anybody else have anything to say?
16 Nothing, we have covered it all?

17 Well, I mean, we are here in the
18 afternoon session until about 5:00 o'clock, we
19 will be back again at 6:30 till 8:00 this evening.
20 We have Mr. Greenwood and at least two or three
21 others who have already indicated to us they wish
22 to make a presentation this evening.

23 If nobody has anything to say right
24 now, we are not going to leave, we will be here
25 and we will sort of stand down, and if anybody

1 wishes to say anything -- yes?

2 MS. VAL BURCH: Just a question to
3 start with, before we end, and maybe give us a
4 little think time.

5 What about the area around where the
6 dams are, what is the damage, environmental
7 damage, residential damage? You referred to
8 recreational and archeological, but when I look at
9 some of those pictures that you have on your site,
10 or that Manitoba Hydro has on its site, it seems
11 to be such a huge devastation. I know that the
12 First Nations communities have signed on, but I
13 don't know if they are getting, well, I don't know
14 to what extent that -- it looks so bad and has
15 sounded so bad over time is certainly true, or how
16 extensive the actual area around those stations
17 are? Because if I was a person, even though they
18 are small numbers of people living up there, if I
19 was a person going through some of that, that I
20 see in the pictures and that on the presentations,
21 I would be really majorly concerned, even though
22 there might be some benefits to the First Nations
23 that are there.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, I think that it
25 is accepted that there was significant amount of

1 damage done downstream of the Lake Winnipeg
2 Regulations, which are located at the Jenpeg
3 Generating Station just north of Lake Winnipeg.
4 On this banner closest to me, sort of right in the
5 middle of the page, there is a big red square with
6 a blue dot. That's where Jenpeg is. Downstream,
7 including the communities of Cross Lake, Split
8 Lake and York Landing, there was a lot of
9 ecological damage, particularly at Cross Lake. It
10 changed the water patterns, and particularly at
11 different times, water was high at different times
12 of the year than normal. They had problems with
13 ice levels being different and having what they
14 call hanging ice, basically ice with no water
15 underneath. It is okay as long as the ice is
16 solid, but if you go across it on foot or on
17 Skidoo when it is not so solid, you can have some
18 serious damage. Cross Lake, in particular, I
19 think is still trying to recover from a lot of the
20 damage done in their area. It affected a lot of
21 aspects of their life.

22 In 1977, five northern First Nations,
23 four of them along the Nelson River and one of
24 them at Nelson House on the Burntwood River,
25 signed the Northern Flood Agreement, which was

1 designed to compensate and mitigate for some of
2 those damages. And that's still being
3 implemented. I mean, there is still a lot of work
4 to be done to overcome some of the damage.

5 Around the bigger generating stations
6 themselves, at Kettle there is a large forebay
7 that caused a lot of flooding. And it was built
8 in the late '60s, early '70s, and there was a very
9 different environmental thinking at the time. And
10 at Kettle they didn't clear the forebay of trees
11 that got flooded. So for many, many, many years
12 afterwards, trees would sort of pop up and float
13 down. That poses a danger for people who are
14 fishing, either for pleasure, or commercially, or
15 for subsistence.

16 On subsequent stations at Long Spruce
17 and Limestone, although there wasn't as much
18 flooding, they did clear all of that bush
19 beforehand so that you wouldn't have those
20 problems. So there has been -- there has been a
21 significant amount of environmental damage.

22 When those projects were built, it was
23 a different time, people had really just started
24 to become sort of generally publicly concerned
25 about the environment.

1 And you know, to say something
2 positive about Manitoba Hydro, they have been
3 trying to mitigate and overcome some of that
4 damage for many years, but there is still a long
5 way to go.

6 MS. VAL BURCH: And then since a
7 number of people use that water as their main
8 water supply, what is the quality of the water
9 that's now in the northern areas, compared to
10 perhaps what it was back before regulation?

11 THE CHAIRMAN: I can't tell you
12 scientifically. I know that people, other people
13 do know that, but I don't have that information in
14 front of me, or I'm not aware of it. But local
15 people have told us, in many different
16 communities, that whereas they used to be able to
17 take the water directly out of the river to drink
18 and use, they can't now. All of those communities
19 now have water treatment plants. So, it has
20 affected water quality. How much, I don't know.

21 MS. VAL BURCH: Did Hydro share in
22 those water treatment plants?

23 THE CHAIRMAN: I can't tell you for
24 certain, but I suspect that they played a role.

25 MS. VAL BURCH: And you talked about a

1 surge of water coming through at certain times,
2 that was the terminology. Surge to me seems to
3 come very quickly with, again, carrying a lot of
4 debris and things with it, if the water is coming
5 through that fast, that quickly, to regulate.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: I think initially there
7 were concerns over surges of water. I think that,
8 you know, with experience -- also in about 1990,
9 near Cross Lake, Manitoba Hydro built a weir which
10 slowed down -- slowed down the movement of water,
11 but also allowed it to build up. Because with
12 blocking off the Nelson at Jenpeg, that meant that
13 there was less water downstream at Cross Lake.
14 But when they put the weir in, it held more water
15 and it brought it back close to natural.

16 I believe, and this again I can't tell
17 you scientifically, but what we have heard
18 anecdotally, there are times when Manitoba Hydro
19 releases water, particularly in winter, on top of
20 frozen ice when they get a bit of a surge and it
21 messes up the ice. How much that still happens, I
22 don't know. Whether that has been addressed
23 successfully or not, I can't tell you. There will
24 be an opportunity when we have our Winnipeg
25 hearings to ask questions of Manitoba Hydro of

1 that nature.

2 MS. VAL BURCH: And if we have all of
3 this power generated up north, how much is
4 actually available to the people that live there?
5 In other words, do they get -- because the lines
6 presumably would have a longer distance and less
7 usage, as a total usage for whatever line is put
8 in to those communities, do they get some kind of
9 subsidy or reduced rate? One would hope so,
10 but...

11 THE CHAIRMAN: I don't believe that
12 they get a reduced rate. I believe that they are
13 charged the same rate as all Manitobans. But
14 virtually -- I shouldn't say virtually all -- most
15 of the First Nations communities do have land line
16 power now. For a number of years there were many
17 communities that had just diesel generation,
18 which, one, is expensive, two, it is difficult to
19 get the diesel fuel in, it had to come in on
20 winter roads. But most of the communities now
21 have land lines. I'm not sure about the two or
22 three very far north communities, Tadoule Lake and
23 Lac Brochet, I'm not certain whether they have
24 land lines or not, but most of the others do. I
25 think Shamattawa might still be without a land

1 line, because when they appeared before us at
2 Keeyask, they told us they are only about 100K
3 from Gillam but they don't have a land line yet.

4 Behind you, Val? Introduce yourself
5 and then say whatever you like.

6 MR. TOM FARRELL: I'm Tom Farrell,
7 former mayor of Victoria Beach, and way before
8 that the Mayor of Thompson.

9 Just one thing, Mr. Chairman, am I
10 correct, it was probably the Kelsey power dam that
11 did the real damage to Cross Lake. It became --
12 Cross Lake got caught in the forebay and Kelsey
13 went in, in the late '50s to power Thompson. But
14 going forward, I think Hydro has probably helped
15 Lake Winnipeg when it is in normal state of flow
16 by controlling it. But the problem is, we are in
17 a time of very significant climate change, and I
18 think the request for a forever licence is just
19 not going to sit, it is just not that -- I don't
20 think that's a good thing to be doing. I think it
21 needs to be licensed, I think we need to find some
22 way to probably look at -- real damage that's
23 occurred along the shorelines in the south basin
24 have occurred because the storms have hit at a
25 time when we have had significant water.

1 Now, Manitoba Hydro did not cause the
2 flows coming into Lake Winnipeg from the whole
3 catch basin. It is climatic. But I think
4 maintaining it very close to 715 just adds to the
5 problem when we have something like the weather
6 bomb of October 2010.

7 There is also from many of us, an
8 expectation that Manitoba Hydro should be
9 participating with the Government of Manitoba and
10 the municipalities to do remedial work, to prevent
11 the significant damages that have occurred along
12 the shorelines. Here at Grand Beach there was
13 significant damage done to the boardwalk and along
14 the park area in that storm of late October 2010.
15 Victoria Beach had -- major losses along the
16 shorelines contributed to a significant number of
17 other social issues, but those are just battles
18 between cottagers. But I think there is some, I
19 know Victoria Beach has spent three quarters of a
20 million dollars on an engineering study, three
21 quarters of a million dollars that it could ill
22 afford, to get the best advice they could on what
23 might be put in place. They are looking to the
24 Manitoba Government to assist with that. I think
25 Hydro has a role to play there. Because using

1 Lake Winnipeg as basically a storage basin should
2 have some cost attached to it. And I think there
3 is a role for Hydro to play in assisting with the
4 mitigation of some of the very serious effects of
5 storms when the water level is very high.

6 I believe that we need to look at,
7 first, the terms of the licence, and secondly, a
8 greater involvement on the part of Hydro in their
9 mitigations.

10 Along the Winnipeg River, for
11 instance, the old Winnipeg Hydro system, they
12 looked after the whole, if there was any erosion
13 along there, there was riprap put in along the
14 river to try and protect those properties. That
15 isn't the case with Manitoba Hydro.

16 I took my council to Hydro in late
17 '70s, when I was still the mayor, and we almost
18 had a sit-in, because we wanted the board to
19 direct them to do riprap. It was, I think our
20 sitting in their lobby was worthwhile for a few
21 hours, because they did riprap the banks of the
22 Burntwood when they were diverting the Churchill
23 River through Rat River. And I think that, not
24 necessarily riprap in an area, but participating
25 in some of the protection would be a very, very

1 valuable tool.

2 And I know that the argument will be
3 that they pay their water rental rates and those
4 sorts of things through the Province, but I really
5 believe protecting the shorelines should be part
6 of the cost of doing business. And Manitoba Hydro
7 is doing business, the processes they are putting
8 in place -- which I don't disagree with, I think
9 that we in Manitoba are very lucky to have
10 Manitoba Hydro and to have it as a Crown Corp that
11 is the sole generator of electricity.

12 I'm sorry, I'm usually loud enough.
13 Manitoba has a great benefit in having one
14 generator of power in the province, and I don't
15 think we want to lose that. But I think we also
16 would like to see a little more participation in
17 protecting from some of the effects of the things
18 that Hydro is doing. Thank you.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

20 Just one thing, Tom, you talked about
21 a licence for all time, this licence isn't for all
22 time.

23 MR. TOM FARRELL: 50 years.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, it would be a
25 total of 50 years, 50 years from when they first

1 got the licence in 1976. So the final licence
2 that they may or may not receive later this year
3 will only be good until 2026. And then in about
4 2020 or the early 2020s, they have to apply for
5 another 50-year licence.

6 MR. TOM FARRELL: That is good to
7 know. I would think ten years is probably the
8 longest horizon I would like to see a licence go
9 for. And that's really the concern that I have
10 with the forever licence.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, this one will
12 only be for about 11, or the final part of it will
13 only be for 11. They have already had 39 years of
14 interim. It is possible, though, that when they
15 apply for and may receive a second licence in
16 2026, that that may well be for 50 years.

17 MR. TOM FARRELL: That will be
18 probably well beyond my time on this planet,
19 but...

20 MS. VAL BURCH: It is Val Burch once
21 again. I wanted to comment, or suggest, or
22 propose I guess, I'm looking for the right word,
23 that something be done or put into place to make a
24 cyclical kind of change for the water. And I've
25 heard a bit about this, I don't know a lot about

1 it, I don't know if that's five years or seven
2 years or ten years. But there are certain
3 endangered plants and species of water life, I'm
4 not sure exactly what all of those are. I know
5 some of the orchids in our own areas and around
6 Brokenhead are some of them, but there are
7 certainly other things. I have heard something
8 about the brushes in certain areas and so on that
9 are being endangered, not just not existing as
10 well as they used to, but actually endangered of
11 actually disappearing altogether. And that
12 perhaps a cyclical, and a shorter cyclical cycle
13 to match the life-cycle of some of the plants and
14 smaller animals, fauna or cell level of things
15 should be investigated, should be promoted, should
16 be part of our looking after the lake or
17 everything around it. Because, again, what I'm
18 hearing and being told is that is related to the
19 high continuous level, and that the natural cycle
20 of the animals and plants and things would be
21 cyclical and, therefore, the water regulation
22 should also be cyclical.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Are you suggesting that
24 every once in a while, the level be drawn down
25 significantly?

1 MS. VAL BURCH: Yes.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you.

3 MR. TOM FARRELL: I'm beginning to
4 feel like a debate here. That was one point -- by
5 the way, I tried to file all of this, it was a
6 wonderful lady that I was in touch with in your
7 offices who was going to line it up.

8 Unfortunately, the technology failed, it just
9 wouldn't accept anything I was sending to you.

10 That point regarding the need to look
11 after the marshes I think is a major one. There
12 has been some work with Ducks Unlimited and the
13 two universities, in Winnipeg, Dr. Goldsborough --
14 now I have his name wrong --

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Goldsborough.

16 MR. TOM FARRELL: -- has done a fair
17 amount of work with the Netley Marsh and that
18 whole area. And I think it is one that was
19 probably not, in the whole scheme of things, a
20 terribly expensive gating process that could allow
21 a draw down in that marsh to actually allow it to
22 regenerate. Now, how expensive it would be, I'm
23 not an engineer so I wouldn't even skate out on
24 that. But in the whole scheme of things, it is
25 probably a couple of million dollars, and it could

1 provide for the regeneration of the marshes. And
2 that's been one of the things, with high water,
3 that has been significantly detrimental to
4 wildlife, to fish production, to a whole lot of
5 things. So that's one that I would like to see
6 them, as they extend their licensing, be more
7 involved in. Thank you.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: I can tell you, I can
9 tell you that the Commission has contracted with
10 Dr. Goldsborough to do a paper for us. When it is
11 finalized, which will be fairly soon -- it has
12 already been posted on our website. And I believe
13 Dr. Goldsborough will be appearing at a session in
14 Winnipeg in March.

15 Anybody else have anything to add?
16 Well, we will just take a short break, and if at
17 anytime anybody thinks of anything they want to
18 add or want to say something, just let us know and
19 we will reconvene immediately. And we will be
20 breaking from 5:00 until 6:30 so that we can go
21 for supper, and we will be back here for an hour,
22 an hour and a half after supper.

23 (Recessed at 4:30 and reconvened at
24 6:30 p.m.)

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Good evening, welcome.

1 My name is Terry Sargeant, I'm the chair of the
2 Manitoba Clean Environment Commission, as well as
3 the chair of the panel conducting this particular
4 review. With me on this panel are Edwin Yee, Neil
5 Harden and Bev Suek.

6 Now, we were asked a few years ago by
7 the Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship
8 to hold hearings in areas throughout the province,
9 or certainly around Lake Winnipeg, around both the
10 north and south basins of Lake Winnipeg, to give
11 people an opportunity to share their stories and
12 their concerns about Lake Winnipeg Regulation,
13 which has been controlled by Manitoba Hydro, the
14 regulation has been undertaken by Manitoba Hydro
15 for a bit over 40 years now.

16 So we are here to hear from as many of
17 you in the audience as wish to share your stories
18 or concerns. What we would like to hear from you,
19 first, we want to hear your name, who you are, and
20 then just tell us how Lake Winnipeg Regulation may
21 have impacted on you, or on your community. You
22 can tell us what you think should be done or what
23 you think we should recommend to the Minister when
24 we report to him, and just really any thoughts you
25 might have about the impacts of Lake Winnipeg

1 Regulation.

2 We haven't been asked to look at any
3 other parts of the Manitoba Hydro system, even
4 though Lake Winnipeg Regulation is a significant
5 part of it. So anything else outside of Lake
6 Winnipeg Regulation is out of our scope, or out of
7 our terms of reference.

8 If any of you have thoughts that you
9 wish to share, but don't want to do it in a public
10 setting or aren't ready to do it tonight, you can
11 submit a written submission. That need not be
12 anything more than just a letter or even an email
13 to us. Our address, our email address is
14 available on our website.

15 Before we turn to public
16 presentations, I'm going to ask Dale Hutchison
17 from Manitoba Hydro to give us a quick overview of
18 these boards that you see on the side, which
19 basically explain what Lake Winnipeg Regulation is
20 all about. Dale?

21 MR. HUTCHISON: Thank you,
22 Commissioner. I am Dale Hutchison from Manitoba
23 Hydro, I have been working with them for 15 years
24 to understand our impacts on the waterways and the
25 people that we share them with. I'm going to talk

1 about the Manitoba Hydro system, Lake Winnipeg and
2 our Lake Winnipeg Regulation project.

3 So you can imagine, a huge area flows
4 into Lake Winnipeg, it is actually a million
5 square kilometres. And we have 15 generating
6 stations that take advantage of the water that
7 flows through the province. These are shown by
8 the blue dots on the map. We have small, medium
9 and large. And this shows how much electricity
10 they can produce. So we have got six small
11 stations on the Winnipeg River, a medium sized
12 generating station on Saskatchewan River at Grand
13 Rapids, and also river flows into Hudson Bay. And
14 on the west branch of the Nelson River, you have a
15 small generating station at Jenpeg. So north of
16 the Nelson is the Churchill River, it flows like
17 this also into Hudson Bay. Rather than building
18 generating stations on this far northern river,
19 instead its waters were diverted into the Nelson
20 through what is called the Churchill River
21 Diversion project, where they meet up with the
22 Nelson River water at Split Lake. Wuskwatim is
23 the newest generating station, it is on this
24 Churchill River Diversion route. And the benefit
25 of doing this project is that from Split Lake

1 downstream, the Nelson has the benefit of two
2 rivers.

3 You can see that our largest
4 generating stations, with the largest blue dots,
5 are on this stretch of river, Kettle, Long Spruce
6 and Limestone. So these three stations alone
7 produce 70 per cent all electricity in Manitoba.

8 Keeyask is a station that is currently
9 being built right now, actually, on this stretch
10 of river downstream of Split Lake. To get the
11 electricity down to the south, there is a thousand
12 kilometre bipole line, and we have also got a
13 third bipole line that's currently being built.

14 From the converter station near
15 Winnipeg, there are 100,000 kilometres of
16 distribution lines to take power to homes and
17 businesses throughout Winnipeg -- or Manitoba.

18 We can also produce electricity from
19 natural gas at generating stations in Brandon and
20 Selkirk, and in an emergency we can use coal at
21 our station in Selkirk. We can also use wind
22 energy from wind farms in St. Leon and St. Joseph.

23 I will talk a little bit about Lake
24 Winnipeg. It is the tenth largest freshwater lake
25 in the world. There are more than a dozen rivers

1 that flow into Lake Winnipeg. There is one
2 natural outflow, that's the Nelson River. This
3 can make the lake prone to flooding, because the
4 Nelson River is very wide but it is also quite
5 shallow, so in the winter ice can block the flow
6 of water out of the lake which causes flooding.
7 And this has caused problems for people living
8 around the lake, to the point where highways were
9 closed, farmers couldn't get their crops in, or
10 homes and cottages were damaged.

11 These are Winnipeg Free Press
12 headlines and photos showing some flooding events
13 that happened in years like 1927, 1950, 1954,
14 1955, 1966, 1968, 1969, 1970. All of this
15 recurrent flooding, people put a lot of pressure
16 on government to do something about it. At the
17 same time the demand for electricity was growing
18 in the province. And so in 1970, the Premier of
19 Manitoba announced plans to proceed with Lake
20 Winnipeg Regulation in order to help with flood
21 relief on Lake Winnipeg and to help with power
22 production on the Nelson River.

23 So before we could build this project
24 we had to, we had to get a licence similar to if
25 you are going to build a house, you need a

1 building permit. Under the Water Power Act this
2 initial licence is called an interim licence.

3 So we applied for that, 2010. That
4 licence is good from 50 years from the date of
5 construction. So we completed construction on LWR
6 in 1976. So this final licence that we have asked
7 for will be only good for another 11 years. So in
8 2026 or before then, we will have to apply for
9 another licence.

10 Now, LWR involved building -- I'm
11 using the word LWR, it is Lake Winnipeg
12 Regulation, but I say it a lot, so it saves some
13 time -- it involved digging a second outlet for
14 Lake Winnipeg, and two other channels, to get more
15 water out of Lake Winnipeg. Now, of course, if
16 you just dug these channels alone you would drain
17 the lake. So there was a control structure built
18 at Jenpeg on the west branch of the Nelson River
19 to control the outflow of water from Lake
20 Winnipeg -- I lost my train of thought. Actually
21 over here -- I got it again.

22 If all of these rivers are represented
23 by the water drop under the faucet, the basin
24 represents Lake Winnipeg, and this drain here
25 represents the natural Nelson River channel, this

1 river. So you can see the water drop under the
2 drain is actually quite a bit smaller than the
3 water drop under the faucet. What this represents
4 is that during flood times more water enters the
5 lake than can leave it, which means the lake level
6 rises and the lake floods. You can see in this
7 lower diagram, there is a second drain, and this
8 drain is actually half the size of the natural
9 outlet, and this is the Lake Winnipeg Regulation
10 channel. You can still see, though, that these
11 two water droplets under the drains are still
12 smaller than the water droplet representing all of
13 the rivers. So even with LWR, during floods more
14 water will enter the lake than can leave it, so
15 the lake will still flood only it won't -- the
16 water level won't get quite as high and the lake
17 won't flood as long.

18 Just -- I have to run through this a
19 little quicker than I normally would, but this is
20 a graph that demonstrates how Lake Winnipeg
21 Regulation has reduced flooding on Lake Winnipeg.
22 It compares what the water level has been over the
23 last 40 years with LWR, to what it would have been
24 if LWR did not exist. And what it shows, in the
25 last four major flood years, 1997, 2005, 2011 and

1 last year, 2014, that the lake would have gotten
2 about two feet higher and the flood would have
3 lasted much longer. So the information on this
4 graph -- and you can come see me at the end of the
5 meeting if you want to talk more -- but it is
6 demonstrating that this project is reducing
7 flooding on Lake Winnipeg, which was one of the
8 main goals when it was first developed.

9 Downstream of Lake Winnipeg there are
10 20,000 people that live along the Nelson River.
11 Land and water are extremely important to their
12 identity and livelihoods. And all Manitobans
13 benefit by having reliable low cost electricity,
14 and people around Lake Winnipeg benefit by having
15 the flood relief provided by this LWR project.
16 However, people downstream have suffered by having
17 more water flow out of the lake during the winter
18 and during time of flood.

19 Normally a natural river system, over
20 the course of the winter lake levels and river
21 flows decrease. However, with Lake Winnipeg
22 Regulation, water flows are much higher in the
23 winter, 50 per cent higher than they would have
24 been if this project wasn't around. This
25 additional water causes impacts on the waterways

1 downstream, and makes travel on them more
2 dangerous. Also, it negatively affects aquatic
3 mammals like beaver, mink, muskrat and otter.

4 So by working together, in Cree this
5 is called witasosketowin, with the people who live
6 and work along the Nelson, Manitoba Hydro is
7 addressing these impacts through agreements and
8 other arrangements with First Nations and
9 communities on the Nelson River, through projects
10 like the Cross Lake Weir, through programs for
11 access and navigation, resource harvesting,
12 recreation, archaeology and heritage resources,
13 like all of the photos that are shown here.
14 That's the abridged version.

15 So I hope you have a productive
16 meeting with the Commission, and Murray and I
17 would be pleased to talk with you after.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Dale.

19 Now it is your turn. Any of you wish
20 to make a presentation over the next hour, hour
21 and a half, you will have that opportunity. Just
22 one thing, we do have a hand-held microphone.
23 Because we are recording this, if you want to make
24 a presentation or ask questions, I will ask you to
25 use the microphone. We are required by law to

1 record these. Verbatim transcripts will be on our
2 website within two or three days of tonight's
3 session.

4 So we have three people who have
5 indicated prior to today that they wish to make
6 presentations. That's Ron Greenwood, Julian
7 Gorchynski and Bruce Morrison. So I will take
8 those three first, and then we will turn to
9 anybody else who wishes to speak. So
10 Mr. Greenwood?

11 MR. GREENWOOD: I'm sorry, I'm not
12 really accustomed to public speaking and it is
13 stressful for me. And I'm just getting over the
14 tail end of a cold, so I'm praying I don't have a
15 coughing fit, so I'm going to apologize in
16 advance.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: If you feel more
18 comfortable sitting down, that's fine.

19 MR. GREENWOOD: This is fine, I will
20 get more water if I need it.

21 I thought perhaps Greg Selinger might
22 be here to apologize. Within the last week he has
23 been at the north end of the lake making apologies
24 for Manitoba Hydro for the damage to the
25 environment they have done up there. Speaking of

1 Greg Selinger, on the news last week I noticed
2 that he was making his pitch to UNESCO for the
3 property on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. And
4 here is a quote that I picked up off the TV:

5 "We have put Manitoba on the map in
6 terms of ecological responsibility."

7 I will say that again:

8 "We have put Manitoba on the map in
9 terms of ecological responsibility."

10 Like, I mean, doesn't Greg Selinger
11 have any concept of reality? Has nobody told him
12 about Lake Winnipeg?

13 Anyway, I will get right down to the
14 meat here, I will get gonged here soon.

15 Anyway, we know that Playboy Magazine
16 ranked Grand Beach as one of the top ten beaches
17 in North America. That was in the '60s. And in
18 1968, I would have been 20 years old, so I have a
19 very clear recollection of what a fantastic beach
20 it really was. It was wonderful. The beach was
21 wide, the sand was clean and white and the water
22 was clean. When we camped, we would wash in the
23 lake. Now you have to wash when you come out of
24 the lake. Now the beach is narrow, the sand is
25 brown and trending towards mud, and the e. coli

1 are thriving. It is very sad that the younger
2 generation did not have an opportunity to see
3 Grand Beach as it was before Manitoba Hydro turned
4 the lake into the third largest hydro reservoir in
5 the world. Can you imagine how valuable property
6 here would be, and how many businesses would be in
7 the area if Hydro regulation had not destroyed the
8 lake? Tourism around the lake would be worth
9 hundreds of millions of dollars today.

10 Now, we have owned 238 feet of lake
11 frontage near Balsam Bay since 1971, so we do have
12 on-site experience. In the '60s and the early
13 '70s, we used to canoe in the Beaconia marsh and I
14 used to hunt ducks there in the fall. The marsh
15 was teeming with ducks and other birds from spring
16 until freeze up. I knew a fellow from Beaconia
17 who trapped numerous muskrats in the marsh. Last
18 year we spent an afternoon kayaking in the marsh.
19 We did not see one duck, not one duck in the whole
20 marsh. It has got to be a thousand acres there.
21 The marsh now actually stinks. It is dead. It is
22 a sewer hole in there. The muskrats are gone, all
23 killed by higher than natural winter lake levels.

24 And the marsh has been destroyed by
25 the continuous high water caused by Lake Winnipeg

1 Regulation. That's a given, that's a fact, the
2 science is there.

3 My next topic is Manitoba Hydro versus
4 clean electricity. At one time Minnesota and
5 Wisconsin power utilities were attracted to
6 Manitoba hydroelectricity because it was
7 considered clean energy. That's no longer the
8 case. Aboriginal groups from Manitoba have held
9 protests in Minneapolis, St. Paul, to inform
10 Americans on how Hydro mistreats the people and
11 their traditional lands and fishing grounds in
12 order to produce electricity. U.S. environmental
13 activists have asked Minnesota and Wisconsin
14 utilities not to buy any hydro power produced from
15 the Lake Winnipeg reservoir. They are well aware
16 of the environmental destruction that Lake
17 Winnipeg Regulation has caused.

18 So, Manitoba sells power to U.S.
19 consumers below the cost of production, while we
20 watch the lake and the beaches decline at an
21 accelerated rate. As we speak, Manitoba Hydro is
22 bullying farmers off some of the most productive
23 land in the whole country in order to run a
24 transmission line. And they don't even have
25 customers for the electricity. How green is that?

1 I will skip on to my next topic, the
2 715 ASL level. Manitoba Hydro has had the
3 authority to use Lake Winnipeg as a hydro
4 reservoir up to a maximum level of 715 feet ASL.
5 So why is the wind adjusted level of the lake well
6 above that limit time and time again? In 2011 the
7 lake was well above 715 feet for the whole entire
8 season. Manitoba Hydro's attitude was who cares?

9 Manitoba Hydro should not be granted a
10 licence to regulate Lake Winnipeg, when they do
11 not have the capability to comply with the terms
12 of the licence. If I do not comply with terms of
13 any licences that I hold, I receive a penalty.

14 Let's get on to lowering the maximum
15 regulated level. In 1999 Manitoba Hydro issued a
16 statement saying that if they were required to
17 lower the maximum storage level one foot, to
18 714 feet ASL, it would cost them \$300 million.
19 Well, I think they should lower it \$600 million in
20 order to save the lake.

21 In that same statement, Hydro
22 expressed concern that drawing down the lake one
23 foot might cause people living downstream of the
24 control structure to be flooded. This was the
25 first time Hydro ever expressed any concern over

1 flooding anybody out. Just ask the Aboriginal
2 people who are still fighting for compensation
3 more than 40 years later. And besides, I'm sure
4 there is lots of people in that Hydro palace on
5 Portage Avenue who are smart enough to know that
6 you don't have to let all of the water out in one
7 day.

8 Let's talk about unsafe lake water due
9 to toxins. For a considerable portion of the
10 summer, it is not safe to enter the lake due to
11 e. coli and algae toxin related threats. Hundred
12 pound dogs have died after entering the lake. If
13 the water in the lake can kill a large dog, it
14 certainly can put a 50-pound child at extreme
15 risk, and the risk to humans is escalating.

16 Hope I don't run out of time here.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: No, no, you won't.

18 MR. GREENWOOD: Let's talk about
19 nitrification of the lake. For anybody who
20 doesn't know, nitrification is a condition caused
21 by an overabundance of nutrients in the lake,
22 which result in harmful algae blooms. There was a
23 major study of Lake Winnipeg done in 1969, one
24 year before Hydro received its first interim
25 license to regulate the lake. At that time

1 scientists from the University of Manitoba
2 determined that 75 per cent of nutrients -- 75 per
3 cent of nutrients entering the lake were
4 discharged into the Nelson River system at the
5 north end. And now because Manitoba Hydro has the
6 outlet of the lake bunged up, only 25 per cent of
7 nutrients entering the lake this year are
8 discharged. In other words, Lake Winnipeg
9 Regulation has caused 75 per cent more nutrients
10 to remain in the lake each year. And you don't
11 have to be a red seal plumber to know that every
12 toilet needs a good flush once in a while.

13 Lake Winnipeg Regulation has destroyed
14 the marshes around the lake, thus eliminating the
15 nutrient buffering capacity of the wetlands.
16 Result, more nutrients in the lake.

17 I want to talk about the year 1974.
18 In 1974 we had all time high water levels on Lake
19 Winnipeg, even though we had below normal
20 precipitation. We lost a lot of property through
21 erosion. People were complaining that Hydro
22 caused the high water because they were damming
23 the lake. Hydro lied and they said, no, it is not
24 us, it is just mother nature, as they have done
25 many times since. Well, I flew up to the north

1 end of the lake and I looked all around. I saw
2 with my own eyes in 1974 the dam holding the lake
3 back. If it wasn't Hydro's dam, whose was it?

4 Of course, a year or so later Hydro
5 was forced to admit that they had regulated the
6 lake to a high level in order to facilitate
7 construction. But, no apologies. Hydro's
8 attitude, so what?

9 Now I go to the relationship between
10 the Manitoba Government and Manitoba Hydro. We
11 can't rely on the Provincial Government to do
12 anything for the lake. The Provincial Government
13 is using Manitoba Hydro as a cash cow, and we know
14 they are hopelessly in debt.

15 When it comes to Lake Winnipeg
16 Regulation, the attitude of the Provincial
17 Government and Manitoba Hydro are one and the
18 same, and I will give you an example of that. In
19 2011, Lake Winnipeg was regulated at a very high
20 level. In fact, on July 30th, the wind eliminated
21 level was 717 feet -- my friend Dale corrected me
22 on that, from Hydro there corrected me on that.
23 The actual level on July 30th, 2011, was
24 716.97 feet. So he made a liar out of me over .3
25 of a hundredth of a foot, which may be equivalent

1 to the thickness of a loonie. Anyway, thank you
2 for that.

3 The wind eliminated level was 716.97,
4 two feet above the licenced maximum. There had
5 been considerable erosion damage, particularly on
6 the west side of the south basin. By fall people
7 were very upset with Hydro, and the Provincial
8 Government agreed to hold a special meeting at
9 Gimli in mid November.

10 Christine Melnick, Minister of Water
11 Stewardship was going to be attending, and people
12 were looking forward to some straight answers. At
13 the meeting it became immediately apparent that
14 the Honourable Christine Melnick wasn't there to
15 represent the citizens, she was there solely to
16 defend Manitoba Hydro. And this is how she shut
17 the crowd up, she shut the crowd up with this
18 statement, and I will quote you, this is what she
19 said:

20 "The damage and erosion this year...,"
21 which was 2011,

22 "...was not caused by Lake Winnipeg
23 Regulation. The worst damage to the
24 shoreline ever was in 1974, and Hydro
25 did not even start regulating Lake

1 Winnipeg until 1976."

2 That was her trump card, and it worked, she shut
3 the crowd up. But there was a problem. The
4 problem, however, was her statement was not true.
5 Hydro received an interim licence to regulate Lake
6 Winnipeg in 1970, and the main cause of the high
7 water and damage in 1974 was a Hydro dam to
8 facilitate construction projects at the north end
9 of the lake.

10 So someone said to me, Christine
11 Melnick is an NDP minister and she wouldn't say
12 anything that's not true, and she wouldn't
13 willfully make misleading statements. Well, there
14 is a simple answer to that. This is the same
15 Honourable Christine Melnick that was kicked out
16 of the NDP Cabinet for lying to the Legislature.

17 We are here before the Clean
18 Environment Commission, so I want to discuss that
19 for a minute, then I'm done.

20 We know what the problems are. We
21 know Lake Winnipeg Regulation has caused most of
22 the problems. We know that in order to save the
23 lake, the Clean Environment Commission will have
24 to reduce the maximum operating level of the
25 reservoir. If Manitoba Hydro will not or cannot

1 comply with the terms of the licence, there must
2 be severe penalties involved. In 2013, Lake
3 Winnipeg was named the world's most threatened
4 lake by the Global Nature Fund. Well, let's think
5 about that for a minute, the most threatened lake
6 in the world. And it is only a few hundred metres
7 from where we are standing right now.

8 The Clean Environment Commission has
9 the opportunity and the obligation to act on
10 behalf of the lake and on behalf of all
11 Manitobans. And unless these hearings are a sham,
12 there will be significant changes made on how
13 Hydro operates the reservoir.

14 And nothing personal, gentleman and
15 lady, but the fact that all members of the Clean
16 Environment Commission have been appointed by the
17 NDP Government is somewhat troubling to me.

18 I won't thank you for listening
19 because I'm not sure you are listening. I'm done.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,
21 Mr. Greenwood. And I can assure you that we were
22 listening, I heard every one of your comments.

23 MR. GREENWOOD: I'm surprised I didn't
24 get gonged then.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: No, no, we are open, we

1 let anyone say what they like.

2 MR. GREENWOOD: I appreciate that.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Now, is Mr. Gorchynski
4 here?

5 MR. JULIAN GORCHYNSKI: Yes, I'm here.

6 Good evening. I'm pleased to be here.
7 I'm representing Grand Beach and Area Development
8 Corporation as a member, and I'm on the board of
9 directors of that organization. And secondly, I'm
10 a local realtor in the area and have been for the
11 last 21 years. And thirdly, I'm going to, I'm
12 also representing myself as an individual that
13 lives on the lake, on the shoreline of Lake
14 Winnipeg, and I would like to make some comments
15 in regards to the shoreline and the problems that
16 it has caused for property owners along Lake
17 Winnipeg.

18 So let me start in general, the issue
19 of Lake Winnipeg and how Manitoba Hydro keeps the
20 lake level artificially high is a concern to Grand
21 Beach and Area Development Corporation. The high
22 level causes untold damage of lakeshore erosion,
23 property loss and flood damage, natural beach
24 damages, lack of viable access to the lake for ice
25 fishing and summer boat launching. Threats on

1 spawning and breeding grounds of fish, birds, and
2 animals living in and along the lakeshore are a
3 concern to all. These issues create an insecure
4 economy that decreases property value, prevents
5 growth of business and local employment, a
6 negative impact on commercial fishing, and an
7 uncertain future for the area that relies on Lake
8 Winnipeg, especially Grand Beach and the
9 surrounding communities, for their livelihood.

10 I would just like to make a comment as
11 a realtor in the area, as I have been for the last
12 20 some odd years. Since the storm in 2011, we
13 have experienced some real, real difficulties in
14 terms of real estate and real estate values. I
15 will give you an example. I'm not going to bore
16 you to death, because I could have gone around and
17 got a book full of examples, but I'm going to give
18 you two personal examples of properties that are
19 on the lakeshore on Lake Winnipeg, that I sold in
20 2014. And this is the subject property sold in
21 2014; number 10 Ateah Drive, Traverse Bay, two
22 bedroom lakefront year round home with a detached
23 garage sold for \$160,000, should have sold for
24 \$250,000. You can see there that there is a drop
25 in value of \$110,000 on that property alone.

1 Subject property sold in 2014, 214 Grand Marais
2 Boulevard, Grand Marais, three bedroom lakefront
3 year round home with attached garage sold for
4 \$180,000, should have sold for \$330,000, a drop of
5 value of \$150,000.

6 The area of Grand Marais, Grand Beach,
7 that area is probably suffering a real downturn in
8 economy, and part of that is access to Lake
9 Winnipeg. We are not a Gimli, we would like to
10 be, we would like to have a breakwater, we would
11 like to have a marina, we would like people to be
12 able to come here and to enjoy the beach, which is
13 great, but there is no access to the lake. There
14 is one at Balsam Harbour, which is about ten miles
15 to the south of us here, and that's about it.
16 There is a ramp in the Grand Beach Provincial Park
17 that goes into the lagoon. You can get a boat
18 into the lagoon but you can't get it out into the
19 main lake. There is just no way. If the water is
20 at a low level, if we have south winds for several
21 days, there is just no way. You would be hung up
22 on sand bars. And if the water is high with north
23 winds, you can't get under the foot bridge that
24 goes across the channel in Grand Beach Provincial
25 Park.

1 So all in all, access to the lake is a
2 problem and it is hurting the economy of this
3 particular area. And it is a widespread area, as
4 you can well imagine, it is all the way from
5 Beaconia, all of the way to Victoria Beach,
6 Traverse Bay, and anywhere there is a shoreline.

7 Now, from a personal point of view, I
8 do own property on the shoreline. And since the
9 storm in 2011, I think, I have tried to restore
10 and save my property, and at the tune of about
11 230 yards of rock. And that is just the
12 beginning. It is a perpetual problem. And people
13 that live along the lake have lost virtually
14 millions of dollars in property value.

15 It has also affected the desirability
16 of people wanting to buy properties in this
17 particular area, because there is no access to the
18 lake. People nowadays have watercraft, they have
19 expensive sporting equipment, they would like to
20 use the lake for recreational purposes, but if you
21 can't get on it, they are moving elsewhere. So,
22 this particular area, as far as I can see, is
23 basically a disaster area, since the storm and
24 before. And businesses are having a very
25 difficult time to survive in this particular

1 community and elsewhere along the lake on this
2 side.

3 I won't bore you with anymore, but I
4 do have some handouts I can provide you with. So
5 I want to thank you for the opportunity to express
6 our concerns here in Grand Marais.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,
8 Mr. Gorchynski. And let me assure you, you didn't
9 bore us at all, we are not here to be bored, we
10 are here to hear stories, real stories from people
11 who are affected.

12 Bruce Morrison?

13 MR. BRUCE MORRISON: I have brought
14 copies of what I'm going to say here, I was told
15 to do that. Should I give them to someone?

16 Anyways, I'm Bruce Morrison from
17 Victoria Beach. I want to thank you for letting
18 me speak in regards to regulation of Lake
19 Winnipeg. As a long time cottager and now
20 permanent resident of Victoria Beach, and a past
21 councillor, I found the rules for regulating the
22 lake have a lot to be desired, and going forward I
23 would hope some changes will be made.

24 On talks with the Premier in the past,
25 on wanting changes on regulations, his comment

1 was, don't go there. Nice way to start a
2 conversation.

3 While I find there are two major
4 problems, and being a councillor for 12 years, you
5 get to know politics and you wonder if this will
6 ever go anywhere, but let's hope.

7 The present rules allow Hydro to
8 regulate the lake between 711 and 715 feet above
9 sea level. Although this would make sense at the
10 time that this was being set, the medium would be
11 713 feet, which sounds like the perfect height to
12 keep the lake. The shorelines then would be safer
13 from major damage when the lake does rise. Hydro
14 rarely keeps the lake any lower than 715, unless
15 in dry times when it drops naturally. It has
16 nothing to do with Hydro lowering it. Holding the
17 lake at 715 does not allow for any leeway between
18 high water and damage being done to the
19 shorelines, especially when winds raise the lake
20 even higher when prevailing wind is mostly coming
21 from the northwest.

22 The second problem I find is Hydro
23 when using Lake Winnipeg as a reservoir is not
24 responsible for the shoreline and the damage it
25 has caused by controlling the lake. They take

1 over the lake as their reservoir, and you would
2 think they would have a moral obligation to try to
3 keep the landowners living around the lake safe.
4 I know claims are made that without regulations,
5 the fluctuations between highs and lows would be
6 worse. But the many years of low water gave the
7 shore a better chance naturally to survive the
8 highs, which now it can not do. As you know, our
9 marshes are all dead.

10 Victoria Beach, which is mostly sand,
11 has areas that have eroded to the point where some
12 cottages are sitting precariously 25 feet above
13 the lake level on sand. Engineering studies have
14 been done on saving the shoreline in that area,
15 but without financial help that work will probably
16 never be done, and that tax base is going to slip
17 into the lake as the cost to do the work is too
18 prohibitive. Thank you.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,
20 Mr. Morrison.

21 Now, nobody else had indicated
22 beforehand that they wished to speak, so are there
23 any others in the audience who would like to share
24 your concerns, or stories, or tell us what you
25 think should be done? You don't need to be shy.

1 As you have seen, we don't bite.

2 MS. EVA BROWN: Hi, my name is Eva
3 Brown. My grandparents actually homesteaded in
4 Traverse Bay, Albert Beach area. When my great
5 grandfather came here, he had a road just along
6 the lakeshore. That road is now gone forever. I
7 was looking at the days, at the flood times in
8 Gimli, and they kind of coincide over here, but
9 the other part that they don't show is when the
10 lake was so low that you could walk out into it
11 500 yards and maybe still be up to your knees. We
12 don't have that anymore. Our little children
13 cannot go play in any of those beaches. It used
14 to be so much fun for my kids, and my kids are now
15 in their 40s, to go and play. That little girl
16 will never have that opportunity. We have no
17 beach. Victoria Beach was the same way. Yes,
18 there was high water, times with high water.
19 Albert Beach was the same. You know, we had times
20 where we could go out and enjoy the nice sand. We
21 don't have that anymore. We are stealing a
22 generation's fun.

23 And I know other people here that have
24 had exactly the same thing. Come to Grand Beach,
25 have a good time. Now the beach is from here to

1 that wall, where it used to be almost from here to
2 the highway. What happened to it?

3 Yes, it is great that it is high
4 water and you use it as a reservoir, and you are
5 keeping it at one specific level. If we have a
6 dry year, you are still keeping it at that high
7 level. You are not giving anything a chance to
8 regrow, and we need that. This is basically where
9 both -- my whole family homesteaded.

10 And I mean, I had a comment today;
11 what happened to Grand Marais? What happened to
12 all of the little restaurants that we had here?
13 Why does it look so derelict? Because people
14 don't want to come out here. 10, 15 years ago,
15 you couldn't get a place to park in Grand Beach.
16 Now we have businesses that are closing because
17 nobody is coming out here. That's the problem.

18 If the lake stays as high as it is, it
19 doesn't give us a chance for our tourism, and
20 that's what you are talking about, our tourism to
21 actually grow. We were talking today in our
22 office. We are one of the few offices, I think
23 there is 10 people in this town that have a
24 full-time job. That's disgusting. We can't even
25 attract business to come here during the winter

1 when it is off season. So, I mean, our little
2 economy here is really dying, and it is dying with
3 Lake Winnipeg. And that's all I really have to
4 say.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. Brown.
6 Anybody else?

7 MR. RYAN THOMPSON: If I may?

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly, please,
9 that's why we are here.

10 MR. RYAN THOMPSON: My name is Ryan
11 Thompson. In regards to a lot of the things that
12 have been spoken to tonight, I do quite a bit of
13 extensive traveling, actually, and I get to talk
14 to people from high positions down to the very
15 minimum. And they say, oh, what do you do, et
16 cetera, et cetera, and where are you living now?
17 I tell them. And they say, you moved there? And
18 I say yes. Why? It is a crazy place in the
19 world. Perception, however, really does bring out
20 the reality of human beings. And there is always
21 bad press in regards to the lake, with the toxins
22 that are being put in there. The other day in a
23 restaurant, there was a table of maybe 17-year old
24 girls sitting there, oh, Grand Beach, why would
25 you go there, it is all e. coli and nothing but

1 terrible, terrible algae there all of the time.
2 We wouldn't go there anymore. And unfortunately,
3 the perception is that it is a dirty lake now.
4 Granted, there has been some media that usually
5 gives some bad indications towards that. And
6 unfortunately, it does come back to Hydro's
7 involvement. I'm not trying to paint you guys as
8 good or bad, but these things have to be
9 challenged and have to be changed.

10 There has been a lot of good
11 information passed on this evening about the
12 realities and the perceptions of exactly this
13 lake. And if we are going to maintain this jewel
14 that it should be, we are really going to have to
15 have some serious discussions on the maintenance
16 and use of it for both Hydro and the maintenance
17 of this lake. We don't get put on the number one
18 endangered lake list by accident, especially from
19 30 years ago until now. It is a large change and
20 I'd really -- there is a lot of people that say,
21 ah, the good old days, the good old days. The
22 good old days are good, but there has been a lot
23 of changes between then to now. I would like to
24 look forward to the future of this lake as opposed
25 to what it once was like. And hopefully, with the

1 help of you, and I know that Hydro is not going to
2 go anywhere any time soon, responsibility and
3 corporate responsibility toward the people that
4 are supporting, literally, should really be a
5 foremost concern. And that's about everything
6 that I have to say with that. Thank you.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,
8 Mr. Thompson.

9 Anybody else have anything to add to
10 this conversation? Anybody else wish to share
11 some stories or thoughts? Yes, behind you Cathy?

12

13 MS. CHRISTINE STEWART: My name is
14 Christine Stewart and I'm a resident here as well.
15 And I just have a question to you. I came in a
16 bit late so I might have missed something. I am
17 just wondering where you go from here?

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, that's a good
19 question. I didn't specify any of that at the
20 outset. We are actually in week four of what we
21 anticipate will be about 12 weeks of hearings, I
22 think. So far we have been in Northern Manitoba
23 and sort of the upper middle Interlake. This week
24 we are in this -- well, we are here today,
25 Brokenhead tomorrow, Selkirk and Gimli later in

1 the week. Next week we are here back up this side
2 of the lake, Manigotagan, Black River and
3 Sagkeeng. And then we are back up north in Cross
4 Lake. And then we will have we think five weeks
5 of hearings in Winnipeg. And then we go back up
6 north to Norway House and perhaps Split Lake. So
7 we have got a lot of traveling over the next two
8 and a half months before we are finished just the
9 hearing part of it. Then we sit down and
10 deliberate, decide what we are going to report on
11 and what we are going to recommend, what kind of
12 conclusions we are going to come to. And then
13 after we have concluded that, we write up a report
14 with all of that in it. We deliver it to the
15 Minister, and the Minister takes it from there.

16 Our recommendations by law are not
17 obligations. The Minister doesn't have to accept
18 our recommendations. We advise the Minister.
19 However, the track record is, our track record is
20 that the Minister accepts most, if not all, of our
21 recommendations. And in fact, we have had a
22 couple of recommendations -- typically we make
23 both licensing recommendations and then
24 non-licensing recommendations. And the
25 non-licensing recommendations might be issues that

1 are outside of our terms of reference, but that we
2 think would help environmental concerns. The
3 current minister in recent years has accepted all
4 of our recommendations, both licensing and non
5 licensing. So I would anticipate that as long as
6 our recommendations are reasonable, even some of
7 them may be a little further fetched than the
8 terms of reference might indicate, that our
9 recommendations will be recommended, or will be
10 accepted.

11 Following that, you know, it can be
12 anywhere from months to years before stuff becomes
13 implemented. But that's where we are headed.
14 Does that answer your question, Ms. Stewart?

15 MS. CHRISTINE STEWART: Yes, it does.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: The other thing that I
17 typically close meetings with, although we are not
18 necessarily closing the meeting yet, is that what
19 you've said to us tonight, you will see something
20 in our report reflecting what we have heard here
21 today. You may not see all, or perhaps any of the
22 recommendations that you have made to us. I say
23 that everywhere we go. I would think that some of
24 the suggestions we heard today may well end up in
25 our report. But you will certainly see a report

1 on what we heard today.

2 Anybody else have anything to add?

3 Any more people wish to make statements or ask
4 questions?

5 Okay, we will give you one last
6 chance. Anybody else wish to add anything to this
7 discussion, or ask questions before we close it
8 down?

9 Maybe we will just, rather than close
10 it down immediately, we will wait five or ten
11 minutes. If anybody has any further thoughts --
12 yes, Cathy?

13 MS. LINDA GRIEVE: Hi, I'm Linda
14 Grieve and I also sit on the Grand Beach and Area
15 Development Corporation, along with Julian and a
16 few others in the room. I was able to sit in on
17 the preparatory meeting with the Brokenhead First
18 Nation as they were getting together their
19 synopsis of what they want to present tomorrow.
20 So I just want to highlight -- and I apologize for
21 being late, but I'm a commuter. So this was an
22 early meeting for us that commute. And I'm not
23 sure if anybody highlighted the issue of the
24 marshes and the shoreline damage as far as
25 vegetation, and the area where eggs for fish and

1 frogs and all of that are a concern. That's one
2 thing that they are really going to focus on
3 tomorrow night, and I think it's very important to
4 highlight that as well.

5 The other issue is the impact of
6 economic development and the impact of the heart
7 of the community, which are the kids. And Ryan's
8 family is probably one of the very few that have
9 young children here. And I think the lake has a
10 lot to do with that. So just the issue of dying
11 communities and dying areas around the lake. So I
12 just wanted to highlight that.

13 And the issue of commercial fishing is
14 something that was a big discussion with the
15 Brokenhead folks last weekend when I was able to
16 sit in on that meeting. And I'm not sure if there
17 is commercial fishermen here that have presented?
18 Okay. So that whole impact.

19 And as far as recommendations, I'm not
20 sure what is realistic and what is not. But I
21 think it was already stated, we can't do without
22 the Hydro that we know currently, but we certainly
23 need to look at alternatives, and the economic
24 impact of looking at those alternatives needs to
25 be considered in regenerating these communities,

1 as, for example, considering favoring the
2 communities that surround the lake for economic
3 and employment opportunities in whatever is going
4 to replace Hydro, or fixing, however you restore
5 the lakeshore line. Those employment
6 opportunities need to be provided as first choice
7 to the communities that surround the lake.

8 I think that's all I have to say.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. Grieve.
10 Any others?

11 MR. GLEN THOMAS: I would like to say
12 something.

13 Hi, I'm Glen Thomas, I'm a commercial
14 fishermen. I have commercial fished since I could
15 walk, and my father did and my grandparents did,
16 they have done that all along.

17 I own property along Lake Winnipeg.
18 I'm also -- I also am on the Balsam Bay Harbour
19 Authority. And on high water, our harbour,
20 permanent harbour has been underwater for the last
21 two years over 50 per cent. When the high water,
22 when the high water comes up, we have two feet,
23 two and a half feet on top of the permanent dock.
24 The permanent dock is protected by a water-break
25 that is put there by the Federal Government. And

1 when high water comes, you can't see that. It
2 hits -- it has cement protection on the north and
3 the west wall, and the waves, when it hits that it
4 comes right over the harbour. The boats that use
5 the harbour, when there is any high water, we have
6 to trailer our boats and take it out of there.
7 When the water was high in 2010, the floating
8 docks ended up in the Beaconia marsh. They
9 floated right off, ripped off. And there was
10 about six boats lost, along with their motors. So
11 if we have any more high water, like any higher
12 than it gets, that harbour will be totally
13 useless. And that's the only harbour on the east
14 side, in the south basin here, that you can access
15 on to Lake Winnipeg.

16 And I also own land on the lakeshore,
17 and when that land was surveyed we had 7.9 acres
18 there. Now, through erosion, bank erosion, I
19 might have 5 acres left.

20 And that's pretty well all I have to
21 say. Thank you.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Just a second,
23 Mr. Thomas, I have a question or two and I just
24 want to finish my notes here. You said it is
25 5 acres now, more or less?

1 MR. GLEN THOMAS: Yes.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: A couple of questions.

3 Do you fish out of Balsam Bay Harbour?

4 MR. GLEN THOMAS: Yes, I do.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: And when you say it is

6 two to two and a half feet above the permanent

7 pier, how long has it been like that?

8 MR. GLEN THOMAS: How long?

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, how many years

10 has it been going that high?

11 MR. GLEN THOMAS: Well, in the last

12 few years, the last -- well, this summer, every

13 time we get high water there, when it goes down

14 there is a ton of sand on top of the dock that we

15 have to get cleared off because vehicles will get

16 stuck on it. And we have done that six times this

17 year.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: But is that more than

19 normal? Has it been like that for a long time or

20 just in recent years?

21 MR. GLEN THOMAS: I would say just the

22 last -- well, this year was bad and last year was

23 bad. And before that there wasn't much of a

24 problem.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.

1 Thank you for those comments, Mr. Thomas.

2 Anybody else? Yes, sir?

3 MR. BRUCE MORRISON: I would just like
4 to add a few things. As people talk, you are
5 thinking a little more about things that are going
6 on.

7 They cut a channel from Lake Manitoba
8 through to Lake Winnipeg, and that also affected
9 the high level of our lake, which we don't seem to
10 bother with or talk about. I heard for the total
11 volume, it raised our lake by an inch. I think it
12 is probably a lot more. If it's the experts
13 telling us that, it is probably a foot. You can't
14 drop Lake Manitoba and only increase our lake by
15 an inch.

16 One maybe solution to all of this, if
17 we could get another exit out of the lake so that
18 we can dump more water out of here, as Hydro
19 showed us, we are not dumping out what we take in
20 at any point. Could that not be increased so we
21 do? Make everybody happy.

22 And why do they have to hold it at 715
23 all of the time? I have lived up in Victoria
24 Beach for a long time, built a cottage in 1969,
25 and I've never seen it like it has been in the

1 last 20 years. It is crazy. And it is only --
2 whether Hydro wants to believe it or not, all of
3 their little charts are beautiful up there, but
4 not one of them has any concerns about wave
5 height. That's water height. You add the
6 northwest wind to that sucker and you are talking
7 724, 725 water waves, even higher, pouring into
8 those beaches. If they were held at 713 even, we
9 would have stood a two foot chance of winning, you
10 know.

11 We had properties there in the fall of
12 2010, where we had the big bomb as they called it,
13 again, that's massive winds over a longer period
14 than three days, and that's where you have the
15 problems. We had places where their footings or
16 their floor levels were at 722, and they had to be
17 dyked. Over there the highest water I can see is
18 719, 718. Like, you have to get things in
19 perspective, all of this stuff.

20 And then the overall picture for the
21 whole of Manitoba, your problems are your
22 drainage. All of the farmers for years had
23 dugouts. Then the banks paid them to fill the
24 dugouts in so there was more land to develop and
25 seed. You need all of those dugouts back so that

1 water will be held back in all of those areas,
2 hold it back, and then once the reservoir fills,
3 it drains.

4 No one has taken the initiative, all
5 of our culverts and areas -- I know my
6 brother-in-law is in Melita, they have got 1,200
7 culverts they are going to fix up and make bigger
8 to drain the land faster. Where is all of that
9 water going to go? It is coming to us. They
10 should be staggered -- no one even knows about
11 these situations -- staggard culverts where every
12 culvert holds a bit of water back all the way down
13 the line. But little things like that help. No
14 one seems to bring these things up or want to talk
15 about it. Anyways, thank you.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you again,
17 Mr. Morrison. We are running out of time.
18 Anybody else? Mr. Gorchynski?

19 MR. JULIAN GORCHYNSKI: I think
20 Mr. Morrison had a very good point that since the
21 invention of the GPS and the farms becoming huge,
22 they are no longer the family quarter or
23 homestead, they are farmers that are farming close
24 to the township. And I know some of them, and I
25 think part of my family is amongst the guilty.

1 And that they -- if they see a tree out in the
2 farm out there, there's two farmers running at it
3 with an ax, making sure that it doesn't exist
4 anymore because it gets in the way of those
5 80-foot pieces of machinery that they tow behind
6 these huge tractors. Not only that, I have
7 personally seen farms that have drainage ditches
8 up to 14 feet deep draining the land. There isn't
9 a slough in site, because of all of these big high
10 powered equipment that they tow behind.

11 So, there is more to it than just Lake
12 Winnipeg. It is the watershed that comes in from
13 the States, from the Red River basin, from Minot
14 and Mouse River, to the Souris River, the
15 Assiniboine River, the Saskatchewan Qu'Appelle
16 Valley system, that all feeds into the Assiniboine
17 River, and then the Assiniboine River feeds into
18 the Red River, and the Red River feeds into Lake
19 Winnipeg. So there is a huge problem out there,
20 and I think there has to be a cooperative effort,
21 not only with Hydro, but with the Department of
22 Agriculture, all segments of our economy that have
23 an impact on watersheds, drainage, and the like.

24 Thank you very much.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you,

1 Mr. Gorchynski. That's a very good observation,
2 and it is something that we have thought of and we
3 have heard from others in the few weeks that we
4 have been going at this. You've hit a -- it is a
5 big issue, it is a lot bigger than just this lake,
6 it stretches out.

7 Dale talked earlier about the entire
8 watershed being about 1 million square kilometres.
9 But the serious parts of it, you have identified a
10 lot of them in your comments just now, so thank
11 you for that.

12 MR. RYAN THOMPSON: This is my second
13 half, sorry --

14 THE CHAIRMAN: That's fine.

15 MR. RYAN THOMPSON: Actually, that was
16 a really good point about the watershed, it does
17 come from Alberta straight through to Thunder Bay,
18 so that's a lot of water coming through. I have
19 been to these things before, and it has been
20 mentioned in the past that a lot of pollutants do
21 come through the Red River, not pointing any
22 fingers Minnesota, sorry, North Dakota. I was
23 good in geography once.

24 What I wanted to lead with earlier was
25 the fact that we do have a lot of past history and

1 a lot of problems that have arisen over the past
2 20, 30 years. So with that information, what I
3 would ask of everyone here, because we have
4 figured out how to really mess up the lake by
5 doing the wrong things, now if we could find the
6 solutions for it, such as dropping water levels to
7 come back up like it used to have, as it was
8 naturally so long ago. 30 years is a long time
9 for me. And basically to look at the data that we
10 have and what can be done to formulate this lake
11 back to its natural state, with Hydro included
12 obviously, because, again, they make a lot of
13 money, they will likely continue to make money.
14 However, it shouldn't be done at the expense, and
15 there needs to be a real focus to corporate, I
16 guess, integrity with this is a good word, as well
17 as looking to things such as the pollutants that
18 are coming through. It is not all Hydro, there
19 are other players in this game as well. That's
20 it.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you again.

22 Okay. Any other comments or
23 questions?

24 Well, I think we have had a very good
25 day here. We had a lot of presentations and

1 comments this afternoon, and I think some very
2 good discussion this evening. There have been
3 some very good suggestions, some of them you may
4 see in our report. As I noted earlier, you will
5 certainly see some comment in our report of what
6 we heard here today.

7 So I would like to thank you all for
8 coming out here tonight, and I would like to thank
9 those who came out earlier today. I think
10 Mr. Greenwood is the only one who is a carryover
11 from this afternoon. But thank you to all of the
12 people from this area that came out to share their
13 thoughts with us.

14 Having said that, I would like to wish
15 you all a good evening, and again, thanks.

16 (Concluded at 8:00 p.m.)

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OFFICIAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE

I, CECELIA J. REID, a duly appointed Official
Examiner in the Province of Manitoba, do hereby
certify the foregoing pages are a true and correct
transcript of my Stenotype notes as taken by me at
the time and place hereinbefore stated, to the
best of my skill and ability.

Cecelia J. Reid
Official Examiner, Q.B.

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