

March 18, 2023

Clean Environment Commission
Winnipeg Manitoba

Sio Silica Hearing

“The **precautionary principle** (or **precautionary approach**) is a broad epistemological, philosophical and legal approach to innovations with potential for causing harm when extensive scientific knowledge on the matter is lacking. It emphasizes caution, pausing and review before leaping into new innovations that may prove disastrous.” (From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

My family and I have only recently moved to Manitoba. We still feel like guests, and are grateful for all the hospitality we have received. We have Manitoba health cards, provincial drivers licenses, we bought a house here and look forward to farming the land on which it sits. My wife’s family settled in Manitoba over 75 years ago. I was born in Canada but have not yet found my voice. I understand now why new Canadians are often absent from environmental activism.

Naturally, I am concerned about water. While this winter has been gentle we look forward to an unfamiliar spring. What kind of spring will it be? Will we have flooding? I understand that we should be grateful for the water we get because the summer might be dry. I am only now learning why drought could be devastating.

In the face of all these uncertainties why are we inviting disaster in the Springfield aquifer? Why are we disturbing such a fragile formation and risking our most precious resource? For cell phones, or more likely, for raw material that will pollute and degrade some other part of the world unfortunate enough to have natural gas underground.

Let us leave the natural gas in the ground. Let us leave the sand where it sits. Let us keep our aquifer intact. We have enough work mitigating the effects of too much or too little water. We don't need another disaster in Springfield and the surrounding communities. Don't allow Sio Silica and its unfounded technologies to put our water at risk. We need to follow the precautionary principle as described above, using caution in this situation that has the potential to prove disastrous.

Sincerely
Greg Roberts
Ste. Anne, Manitoba