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Manitoba Clean Environment Commission Notice of Public Hearing Wuskwatim Generation and Transmission Projects

The Manitoba Clean Environment Commission (CEC) has been requested by the Minister of Conservation to convene a public hearing to review and receive public comments respecting the Manitoba Hydro/Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation proposal for the development of the Wuskwatim Hydroelectric Generating Station Project along with a related proposal submitted by Manitoba Hydro for the development of the Wuskwatim Transmission Project.

BACKGROUND

On December 7, 2001, Manitoba Conservation received separate Environment Act Proposals from (1) Manitoba Hydro on behalf of Manitoba Hydro and Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation respecting the proposed Wuskwatim Generating Station and (2) from Manitoba Hydro for Wuskwatim associated transmission facilities (Wuskwatim Proposals). A cooperative provincial/federal review of the Proposals is underway in accordance with the Canada-Manitoba Agreement on Environmental Assessment Cooperation. The review includes the preparation of Environmental Impact Statements in accordance with Guidelines prepared by Manitoba and Canada and finalized after a public consultation process led by the CEC. A Comprehensive Study Report will also be prepared by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in accordance with provisions of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

The Minister of Conservation also determined that the review would include a public hearing by the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission (the Commission).

MANDATE OF THE HEARINGS

The Commission shall conduct an integrated public hearing, in appropriate locations in Winnipeg and Northern Manitoba as determined by the Commission, to consider:

- First, the justification, need for and alternatives to the Wuskwatim Proposals; and
- Second, the potential environmental, socio-economic and cultural effects of the construction and operation of the Wuskwatim Proposals.

Following the public hearing the Commission shall provide a report to the Minister of Conservation pursuant to Section 7(3) of *The Environment Act*.

SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

For the justification, need for and alternatives to the Wuskwatim Proposals component of the hearing, the Commission shall:

- Consider whether all alternative resource options have been considered and whether the Wuskwatim Proposals have been selected on reasonable grounds, including economic viability as an export market driven project and relevant technical factors. The review of economic viability shall consider the Wuskwatim Proposals in their entirety.
- Include the effect, if any, of the Wuskwatim Proposals on Manitoba Hydro customer rates and the Corporation's financial stability. The partnership between the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation and Manitoba Hydro and the associated arrangements for such partnership are to be described to the degree such information is required to understand the financial analysis.

- Give consideration, at a conceptual level, to the environmental, socio-economic and cultural effects of the Wuskwatim Proposals relative to available alternative resources.
- Consider Manitoba Hydro's electricity generation capability, market prospects and risks as they pertain to the Wuskwatim Proposals including:
 - load growth in export jurisdictions;
 - energy supply situation in the export jurisdictions; and
 - energy pricing trends and industry restructuring.

For the potential environmental, socio-economic, and cultural effects of the Wuskwatim Proposals component of the hearing, the Commission shall consider the Environmental Impact Statement, and public concerns, and with consideration of the evidence received on the justification, need for, and alternatives to the Wuskwatim Proposals, provide a recommendation on:

- Whether Environment Act Licences should be issued to Manitoba Hydro for the Wuskwatim Proposals.

Should the Commission recommend the issuance of Environment Act Licences for the Wuskwatim Proposals, then appropriate recommendations should be provided respecting:

- Measures proposed to mitigate any adverse environmental, socio-economic, and cultural effects resulting from the Wuskwatim Proposals and where appropriate, to manage any residual adverse effects; and
- Future monitoring and research that may be recommended in relation to the Wuskwatim Proposals.

The Clean Environment Commission's recommendations shall incorporate, consider and directly reflect, where appropriate, the Principles of Sustainable Development and Guidelines for Sustainable Development as contained in *Sustainable Development Strategy for Manitoba*.

PUBLIC HEARING

Winnipeg

Date: March 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 2004

Location: Radisson Hotel
288 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Times: 9:00 - 17:00 (March 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16)
13:00 - 22:00 (March 3, 10, 17)

Thompson

Date: March 22, 23, 2004

Location: St. Lawrence Hall
114 Cree Road, Thompson, Manitoba

Times: 13:00 - 22:00 (March 22)
9:00 (March 23)

The Pas

Date: March 25, 26, 2004

Location: Kikiwak Inn
Hwy. 10 North, The Pas, Manitoba

Times: 13:00 - 22:00 (March 25)
9:00 (March 26)

Winnipeg*

Date: April 6, 7, 2004

Location: Radisson Hotel
288 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Times: 9:00 - 17:00 (April 6, 7)

* Closing Statements (tentative)

DOCUMENTATION

Information and documentation respecting the Wuskwatim Generation and Transmission Projects are available for public review at the following Public Registries locations:

- Conservation Resource Library, 123 Main St. (Union Station), Winnipeg;
- St. James Library, 1900 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg;
- Manitoba Eco-Network, 2nd Floor, 70 Albert St., Winnipeg;
- Legislative Library, 200 Vaughan St., Winnipeg;
- Treaty and Aboriginal Rights Research Centre, 300 - 153 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg;
- Flin Flon Public Library, 58 Main Street, Flin Flon;
- The Pas Public Library, 53 Edwards Avenue, The Pas;
- Thompson Public Library, 81 Thompson Drive North, Thompson;
- Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Office, 201 - 701 Thompson Drive, Thompson
- Churchill Public Library, Churchill;
- Snow Lake Town Office, 113 Elm Street, Snow Lake;
- Grand Rapids Town Office, 200 Grand Rapids Drive, Grand Rapids;
- Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation Office, Nelson House;
- Tataskweyak Cree Nation Office, Split Lake.

HEARING REGISTRATION

Groups or individuals intending to make a representation before the Commission should register with the Commission office at least seven (7) days prior to the opening of the hearing. All presentations will be limited to 15 minutes unless prior arrangements have been made with the Commission Secretary.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Manitoba Clean Environment Commission
www.cecmanitoba.ca
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Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3H8
Telephone: 204-945-0594 or
1-800-597-3556 (toll free)
Facsimile: 204-945-0090



Five days notice required.



Wheelchair access is available.

Manitoba