



**MINISTER OF  
CONSERVATION AND WATER STEWARDSHIP**

Legislative Building  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA  
R3C 0V8

August 20, 2015

Mr. Terry Sargeant  
Chair  
Clean Environment Commission  
Room 305 – 155 Carlton Street  
Winnipeg MB R3C 3H8

Dear Mr. Sargeant:

Pursuant to Section 6 (5) of *The Environment Act* (the Act), I hereby request the Clean Environment Commission to hold a series of public outreach meetings on the final report for the Regional Cumulative Effects Assessment that was completed by the Manitoba government and Manitoba Hydro for the Nelson, Burntwood and Churchill River systems.

The work was recommended in the final Bipole III Clean Environment Commission (CEC) report. Although not a part of the CEC recommendation, given the level of public interest in the regional cumulative assessment study, I am requesting that the CEC carry out public outreach to gain feedback from interested parties.

I have enclosed Terms of Reference to guide in the scope of your review, as provided in Section 6 (5.1) of the Act.

Following completion of the meetings, please provide me with a report summarizing the input received at the meetings.

For any information needed on the Regional Cumulative Effects Assessment, feel free to contact Ms. Tracey Braun at (204) 945-7071.

Yours sincerely,

***“original signed by”***  
Tom Nevakshonoff  
Minister

Enclosure

cc: Tracey Braun

**Terms of Reference**  
**Clean Environment Commission**  
**Regional Cumulative Effects Assessment of the Nelson, Burntwood and Churchill Rivers**  
**System (the project)**

**Background**

In its 2013 report on the Bipole III Project, the Clean Environment Commission (the Commission) made the following recommendation:

*“Manitoba Hydro, in cooperation with the Manitoba Government, conduct a Regional Cumulative Effects Assessment for all Manitoba Hydro projects and associated infrastructure in the Nelson River sub-watershed; and that this be undertaken prior to the licensing of any additional projects in the Nelson River sub-watershed after the Bipole III project.”*

This recommendation was accepted by Manitoba and a Terms of Reference for a regional cumulative effects assessment of hydroelectric developments was agreed to in May 2014. It should be noted the scope was expanded to include areas beyond that identified in the Commission’s recommendation to include the Churchill, Burntwood and Nelson River systems. The study is being completed in two phases. The first phase was completed in May 2014, and included a compilation of available data and a description of the assessment approach to be used to analyze the data in the second phase. The second phase report is expected in December 2015.

The second phase report will be based on a compilation and analysis of available data and studies and will document what is known about the cumulative effects of hydro-electric development on the land, water and people within the region, and will identify where potential knowledge gaps exist. When the final report is filed with the Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship in December 2015, the recommendation as noted above will be deemed complete.

However, given the level of public interest in the regional cumulative effects assessment, government has decided to go beyond what was asked for in the CEC recommendation and to implement a public outreach process during 2016. To that end, these terms of reference describe the work expected from this review which will be conducted by the Commission.

**Terms of Reference**

Pursuant to Section 6 (5.1) of the Act, the Minister has determined that the Terms of Reference the Commission shall follow for this public outreach are:

- To review the final Phase I and Phase II reports on the regional cumulative effects assessment;
- To carry out a Participant Program with funding available;
- To invite all affected First Nations, and communities identified in the assessment study area and the Manitoba Metis Federation to public meetings to provide an opportunity for them to provide input on the regional cumulative effects assessment and its accuracy in presenting past effects and community perspectives and concerns, and to provide any additional information relevant to the assessment;

- To facilitate a web-based review of the final Phase II report for interested parties outside the Region of Interest;
- To hold a public meeting in Winnipeg to allow interested parties outside the Region of Interest to present summaries of their written comments on the final Phase II report; and
- To prepare and file a separate report with the Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship summarizing what was heard from participants during the course of the public outreach program, including any comments received through the web-based review. The report should be filed within four months from the date of completion of the meetings.

### **Mandate of the Meetings**

Meetings should be located in areas that will allow reasonable access to community members in the project area, and be conducted in a manner that encourages inclusiveness and minimizes formality.

The Commission may, at any time, request that the Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship review or clarify these Terms of Reference.

**August 6, 2015**