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**EAST SIDE PLANNING INITIATIVE
Community Visit, February 25, 2004**

Matheson Island, Manitoba

ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

We don't get information about the proposed developments. Nobody knows what is going on and how it affects us on the West Side.

WATER QUALITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Water Quality

Low water levels are an indication of the damage that Hydro has done. There has been no compensation for the destruction they have caused.

There have been a lot of changes in the lake. Before the flood, there were a lot of fish. Since the flood there are more Saugers. When we have a south current, the water is brown, murky and smells bad. This may be because of the hog farms to the south. When we get a north current, the water is clean and there are a lot of fish. This is the lakes' way of filtering itself.

Chemicals in the fields are also a problem. Nitrates are going into the lake. There are algae blooms at the north end of the lake. Algae settle to the bottom which can affect different species. Whitefish come into our area and spawn at the north end of the lake. There are increases in the number of smelts. Smelts are a high quality feeder fish. Increases in smelts, however, mean that they feed on the spawn of other fish.

Waste Management and Clean Up

Part of our CDE plan is to get a lagoon.

Recommendation: Environmental Issues

- Investigate the environmental problems.
- Stop putting pollutants into the system.
- Follow up with the Board that is studying the effects of Lake Winnipeg.
- Have an on-going dialogue with the Lake Winnipeg study.

EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Commercial Fishing

The marketing board controls the commercial fishing industry. There is over fishing on the lake, however, because of the black market. What is on paper is not a true reflection of the fish caught. The First Nation fish are not reported either so there is not a clear indication of the resource.

Economic Development

The development in the area should create jobs for local people yet not affect the wildlife in a negative way. We are concerned about the impacts that might occur to this area when the East is opened up. There will be increased access for anglers, hunters, and cottagers and the land will be used up too quickly.

Road and Transmission Line Development

Road development is important for the remote communities. Is it necessary to have a new road, however, when there is a road already in existence that could be up-graded. Will there be compensation for the trappers if the Hydro line impacts their area?

Recommendation: Employment and Economic Development

- Corridor development should include both the roads and the transmission lines to minimize impact of the forest.