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## EAST SIDE PLANNING INITIATIVE

### Princess Harbour, Manitoba

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#### ISSUES IDENTIFIED & RECOMMENDATIONS

##### Commercial Fishing

During the East Side meetings, everything is mentioned except fishing, yet fishing is significant to the economy of Manitoba. The product is being shipped all over the world, to Denmark, Sweden, western and eastern Europe. There are a lot of people involved. Not only the fishermen, but most people around the lake earn their money because of fishing. Suppliers, boat builders, shippers, exporters, gas, oil, food, health services and the freight going into the communities all benefit. Cottage lot development and outposts are small in comparison and there are limits to the sustainability of forestry and tourism for any length of time. In the forestry sector, as well, there is only cutting and trucking that is now being done.

The commercial fishing industry seems to be overlooked in the East Side process. Perhaps it is being taken for granted, that it will always be here. The water quality, however, is going down hill and it is harder to get fish. There is a lot of algae growth in the summer. A university study, Namajo, indicated that at the north end of the lake there is 2' near the bottom where there is no oxygen. Most fish feed and spawn on the bottom and without oxygen sustainability of the fish is in jeopardy. There is too much sewage being dumped into the lake. We are also concerned about the increase in anglers and that they will take over. Lake Winnipeg, however, is not a good angling lake.

##### **Recommendation:** Commercial Fishing

- Gather the data and study the economic significance of commercial fishing for the Province of Manitoba to show how important it is to the economy of the province. Determine how much fish is sold and what is the multiplier effect?
- Commercial fishing needs to be considered as a main stay and a priority. The viability of the industry and the sustainability of the resource must be ensured.

**Recommendation: Water Quality**

- Maintain water quality and recognize its link to a sustainable economy in the Province of Manitoba

**Consultation and Communication**

There has been a consistent lack of consultation overall. The current approach of ‘information giving’ is not sufficient. Meetings that we have attended for the East Side have been cut and dry. We are not asked for our input, just told what is going to be happening. Everything is already decided before the meeting is called. We don’t get any background before hand and it is the same rhetoric time after time. We have been talking about the same issues for 25 or 30 years and it doesn’t seem to go anywhere. Once the meeting is over, we are provided with a report from government. Their minds had already been made up. Nothing we say is reflected in those reports.

Everyone is now being divided into groups that only get people fighting over issues. The government then does what it wants. It may work for the short term, but it doesn’t win any favours in the long run. People are skeptical about what government is doing. We need to work as one.

There is inconsistency with the members on the round table as well as with those attending from the communities. Time is spent bringing people up to date and a lot of time is wasted.

Government will ultimately have the last say. It may be cynical, but nothing has happened over the last 25 years. What will happen when there is a change in government? Will all this work be shelved, anyway?

**Recommendation: Consultation and Communication**

- There needs to be consistency with members on the Round Table, the various committees and the people attending from the communities.
- An appropriate and comprehensive consultation process needs to be developed where community input is taken seriously.

## **All Weather Road**

The road that is being talked about will go where industry wants it, either for pulp or for mining. If there is money to pave a road, #234 should be paved. That is the road that is used by everyone on the east and west side of the lake as well as from the north.

Businesses are located on the west side as well as services such as hospitals, doctors and personal care facilities. People have been using these services for years and are not likely to change their doctors, hospitals, or where they do business. The road on the west side needs to be upgraded and maintained for access and safety.

Another question is how the building of a new road will affect the fish and their spawning grounds? Impact assessments should be done but past assessments don't seem to mean anything, anyway. Government does what it wants.

### **Recommendation: All Weather Road**

- As a priority, pave and maintain #234 for access of services and businesses and for the safety of the people on the east and west side of the lake and from the northern communities.