

December 5, 2017

Client File No. 5433.00
Licence No. 3055

Ms. Tracey Braun
Director
Environmental Approvals
Manitoba Sustainable Development
Suite 160, 123 Main Street
Winnipeg, MB R3C 1A5

Dear Ms. Braun:

RE: Bipole III Transmission Project (Licence 3055) – Fibre Optic Cable Alteration Request

Pursuant to the Bipole III Transmission Project *Environment Act* licence 3055, Manitoba Hydro is requesting a minor alteration to the Bipole III Transmission Project EIS.

Manitoba Hydro requested a minor alteration on January 18, 2017 with respect to the installation of fibre optic cable along the AC Collector transmission line right of way. During the past winter construction season, while installing the fibre optic cable Manitoba Hydro experienced extremely challenging rock/boulder and hard till soil conditions, which prevented the completion of the project.

Over this past summer, we have re-evaluated our approach and determined that a combination of frost wheel/ploughing/trenching and horizontal directional drilling techniques are required to complete the project on schedule.

Outside of stream/creek crossings three possible techniques could be utilized; a) the frost wheel, a rotating carbide tipped blade that cuts a narrow trench for the cable to be installed; b) ploughing technique which involves the use of a ripper tooth to break up frozen ground followed by the plough to install the cable; and c) when extremely hard soil conditions are encountered such as rock and boulders, a trenching technique is utilized to excavate a trench that removes the rock and boulders, to facilitate the installation of the cable. When ripping, ploughing and trenching during frozen soil conditions, the frozen peat may break into large chunks resulting in a disturbed area of approximately 1.5m. In the isolated instances where hard soil or large rock conditions are encountered the disturbed area may be wider than 1.5m.

Manitoba Hydro will continue to implement the following measures to mitigate potential effects of this project:

- Horizontal directional drilling will continue to be used to install fibre optic cable under

- streams and creeks to mitigate disturbance to these sensitive areas;
- The Limestone River crossing will continue to be installed overhead on wood pole structures;
 - Existing access trails will be utilized where possible and keeping any new trails less than 12m in width;
 - Where trenching by way of excavation, original organic material will be replaced on the top of the backfill to facilitate natural re-vegetation; and
 - Any disturbed areas will be assessed the following spring for rehabilitation requirements.

The proposed changes with mitigation measures as described above do not alter any conclusions in the Bipole III Transmission Project EIS. Manitoba Hydro will follow the Bipole III AC Collector Construction Environmental Protection Plan for the installation of the buried and overhead fibre optic cables.

Should you have any questions or require further clarification of our request, please do not hesitate to contact me at 204-360-4394.

Regards,

Original signed by Shannon Johnson

Shannon Johnson
Manager
Licensing and Environmental Assessment Department
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