

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

PROPONENT: Manitoba Hydro
PROPOSAL NAME: Poplar Bluff Transmission Project
CLASS OF DEVELOPMENT: 2
TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT: Transportation and Transmission
CLIENT FILE NO.: 5901.00

OVERVIEW:

On July 6, 2017 the Department of Sustainable Development received a proposal dated July 5, 2017 for a Class 2 licence pursuant to The Environment Act for the Poplar Bluff Transmission Project.

The project involves the construction, operation, and maintenance of a new 16.5 km, 230 kV AC transmission line from the Poplar Bluff Industrial Park, west of Portage la Prairie, to an existing transmission line located north of Long Plain First Nation.

Copies of the Proposal were placed in the Public Registries located at the Legislative Library (200 Vaughan Street), the Winnipeg Millennium Public Library, and the Environmental Approvals Branch Website at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/eal/registries/5901poplarbluff/index.html>.

A notice soliciting public comments on the Proposal was placed in the Portage Central Plains Herald Leader on Thursday, July 27, 2017. Copies of the Proposal were provided to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for this project, which is composed of provincial government representatives with expertise on the potential impacts of the project. The newspaper and TAC notifications invited responses until August 28, 2017.

A request for additional information based on the comments received from the public and the TAC was sent to the proponent on September 1, 2017. A response was received from the proponent, dated September 2, 2017. The information request and the proponent's response were placed in the public registries.

This report provides a summary of the Environmental Approvals Branch's review of the public and TAC comments received on the Proposal and licence recommendations. A draft Environment Act licence is attached.

ENVIRONMENT ACT PROPOSAL – REVIEW SUMMARY

ASSESSMENT OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments were received from the public pertaining to the Proposal.

ASSESSMENT OF TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMMENTS

The following is a summary of comments received from the TAC pertaining to the Proposal, additional information requested based on these comments, the responses received, and the disposition of the comments.

Technical Advisory Committee Member	Response Provided*
Manitoba Sustainable Development: Compliance and Enforcement Branch Climate Change and Air Quality Branch Wildlife and Fisheries Branch Parks and Protected Spaces Branch Forestry Branch Indigenous Relations Branch Lands Branch Water Quality Management Section Groundwater Management Section Office of Drinking Water Water Use Licensing Section Water Control Works Licensing Section Regional Services Branch	See below No response See below No response No response No response No concerns No response No response No response No response No response No response
Manitoba Sport, Culture, and Heritage: Historic Resources Branch	See below
Manitoba Growth, Enterprise and Trade: Energy Development Branch Petroleum Branch Office of Fire Commissioner Work Place Safety & Health	No response No response No concerns No response
Manitoba Infrastructure: Flood Forecasting Branch Highway Planning and Design Branch	No response See below
Manitoba Indigenous and Municipal Relations	No response
Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living	No response
Manitoba Agriculture: Land Use Branch	No response

*“No response” means no comments were received on the Proposal. “No comment” means the TAC member indicated they have no concerns with the Proposal.

Manitoba Sustainable Development, Compliance and Enforcement Branch

Summary of Comments:

The Branch requested that the biosecurity protocols are implemented as described in the Proposal, or as otherwise required by the Director.

Disposition:

The draft licence contains a clause requiring Manitoba Hydro submit a detailed biosecurity plan for approval of the Director.

Manitoba Sustainable Development, Wildlife and Fisheries Branch

Summary of Comments:

The Wildlife and Fisheries Branch submitted the following questions regarding this statement in section 5.1.6.2 of the Proposal: *“The largest concentration of birds was found in a large wetland complex east of PTH 305, south of road 62N. A large wetland complex at this site was supporting tundra swans, Canada geese, and other waterfowl.”*

1. Has Manitoba Hydro considered deploying bird strike diverters along the line northwest of this site to lessen the potential impacts to waterfowl and other birds?, and
2. Has Manitoba Hydro established a minimum distance to staging wetlands where diverters are installed as a standard mitigation tactic for other recent transmission projects (e.g. MMTP, Bipole III)?

Information Request:

The Environmental Approvals Branch requested a response to these questions in a letter to Manitoba hydro dated September 1, 2017.

Response to Information Request:

Manitoba Hydro provided an explanation of the process they utilize to limit risks to birds when developing new transmission projects and noted that in most cases the application of bird diverters extends no more than 100 - 200 meters from the water's edge. They indicated that bird diverters are not being considered for this project because the subject wetland is a minimum 650 meters from the proposed project footprint and at this distance bird diverters would not lessen the already very low risk to staging waterfowl and other birds any further.

Disposition:

Manitoba Hydro provided a sufficient response to the Wildlife and Fisheries Branch's concerns.

Manitoba Sport, Culture and Heritage, Historic Resources Branch

Summary of Comments:

The Branch indicated they have no concerns at this time based on their examination of the final preferred route in conjunction with their records for areas of potential concern and that they are satisfied with the information regarding heritage resources as outlined in section 5.2.1 and Appendix F of the Proposal. It was noted, however, that if heritage resources are encountered in

association with these lands during testing and development, the Historic Resources Branch must be immediately contacted and a resource management strategy may need to be implemented to mitigate the effects of development on the heritage resources.

Disposition:

These comments were forwarded to the proponent for consideration.

Manitoba Infrastructure, Highway Planning and Design Branch

Summary of Comments:

Information on permits that may be required for the project was provided.

Disposition:

These comments were forwarded to the proponent for consideration.

PUBLIC HEARING:

A public hearing was not requested by the public and is not recommended for this Development.

CROWN CONSULTATION OF INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES:

Crown consultation of Indigenous communities was not carried out for this project since it is unlikely to infringe upon or adversely affect the exercise of a treaty or Aboriginal right of a First Nation, Métis community or other Aboriginal community.

RECOMMENDATION:

The concerns raised in the TAC comments received relating to the Proposal can be addressed in the mitigation proposed by the proponent, as conditions of licensing for the project, or have been forwarded to the proponent for information where applicable. It is recommended that an Environment Act licence be issued for the project subject to the limits, terms and conditions as described in the attached draft licence. Enforcement of the licence should be assigned to the Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Branch of Manitoba Sustainable Development.

Prepared by:

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