

February 9, 2018

Client File No. 5433.00
Licence No. 3055

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

Dear Ms. Braun:

RE: Bipole III Transmission Project (Licence 3055)

The monitoring for potential effects on moose populations by the Bipole III Transmission Project within the Game Hunting Areas (GHA) 14, 14A and 19A is a condition of Environment Act Licence 3055 and Manitoba Hydro is required to put forward its proposed activities for approval by the Director of the Wildlife and Fisheries Branch. Specifically, licence condition 18 d) iii states that Manitoba Hydro is:

- d) Using methods approved by the Wildlife Branch*
 - iii) to conduct periodic moose surveys for 25 years, or less if approved otherwise by the Wildlife Branch, including, but not necessarily limited to, Game Hunting Areas 14, 14A and 19A;*

Manitoba Hydro's monitoring activities for the Bipole III transmission project include conducting aerial surveys in Game Hunting Areas 14, 14A and 19A to assess changes in winter distribution of moose proximal to the project right-of-way. However, Manitoba Hydro and the Wildlife and Fisheries Branch are cognizant that public concerns, expressed through the Clean Environment Commission review and other engagement processes, emphasized how the Bipole III Transmission Project could impact mortality rates of moose. Manitoba Hydro and the Wildlife and Fisheries Branch concur that this expectation cannot be reasonably met using conventional monitoring techniques and that surveys are unlikely to allow for the detection of changes in moose population size as a result of the Project at this time.

As such, Manitoba Hydro, after collaboration with the Wildlife and Fisheries Branch, is proposing that the activity to be approved under this condition be the development of moose stewardship programs that investigate factors affecting moose population dynamics in Manitoba (Moose Stewardship Study Program), and enhance and sustain moose populations in Manitoba (Moose Stewardship Conservation Program).

If approved, Manitoba Hydro will provide \$800,000 of total funding for the establishment of Moose Stewardship Study and Conservation Programs. The Study and the Conservation Programs will be available for researchers, public, indigenous communities and organizations,

and other stakeholders as a source of funding to investigate factors affecting moose population dynamics in Manitoba and to enhance and sustain moose populations in Manitoba.

Review and management of the proposed programs and/or research will be made by staff from Manitoba Hydro and Manitoba Sustainable Development, with input from qualified experts. Final recommendations for the Study Program project proposals will be made jointly by senior staff from Manitoba Hydro and Manitoba Sustainable Development. Please see attached appendix for further details on the programs.

If these programs are approved, it is understood that Manitoba Hydro will not be pursuing any additional activities associated with EA Licence 3055 condition 18 d) iii.

Manitoba Hydro also remains committed to other moose monitoring efforts as part of the Bipole III project. Manitoba Hydro will be submitting shortly the finalized moose component of the Bipole III Biophysical Monitoring Plan, monitoring efforts will include:

- Assess changes to the quantity of potential moose browse
- Assess changes in winter moose distribution
- Investigating wolf presence on ROW
- Investigating change in distribution of white-tailed deer along ROW
- Assess whether *Parelaphostrongylus tenuis* occurs in white-tailed deer in the project area
- Investigate human presence on ROW
- Assess potential changes in vehicle- wildlife (deer/moose) collisions

Should you have any questions or require further clarification 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
Manitoba Hydro
820 Taylor Ave (3)
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3M 3T1

Attachments: Appendix

- Moose Stewardship Study Program Operating Guidelines
- Moose Stewardship Study Program Terms of Reference
- Moose Stewardship Conservation Program Operating Guidelines
- Moose Stewardship Conservation Program Terms of Reference