

**SUBJECT AREA:** Fish, Fish Habitat

**REFERENCE:** MWL-IR-003

**QUESTION:**

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Further to Manitoba Hydro's response to MWL-IR-003, specify what mitigation measures will be in place for each watercourse in relation to Cooks and Edie creeks that support fish and fish habitats, and when these measures are expected to be in place.

Conservation Districts are not the same as Watershed Plans, nor are Conservation Districts part of Sustainable Development Manitoba. For regulatory and provincial jurisdiction purposes water plans (re: relevant legislation) must be accepted by the Manitoba Government. Provide the specific watershed plan names with their respective government domain access that were used in the EIS to arrive at the conclusions regarding fish and fish habitat.

Confirm that Manitoba Hydro will now conduct the field work regarding these watercourses, rather than rely on desk studies only.

**RESPONSE:**

- 1 As described in MWL-IR-002, MWL-IR-003 and MWL-IR-065, Manitoba Hydro used a
- 2 precautionary approach in assessing effects to fish and fish habitat, but stresses that:
- 3 - no transmission towers will be placed closer than 30 m to any watercourse;
- 4 - wire stringing across watercourses will be done either during frozen conditions or by
- 5 helicopter; and

- 6 - Manitoba Hydro has developed an environmental protection plan that prescribes  
7 effective measures to reduce levels of any deleterious substances to levels that are not  
8 expected to result in any measurable adverse effects.

9 A comprehensive list of general mitigation is provided in the Construction Environmental  
10 Protection Plan (Appendix 22A). The complete list of mitigation measures for each watercourse  
11 will be determined during detailed design of each watercourse crossing and will include the  
12 measures presented in the MMTP EIS, as appropriate for each crossing. This will include a site-  
13 specific analysis of both Cooks and Edie Creek crossings.

14 While there is a low likelihood of pathways of effect from project activities and robust  
15 precautionary mitigation measures being proposed, Manitoba Hydro assembled information on  
16 the various watercourses that would be crossed to determine habitat sensitivity. As described  
17 in the EIS, Chapter 8, Section 8.3.1 (page 8-9), field and desktop data (sources described in  
18 Section 8.3.1.1, pages 8-10, 8-11) were analyzed to characterize the existing in-water and  
19 riparian physical environment, surface water quality, and habitat suitability for fish. Fish species  
20 potentially inhabiting watercourses in the Regional Assessment Area were identified and their  
21 seasonal ranges, sensitive periods, and habitat use were described with special attention to  
22 relevant Species of Conservation Concern. Known and potential CRA fisheries were also  
23 identified. In terms of watershed management plans, Section 6.0 of the Fish and Fish Habitat  
24 Technical Data report includes references and web addresses for each integrated watershed  
25 management plan used in the analysis. The data collected from the field and desktop studies,  
26 together with input from the other Project VCs, and Public and First Nation and Metis  
27 Engagement Processes, were used to determine the habitat sensitivity for each of the  
28 watercourses crossed by the Project.

29 Based on the information that was available on the above crossings to determine habitat  
30 sensitivity, the low likelihood of pathways of effect from project activities and robust  
31 precautionary mitigation measures being proposed, no additional field assessments for the  
32 purposes of the environmental assessment are being planned at this time.

33 Pre-construction field work will be completed at the two locations on both creeks to collect  
34 information to facilitate construction. Information collected will include channel morphology,  
35 high water mark, bank width, bank height and slope. This information will be used to plan  
36 construction and implementation of mitigation measures.