

**Webb, Bruce (CWS)**

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**From:**  
**Sent:** May-11-16 2:52 PM  
**To:** Webb, Bruce (CWS) BW  
**Subject:** Whitewater lowering project

Hi Bruce

I just was made aware of the proposal to drain Whitewater Lake. We had had preliminary discussions with the people that were on the committee however it seems that things are moving along.

My question for you is can you define low flow on the Medora Creek. I see numbers for the lake level however can you please advise how the flow would be measured and who's responsible to make the call.

Regards Gary R. Williams

Head of Council

Municipality of Brenda Waskada

Webb, Bruce (CWS)

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From: Gary Bolduc  
Sent: May-13-16 4:07 AM  
To: Webb, Bruce (CWS) BW  
Subject: Whitewater Lake Outlet

I have owned property around Whitewater Lake for over 40 years. A level on this lake should be a priority. As it stands now, the lake has a natural overflow outlet to the west through Medora creek. More money has been spent "studying" this project than it would take to fix it. Downstream concerns have been voiced in the past. Fact is, in high water situations they're getting it one way or another. Saying they're against it is like saying they're against bad weather. None of us want bad weather, but none of us can stop it. Your best defence is a good offence. A simple, cost effective solution is available, but former municipal councils went out of their way to derail any sensible solution. My 2 cents worth. Thanks Gary Bolduc

Sent from my iPhone

**Webb, Bruce (CWS)**

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**From:** Don Wickham  
**Sent:** May-13-16 10:19 AM  
**To:** Webb, Bruce (CWS) BW  
**Subject:** Medora creek, from whitewater lake

Bruce, As a down stream farmer on the Medora Creek, we have been impacted to a great extent from all the drainage that has happened over the last years. My biggest concern is all the projects that start at the top of the runs and not from the bottom back. There was a creek clean out that happened before , that also started at the top and worked down stream, and never got completed, as the story was run out of money, well for about one and a half miles to finish, to date has not been done, this needs to be completed before any more water comes down the Medora Creek, water runs north from our place and has great washouts to the north of us which should not be impacted at all, if creek project was finished. Jeff Reimer says there is a grandfather clause to get these back projects finished, which doesn't,t seem to concern people in charge of this project. Another big concern down stream people have is the quality of this water, this year low spots that have dried up are left with white bottoms, we don,t want more whitewater lakes! There needs to be a huge look at all the drainage that has been put into Whitewater Lake , before dumping this on other people lives, I hear there is a big conflict of interest in this project! Don Wickham. PS. Down stream people have not been made aware of what is going on here!

Sent from my iPad

May 15, 2016

Bruce Webb

BW

Environmental Engineer

Environmental Approvals Branch

Conservation and Water Stewardship

123 Main Street, Suite 160

Winnipeg MB R3C 1A5



Re: Municipality of Deloraine Winchester – Whitewater Lake Management Project File 5822.00

Dear Mr. Webb;

Thank you for the opportunity to comment regarding the aforementioned project. After the past five years of enduring the issues and discussions involving Whitewater Lake, we are very cognizant of the social implications of having an opinion regarding these issues when that opinion may not align with others. We are however thankful for the freedom to have an opinion and appreciate the opportunity to express it. So it is with sincere sadness and trepidation we face these considerations yet again. We wish to clearly note the comments contained in this letter reflect solely our opinion of the situation and ours alone.

How is it possible in the scant 100 to 125 years (3 to 4 generations) since the settlement of this region we have so grievously degraded our ecosystem we are even considering the human manipulation of one of the last vestiges of wilderness remaining in southern Manitoba?

How is it possible after literally years of discussion regarding Whitewater we fail to understand or perhaps refuse to accept the message the lake itself is sending?

This lake is a unique and iconic area existing largely intact and un-touched for thousands of years since the last ice age!

Preface:

As residents of the Municipality of Deloraine Winchester, our property (owned since 1948) borders the southwest shore of Whitewater and as a result of high water we have lost the use of  $\frac{1}{4}$  section (se 9-3-22) which represents  $\frac{1}{3}$  of our land. This particular  $\frac{1}{4}$  remains in a native state of permanent cover (when not flooded), is highly productive, and produced nearly  $\frac{1}{2}$  the forage we required in the form of hay and pasture for our cattle enterprise. Needless to say, the loss of this land for the past 5 years has had a significant impact on our farm, family and life!

Through the years we have seen the lake high, (1970's and today) and bone dry, (1980's). While neither situation is desirable we understand such is the nature of this lake and part of the reason it is so unique. We accept the "natural" cycles of the lake to be one of the hazards of farming this ancient lake bottom. The present period of high water has certainly reached epic proportions, (at least in recorded history). Understandably, the focus of our attention is drawn to the lake and the issues arising from high water, however, we believe the real reasons for this vexing state of affairs have largely been overlooked and will address some of these in this paper.

#### Benefits of Whitewater Lake:

The ecology of this region has evolved over several millennia in tune with this prominent geographical feature and as a result the lake offers a myriad of benefits regionally and of course to a much larger area. For the purposes of this discussion and the sake of brevity we will limit our comments to just two of these, assuming others will comment regarding wildlife, social, economic and other environmental concerns etc.

#### Surge Basin:

Although not strictly a terminal basin, over recorded history, Whitewater has functioned largely as a terminal basin buffering surges of runoff primarily from the Turtle Mt. uplands offering protection to the provincial watershed downstream. On those occasions when water flowed from the lake, the slope and nature of the outlet tended to govern the velocity and hence the volume of the outflow, further protecting an already seriously taxed watershed (the circumstances leading to overflows from Whitewater already had the existing provincial drainage network at and well beyond capacity).

#### Environmental Filter:

While the lake's potential as a surge basin is blatantly obvious, the service Whitewater offers as a water purification system is perhaps less understood. Water entering the lake from the watershed is laden with suspended and dissolved solids, nutrients, pesticides, etc. and through direct evaporation and evapotranspiration that water, now purified, is returned to the atmosphere. The TMCD landownership map suggests a surface area of approximately 25 square miles. An open, shallow, warm, windswept lake such as Whitewater has the potential to evaporate, by whatever means, 3 feet in depth of water annually. That 25 square miles of surface will purify approximately 250,000 gallons per acre foot or between 10 and 12 billion gallons, (48,000) acre feet of water annually.  $(25 \times 640 \times 250,000 \times 3)$

Historical reports of high water on Whitewater suggest a surface area approaching 50 square miles doubling these calculations, and even with a surface area of 35 square miles there would be an astonishing 16 billion gallons or 65,000 acre feet purified for the atmosphere! The point being, the depth of the lake and hence the surface area of Whitewater is absolutely critical since every surface acre it is reduced in size, (naturally or artificially) results in a potential loss of 750,000 gallons or 3 acre feet of surge protection and purification all benefiting the provincial watershed and the ecosystem.

## Our Position:

We fully appreciate and share the anxiety of landowners faced with the loss of their land and with it the opportunity to make a living. While we eagerly anticipate a return to more "normal" water levels on Whitewater, we disagree with the proposed method of achieving those levels. Since the flooding of our land 5 years ago our position with respect to the artificial release of water from Whitewater Lake has remained steadfast. Therefore; notwithstanding the loss of our land, we cannot in good conscience endorse the release of this water to flow into the provincial watershed where it has the potential to contribute to similar hardship and problems elsewhere on private and public property and infrastructure.

## An Alternative.....

The solution to the situation at Whitewater Lake lies in the source of the problem. We don't believe the lake is to blame for this situation, but rather the ever increasing volume and velocity at which water arrives at the lake. Today, moderate and heavier precipitation falling in the watershed translates to the basin in a matter of just hours when historically it took days, weeks, months, and perhaps even years. We heartily concur with the Reeve of the Municipality of Deloraine Winchester (Boissevain Recorder, Feb. 26, 2016) who notes that drainage in the watershed has contributed to the problem and that a large percentage of that drainage is illegal. We believe the problem lies in the watershed (primarily, but not exclusively from the Turtle Mountains) however it is far more complex than solely the aspect of drainage. We will comment on a few of these.

**Impairment of the Water Cycle:** The infiltration of water is a corner stone of an effective water cycle and the more water entering the soil profile at the source the less available for run off. The infiltration of water at the source is governed by a number of factors but for this discussion two major factors or lack thereof are at work. The first is a soil surface capable of receiving and holding copious amounts of precipitation. Specifically we are referring to the "duff" layer at the soil surface which acts like a sponge receiving and holding water from precipitation allowing ample time for it "soak" in. Second and of equal importance is a soil profile liberally perforated with the deep roots of perennial grasses and vegetation that can receive water from the duff layer and infiltrate it to the water table (historically the case on the prairies and in particular in the Turtle Mountains). As the permanent cover disappeared from the watershed so too did the "duff" layer and the deep roots perforating the soil profile. The result is an exposed unprotected surface with little opportunity to "hold" precipitation, and an increasingly compacted subsoil with little ability to infiltrate water. The collective result being far greater amounts of water on the surface with no option but to "run off". Hence a vast increase in water immediately available to the watershed compared to the historic normal.

**Drainage and Channeling of wetlands and recharge areas:** With ever increasing water on the surface combined with a phenomenon where the surface is saturated to the depth of compaction yet often drier below, producers have increased efforts to drain ponded water etc. in an attempt to claim acres considered arable. At the same time permanent and seasonal wetlands and recharge areas have fallen victim. The collective result is greater amounts of water immediately available to the watershed as compared to the historic normal.

Slope: Our farm is located on the last mile adjacent to the south shore of Whitewater. In that mile our land drops at approximately, the rate of 50 feet per mile and this slope, more or less, is typical of the entire north slope of the Turtle Mountain escarpment in the Whitewater watershed. Engineers and water managers have spent entire careers attempting to develop schemes to deal with the results of water moving in this type of geography. If we have learned one thing from this effort and the past decade, it's that once water begins to move it quickly becomes extremely difficult and often impossible to control in any significant way. The disastrous and worsening erosion and destruction of infrastructure evidenced in the watershed, especially in recent years clearly indicate that our best efforts are falling far short of keeping pace with the problem.

Nowhere north or west of Whitewater in the Municipality of Deloraine Winchester does this type of slope exist, nor is there an opportunity to mechanically develop this type of slope, and nor would you want to duplicate this type of slope given the record of erosion and destruction evidenced where such slope now exists.

A dozen or more major creeks feed the lake through deeply incised ravines, while numerous creeks of lesser size all contribute to draining the more than 700 square km in the watershed with no mention of the overland flooding now so prevalent with even moderate rainfall events as a result of compacted soils, absence of surface litter and of course the slope.

How could any constructed outlet, with control structures, operated on a strictly regimented release, and no significant geography, hope to accommodate the kind of flow witnessed in the past five years, when the circumstances of these events had both Medora Creek and Elgin Creek at or beyond capacity precluding the opening of the control structure? Flooding of the provincial watershed downstream persisted well into summer and the release of water from this watershed would have served to aggravate an already dire situation. If we are to accept the notion of impending climatic change, then we really have no idea how artificial manipulation of Whitewater will affect the long term "natural" historic cycles of the lake and ultimately the ecosystem.

The Whitewater Lake Watershed: The Whitewater Lake watershed is estimated at 750 square km, or 465 square miles (the bulk of which is Turtle Mt. upland). The mean annual precipitation for this area is recorded as 550 mm (approx. 21 inches) amounting to approximately 450,000 gallons per acre or 1.75 acre ft. The watershed then, with average annual precipitation, is the recipient of some 520,000 acre ft. of water annually.

The last long term dry to dry cycle on Whitewater occurred in the last century and took approximately 50 years to complete (1930's to 1980's). The length of time of this cycle would indicate that annual evaporation from the lake, to a greater or lesser degree kept pace with the volume of water arriving at the lake. If the average long term annual evaporation from the lake is 50,000 to 60,000 acre feet, then we can estimate that on average this was the volume of water delivered to the lake from the watershed. We can also estimate the remaining 450,000 acre feet was captured by the watershed and infiltrated or evaporated.

As the watershed is degraded however the ability to infiltrate and evaporate water are both impaired. Should this impairment result in even a 1% reduction in the capture potential of the watershed, we

would expect an increase of 4500 acre feet delivered annually to the basin. A 10% reduction in capture would result in 45,000 acre feet being delivered to the lake annually for a total of approximately 100,000 acre feet, essentially double the historic average delivered by the watershed annually. What is the degree of degradation in this watershed today?

During periods of below average precipitation, evaporation from the lake can exceed recharge, (such is the case thus far this spring). During years of normal precipitation, (even with modest increases in volume as a result of watershed degradation) equilibrium between recharge and evaporation can be achieved all be it with a corresponding increased surface area on the lake. In years of above normal precipitation however even modest increases will rapidly outpace the rate of evaporation and the lake will swell to overflow.

Historically, periods of above normal precipitation took years perhaps decades to swell the lake. Today however the watershed is so volatile that land managers in proximity of the lake cannot predict next year's lake level with and degree of certainty and in some cases could be victims of the next serious event. A catastrophic 6 inch rainfall in June or July involving  $\frac{1}{2}$  or even  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the watershed could result in 10's of thousands of acre feet of runoff occurring instantly. During the past decade similar events of less magnitude involving the Turtle Mt. uplands produced torrents of runoff destroying infrastructure, inflicting enormous flood damage to private property and placing families on standby for immediate evacuation.

A healthy watershed with a fully functional water cycle is undoubtedly the greatest asset we have for protection against such occurrence and the present state of the lake. To ignore the importance of the watershed and continue to degrade it will undoubtedly have it become our greatest liability.

To address the opening question, the message from Whitewater Lake, is "all in the watershed is not well". If we choose to ignore the message, we do so at our own peril!

While the facts and figures we have provided may be disputable, we can assure you the intent is not. It appears to us that we are now in possession of a water shed delivering never before seen volumes in obscenely record time. If the destructive events of the past decade are the hallmark of a "new normal", then it's a normal we can ill afford, environmentally, socially, or financially.

In our opinion, if we truly wish to resolve the issues surrounding Whitewater Lake we must focus our time, human and financial resources at halting and then reversing the degradation of the watershed. Perhaps then our children or grandchildren will see the benefits and opportunities of Whitewater Lake and its healthy watershed celebrated.

Gary & Llana Davis

Sincerely,

Deborah Mb  
ROM OMC

Llana and Gary Davis

Note: Information such as average precipitation, evaporation, drainage area, slope, lake surface area, etc. was gleaned from various "on line" reports pertaining to Whitewater Lake



May 17, 2016

Hartney, MB  
ROM OXO

BW  
Mr. Bruce Webb  
Environmental Approvals Branch  
Conservation and Water Stewardship  
123 Main Street, Suite 160  
Winnipeg, MB  
R3C 1A5

RE: MUNICIPALITY OF DELORAINE-WINCHESTER – WHITEWATER LAKE MANAGEMENT PROJECT  
– FILE: 5822.00

Dear Mr. Webb,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on the proposal filed by KGS Group on the behalf of the Municipality of Deloraine-Winchester for a project to regulate water levels on Whitewater Lake in south-western Manitoba. I am responding as a beleaguered resident of the Souris River watershed who has experienced and suffered personal loss from the devastating floods of 2011 and 2014. My wife and I own and live on property along the Souris River north of Hartney. In addition, my professional background includes university degrees in fisheries and wildlife management and a career focused on wildlife and wetland conservation and management including the planning and delivery of watershed management projects. Although recently retired, I remain active in the area of resource management and conservation and serve on a number of boards of related organizations.

I would also like to add that I have considerable experience working on Whitewater Lake and have seen it go through its incredible wet-dry cycle. I recall in the late 1980's being able to locate my survey crews in the middle of the lake by seeing the dust trails of their ATVs as they worked in the dry lake basin. I've also driven airboats up to and over the local roads during wet years. It is this recurring wet-dry cycle makes the lake the incredibly productive natural area and wildlife haven it is.

To open my comments and ensure that there is no misunderstanding of my position **I am strongly opposed to this proposal** for a number of reasons (as detailed below) **and urge the provincial government to reject the project application** in the interest of all Manitobans downstream of the proposed outlets (which is by far the majority of people in the province). I am going to direct my comments to high level issues because I feel it is those issues that make the project untenable rather than the details on specifications of outlet location, sizing, etc.

The cardinal rule of effective and ethical watershed management is “do not pass your problems on to others lower in the watershed”. The problem of high water levels in Whitewater Lake is the result of two things: higher than normal precipitation and land use change within the lake catchment area. Past and ongoing drainage and land clearing have reduced the storage capacity of the surrounding catchment area so that the lake is now subjected to increased runoff and water volumes during precipitation events (and hence prolonged high water levels). The solution to high water levels needs to be an effective water management plan within the Whitewater Lake catchment area (increased surface water retention, increased perennial cover, etc.,) and not a plan to simply pass the problem on to others downstream. The problem was created within the watershed and should be solved within the watershed. To simply place the blame on high precipitation levels is wrong and avoids the real problem of improper planning and management within the lake catchment area.

As stated throughout the proposal Whitewater Lake is a terminal basin meaning it has no natural downstream outlets (except during extreme flood events as noted in the proposal). Therefore the lake and its catchment area are normally isolated from other watersheds. A fundamental concept in sustainable watershed management is “never artificially transfer water across unconnected watershed boundaries”. The Manitoba government arduously presented this concept in its opposition to the Devil’s Lake outlet in North Dakota that now transfers water across natural watershed boundaries into Manitoba watersheds. How can the provincial government now reverse itself and allow transfer from the isolated Whitewater Lake watershed into other watersheds in Manitoba?

This project would transfer water into the Souris River, the Assiniboine River, Lake Manitoba (via the Portage Diversion), Red River and Lake Winnipeg – all stressed ecosystems. All these systems have their own stories regarding stresses and certainly none of them need the extra water from this project or the constituents that may be transferred with that water. Let me focus on the Souris River where I live near Hartney. The floods of 2011 and 2014 were devastating to our area. To date only a portion of the damaged infrastructure has been replaced with more investment needed to bring the situation back to pre-flood levels. On our property the destruction to the river and associated riparian system has been extensive. Besides the physical erosion effects on the riverbanks, tens of thousands of trees (no exaggeration) on our property have been killed by the high water levels. The ecosystem has been irreparably damaged. While damage to agricultural lands always gets the attention of the media and local governments, all of us living in this watershed have been affected. Like the catchment area of Whitewater Lake, watersheds associated with the Souris River have been affected by drainage and land clearing. The surface water storage capacity in our surrounding area has been greatly affected. When we first purchased our property near Hartney, a significant rain event would cause the river to rise 2 or 3 days later. These days the river begins to rise on the same day as the rain event and the rise is much higher in proportion to the size of

the rain event. During the 2014 flood the river through our property rose over 12 feet in 3 days. Obviously our watershed is already under severe distress. And now we're being expected to stress the system even further simply because we're lower down in the watershed.

While I could go on about the many aspects of the water quantity issues related to the artificial lowering of Whitewater Lake, I would now like to address the issue of the quality of water to be dumped on the downstream systems should this project move ahead. Beyond the obvious additional nutrient loading to the downstream systems there are a couple of aspects to the Whitewater Lake water quality that require attention and either alone should be enough to deny this proposal. The first issue is salinity of the lake water. As a terminal basin, Whitewater Lake has elevated salinity levels due to the accumulation and concentration of the salts through evaporation. In addition a study by an University of Manitoba graduate student showed that not all of the elevated salt concentrations in the lake water is due to evaporation alone and that geologic conditions associated with the subsurface soils and groundwater are contributing salt to the lake surface water. This would ensure that the lake would remain an on-going source of salinity to the downstream systems even after the initial flush of water from the system. Salt will be exported and continue to be exported over the long term to the downstream watersheds should the proposed outlets move ahead. The effects of this added salt burden to the receiving water bodies/systems are unknown and would require significant research to determine both the short-term and long-term impacts of increasing the salt load on these already stressed systems. The impacts of increased salinity on fisheries, nutrient cycling, vegetation growth and reproduction, and algae production are but a few of the variables that would require investigation in each of the receiving water systems.

The other water quality problem associated with Whitewater Lake is the presence of the bacteria causing avian botulism. Whitewater Lake has long been identified by wildlife agencies as one of the most severe botulism outbreak areas in all of Canada. The botulism bacteria is present in the soils and waters of infected lakes and under the right environmental conditions it multiplies rapidly. Waterfowl primarily ducks that ingest the bacteria eventually die. Botulism die-offs have been reported on numerous occasions in Whitewater Lake. In 1996 I was involved in a team of wildlife agencies including the Canadian Wildlife Service, Manitoba Conservation and Ducks Unlimited Canada that collected more than 100,000 carcasses of birds (largely ducks) that died from botulism in Whitewater Lake that year alone. Our research also showed that in these botulism clean-ups we actually only found a very small proportion of the birds (well less than 25%) that actually died from botulism in the lake. As a result the actual mortality in Whitewater Lake in 1996 likely was half a millions birds or more (to find all this information on botulism in Whitewater Lake simply Google 'Whitewater Lake botulism'). Fortunately as an isolated basin the botulism outbreaks in southwest Manitoba have been largely limited to Whitewater Lake itself. Once outlets are in place the bacteria associated with the water and its associated suspended sediments will be transferred to the receiving watersheds. Wetlands associated with the Souris and Assiniboine Rivers, the Delta Marsh (via the Portage Diversion

and Lake Manitoba), the Netley Marsh (via the Red River) and Lake Winnipeg and its many associated wetlands will all be exposed to one of the most serious wildlife diseases ever documented. In addition, more regular low water periods caused by the outlets will likely result in the environmental conditions to cause more frequent botulism outbreaks in Whitewater Lake itself. I would argue that the botulism issue alone should be sufficient to deny this proposal.

Before moving on I would like to make some general observations on the current state of the Souris River as one of the systems receiving water from the proposed project. Although I haven't taken any water samples (yet), it is pretty obvious that the river has a nutrient loading problem. In most years the river begins to emit an odour in about mid-August and the entire river substrate is covered with a foul layer of what I assume is bacteria, algae and fungus (again some samples will need to be taken). When I talk about swimming in the river, the locals just laugh at the thought. I've also talked to people about fishing in the river and while some people do fish there they are almost unanimous in their comments that they would never eat the fish. So although this isn't a scientific assessment, it's obvious the river is under stress from nutrient loading and other contaminants. Before there is any major addition of water and its associated nutrients/salts/contaminants as proposed by this project there should be a thorough scientific evaluation of the current state of the Souris River and its ability handle additional water and associated contaminants.

I have limited my comments primarily to water quantity and quality issues. Although I have many concerns regarding the effects of the outlets on wildlife and wildlife habitat within the lake, I'm sure that you will hear from a variety of wildlife organizations regarding these issues. I do however have one final concern that I would like to bring to your attention and it comes from years of experience working with water management projects and the public. Once the infrastructure for a project is in place, it will be operated to suit the needs and concerns of the local interests regardless of the restrictions in a signed agreement with the various partners. If land is flooded and opening a control will reduce that flooding, it will be opened regardless of what any agreement says. During my career I have seen countless instances where controls or access to controls have been 'vandalized' in order to change water levels to suit individual needs (a recent example is the unauthorized tampering/destruction of the control infrastructure on Big Grass Marsh this past fall). The 'vandals' are never identified (as a local reeve once told me 'you don't report on your neighbours' – actually a concept I understand and respect). However with that reality in place, the physical infrastructure must be designed with the understanding that it won't always be operated following some preplanned and agreed-upon design. I'm not sure how that's possible with a complicated project like one proposed here or with a project where the downstream impacts from improper operation can be quite serious (e.g. adding water to the Souris River when farms and homes along the river are already under water).

Finally the issues defined above show that this proposed project to move water from Whitewater Lake to other downstream watersheds does not conform to the spirit or intent of the recently released Manitoba Surface Water Strategy by Manitoba Water Stewardship/Conservation. Approving this proposal will show the local municipalities, conservation districts and indeed the people of Manitoba that the department is not committed to that strategy or the sustainable management of Manitoba watersheds.

So in closing, I urge the provincial government to reject this project in order to protect both Whitewater Lake and the watersheds downstream from the proposed outlets. That said, I would also strongly encourage the provincial government to work with the local municipal governments and other resource agencies to provide the technical assistance and funding to develop a watershed management plan within the Whitewater Lake catchment area that will address the ongoing water problems in the area.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'H. Murkin'.

Henry Murkin  
Hartney, Manitoba

*Please circulate as required.*

# MUNICIPALITY OF GRASSLAND

BRAD COE  
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER  
BOX 399  
HARTNEY, MB. ROM OXO

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May 18, 2016

Environmental Approvals Branch  
123 Main Street, Suite 160  
Winnipeg, MB  
R3C 1A5

BW

Dear Sirs:

**Re: Municipality of Deloraine-Winchester – Whitewater Lake Management Project – File 5822.00**

The council of the Municipality of Grassland would like to state that they approve of the project in principle but have the following concerns that need to be addressed before they are in full agreement of the Whitewater Lake Management Project as proposed:

1. There is a need to study quality of the water being drained into the Elgin Dam recreation area and the Souris River to ensure that there are no possible saline and other undesirable qualities that would be detrimental to aquatic species.
2. The control and management of the water release structures and the need for downstream permission before opening them needs to be addressed.
3. There is a possibility of damage to downstream infrastructure from the increased drainage and compensation agreements are needed in the event of damage caused by such drainage.
4. The long term maintenance and management costs of the drainage channels and the funding of such costs need to be determined.
5. The capacity of the downstream infrastructure to handle the drainage produced needs to be assessed.
6. Will there be enforcement to resolve and compensate for damage caused by any drainage in the proposed drainage system including illegal drainage activities?
7. The council would like Manitoba Conservation to not issue any more new drainage permits that would add to Whitewater Lake or the downstream channels and to enforce closures of any illegal drainage that might occur.
8. Will there be compensation and repairs to any roads damaged caused by construction activity related to the project?

Yours truly,

  
Brad Coe, CAO

Webb, Bruce (CWS)

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From: Barry & Kim Sunaer' [REDACTED]  
Sent: May-19-16 9:18 PM  
To: Webb, Bruce (CWS) BW  
Subject: Notice of Environment Act Proposal

To Whom it May Concern:

Regarding Municipality of Deloraine-Winchester- Whitewater lake Management project - file:582200

We have farmed in this municipality for over forty years and have been through both the drought of Whitewater Lake and the flooding of Whitewater lake and we are very much in support of this project to regulate high water levels. Something desperately needs to be done to control the level. Unnaturally high levels have caused thousands of acres of drowned farmland and put peoples homes at yards at risk of flooding. Millions of dollars of lost farm income has occurred also causing potentially irreversible damage to valuable crop land. Considerable costs to municipal roads because of high water levels, wildlife now living adjacent to municipal roads because of change of habitat have caused multiple collisions with vehicles and excessive hunting from road side. Excessive high water levels have caused an increased level in the water table surrounding Whitewater, which has driven the salinity levels up to caused potentially irreversible damage also. Fluctuating water levels around whitewater continue to damage crop land, wetlands, pastures, and farm yards. A level on Whitewater is the only option to prevent any further damage to our environment and our economy. Our livelihoods in the area depend on it for the future of our children.

Thank you,

Barry and Kim Sunaert