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June 29, 2018

Bruce Webb  
Environmental Approvals Branch  
Manitoba Sustainable Development  
1007 Century Street  
Winnipeg, MB R3H 0W4



**Re: Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project - Invitation to Participate in Technical Advisory Group**

Dear Mr. Webb:

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (the Agency) is undertaking an environmental assessment of the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project (the Project). I invite representatives from Manitoba Sustainable Development to participate in a technical advisory group that is being established for this environmental assessment.

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada, decided that the federal environmental assessment for the Project should continue as an Agency-led environmental assessment and not be referred to a review panel. I am aware that the Project also requires an environmental assessment under Manitoba's *The Environment Act*.

In response to the concerns raised by Indigenous groups regarding the potential effects of the Project and transparency of the environmental assessment process, the Agency is also inviting potentially affected Indigenous groups and the Regional Municipality of Grahamdale to participate with federal expert departments in the technical advisory group.

As members of the technical advisory group, Indigenous groups and the local municipality would be able to contribute their Indigenous and local knowledge, working directly with provincial and federal expert departments to review the information and address issues, review potential mitigation measures, and influence the design of monitoring and follow-up requirements.

The work of the technical advisory group would be enhanced if experts from Manitoba Sustainable Development were members, contributing to the rigour and transparency of the environmental assessment.

If Manitoba Sustainable Development wishes to participate in the technical advisory group, the Agency can provide additional information related to the timelines and next steps in drafting Terms of Reference for the technical advisory group. Please respond by July 27, 2018 indicating your interest and the appropriate contact(s).

Should officials in your office have any questions in this regard, please contact me by telephone at 780-495-2479 or by e-mail at [Anna.Kessler@ceaa-acee.gc.ca](mailto:Anna.Kessler@ceaa-acee.gc.ca). I look forward to your response to this invitation.

Sincerely,



Anna Kessler  
Project Manager

cc: Matthew Dairon, Consultation Coordinator, Canadian Environmental  
Assessment Agency

**Webb, Bruce (SD)**

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**Subject:** FW: Request for Review/Comment by June 19, 2018: Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels File: 5966.00

**From:** Kiss, Brian (SD)

**Sent:** June-20-18 1:23 PM

**To:** Webb, Bruce (SD) <Bruce.Webb@gov.mb.ca>

**Subject:** RE: Request for Review/Comment by June 19, 2018: Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels File: 5966.00

Hey Bruce,

My apologies for the late response.

The Wildlife component of the Wildlife and Fisheries Branch has reviewed the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Scoping Document, and provides the following comments:

We appreciate seeing the wide range of potential direct and indirect project-related effects to wildlife populations included in this document. We look forward to seeing how potential effects are assessed and mitigated for in the Environmental Impact Statement.

Manitoba Infrastructure acknowledges "*In some instances, permanent or semi-permanent wetland habitats may be lost or altered as a result of Project construction and operation*". Based on this and the potential fragmentation and alteration of other wildlife habitat in the project area, we suggest that in addition to assessment and monitoring for the specific species identified in this document, MI also investigates broad landscape and habitat change in the EIS. This assessment will determine the magnitude of existing (interim operations) and future change, and how impacts could be mitigated and/or offset within the project area.

-Brian Kiss

## Webb, Bruce (SD)

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**Subject:** FW: Request for Review/Comment by June 19, 2018: Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels File: 5966.00

**From:** Epp, Jane (SD)

**Sent:** June-20-18 1:45 PM

**To:** Webb, Bruce (SD) <Bruce.Webb@gov.mb.ca>

**Subject:** FW: Request for Review/Comment by June 19, 2018: Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels File: 5966.00

Hi Bruce,

I believe in the initial phases of this project we were asked about the peat and what can be done with it, I believe we met with Asit. Anyhow, there is obviously quite a bit of peat being impacted by the creation of the channels. We did reach out to the industry on whether they were interested in using it but do to strict harvesting parameters set by industry it would not have been feasible.

Forestry and Peatlands preference is:

- to limit disturbance to peat in the area of construction and access,
- mitigate hydrological impacts caused by construction to allow for re-wetting of peatlands post construction, and
- cap peat with clay to for re-contouring/distribution (landscaping) post construction

Jane Epp

Forestry and Peatlands Branch

Water Stewardship and Biodiversity Division, Sustainable Development

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*Trees are renewable, recyclable and sustainable.*

## **Webb, Bruce (SD)**

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**From:** Toop, David (SD)  
**Sent:** June-20-18 10:32 AM  
**To:** Webb, Bruce (SD)  
**Cc:** Phipps, Graham (SD)  
**Subject:** Lake St. Martin Drainage Channel

Dear Bruce,

Graham has asked me to review and comment on Manitoba Infrastructure's Project Description : Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels.

I have reviewed the proposal and am providing the following comments:

### **Lake St. Martin to Lake Winnipeg channel**

The channel from Lake St. Martin runs mostly through fen. It is presumed that the channel will mostly be incised in clay, but there is the possibility that sections could be incised into carbonate bedrock, or entirely into peat and organics. Some areas may not be clay, but could be silty or sandy materials. Regardless there will still be a significant organic layer at the surface.

Since the channel is supposed to be clay-lined and self-contained in clay, with the clay being used sourced from the excavation, how will substrate that is not clay be dealt with? Will clay be sourced from another area, to line channel sides in order to isolate the channel to prevent interaction with surrounding hydrology?

There should be a sufficient number of test holes along the route to know what material they expect to encounter.

### **Lake Manitoba to Lake St. Martin channel.**

It is stated that the channel would mostly be in clay, though this seems speculative. Portions of the channel could be excavated in sand or silt and it could be in the same sand as surrounding shallow wells or nearby small lakes. As the area is one of beach ridges and clay/organic swales, we should expect to encounter these along the route. There is also the potential of excavating into the Carbonate aquifer, without indicating how this might be handled. Since the channel is lined with and flanked by excavated materials, what happens when those materials are not clay? Will the Carbonate aquifer be sealed off?

There should be a sufficient number of test holes along the route to know what material they expect to encounter.

There is not a clear assessment provided of potential impacts to surrounding wells. This may include issues if there is a direct connection between the outlet channel and the Carbonate aquifer concerning water levels or water quality. The water well survey is not field-verified.

### **Flowing Conditions**

Flowing conditions are known in the area and could be encountered along either channel resulting in heave. It is not stated how these conditions would be handled if encountered, but they are best avoided. Karst springs are a possibility in the Lake St. Martin channel. It may be possible to identify karst springs, if present in the fen area by examining aerial imagery.

Kind Regards

David Toop  
Hydrogeologist

**Webb, Bruce (SD)**

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**Subject:** FW: Request for Review/Comment by June 19, 2018: Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels File: 5966.00

**From:** Vitt, Cory (SD)  
**Sent:** May-11-18 9:54 AM  
**To:** Webb, Bruce (SD) <Bruce.Webb@gov.mb.ca>  
**Cc:** Barlishen, Kim (SD) <Kim.Barlishen@gov.mb.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: Request for Review/Comment by June 19, 2018: Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels File: 5966.00

**Office of Drinking Water:**

Baseline, prior to construction, full water chemistries from ALS must be established in coordination with ODW, for the Watchorn Provincial Park Semi-Public Water System (SPWS #4243.00).

A full water chemistry test, including EC/TC, must be performed each year (annually) during the construction of the Lake Manitoba to Lake St. Martin Channel.

A full water chemistry test, including EC/TC, must be performed the year following the construction of the Lake Manitoba to Lake St. Martin Channel.

The costs of these additional water chemistry tests will be assumed under the project and not by the Office of Drinking Water or Watchorn Provincial Park.

If you require any clarifications, or further information, please let me know.

Thanks.

Cory Vitt

**Cory Vitt, M.Eng. P.Eng.**

Approvals Engineer

Office of Drinking Water

Manitoba Sustainable Development

1007 Century Street

Winnipeg, Manitoba R3H 0W4

**Phone:** 204-806-1363

**Fax:** 204-945-1365

**Email:** [Cory.Vitt@gov.mb.ca](mailto:Cory.Vitt@gov.mb.ca)

**Website:** [www.manitoba.ca/drinkingwater](http://www.manitoba.ca/drinkingwater)

DATE: 2018-06-19

**TO: Bruce WEBB**  
**Water Development and Control  
Assessment Officer**  
Environmental Approvals Branch  
Manitoba Sustainable Development  
123 Main Street, Suite 160 (Box 80)  
Winnipeg, MB  
R3C 1A5

**Cc: Christina NESBITT**  
Impact Assessment Archaeologist  
Historic Resources Branch

**FROM: Suyoko TSUKAMOTO**  
**Impact Assessment Archaeologist**  
Historic Resources Branch  
Main Floor – 213 Notre Dame Avenue  
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PHONE NO: (204) 945-2118  
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**SUBJECT: Request for review/comment – Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet  
Channels File 5966.00  
HRB FILE: AAS-18-13130**

Concerns.

Further to your e-mail regarding the above-noted EAP, the Historic Resources Branch has examined the locations in conjunction with Branch records for areas of potential concern. The proposed outlet channels are situated along ancient and active waterways wherein there is at least one reported archaeological site in the area. These factors, in addition to being in catchment area(s) for Indigenous communities and former fur trade post(s), suggest that any future planned development within the area has the potential to impact heritage resources, therefore, the Historic Resources Branch has concerns.

Under Section 12(2) of The Heritage Resources Act, if the Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage has reason to believe that heritage resources or human remains are known, or thought likely to be present, on lands that are to be developed, then the owner/developer is required to conduct at his/her own expense, a heritage resource impact assessment (HRIA) and mitigation, if necessary, prior to the project's start.

The developer must contract a qualified archaeological consultant to conduct a Heritage Resources Impact assessment (HRIA) of the proposed development location, in order to identify and assess any heritage resources that may be negatively impacted by development. If desirable, the Branch will work with the developer/land owners and its consultant to draw up terms of reference for this project.

If you have any further questions or comments, please feel free to contact the Branch as above.

Manitoba Historic Resources Branch  
Archaeological Assessment Services