

5.0 Public engagement process

5.1 Overview of process and goals

Manitoba Hydro developed a public engagement process (PEP) to provide the public and interested parties with meaningful opportunities to participate in the process, including receiving timely and pertinent information and methods to voice any concerns and share input into the environmental assessment process. This process started in June 2017 and will continue throughout the regulatory review and construction processes as project information becomes available.

Manitoba Hydro undertook a public engagement process to:

- share clear and timely information;
- obtain feedback for use in the assessment process;
- gather and understand local interests;
- consider interests and concerns into the environmental assessment process; and
- discuss potential mitigation measures.

These goals were met by:

- involving the public and interested parties throughout environmental assessment process;
- providing clear, timely, and relevant information and responses; and
- documenting and reporting on feedback received.

5.2 Design

The process aimed to notify and involve participants who would be directly or indirectly affected by the Project. These included landowners, municipalities and government departments (see “Determination of Interested Parties”). Direct mailings, broad notification, one-on-one meetings, council meetings with rural municipalities as well as an information session to share project information were incorporated in the design of the process.

Manitoba Hydro has undertaken two public engagement processes in the area previously. Site selection used public engagement data previously collected through the Bipole III Transmission Project and the St. Vital Transmission Complex).

5.3 Determination of interested parties

Manitoba Hydro defined an interested party as a group or individual who may:

- have potential feedback to provide;
- be affected by the decisions made regarding the Project;
- have specific interests or mandate in the area;
- have potential data to share;
- have an ability to disseminate information to membership/constituency; and
- possess an interest in the Project's area.

As part of the engagement process, Manitoba Hydro aimed to engage:

Affected landowners

This individual will be directly impacted by the Project and was identified based on easements / purchase requirements of land to host the electrical station. One landowner will be directly affected by the Project.

Adjacent landowners

Landowners within one mile of the proposed station were identified as there will be a change in their landscape and they may have concerns about the development in close proximity to their lands. Nineteen adjacent landowners fall within one mile of the proposed station location.

Seine-Rat River Conservation District

This conservation district's mission statement is "To promote the stewardship of our land and water resources to ensure a healthy and prosperous lifestyle for all watershed residents, now and into the future." This conservation district also manages the Tourond Discovery Centre, located approximately one mile from the station site.

Manitoba Sustainable Development Technical Advisory Committee

This group of government departments will be provided the environmental assessment for review and comment. Early notification of the Project and incorporation of feedback

allowed for additional opportunities for concerns to be addressed prior to filing the environmental assessment.

Manitoba Infrastructure

Manitoba Infrastructure potentially had information or feedback to provide regarding weight restrictions on local roads, management of the Tourond drain, and future planning.

Rural Municipalities of Hanover & De Salaberry

Council was informed as to the activities being undertaken in their communities. Information was shared to assist in addressing questions and concerns their constituents may raise.

Other interest groups

These include groups who may have an interest in the area and included Keystone Agricultural Producers and Steinbach Community Planning Services. Each were notified about the Project by email on June 16, 2017

Members of the general public

General notification was provided to adjacent communities (Tourond and Kleefeld) as they may potentially be indirectly affected by the Project. Notices were sent to 350 mailing addresses.

In total, twenty-eight groups, one affected landowner, and nineteen adjacent landowners were directly notified regarding the Project.

5.4 Engagement activities

5.4.1 Previous project feedback

During site selection, public engagement feedback received and presented in the environmental assessments for the St. Vital Transmission Complex and the Bipole III Transmission Project was reviewed. Feedback was reviewed as the projects were in close proximity to potential sites being considered in the area. Concerns and comments reviewed were represented during site selection.

5.4.2 Material creation

Manitoba Hydro developed a newsletter and storyboards to share information regarding the proposed station. This material outlined the environmental assessment process, timelines, potential effects on the environment and contact information to share feedback. A copy of the newsletter is included in Appendix A.

5.4.3 Project web page

Manitoba Hydro developed a Project information web page (www.hydro.mb.ca/desalaberryeast). The Project site includes a Project description, anticipated schedule, the environmental assessment process, telephone and email contact information for questions and concerns and a Document Library where engagement materials are included.

5.4.4 Notification and engagement with affected landowner

In November of 2016, a property agent with Manitoba Hydro met with the landowner regarding the possibility of purchasing property for the station location. Since this time on-going discussions have occurred between Manitoba Hydro and the property owner who also attended the information session in July 2017.

5.4.5 Notification and engagement with adjacent landowners

On June 15, 2017, an information package was sent to nineteen adjacent landowners within one mile of the proposed station site. The letter contained a newsletter (Appendix A) and encouraged landowners to contact the public engagement team to discuss their concerns or provide their feedback through one-on-one discussions. The letters also informed of the Project walk-in information session being held in Kleefeld where they were welcomed to attend and discuss the Project with a Manitoba Hydro representative.

5.4.6 Kleefeld & Tourond notices

Two weeks prior to the Project information center, 350 newsletters were distributed to two postal codes (Kleefeld [ROA 0V0] and Tourond [ROA 2G0]) as they represented the two closest communities to the proposed station site.

The newsletter served as public notice for the Project information centre as well as contact information as to how to share feedback outside of the information centre.

5.4.7 Walk-in information session

On Wednesday, July 12, 2017, from 12:00 to 7:00 p.m. a walk-in information session was held at the Kleefeld Recreation Centre for local community members. The session followed a drop-in format and welcomed local community members to attend and ask questions and have feedback documented by a Manitoba Hydro representative. Manitoba Hydro representatives hosted the event to explain the Project, answer questions and gather feedback. Approximately 20 participants attended the session.

5.4.8 Council meetings

Meetings were held with the Rural Municipalities of De Salaberry and Hanover to share project information and to collect feedback on the area for the proposed station. The meeting with the RM of De Salaberry occurred July 5, 2017, and the meeting with the RM of Hanover occurred on June 28, 2017. Concerns and comments raised by these councils have been summarized in the collection of feedback section of this chapter.

5.4.9 Project email address

Manitoba Hydro staff used a dedicated Project email address (LEAProjects@hydro.mb.ca) to receive comments, address concerns, collect feedback and answer questions related to the Project. The email address will continue be maintained throughout the regulatory review, construction and operational phases of the Project.

5.4.10 Toll free information line

The toll-free Information Line (1-877-343-1631) was in operation from the Project initiation in June 2017 and remains available for public inquiry. The Information Line is operated by Manitoba Hydro staff and will continue to be maintained throughout the regulatory review, construction and operational phases of the Project.

5.5 Collection of feedback

5.5.1 Overview

Engagement feedback typically focused around one or more of the following topics:

- the name of the Project; and
- the impacts of additional costs incurred by producers to spray fields due to the presence of the St. Vital Transmission Complex (not related to this project, but discussed at the De Salaberry East information session).

Name of Project

At the RM of Hanover Council meeting and at the information session held at Kleefeld it was brought to the attention of Manitoba Hydro that there was a concern regarding the name of the station – Stony Brook, which is associated with the city of Steinbach. Due to the station being situated in the RM of De Salaberry members of council thought it would be prudent to have De Salaberry in the name of the station. Due to the issue raised during this council meeting and during the walk-in information session, Manitoba Hydro changed the name of the station to De Salaberry East Station.

Issues with other Projects

A landowner in close proximity to the station identified a concern regarding the St. Vital Transmission Complex that traverses their property. The property owners were concerned that the transmission line will impact their ability to aerial spray their fields once the Project is constructed. Discussions between property agents and the landowner will occur regarding these concerns at the time of easement negotiation.

5.6 Ongoing notices and communication

Manitoba Hydro will continue to notify stakeholder groups, the municipalities and landowners within the area. This includes notifying affected and adjacent landowners of upcoming timelines and providing them with contact information. The Project web page will continue to be updated as the Project progresses and the information line and email address will remain active.