APPENDIX F

Opaskwayak Cree Nation Report on Proposed Bipole III Transmission Line

Natural Resource Council

Aboriginal Ecological Knowledge Project

Report on Proposed Bipole III Transmission Line - Manitoba Hydro

June 30th 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Manitoba Hydro and the Opaskwayak Cree Nation (OCN), under the auspices of the Natural Resource Council (NRC), entered into a Contribution Agreement March 26th 2010 which provides for meaningful consultation by OCN on the proposed Bipole III within its traditional territories.

This report informs of the process in which engagement with membership was co-ordinated for the purpose of assessing potential impacts as a result of further transmission line construction and installation throughout OCN traditional territories.

This report also provides commentary on the anticipated benefits that can be realized as a result of engaging such an initiative within our territories. These benefits take into consideration Manitoba over the longer term, and OCN's interim socioeconomic benefits as a result of considering a venture of this stature.

OCN has had prior engagement with Manitoba Hydro with the most recent Wuskwatim Line and is using this experience to consider all aspects in preparation of the proposed Bipole III. It is our intention to use this experience considering best practices and lessons learned as a result of co-ordinating the project over the course of a three (3) year period.

OCN appreciates the opportunity to be engaged in meaningful consultation with Manitoba Hydro, and anticipates continued discussions for the purpose of ensuring tangible benefits that focus on investing into the resource, skill development and economic potential that such an initiative will provide.

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1. Introduction and Overview

1.1 Introduction

In July 2010 Manitoba Hydro officially announced the Preliminary Preferred Route (PPR) arising as a result of the Site Selection Environmental Process undertaken from preceding years.

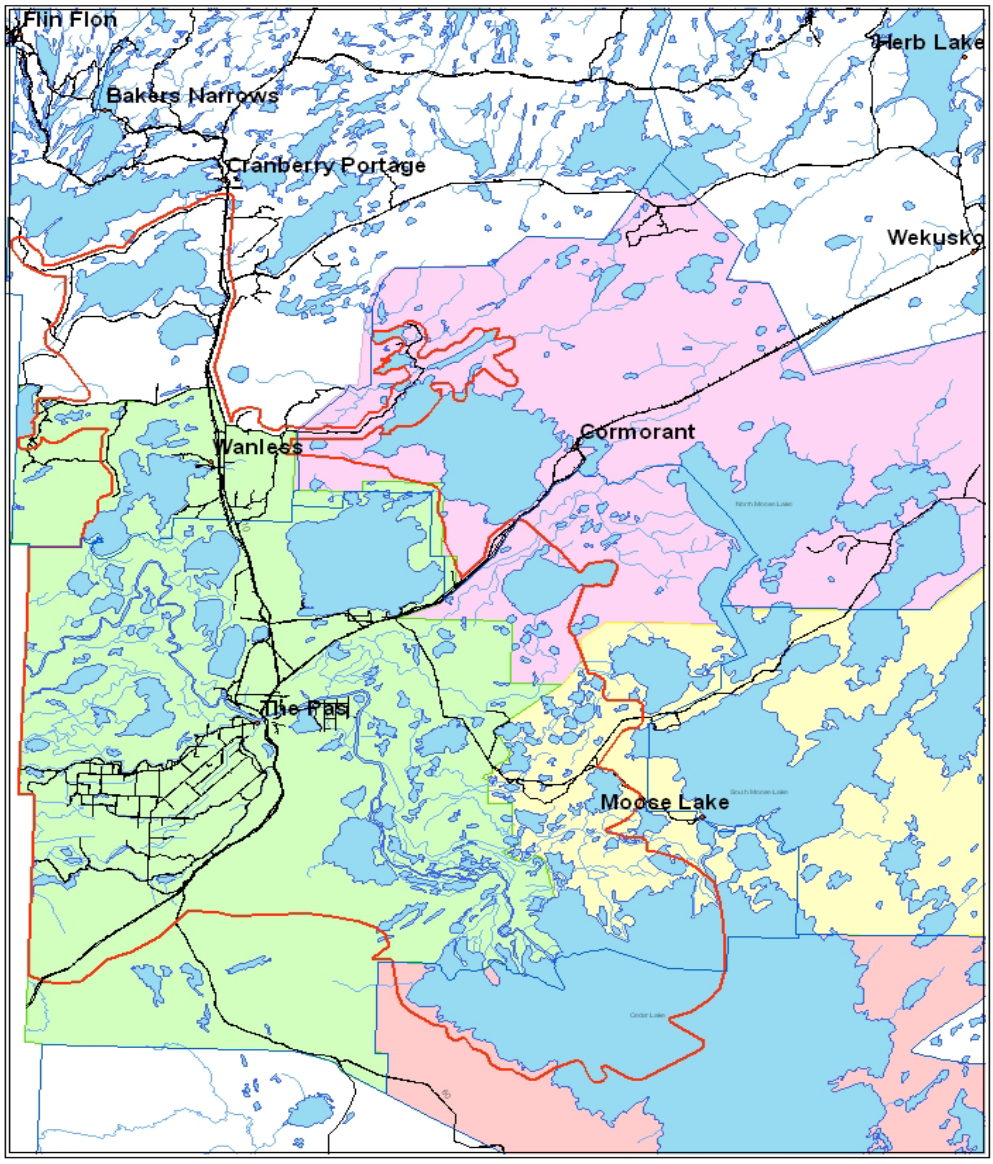
Manitoba Hydro has expressed a need to increase the reliability of its High Voltage direct current (HVdc) transmission system from 70% during peak capacity; it intends to do so by constructing a new transmission line, Bipole III along the western corridor of the province.

In November 2009 OCN entered into discussions with Manitoba Hydro with consideration given to early engagement in the planning process for Bipole III. On March 26th 2010 the Contribution Agreement was signed for the purpose of:

- developing a process for OCN and Manitoba Hydro to discuss the proposed Bipole III Transmission Project;
- encouraging membership engagement for the purpose of addressing issues, concerns, and opportunities related to Bipole III;
- identifying and characterizing the environment where the alternative routes for Bipole III are sited in OCN's traditional territories;
- map Aboriginal Ecological Knowledge (AEK) in OCN's traditional territories;
- describe how the use of AEK will enhance the level of consideration given to the ecosystem and the well-being of the environment in relation to Bipole III;
- explain the findings and considerations arising from discussions with Elders, resource users, membership and leadership regarding Bipole III;
- identify potential positive and negative effects of Bipole III within OCN traditional territories; and
- propose mechanisms that will allow for follow-up on areas of primary concern related to Bipole III.

OCN has a legal and inherent interest in this initiative given that a portion of the proposed corridor rests in OCN traditional territories, which continue to serve the cultural and subsistence needs of membership as a whole. The proposed corridor will encompass 83 kilometers of territory, intersecting with five (5) traplines and traditional use areas. This will entail an estimated installation of 145 structures. This, in addition to those structures which were most recently installed as part of the Wuskwatim initiative.

OCN Traditional Territory



April 11th, 2008 / Derek Leask
Manitoba Conservation
NW Region
* For Reference Purposes Only

1.2 Overview

The contributions made by Elders and resource users in OCN traditional territories will serve to determine the right of way for the Preliminary Preferred Corridor for Bipole III, while also articulating views on the anticipated positive and negative impacts as a result of the construction, installation and operation of the Bipole III in the specified territories.

Reference to our worldview will be cited to allow for greater consideration in the Environmental Assessment Process to be undertaken by Manitoba Hydro as part of licencing. OCN is known as a leader towards progress and independence as a First Nation not only in Manitoba, but throughout Canada. That being said, however, we are in our infancy when it comes to developing and formalizing land use planning initiatives in respect of our traditional territories. The opportunity to engage in meaningful ways with Manitoba Hydro serves as the initial stepping stone towards achieving this vision.

Further reference will also be given to the process used to communicate with membership, in particular our Elders and resource users. This will include description of key personnel and Elders, the interview selection process, the development of consent forms and the questionnaire utilized for this purpose.

This report will then provide our findings as a result of the process and make recommendations not only on the Preliminary Preferred corridor, but the ways in which we can continue to ensure meaningful engagement throughout the 'life of the line'.

2.1 OCN Joint Management Agreement Preamble

On February 15th 2007 the Opaskwayak Cree Nation formally signed the Agreement for the Joint Management of Resources with the Province of Manitoba recognizing the following:

- Manitoba, principally through the Department of Conservation and the Department of Water Stewardship is responsible for the management of lands, waters, resources and the environment of Crown lands within the Province of Manitoba pursuant to The Crown Lands Act, The Wildlife Act, The Fisheries Act (Manitoba), The Forest Act, The Water Rights Act, The Water Power Act and other Acts of the Legislature of Manitoba in accordance with the authority of the Manitoba Natural Resources Transfer Agreement;
- The Chief and Council of OCN is responsible for the management of lands, waters, resources and the environment of the Opaskwayak reserve lands under the Indian Act (Canada) and the First Nations Land Management Act (Canada);
- OCN and other First Nations, have throughout their history, been concerned with and involved in the wise use and careful management of natural resources as part of aboriginal customs and traditions so as to maintain and perpetuate the lands and resources which provided their livelihood;
- The Members of OCN (the "Members") have treaty and aboriginal rights in respect of their natural resources on Crown lands and waters and on Opaskwayak Reserve Lands, including rights under Treaty Number #5 and the right to hunt, trap and fish for food at all seasons of the year on unoccupied Crown Land and other land to which they have a right of access as set out in the Manitoba Natural Resources Transfer Agreement;
- Crown lands and Opaskwayak Cree Nation reserve lands have traditionally and historically been used by the Members for the purpose of harvesting natural resources;
- Manitoba and OCN agree that the sustainable management and development of lands, waters, resources and the environment within an OCN Traditional Territory within the Province of Manitoba can best be achieved through a joint management agreement;
- OCN and Manitoba entered into a Memorandum of Understanding in November 2001 to guide the development of a Joint Management Agreement.

3. Aboriginal Ecological Knowledge (AEK): The Process

3.1 Background

Upon considering a formal relationship with Manitoba Hydro there was hesitation in recognizing the process under the commonly used reference of 'Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge'. This was borne as a result of past experiences with studies, and the like, that tended to romanticize and/or relegate the legacy of our people as a people somehow of the 'past'. The term 'traditional' gives rise to this concern as it implies the old ways; ways that are no longer part of today or have not been considered as part of a future. It is for this reason that OCN opted to embrace the reference 'Aboriginal Ecological Knowledge (AEK)' as it is representative of our past, our present and our future in the territories of the Muskakowak.

Co-ordination of the AEK Process also entailed much consideration; firstly in respect of all of OCN traditional territories keeping in mind that this territory extends into Saskatchewan, and rests upon the Saskatchewan River watershed that spans three (3) provinces; all of which represents Creator's life's blood. It is because of this that the focus on the Proposed Preferred Corridor was difficult because it forced limits on the scope of our territories and the relationship to our teachings.

The process of identifying key Elders, who would serve as team leaders, took into consideration a number of factors, in particular: their ties to the community; their responsibilities within the community; their history on the land; their natural tendency to impart knowledge as part of their traditional responsibilities; and their physical ability to appreciate and fulfill the responsibility of such a large and important project. This process also included the need to consider 'western' thinking vis-à-vis the potential for legal 'tests' for credibility of our knowledge and relationship to the territories.

Interviews were conducted by the Elders with technical support provided by staff using the interview survey instrument developed for this purpose. The group believed it was important to interview the most senior of our membership given their history and relationship to the lands as subsistence users. It was also important to begin here given their age; understanding that as every Elder passes in our community so too does their knowledge.

The results of each interview were translated and transcribed in both the Cree and English language. The responses were analyzed focusing on those areas that would be most affected as a result of proposed line.

3.2 Bipole III Elders and Technical Support

The Manager and Project Co-ordinator served as the lead staff for the project; with the Project Co-ordinator holding primary responsibility for all aspects of co-ordination and monitoring. Three Elders were engaged to serve as the lead in all interviews. Technical support was also provided with a staff person hired for this specific purpose. Lastly, two transcriptionists were retained to work under the supervision of the Elder responsible for translation and transcription. All personnel responsible for translation were fully fluent in the Cree language with the lead interpreter holding a bachelors degree in education and influential in developing the Cree language curriculum for the First Nation education system. In total eight (8) individuals were responsible for the completion of the project.

Lead Elders (from left to right) Moses Bignell, Mabel Bignell and Raymond Lathlin-Ross

All members were provided orientation to the proposed project and briefed on all relevant issues related to and/or the potential to arise from the interview process. Reference guides were developed for ease of reference during the developmental stages of the project and throughout the duration of the project.

Members were provided orientation to 'interviewing' inclusive of the process, conducting interviews, and cautions on influencing and/or providing personal commentary on the proposed Bipole III project. All interviews were to be conducted individually and transcribed verbatim.

The Project Co-ordinator was responsible for arranging and co-ordinating interviews and ensuring the equipment necessary for this purpose was both available and in working order. All in-person interviews were conducting using electronic recording devices. Mapping data was undertaken with the use of the Capturx digital pen.

Communication occurred routinely throughout the life of the project. Regular and informal meetings were held to assess progress and reconcile issues arising from interviews. Opportunities were provided to evaluate the survey instruments and adjust where necessary.

3.3 The Interview Selection Process

The Opaskwayak Cree Nation is one of the largest First Nations in Manitoba. It has an estimated 5,600 registered members with an estimated 3,600 living on-reserve. Based on this data it was reasonable to set a target of 250 interviews recognizing that resource use is comprised of many types of gathering.

As stated previously, our most senior members were identified as the primary priority for interviews. Our most senior Elders in the community were 95, a female, and 93, a male, respectively.

Our most senior Elder

In total twenty-eight (28) Elders and resource users were interviewed. Of the twenty-eight, nineteen (19) interviews received closer examination in consideration of the Preliminary Preferred Route. The 19 are represented as follows:

Age	Gender	Language	Confidentiality
95	F	English	Yes
84	F	Cree	
81	M	Cree	
76	M	Cree	
75	M	Cree	
75	M	Cree	Yes
71	M	Cree	
70	M	Cree	
70	F	Cree	
69	M	Cree	
69	M	Cree	
68	F	Cree	
65	F	Cree/English	Yes
64	M	Cree/English	
61	M	Cree/English	
54	M	English	
42	M	English	
41	M	Cree/English	
37	M	English	Yes

3.4 Development of the Interview Questionnaire

The development of the questionnaire was researched and drafted relying on historical and archaeological services used by Manitoba Hydro. The questionnaire was lengthy encompassing subjects such as: waterbodies and fish; soil and terrain landforms; forestry; birds; vegetation; mammals; heritage resources; culture; social connectivity and; income and economy.

It was recognized that not all persons slated for interview would be fully aware of each category; therefore persons were interviewed on the basis of their knowledge and type of subsistence use.

The lead Elders were instrumental in the design of the questionnaire with specific attention given to how a question might differ when it is asked in Cree. Further consideration was given to simplifying questions for ease in communicating and understanding. Questions that were duplicitous were assessed with consideration given to both the English and Cree interpretations and retained or deleted as agreed upon. This process took a considerable amount of time as it was important to minimize misunderstanding and ensure that the translation reflected what was being asked.

Once the draft questionnaire was completed with the Cree translation, Elders had an opportunity to 'test' the document by interviewing each other. Once further amendments were made and their comfort zone was established, the questionnaire was finalized for implementation.

3.5 Mapping

As stated previously, mapping was used with the aid of the Capturx digital pen. This pen is essentially a 'camera' that records data from the maps specially designed for this purpose. The primary staff and Elders were provided orientation and training on the use of the pen.

Draft maps were prepared in advance of interviews with numerous copies made of each area to avoid unnecessary delays during the interview process.

Finalizing data with Capturx digital pen.

The map in question was relied on throughout the course of an interview. Opportunity was given for the individual to reference a particular area. Once the information was confirmed the area was identified using a regular pen in accordance to the legend set out for this purpose. Once the information was finalized the map was 'digitized' using the Caputrx pen and uploaded to the computer system assigned solely for this purpose.

The attached appendices comprise the reference guide inclusive of: the consent form; interview questionnaire; and example of the map designed for use with the Capturx digital pen.

4. Results

The following section provides general comments of the interview process; mapped results; assessment of the proposed Bipole III and; impacts of Bipole III.

4.1 General Comments

A total of twenty-eight (28) Elders and resource users were interviewed. The numbers were lower than originally estimated primarily out of respect for the 'energy' levels of our most senior Elders. It is with the deepest regret that our most senior Elder passed, at the age of 93, into the spirit world within weeks of completing his interview. His contribution to the project was invaluable and exhaustive. All team members were in awe of his level of resource use in areas that spanned well beyond the proposed right of way for Bipole III. His contribution to our work will always be respected and appreciated.

Our late, most senior, Elder

All members interviewed were actively engaged in resource use at various times in their life; many of which recall what the traditional use areas were like prior to advanced industrialization such as forestry and hydroelectric activities.

4.2 Mapped Results

19 interviews received closer review in consideration of the Preliminary Proposed Corridor. Additional consideration was given to all line holders in the proposed area, noting that nine (9) registered trapline holders will be affected as a result; five (5) of which were interviewed.

Registered Trapline Area	Number of Lineholders Affected	Interviewed
Elk	1	Yes
Deer	1	No
Regina	0	
Ravensnest	3	Yes - 2
Kelsey	4	Yes - 1

Trapping has, and continues to be, the mainstay of OCN culture where it has not been diminished as a result of industrialization. The ability to transfer knowledge as part of the cultural teachings has been affected as a result of decrease in market demand; increased standardization promoting humane trapping measures and; fragmentation to wildlife habitat. Few of our youthful members are engaged in trapping as part of our subsistence use and traditional teachings causing great concern for knowledge transfer.

The Elk Zone serves as the environment for which knowledge transfer is encouraged and supported by the Opaskwayak Educational Authority and OCN. The Elk zone is designated as a *youth line* and serves as the outdoor 'classroom' for the Land Based Education Program of what was formerly the Joe A. Ross School, and is now the Oscar Lathlin Collegiate. Youth are provided an opportunity to practice the ways of our people; learn about habitat and wildlife management practices; in addition to acquiring important teachings on wilderness safety.

The Elk Zone, as with the other zones referenced herein, has undergone 'disturbance' as a result of the activities associated with the Wuskwatim Transmission Line. Resource users, more specifically those directly affiliated with the Land Based Education Program, have expressed concern about the decrease of fishers and martens in the area. Elders have suggested that it will take about five (5) to ten (10) years for fishers and martens to return; if they are likely to return given the exposed habitat that now houses the transmission structures.

The Preliminary Preferred Corridor represents a 'threat' likely to significantly alter fisher and marten habitat for many years. The impact is beyond disturbance as consideration must be given to the fact that fishers and martens do not like crossing wide open spaces. The existing Wuskwatim Transmission Line and the proposed Bipole III require right of ways that will remain for many years thereby reducing the likelihood of fisher and marten presence in the area.

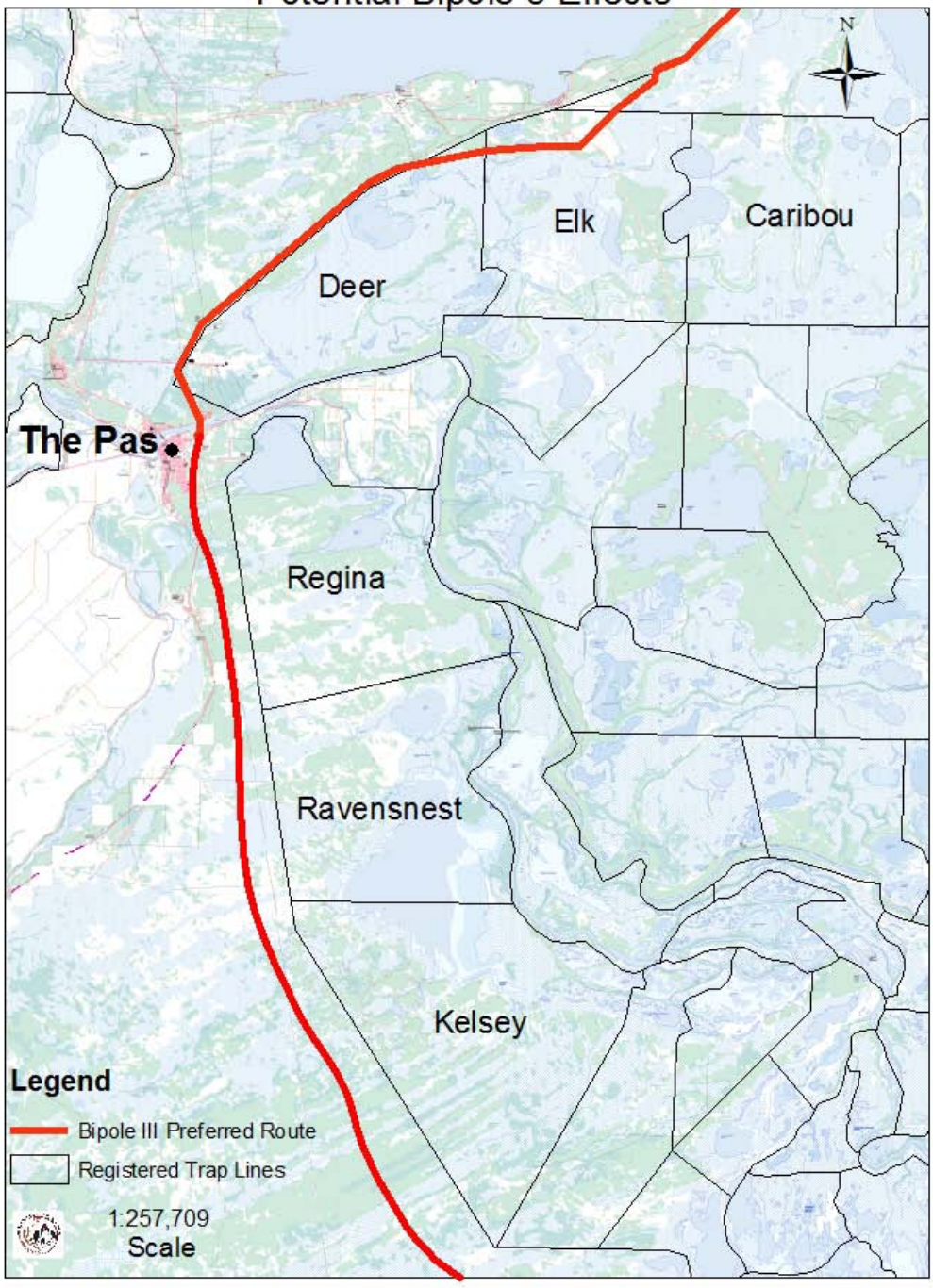
With the declining numbers at present and estimations of continued decline, consideration must be given to the impact this will have on Elk Zone as an outdoor classroom for Aboriginal knowledge and teachings on subsistence use.

The Ravensnest Zone, which includes the northern portion of Kelsey Lake, is within close proximity of important spawning grounds which could be impacted by the development of the transmission line.

The location of the Preliminary Preferred Corridor may potentially impact already declining caribou herds found within the Kelsey Lake Zone. As well, birch trees were historically harvested for the construction of canoes along the southern shorelines of Kelsey Lake, making it an area of cultural importance to OCN.

Trapline Areas

Potential Bipole 3 Effects



5. Analysis of Bipole III

The proposed Bipole III is intended to increase the security of Manitoba's High Voltage direct current (HVdc) that presently delivers 70% of peak power requirements of the province over two 500kV (kilovolt) HVdc transmission lines, also known as Bipole I and Bipole II. The present systems are set up with one to serve as a 'back-up' in the event that one of the lines is lost. Bipole II enables the transmission of northern output to the south; although it is understood that the transmission is not at 100% as a result of line losses.

Manitoba Hydro recognizes the vulnerability to the south as a result of line losses. Manitoba Hydro also recognizes the vulnerability to the lines as a result of extreme weather conditions as was experienced in 1996. The severity was however minimized because of the season in which the incident occurred and the reduced demand for power as a result. Manitoba Hydro is seeking to provide safeguards in the consideration of Bipole III in order to prevent losses which have the potential to disrupt 'commercial and domestic activity', 'increase the demand on emergency services', and 'pose as risk to population health and safety'.

Aerial survey of the proposed line along an existing line.

5.1 Current Level of Industrialized Land Use and Occupancy

The Opaskwayak Cree Nation, formerly The Pas Indian Band, has for centuries served as the centre for the First People who relied on the territories for subsistence use. The subsistence use areas, commonly referred to as the 'triangle' in present day, extended from what is now Grand Rapids, northwestward to Yawningstone Lake and Goose Lake, westward into Cumberland House, Saskatchewan, southwestward to Melfort, Saskatchewan and eastwardly towards Cedar Lake. The watersheds connecting the territories enabled the people to travel vast distances for the purpose of meeting their needs.

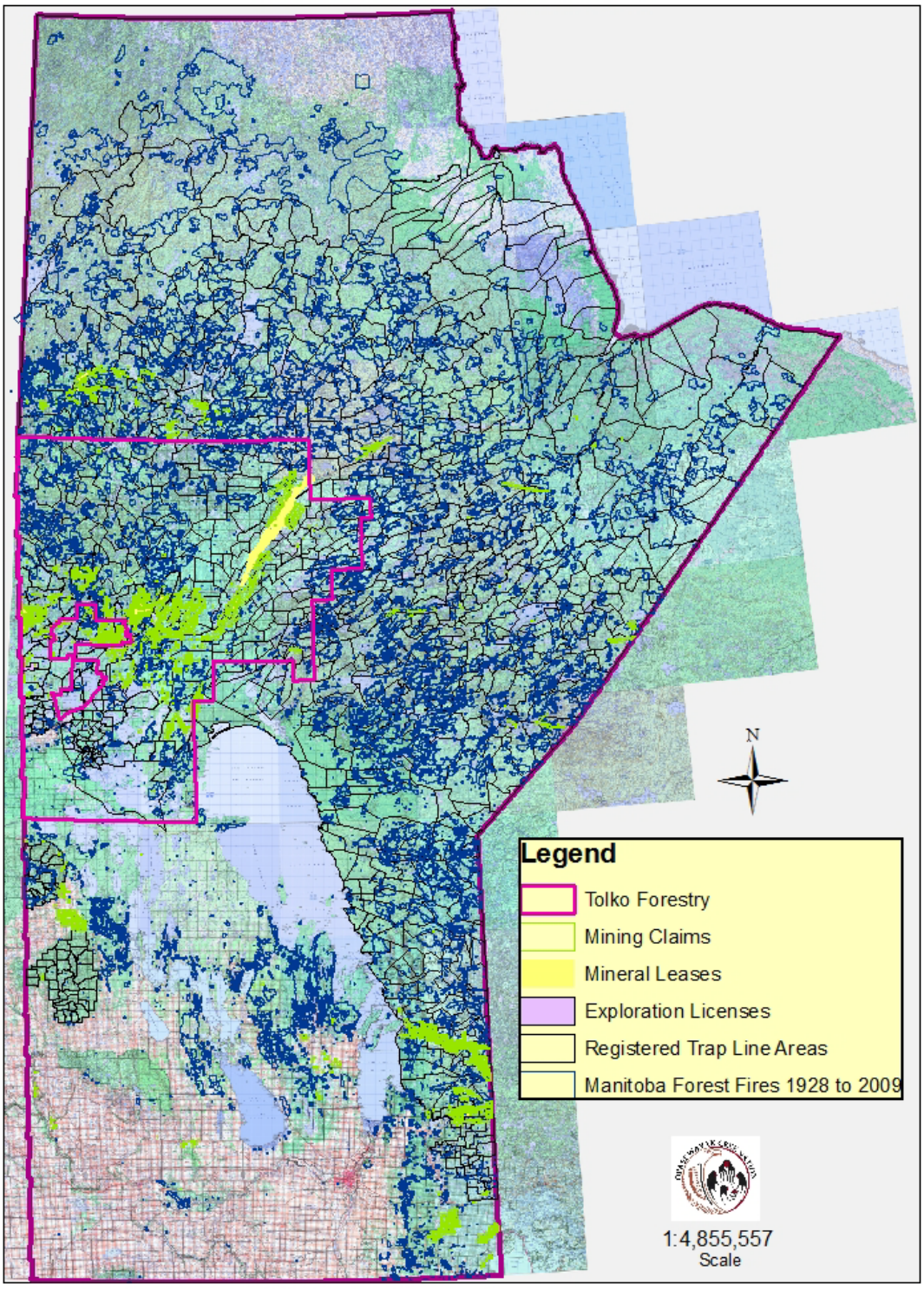
Situated along the Pre-Cambrian Shield, the territory was richly abundant in natural resources consisting of furbearing animals, fish, timber, minerals and precious metals; all of which were necessary for non-Aboriginal commercialization.

The level of commercialized resources used in OCN traditional territories is significant. Tolko Industries presently holds Forest Management Licence 2 covering all timber based activity in what is the Saskatchewan Forest Management Unit. Hudson Bay Railway serves as the primary rail service in present day for general travel and transport of resource based products. HudBay Minerals has held a presence in the mining sector since 1917 and continues to be the leading mining company engaged and interested in OCN traditional territories. Manitoba Hydro is also present, relying upon the flows from the Saskatchewan River to supply the Grand Rapids dam and the terrain to transport power by means of transmission lines.

OCN traditional territories represent an estimated 1,000,000 million acres of land in Manitoba alone. 83 kilometers of land based territory consists primarily of Right of Ways (ROW) for highway, rail and transmission lines; not inclusive of access roads necessary for industry to engage its activities.

Most recently Manitoba Hydro completed the installation of the Wuskwatim Transmission line necessary to compliment the productivity of the Wuskwatim Generation Project. The purpose of the line is to deliver an additional 200 Megawatt of power to the existing network and provide a backup to ensure continuity in the event of outages or failures. A 230 Kilovolt (kV) line, representing an estimated 165 kilometers, was installed from Herblet Lake station, north of Snow Lake, to the Rahl's Island Station in The Pas, Manitoba, representing an estimated 74 kilometers of OCN traditional territories. The Right of Way (ROW) for the line was a width of 60 meters.

Activities in the RTL Areas



5.2 Environmental Impact Considerations: The Biophysical Environment

Environmental impacts include consideration given to adverse and beneficial effects of a proposed activity. Consideration focuses on any change that an action may have on the environment inclusive of wildlife, habitat, the physical and cultural heritage, current uses of lands and resources by Aboriginal people, and the residential and commercial use of areas by other persons or businesses.

Manitoba Hydro, in considering design parameters for its projects and programs, must take into consideration environmental assessment as part of its planning and management. These considerations include: sustainable development; traditional scientific knowledge; valued environmental components; baseline conditions; thresholds; uncertainty; significance; cumulative impact assessment; environmental protection plans and; consultation.

5.2.1 Physical Effects

Manitoba Hydro, has, in assessing the installation of the Wuskwatim Transmission Line, previously indicated there will be an effect on biophysical features; however none of these adverse effects will be significant given the attention to route selection and mitigative measures. Manitoba Hydro assumes this position primarily because the development in any given area will occur during the winter months and will be short-term as the project develops. Given this it is reasonable to conclude that the same position will be adopted in consideration of Bipole III. Physical effects include: climate and air quality and; soil and terrain.

Climate and air quality are comprised of vehicle and dust emissions which affect air quality. Because the activity occurs during the winter months the dust is expected to be both localized and minimized. Clearing will involve the cutting, piling and burning for the Right of Way (ROW). Burning forest related debris will affect air quality; again this is anticipated to be both localized and short-term.

Disturbance to soil and vegetative ground cover during excavation and placement of tower structures will also occur. Clearing will affect sensitive terrain such as permafrost and can cause thermal erosion, which is expected to be offset by ensuring and maintaining compacted snow cover in the work areas.

Construction of the transmission line will create opportunities for access along the right-of-way. Manitoba Hydro will endeavour to minimize the effects of off-road travel to the work sites by utilizing existing winter roads and access trails.

Forestry, mining development, recreational use and natural disturbances contribute to the apprehension as conveyed by the Registered Trapline users; the proposed Bipole III serves to enhance their level of apprehension. Some of the concerns include question as to whether, or

not, the environment will have the opportunity to recuperate from the disturbance and adapt to the changes positively, or with negative results.

Efforts to inform of the anticipated disturbances have served to generate more questions on the proposed project because language such as 'probability' and 'usually' do not provide the clarity or assurances necessary to evaluate a future for resource use in the given area. The experiences of those who have, for generations, relied on these areas for subsistence and cultural use have seen many changes. These changes include the lack of certain species in what were once a thriving habitat and an increased presence of undesirable species. Many factors influence these changes, almost always; however, these changes are influences by manmade activities.

Activity	Disturbance
Environmental Noise	Frighten species from a given area Avoidance of species to a given area Abandonment of dens
Emissions	Pollution will drive away a species Potential to contaminate food sources
Construction	Attract predation to an area Imbalance of fragile ecosystems
Equipment and Waste Storage	Various locations for site construction will widen the level of disturbance Increased predation.
Right of Way Construction	Increased level of access Overharvesting Poaching

5.2.1 Cultural Effects

OCN lands and traditional territories have long served as the cornerstone for knowledge transfer amongst our people. The lands and territories are as integral to our cultural identity and survival as our need for food and water to sustain ourselves.

The Preliminary Preferred Corridor will intersect subsistence, medicinal and cultural use areas. As stated previously transmission line construction will have a physical effect on the environment. Assessment on medicinal impact has been met with varying opinion. For the most part, medicinal gatherers are of the opinion that clearing has almost always encouraged

growth of commonly used roots. Others maintain that the line does not enter into territories where the more guarded medicines are located.

Knowledge transfer has been practiced amongst our people since time began. This occurs in many forms ranging from spiritual teachings to subsistence use. OCN has supported subsistence based knowledge transfer both formally and informally, and most particularly through land based education with the recognition of a trapline area specifically targeted for youth. This area is already challenged as a result of industrial based activity which has had a negative effect on commercial trapping. Further activity in the area will continue to impact resource use and affect the ability for knowledge transfer to occur; either through traditional teachings by the trapper and/or through the land based education program.

5.2.2 Socio-Economic Effects

The location of the Preliminary Preferred Corridor will have varied effects on the members of the OCN. Although commercial trapping has a diminished potential in today's market, the land-based practice continues to provide a source of income for a small number of individuals. As a consequence, continued development in the area may further impact the populations of fur-bearing animals and, therefore, the livelihoods of these individuals. Appropriate compensation from Manitoba Hydro will help to alleviate some of these adverse impacts.

Alternatively, the project could create employment opportunities for those individuals of the OCN with the necessary skills. Manitoba Hydro has stated that efforts will be made to employ Aboriginal people whenever possible. As such, temporary job creation during project construction could contribute economically to the community as a whole.

5.2.3 Cumulative Environmental Effects

Large scale hydroelectric development and related developments have been present in OCN traditional territories since the 1960's inclusive of the building of the E.B. Campbell Dam by SaskPower in Saskatchewan and the Grand Rapids Dam by Manitoba Hydro. Manitoba and Canada have endeavoured to be responsive and attentive to environmental concerns as a result of studies and Commissions previously conducted on the Lake Winnipeg, Churchill and Nelson River diversion projects in the mid and latter part of the 1970's. The recommendation provided called for longer term ecological and socio-economic monitoring and research to protect northern residents from adverse effects of hydroelectric development. Manitoba Hydro has since commissioned various studies primarily focused on aquatic species; however these have primarily been issue driven and for a specified period; almost always short-term. It is unclear if any longitudinal studies have been commissioned in general, and more specifically in respect of transmission line installation.

Cumulative effects are changes that arise as a result of a number of actions that have the potential to occur as a result of the proposed activity with consideration given to the effects of past and future actions.

OCN maintains that an alteration to the environment impedes our ability to sustain our needs in addition to affecting our ability to transfer our knowledge to future generations. The building of the Grand Rapids dam significantly altered the ecosystem of the traditional use areas in the Summerberry and adjacent territories. When the landscape is changed the natural response to it becomes evident in reduced numbers of wildlife and waterfowl populations.

The area has never returned to its original state and, in fact, has significantly deteriorated as has been demonstrated by the absence of muskrats over the past two (2) years. Many resource users maintain that it never will primarily because of the manipulation of water regimes through all Provinces that are signatory to the Master Agreement on Apportionment. Further physical impacts occur also as a result of activities such as forestry and quarry extraction.

As indicated, the members of the OCN have an intimate and long-term understanding of the land located within their traditional territory which should be included in future longitudinal studies.

6. Recommendations

The OCN NRC has produced recommendations based on the assessment of the potential impacts on the community resulting from the selection of the Preliminary Preferred Corridor for the Bipole III transmission line. These are as follows:

- To ensure that OCN's Aboriginal Ecological Knowledge is considered and effectively communicated in the Environmental Impact Statements and related documents as it pertains to assessment and mitigation of environmental effects;
- Longitudinal biophysical study to assess and evaluate the potential environmental effects in partnership with OCN;
- Compensation for cumulative effect in the Elk Zone which serves as the 'classroom' for the Land Based education program;
- Mitigation for disturbance of subsistence use practices in the named areas;
- Development of environmental protection plans in partnership with OCN;
- Provision for Right of Way monitoring and maintenance in partnership with OCN for the life of the line which has been estimated at fifty (50) years;

- All timber generated as a result of creating the Right of Way must be allocated to OCN, this includes softwoods and hardwoods;
- Wherever possible burning of forest related debris is strongly discouraged with encouragement given to using debris as a source of biomass.

7. Socio-Economic Considerations

- Compensation for adverse effects that cannot be mitigated;
- Compensation for disturbance for the life of the project;
- Advocate the negotiation of Impact Benefit Agreements between the successful contractor and OCN;
- Ensure that 10%, at minimum, of the workforce within OCN lands and traditional territories is comprised of OCN registered members for the life of the project;
- Ensure a purchase of services agreement by the Contractor with consideration given to sub-contract or purchase of services from capable OCN independent contractors;
- To ensure, to the fullest extent possible, an opportunity to provide advance training and certification relevant to transmission line site development, installation and environmental monitoring.

8. Conclusion

The opportunity to be fully engaged in considering, and informing, the proposed Bipole III has been 'eye-opening' in many respects. The contribution made to this process by Elders and resource users has been both exhaustive and invaluable.

On the surface transmission line installation appears to have the least amount of impact on the environment when compared to other hydro based activities such as mega hydroelectric construction. Upon closer examination, however, transmission is as significant as other related projects. The challenge is not so much in the activity, but in the fact that not a lot of long term studies have been conducted in this area and more specifically in this territory. The potential for Bipole III coupled with long-term and more recent activities have effectively altered the landscape significantly. As each project comes and goes so too does our resources, our traditional livelihoods, and the opportunity to continue the legacy of our traditional knowledge.

The process used to consider Bipole III speaks to a new era and the way in which 'business' gets done. The opportunity to engage in small 'c' consultation with the proponent is one example of

doing business and developing partnerships; the true strength of this will stand the test once the line has firmly been decided. In the meantime, OCN respectfully advocates that meaningful consideration be given to the recommendations that have been advanced as a result of our work.