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5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CONSULTATION PROGRAM

5.1 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Stakeholder consultation is an integral part of Manitoba Hydro's Site Selection and Environmental Assessment (SSEA) process. Manitoba Hydro developed an Environmental Assessment Consultation Process (EACP) to guide the approach to consultation for the Project. The engagement approach reflects the experience of Manitoba Hydro's current practice and principles for consultation in an environmental assessment context.

The overall purpose of the EACP is to provide the public, and particularly those who may be potentially affected by the Project, with meaningful opportunities to receive information on, and provide their input into, the SSEA for the project. The EACP aimed to achieve the following with respect to such interested parties:

- **Opportunities for early involvement:** This includes providing early notice and information about the project and the EACP so that parties can assess their interests and provide early comment, as well as become involved in ongoing planning and environmental review activities.
- **Opportunities for ongoing involvement:** This includes providing ongoing opportunities to learn about the project and key planning activities, to provide input with respect to any concerns or opinions, to resolve issues raised, to have views and inputs recorded, and to learn about actions or results that occur as a result of studies and planning activities.
- **Opportunities at various stages:** This includes opportunities to provide inputs: (a) when issues are being initially identified, (b) when alternative routes/sites are being considered, (c) when initial effects assessments are reviewed and ways to mitigate or enhance identified effects are considered, (d) when the EIS has been filed with regulators for review and comment, and (e) when supplemental EIS information may be filed with regulatory authorities.
- **Variety of mechanisms:** This includes a variety of mechanisms (appropriate for different segments of the public) to communicate, to receive feedback, and to engage in ongoing meaningful dialogue.

- **Adaptive approach:** This includes adjusting the EACP, as required and feasible, throughout the course of the environmental review and planning process, in response to issues, concerns and challenges.

In order to fully address potential issues that may arise as a result of the large Project Study Area for the project, two broad groups were identified:

- Potentially affected communities and segments of the public in the Project Study Area; and
- Other interested groups and individuals who may be interested in the Project.

Early stage activities focused on elected officials in First Nations, Northern Affairs Communities (NACs) and municipalities in the Project Study Area. To recognize and address the unique rights and interests of Aboriginal communities, potentially affected publics in the project study area were divided into Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groupings. The EACPs for both were carried out separately, but coordinated over the same time frames, which allowed consultation activities to recognize the diversity and unique nature of various stakeholders from both a cultural and physical geographic perspective.[1] Listings of First Nations, NACs and incorporated communities in the Project Study Area are found in Chapter 6.

Stakeholder and public involvement is an important part of the SSEA process for sharing information, particularly during the alternative and preferred route stages of a proposed project. Input has been sought from elected officials, First Nation leadership and NAC councils of communities and municipalities in the Project Study Area, planning districts, resource users, landowners, interest groups, government departments, the private sector (i.e., Vale-Inco, Hudson Bay Railway, Tolko, etc.), and other interested parties. The EACP provided the public with a variety of opportunities to stay informed throughout the study process, to offer pertinent information, and to provide input into the Project.

The specific goals for the EACP for the Project were to:

- Share project information as it became available;
- Obtain Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK) and local knowledge which might assist in project planning;

[1] It should be noted that the EACP does not replace the Crown's obligation to consult with Aboriginal Communities regarding the potential impact of the project on the exercise of Treaty and Aboriginal rights arising from Section 35 of the Constitution.

- Obtain input from communities in the Project Study Area on the best way to involve the public and get their feedback into the decision-making process;
- Understand local and regional issues pertinent to the proposed project;
- Integrate issues and concerns identified by interested parties in the decision-making process; and
- Discuss appropriate mitigation measures to reduce potential negative environmental effects and maximize potential benefits of the project.

The input of government agencies was sought throughout the process to:

- Identify issues relevant to the identification of alternative routes for the Bipole III and northern collector lines, Keewatinoow construction power line and the ground electrode feeder lines, the selection of preferred routes for each, and the assessment of impacts of the preferred routes (see Chapters 7 and 8);
- Identify regulatory and policy factors relevant to route/site selection and effects assessment; and
- Identify mitigation or enhancement measures for identified issues.

5.2 METHODS

Four rounds of public consultation were held for the Project. Figure 5.2-1 outlines the broad purpose and general timing of each. A variety of consultation activities including meetings, Open Houses, and Landowner Information Centres were used throughout the various rounds of consultation and are described in more detail in Section 5.3. These and other methods were also used throughout the Aboriginal EACP which is described in greater detail in Section 5.4. Results and feedback is described in Section 5.5.

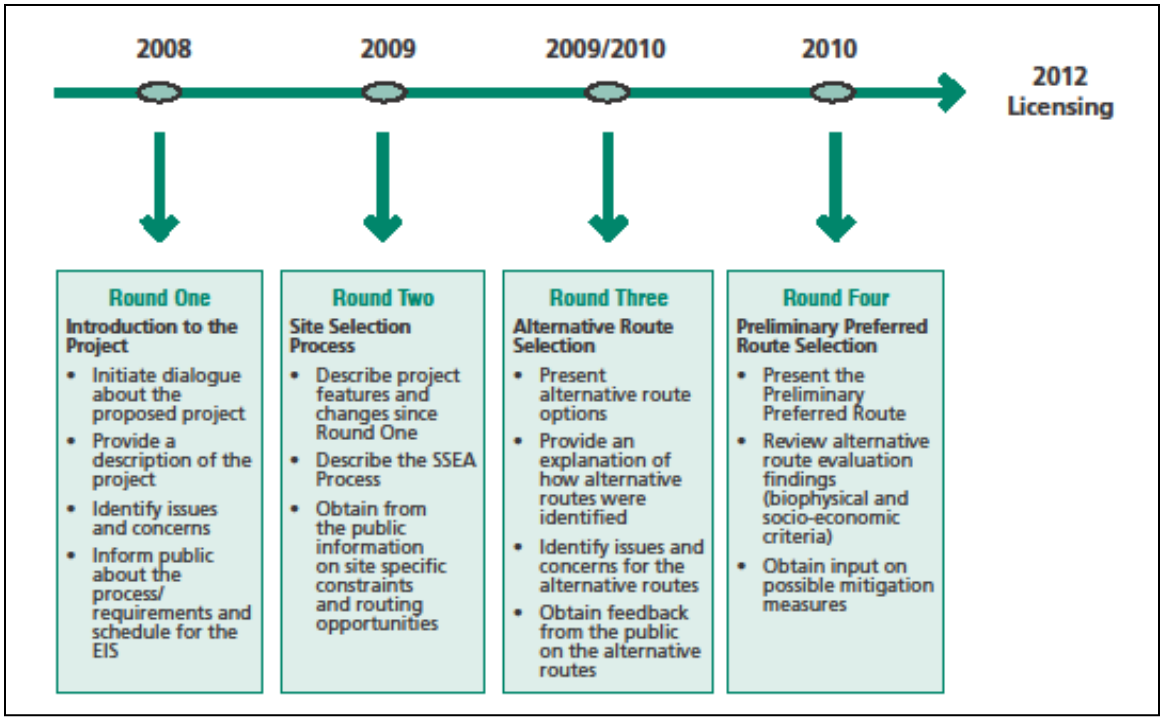

Figure 5.2-1: Four Round SSEA Consultation Approach

From early 2008 to the winter of 2008, Manitoba Hydro conducted introductory Round 1 meetings with planning districts, elected officials and the leadership of northern and southern communities, including First Nations and Northern Affairs Communities in the general area under consideration for planning the Project. A series of Regional Open Houses were held throughout the conceptual study area. Round 2 activities were initiated in early 2009 and continued to the fall of 2009. Round 2 included discussions with elected officials, First Nation leadership and NAC councils of communities in the Project Study Area, planning districts, resource users, landowners, interest groups, government departments, as well as Regional and Community Open Houses. Rounds 1 and 2 focused on providing an introduction to the Project, and identifying potential features/constraints, and opportunities to assist in identifying alternative routes for the Bipole III line.

Round 3 activities, which were initiated in the fall of 2009 and continued through to the summer of 2010, focused on presenting a comparison of the alternative routes for the Bipole III line, and receiving input on these alternatives to assist in identifying a preliminary preferred route for the line. Round 4, which began in the fall of 2010 and continued to the spring of 2011, provided an opportunity to review the alternative route evaluation findings, and the preliminary preferred route, and to provide input on potential effects and mitigation measures for the route. Rounds 3 and 4 included Regional and Community Open Houses as well as discussions with elected officials in

incorporated communities, First Nation leadership and NAC councils, resource users, landowners, interest groups, potentially affected stakeholders, and government departments. Landowner Information Centres were held in agricultural areas along the Preliminary Preferred Route during Round 4. Table 5.2-1 outlines the general approach to each round of consultation.

Meetings were held with the council from the RM of Springfield during each round, as the site for the Riel Converter Station, an existing site which is currently being developed for the Riel Reliability Improvement Initiative Project, is located in the RM of Springfield.[2] The southern ground electrode site is also in the RM of Springfield. Regional Open Houses were held in Oakbank in Round 3 and Dugald in Round 4, both of which are located in the RM of Springfield. An Open House and two Landowner Information Meetings/Centres for the southern ground electrode were held in Dugald during Round 4.

The Keewatinoow Converter Station, construction power station, northern ground electrode and feeder line, as well as portions of the collector and construction power lines are located in the Fox Lake Resource Management Area (RMA) and the Fox Lake Traditional Territory.[3] Manitoba Hydro established a Working Group process with the Fox Lake Cree Nation, based on Article 8.5 of the 2004 Impact Settlement Agreement (ISA) Between Fox Lake Cree Nation, Manitoba Hydro, and Manitoba as the means for dialogue to address the respective needs and interests of Manitoba Hydro and Fox Lake Cree Nation as they relate to the Keewatinoow Converter Station and other Project components. Regular meetings have been ongoing since late 2009 and are expected to continue as the Project proceeds. Further information is provided in Section 5.4.3.1.

It should also be noted that the Keewatinoow Converter Station and related facilities, as well as approximately 15 km of the Bipole III transmission line, are located in the Split Lake Resource Area, just outside the designated Split Lake Resource Management Area.[4] A portion of the "related facilities" is located within the Split Lake Resource

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[2] The Riel Reliability Improvement Initiative received its Environment Act Licence and is currently being constructed. Most of the site was acquired in the 1970s, concurrent with the development of the D602F export line and the site was expanded during the property acquisition process for the Riel Reliability Improvement Initiative. The converter station will be licensed as part of the Bipole III Project.

[3] The Fox Lake Resource Management Area and the Fox Lake Traditional Territory are defined in the 2004 Impact Settlement Agreement (ISA) between Fox Lake Cree Nation, Manitoba Hydro, and Manitoba. Portions of the Fox Lake Traditional Territory overlap with the Split Lake Resource Management Area.

[4] The Split Lake Resource Area and the Split Lake Resource Management Area are defined in the 1992 NFA Implementation Agreement. Portions of the Split Lake Resource Area overlap with the Fox Lake Resource Management Area.

Management Area (along with approximately 226 km of the Bipole III transmission line). The 1992 NFA Implementation Agreement sets out processes for addressing TCN's rights and interests with respect to future developments. Since September 2009, Manitoba Hydro and Tataskweyak Cree Nation have been engaged in a process to reach shared understandings of the impacts of the Bipole III Project on the rights and interests of Tataskweyak Cree Nation and are currently working towards an Agreement in Principle to address a range of issues associated with the Bipole III Project. Further information is provided in Section 5.4.3.6.

A variety of tools were used to carry out the EACP, including: letters to stakeholders; a project newsletter for each round of the EACP; a project website; newspaper, poster and radio notification for Open Houses; brochures; presentation materials; informational packages; feedback forms; and a Master Stakeholder List and a Master Feedback Log. A detailed description of these tools is provided in the Bipole III Environmental Assessment Public Consultation Technical Report. Appendix 5A includes copies of the newsletters from each Round of consultation. Appendix 5B provides a listing of meetings, Regional and Community Open Houses, and Landowner Information Centres by round.

Table 5.2-1: General Approach to each Round of Consultation

Round	Purpose and Approach
Round 1 Introduction to the Project	Purpose: Introduction to the Project. Approach: Planning District, elected municipal officials, First Nation leadership, and NAC council meetings in a presentation format followed by a question and answer period. Regional Open Houses throughout the conceptual study area.
Round 2 Site Selection and Environmental Assessment Process	Purpose: To describe the project and the SSEA process, identify potential routing issues, and constraints and opportunities. Approach: Planning District, elected municipal officials, First Nation leadership, NAC councils and government meetings in a presentation format followed by a question and answer period. Regional and Community Open Houses in the project study area.
Round 3 Alternative Routes	Purpose: To present alternative routes for Bipole III, provide information on how the alternatives were selected, and identify issues, concerns and feedback on the alternatives. Approach: elected municipal officials, First Nation leadership, NAC councils, government and other stakeholder meetings in a presentation format followed by a question and answer period. Regional and Community Open Houses in project study area.
Round 4 Preliminary Preferred Route	Purpose: To review the alternative routes evaluation, present the preliminary preferred route for Bipole III, and obtain input on mitigation measures to minimize potential adverse effects and enhance positive effects. Approach: elected municipal officials, First Nation leadership, NAC councils, government and other stakeholder meetings in a presentation format followed by a question and answer period. Regional and Community Open Houses in project study area. Landowner Information Centres and direct invitations for a one-on-one meeting with landowners in the vicinity of the preliminary preferred route for Bipole III.
Southern Ground Electrode Undertaken as a part of Round 4 following preliminary site determination	Purpose: To present the preferred location of the southern ground electrode, receive feedback regarding the site and respond to issues and concerns. Approach: Meeting with the RM of Springfield to present the location and process by which it was determined. Two landowner information centres/meetings held in the vicinity of the ground electrode site with direct invitation to directly affected and adjacent landowners. Public Open House held in Dugald with notification by direct mail postcard to area communities.

5.3 CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

5.3.1 Meetings

Each of the four rounds of consultation included meetings in both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. The focus of stakeholder meetings evolved through each round of consultation, becoming increasingly site-specific. During Rounds 1 and 2, meetings in the southern part of the Project Study Area were typically held at a Planning District level to obtain feedback on the project and SSEA process, and to obtain knowledge of the future development plans for numerous municipalities at one time. If a potentially affected municipality was not part of a planning district, individual meetings with municipal councils were held. As the alternative routes were presented during Round 3, a number of Planning Districts were no longer potentially affected, and hence meetings were held with individual municipalities. With the identification of the preliminary preferred route for the Bipole III line, the focus shifted to incorporated cities, towns, and villages, First Nations leadership, and NAC councils within 25 km (15.5 mile) of the preliminary preferred route, and to those RMs that the route traversed.

Invitations to meet with stakeholders became more narrowly focused as the SSEA process progressed through the four rounds of the EACP. However, all interested parties were presented with the project information even if they were not potentially affected by the project. Meeting requests with previously unidentified stakeholder groups were accommodated throughout the EACP (e.g., Manitoba Aerial Applicators Association contacted Manitoba Hydro during Round 3 and were placed in the Master Stakeholder List). Generally, stakeholders contacted for meetings included:

- First Nations leadership;
- NAC councils;
- Aboriginal organizations;
- Elected officials from RMs, Local Government Districts, cities, towns and villages;
- Planning District representatives;
- General stakeholder group representatives; and
- Government representatives.

Invitations to meet with stakeholders were made by letter. Phone calls were used as follow up to arrange a meeting time and location. During the meetings, a Manitoba

Hydro representative presented project information through a PowerPoint presentation. A question and answer period followed the presentation.

Notes taken during meetings identified the key issues/points made by attendees and Manitoba Hydro representatives, and included a list of commitments for follow-up action, if required. Manitoba Hydro used the same presentations with each stakeholder during a given round of the consultation process, unless a stakeholder requested to forego the presentation.

Copies of meeting notes are in Appendix F of the Bipole III Environmental Assessment Public Consultation Technical Report. A listing of stakeholder meetings is available in Appendix 5B to this chapter.

Community Open Houses in First Nation and NAC communities were coordinated through community leadership. In addition, the use of community coordinators was offered to Aboriginal communities to assist with the Community Open Houses.

5.3.2 Open Houses

Open Houses were held in both the non-Aboriginal communities (Regional Open Houses) and Aboriginal communities (Community Open Houses). A total of 137 Regional and Community Open Houses were held at locations within the Project Study Area and included a Southern Ground Electrode Open House undertaken as a part of Round 4 following ground electrode site determination. Public notification of each Open House, by means including local newspaper, poster, and radio advertisements, was a key component to ensure the best possible attendance (Bipole III Environmental Assessment Public Consultation Technical Report).

At each Open House, Manitoba Hydro representatives outlined the format of the Open House to participants, provided them with a newsletter and a comment sheet and offered participants a 'tour' of the Open House information. Manitoba Hydro representatives responded to the questions raised by participants, sought to understand the community or individual's interest related to the Project, and offered perspectives on items raised. In some instances where Manitoba Hydro representatives could not respond specifically to a particular question or concern, the issue was forwarded to the appropriate department within the Corporation and a response provided as required.

During each round of consultation, Manitoba Hydro developed new presentation material. Materials evolved over the course of each round to reflect the increasing level of detailed information available as the project parameters evolved. These materials are summarized in Table 5.3-1.

At the beginning and end of each round (including the Southern Ground Electrode Open House), Manitoba Hydro assessed the status of available project information, and the type of feedback from the previous round. This assessment helped determine the type of information and the most effective means of presenting it for the upcoming round. For example, between the end of Round 3 (alternative routes) and the beginning of Round 4 (preliminary preferred route) it was thought that landowners and other stakeholders would benefit from a location map of the preliminary preferred route. Accordingly, localized topographic maps (1:50,000 scale) were sent as a part of the information packages. A list of Open House dates and locations is provided in Appendix 5B. Comments received through the comment sheets submitted are available in the Master Feedback Log contained in the Bipole III Environmental Assessment Public Consultation Technical Report. Section 5.5 summarizes the feedback received through the EACP. Appendix D of the Bipole III Environmental Assessment Public Consultation Technical Report provides a copy of all materials used throughout the EACP.

Table 5.3-1: Presentation Materials Summary

Round	Materials Used
Round 1 (Introduction to the Project)	• Conceptual study area mapping • Round 1 PowerPoint Presentation (for elected officials in incorporated communities, First Nation leadership and NAC councils, and other stakeholders) • Round 1 Open House Display Boards • Bipole III Video Presentation (Project Need)
Round 2 (Site Selection and Environmental Assessment)	• Project study area mapping • Round 2 PowerPoint Presentation (for elected officials in incorporated communities, First Nation leadership and NAC councils and other stakeholders) • Bipole III Video Presentation (Project Need) • Round 2 Open House Display Boards
Round 3 (Alternative Routes Selection)	• Project study area mapping • Round 3 Bipole III Alternative Routes Mapping • Bipole III Video Presentation (Project Need) • Round 3 PowerPoint Presentation (for elected officials in incorporated communities, First Nation leadership, NAC councils, and other stakeholders) • Round 3 Open House Display Boards • Open House Tangibles (conductor, insulators, caribou collar, transmission tower models)
Round 4 (Preliminary Preferred Route Selection)	• Project study area mapping • Round 4 PowerPoint Presentation (for elected officials in incorporated communities, First Nation leadership, NAC councils, and other stakeholders) • Preliminary preferred route Flyover Animation with Ortho-Imagery 3D model • Round 4 Open House Display Boards • Open House Tangibles (conductor, insulators, caribou collar, transmission tower models) • Bipole III Video Presentation • Preliminary preferred route and Alternative Routes Maps • Preliminary preferred route mapping – Landowner Booklet • Construction Practices PowerPoint Presentation • Preliminary preferred route Flyover Animation with Google Earth
Southern Ground Electrode	• Ground Electrode Newsletter • Localized Topographic Mapping • Display Boards • Study Area Mapping

5.3.3 Landowner Information Centres

After the preliminary preferred route for the Bipole III line was identified, 40 Landowner Information Centres were held during Round 4 at locations in each RM crossed by the route. All landowners within 0.8 km (0.5 mile) of the preliminary preferred route received an informational package including a Round 4 newsletter, a preliminary preferred route map in relation to their land holdings, and a letter inviting individual landowners to attend any of the 40 Landowner Information Centres. Landowner Information Centres were undertaken throughout a two month period (late August to October 2010) in 23 communities. Landowner Information Centres were held on the day preceding Public Open Houses at the same location. The purpose of the Landowner Information Centres was to provide an opportunity for landowners whose property may be directly affected by the preliminary preferred route to discuss concerns in a one-on-one setting with Manitoba Hydro representatives. In addition, two Landowner Information Centers/Meetings were held for the southern ground electrode following Round 4.

To ensure that the focus remained on those who were potentially directly affected landowners, Landowner Information Centres were not advertised in local newspapers or on radio. At each Landowner Information Centre, stations were set up to allow a one-on-one discussion with Manitoba Hydro representatives and to complete a comment sheet regarding potentially affected land holdings. Localized mapping, brochures, newsletters and comment sheets were available at each station. Display boards were also provided to convey general project information and to illustrate the location of the preliminary preferred route. Landowner booklets were available at each station. The Landowner Map Booklet consisted of 130 individual maps with orthographic imagery, topographic imagery, and recent flyover imagery within 4.0 km (2.5 miles) on either side of the route.

At the Landowner Information Centres, Manitoba Hydro representatives responded to questions raised by participants, sought to determine each individual's interests relative to the preliminary preferred route and their land holdings, and offered perspectives on items raised. Manitoba Hydro representatives also sought potential routing suggestions in the area from landowners to help with the identification of the Final Preferred Route. These suggested route adjustments were considered by Manitoba Hydro and are outlined in Chapter 7. In some instances, where Manitoba Hydro representatives could not respond specifically to a particular question or concern, the issue was forwarded to the appropriate department within the Corporation and a response was subsequently provided to the landowner as required.

A listing of the date and location of each Landowner Information Centre is included in Appendix 5B. Landowner Information Centre form comments are provided in the Bipole III Environmental Assessment Public Consultation Technical Report (personal information removed due to privacy concerns).

5.3.4 Key Person Interviews

Key Person Interviews (KPIs) were conducted with stakeholder representatives in conjunction with Round 4 of the EACP. A total of 53 KPIs were conducted with 83 participants from RMs, towns, and villages, as well as trappers and industry representatives. Each stakeholder was informed of the process during meetings and received an invitation by letter, as well as a follow up telephone call to set up an interview time. RMs which were crossed by the preliminary preferred route, and towns and villages within 25 km (15.5 miles) of the route were asked to participate. Industry representatives that participated were predominantly those that had been involved in the EACP to date. Registered Trapline Holders were selected based on traplines in the vicinity of the preliminary preferred route. KPIs assisted in collecting socio-economic baseline information and provided another opportunity for stakeholder feedback. Wherever possible, interviews were arranged with a body that represented common interests of a number of individual stakeholders, and the interviewee was selected by the stakeholder group in question.

For further discussion of the KPI process refer to the Bipole III Socio-Economic Baseline Data Technical Report, Appendix B - Key Person Interview Program.

5.3.5 Project Information Phone Line

A toll-free project information phone line was established in July 2010. This project phone line was initially staffed to provide immediate responses to questions regarding the preliminary preferred route and the project in general. When answers to questions could not be immediately provided, the questions were forwarded to an appropriate person and a response was generally provided within 24 hours of receiving the initial question. The information line was operated by representatives from Manitoba Hydro between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. five days a week for the first month of operation. Outside of these hours, an answering machine recorded inquiries. As the call volumes decreased, the phone line was sent directly to an answering machine, which was checked periodically throughout the day. Over 200 calls were received to the phone line since it was established, with the most active period of activity occurring during July to October 2010.

The toll free number to the information phone line was provided in public materials including: advertisements, Round 4 newsletter, project website, landowner compensation materials, and all invitations and direct correspondence with stakeholders.

5.4 ABORIGINAL ENGAGEMENT IN BIPOLE III PLANNING PROCESS

Manitoba Hydro is committed to strengthening working relationships with Aboriginal peoples. From the outset of the Bipole III planning process, Manitoba Hydro identified meaningful engagement with Aboriginal communities and incorporation of Aboriginal perspectives, including Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK), as important components of the Bipole III project planning and SSEA process.

As outlined in Section 5.1, Manitoba Hydro's approach to engagement, including Aboriginal engagement, in the Bipole III planning process was designed to be adaptive, involving the early and ongoing involvement of Aboriginal people, communities, and organizations through a variety of mechanisms.

Given the unique rights, interests and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples as well the logistical challenges associated with travel and engagement activities in more isolated communities, the potentially affected publics in the Bipole III project study area were split between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal stakeholders. The EACPs for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal stakeholders were carried out separately, but activities were coordinated over the same timeframe and stakeholder engagement activities were tracked in the same way. The Aboriginal-specific process included First Nations and NACs.

In addition to use of the engagement tools described in the Bipole III Environmental Assessment Public Consultation Technical Report (letters, project website, information packages, etc.), the mechanisms used to facilitate Aboriginal engagement included: community and leadership meetings; ATK workshops conducted by the Manitoba Hydro ATK Study Team; self-directed studies; discussions with potentially affected resource users in the vicinity of the alternative and preferred routes; bilateral discussions with certain communities and organizations with an interest in the project; and discussions with regional Aboriginal organizations with an interest in the project. As described in Section 5.3.4, KPIs were also conducted with a number of stakeholders, including Aboriginal resource users (Registered Trapline holders) (see also Resource Use, Chapter 8).

The Bipole III Project Study Area included a large portion of Manitoba, encompassing a broad range of stakeholders, including First Nations, NACs, and a variety of Aboriginal

organizations with an interest in the Project. All communities in the Project Study Area were invited to participate in the EACP. As the SSEA process proceeded, leading to the selection of the preliminary preferred route for the Bipole III line, the focus of the EACP shifted to those communities nearer to the preliminary preferred route. That being said, Manitoba Hydro recognizes that Aboriginal communities located outside of the Project Study Area might also have an interest in the Project and the Corporation has been and continues to be available to provide project information to communities outside of the Project Study Area.

5.4.1 Community and Leadership Meetings

Manitoba Hydro undertook a four-round stakeholder EACP over the 2008 to 2011 timeframe, as outlined in Section 5.2. As a component of this process, Manitoba Hydro coordinated meetings, discussions and workshops with First Nations, Aboriginal and northern communities, and regional organizations. First Nations and NAC Councils in the Project Study Area, and the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) were invited to participate in this consultation process.

A number of Aboriginal and regional organizations were also invited to participate in the EACP (Appendix 5B). Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO); Swampy Cree Tribal Council; Keewatin Tribal Council; Northern Association of Community Councils; Manitoba Trappers Association and representatives from the Treaty One First Nations participated in discussions with Manitoba Hydro. Additionally, funding was provided to the Southern Chiefs Organization to host a two day Bipole III workshop on behalf of the Treaty 2 and Treaty 4 First Nations. Five additional Aboriginal and regional organizations were invited to participate in the process including the Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council, Southeast Resource Development Council and the West Region Tribal Council. The main issues of interest and concern which were raised in discussions with Aboriginal and regional organizations included:

- Jobs and businesses opportunities and whether there would be an Aboriginal preference;
- Long-term benefits of the Project and the Community Development Initiative;
- Impacts on trapping;
- Herbicide use to maintain the Right-of-Way;
- Purpose of the Project; and
- Whether the line should be located on the east or the west side of the Province.

Twenty-six First Nations and 23 NAC councils participated in the multi-round EACP, which included leadership and community meetings, and open houses. Through the course of the EACP, 78 Community Open Houses were held in First Nation and NAC communities in addition to leadership meetings (Appendix 5B). The main issues of interest or concern identified by Aboriginal stakeholders are included in the feedback summary in Section 5.5.

In some instances, Project information was shared with interested First Nations through already established channels of communication, for example, Article 9 of the Northern Flood Agreement.

5.4.2 Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Study Process

One goal of the SSEA process was to identify and evaluate alternative routes, and select a preferred route based on community input, Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK) and local knowledge, as well as socio-economic, biophysical, technical (engineering) and cost considerations.

A process was undertaken to incorporate ATK into the SSEA process for the Project. The Bipole III ATK process involved community participation in ATK workshops conducted by the Bipole III study team, as well as self-directed or community-led studies. The following NACs participated in the ATK workshop process: Barrows and surrounding communities (Powell, Westgate, Red Deer River, National Mills and Baden), Camperville, Cormorant, Dawson Bay, Duck Bay, Herb Lake Landing, Pikwitonei, Pelican Rapids and Thicket Portage. The following First Nations participated in the ATK workshops: Chemawawin Cree Nation, Dakota Plains First Nation, Dakota Tipi First Nation, Pine Creek First Nation and Waywayseecappo First Nation. Community-led ATK studies for the Project were completed by Fox Lake Cree Nation, Tataskweyak Cree Nation, the Manitoba Metis Federation, Wuskwi Sipihk First Nation, Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Long Plain First Nation and Swan Lake First Nation.

For the purposes of the EIS, ATK is used as the overarching term for the knowledge gathered, though certain communities used such other terms as Traditional Knowledge, Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Aboriginal Ecological Knowledge. Communities were also asked to identify any additional information they wished to share for the purposes of the Project.

The ATK process provided additional opportunities for consenting communities to participate and to provide feedback. The main issues of interest and concern which were raised through the ATK workshops included:

- Effects of Electric and magnetic fields (EMF) on people, animals and plants;

- Impacts on waterways;
- Impacts on plants, wildlife, and their habitats;
- Chemical usage and resulting impacts on aquatic and terrestrial environments;
- Access management;
- Protection of important sites including key cultural areas, burial grounds, harvesting sites and unidentified sensitive sites; and
- Employment, training and business opportunities.

These main issues of interest and concern were identified from group and individual interviews conducted through the participating community ATK workshops. During the workshops, communities also shared the importance of their relationship with the natural environment which was the basis for many of the concerns expressed by communities. As a general observation and concern, communities noted that taken together, numerous unrelated activities on the land base over time can have a cumulative impact on communities. For example, changes in physical and cultural landscapes can potentially affect cultural practices, either by adaptation, abandonment or relocation of activities. Communities also expressed the importance of continuing opportunities to share knowledge of, and participate in, cultural practices with family and community. To assist in the continuance of these opportunities, knowledge of traditional and currently used cultural landscapes as well as the geographical placement of environmentally sensitive sites was shared through the workshops to enable the project to avoid or mitigate potential impacts.

Further information regarding the ATK process and methodology can be found in the Bipole III Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Technical Report.

5.4.3 Community Specific Processes

While Manitoba Hydro offered Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK) Workshops to communities, some communities as well as the Manitoba Metis Federation indicated a desire to conduct their own Traditional Knowledge studies. Manitoba Hydro provided funding to the following to undertake self-directed studies: Fox Lake Cree Nation (FLCN), Long Plain First Nation (LPFN), the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF), Opaskwayak Cree Nation (OCN), Swan Lake First Nation (SLFN), Tataskweyak Cree Nation (TCN), and Wuskwi Sipihk First Nation (WSFN). The self-directed studies were conducted separately from the ATK workshop process; though where requested, some

assistance regarding methodology was provided at the outset of three of these projects. From Manitoba Hydro's perspective, the purpose of these studies was to engage communities about the Project in the hope of developing a greater understanding of the study area and the potential impacts of the project, from the perspective of Aboriginal communities. However, the MMF and the six communities that conducted their own study completed this work using the objectives, methods, and study topics that they each deemed appropriate. The self-directed studies are summarized below with additional detail provided in the Bipole III Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Technical Report.

5.4.3.1 Fox Lake Cree Nation

The Keewatinoow Converter Station and other components of the Bipole III Project will be located within the Fox Lake RMA and Fox Lake Traditional Territory, as defined in Section 1.2.1 of the 2004 Fox Lake Impact Settlement Agreement (ISA)[5], an area that is used intensively by Fox Lake members for a variety of activities. The Keewatinoow Converter Station site is located approximately 35 km from the Fox Lake Cree Nation community of Bird and approximately 91 km from the Town of Gillam, the historic and present-day home of the Fox Lake Cree Nation (FLCN). The ISA, which was signed by Manitoba Hydro, Manitoba, and FLCN in 2004, addressed the impacts of past Manitoba Hydro developments on the community. The agreement also outlines a process to address the adverse effects of certain types of future developments in the area, including a new converter station. FLCN and Manitoba Hydro interact across a range of projects and processes and have been in discussions in relation to the Project since late 2009.

ISA Keewatinoow Consultation Process[6]

Section 8.5 of the ISA includes provisions for Manitoba Hydro to undertake a consultation process with FLCN in relation to the development of a converter station in the Fox Lake Traditional Territory, as described in the ISA. This process includes: providing information on the Project and criteria for locating alternative sites; identifying FLCN concerns related to the development; identifying and reviewing potential site alternatives and the relative impacts on FLCN; identifying and evaluating potential mitigation measures; reviewing Manitoba Hydro employment, training, and business policies to identify potential opportunities for FLCN members; identifying and describing negative impacts which cannot be addressed through mitigation; and

[5] http://www.hydro.mb.ca/community/agreements/fox_lake/fox_lake_settlement_agreement.pdf.
[6] Crown consultation discussions with Fox Lake will be undertaken by the Province of Manitoba through a process that is separate from the Environmental Act approval process.

negotiating and endeavoring to finalize an agreement to compensate FLCN for adverse effects (Section 8.5.2).

Manitoba Hydro and FLCN have met on a monthly or biweekly basis since November 2009 in relation to the ISA Keewatinoow Converter Station consultation process. As the development of Keewatinoow is occurring as a component of the overall Bipole III Project, this process has also been used as a forum for dialogue related to the other Bipole III project components, including the HVdc line, the ground electrode site and a series of ac collector lines. As of October 2011, Manitoba Hydro and FLCN have met over 30 times in relation to the Project.

Meetings to date have covered a range of topics, including information sharing around the selection of the preliminary preferred electrode site and the evaluation and selection of the preliminary preferred Keewatinoow Converter Station site; discussion of pre-construction field work, permit applications, and associated employment and business opportunities; discussion and follow up regarding archaeological findings at the Keewatinoow preferred site; potential adverse effects and general discussions regarding the regulatory approvals process and construction employment opportunities.

Throughout the ISA Keewatinoow consultation process, FLCN has communicated its concerns regarding Project adverse effects, including: the potential for effects associated with an influx of workers into the area and more importantly concerns regarding potential Project effects on "*Mino pimatisiwin*" the overall health of the people and "*Aski*", the land, water, resources, animals and their interrelationships for future generations which are integral to the cultural identity of FLCN and treaty and aboriginal rights. These concerns have arisen from FLCN's previous experience with development as well as the results of its Bipole III Traditional Knowledge Project and its ongoing consultations with members.

Manitoba Hydro understands that FLCN does not view the Bipole III Project in isolation, but rather, views the previous and future projects as a multi-staged, inter-dependent project. The cumulative impacts of all Manitoba Hydro projects are an important consideration for FLCN. As a result of previous developments in the Gillam region, including the development of the Town of Gillam as Manitoba Hydro's base for its lower Nelson River operations, FLCN considers its existing environment and human condition to be one that is already heavily impacted by previous developments. Fox Lake and Manitoba Hydro have discussed a range of concerns arising from the development of the Project related to human and social issues, safety and community services, and land, water and resource-based issues. This feedback has significantly informed the assessment of project effects, particularly the socio-economic effects assessment related to the development of Keewatinoow. Two background papers summarizing the parties' perspectives on these issues were developed and are included with the Bipole III

Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Technical Report – one is a summary paper which was drafted by Manitoba Hydro with FLCN's participation, input, and review, the other is a paper summarizing only Fox Lake's perspective.

In addition to the ISA Converter Station process, FLCN's experiences are also informed by its *Fox Lake Cree Nation Bipole III Traditional Knowledge (TK) Project*, which gathered and documented FLCN TK about the areas which are in the vicinity of, and which will be affected by, the construction of the Project. The results of this study are summarized briefly below and further in the interim ATK Technical Report (submitted May, 2011 - Appendix to Bipole III Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Technical Report). The final report is still pending.

The FLCN TK report describes FLCN's areas of use and their community's connection to these lands. The report notes that their lands are now used by a number of Manitoba Hydro generating stations and that the developments have impacted FLCN in a number of ways. For example, the report describes environmental impacts such as the population decline of a number of species, as well as impacts on community well-being due to increased separation from the land. The Project will add to Manitoba Hydro's presence in FLCN's territories. The objective of FLCN's report was to communicate the perspectives of FLCN Elders and resource users about the impacts of the Project. To achieve this objective, FLCN employed three different research methods: map biography interviews, group interviews, and ground truthing. Specifically, 27 map biography interviews, four community mapping sessions, and five ground truthing activities were completed. Research participants included resource users and Elders.

The importance of FLCN defining and controlling their knowledge was emphasized. It is their perspective that "Fox Lake people's knowledge is alive and it must be protected like any individual would protect his/her loved ones" (FLCN:9). FLCN's report describes a variety of important land use activities and also includes local place names as well as Cree vocabulary for animals, fish, and plant species. In addition, a number of land use maps were developed, depicting knowledge related to berry-picking, fishing, hunting, traditional medicine picking, trapping, and important community sites. Harvesting berries and medicines continue to be essential activities. The locations of community harvesting areas as well as the medicinal and cultural uses of specific plants were provided. Generally FLCN members harvest berries and medicines in areas that have not been impacted by humans to avoid pollution.

Extensive information was provided about the three herds of caribou hunted by FLCN members: woodland, barren ground, and Pen Island. It was noted that, in the past, there were a lot more caribou observed in the area. More recently, following the construction of the Conawapa road, FLCN members have observed that local caribou movement has shifted. Concerns regarding the potential impact of the Keewatinoow Converter Station

on caribou were expressed as the preferred site is to be located in an area caribou are known to occupy. Another point of discussion was the difference in perspectives between Manitoba Hydro and Fox Lake regarding the different caribou species. Fox Lake would like to ensure that their knowledge regarding these species is respected and acknowledged in Manitoba Hydro reports.

Fishing and hunting were two activities noted for their importance to community life. For many, fishing provides an opportunity to spend time with their family and share Cree knowledge. Similarly, the community goose hunt and fall moose hunt are noted as community-wide events. The strength of family ties is underlined by such traditional and annual events. However, Fox Lake has noted changes in the quality of certain fish species and a decline in moose populations since the start of hydroelectric development in the area. With regards to potential impacts on goose populations, the report identifies concerns that the Keewatinoow Converter Station will displace geese from the area. The importance of these resources as a healthy food source is noted.

The recent discovery by Manitoba Hydro's Project Archaeologist of two archaeological sites, one containing possible ancient burials at Keewatinoow Converter Station has led to development of a heritage resource protection plan (HRPP) by MH's Project Archaeologist on the advice of the FLCN Elders and with support of Manitoba Hydro. Another concern identified by FLCN is the potential for the construction component of the project to impact community trapping activities. In addition to the actual construction activities themselves, FLCN has expressed concerns regarding the influx of workers into the region and the access these workers may have to FLCN territories and resources, which could lead to the over-harvesting of some species. These issues are considered and addressed further in Chapter 8.

The report offers some suggestions for mitigation measures, which include: ensuring that FLCN is involved in deciding the research topics when Manitoba Hydro is planning projects and field studies, as well as the development of a FLCN heritage policy protocol. Additionally, the importance for ongoing communication between FLCN and Manitoba Hydro was emphasized.

Discussions with FLCN with respect to the Project are ongoing. Following the filing of the EIS, Manitoba Hydro and FLCN will continue efforts to identify potential adverse effects and conclude an Adverse Effects Agreement, pursuant to the process set out in Article 8 of the ISA. Consistent with the approach outlined in Section 8.5 of the ISA, the effort will be to prevent or avoid, to lessen or reduce, to compensate in kind and through offsetting programs and, finally, to provide monetary compensation for any residual adverse effects associated with the development of the Keewatinoow Converter Station. Manitoba Hydro is committed under Section 8.5 of the ISA to provide funding for this process. Manitoba Hydro has entered into a series of process funding

agreements with FLCN, which have provided funding for FLCN's participation in this process since its inception.

5.4.3.2 Long Plain First Nation

In addition to Long Plain First Nation's participation in the SSEA process, the First Nation conducted the Long Plain First Nation Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge study (submitted April 2011 - Appendix to Bipole III Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Technical Report). The objective of Long Plain First Nation's (LPFN) study was to document their community's traditional and current land use within the Project Study Area and their concerns regarding the Project. To achieve this objective, LPFN staff sent out a newsletter to every home in the community outlining the purpose of the study and asking for interview participants. In addition, advertisements were placed in the Winnipeg Sun and run on the NCI radio station asking for participation from members living off-reserve. A total of 125 interviews were conducted, all following the same interview guide.

A number of local environmental issues and concerns were noted in LPFN's report. One of LPFN's major concerns is the declining water quality in the area. The Assiniboine River, which used to be the main source of water for the community, can no longer be used in the same way due to increased pollution. The increased chemical use by the agriculture industry has given rise to concerns regarding the safety of drinking water from waterways and wells, using the waterways for recreational activities, and harvesting fish and plants from the area. The report also identifies a number of historical, cultural, and burial sites that the community would like to see protected.

The report focuses on the changes observed in the way in which LPFN uses the land. For example, while there used to be many LPFN members engaged in agricultural activities, the First Nation now leases reserve land to non-member farmers. The report also describes the changes associated with hunting, trapping, and fishing activities that have been observed over time. Government regulations as well as concerns about environmental degradation were identified as having an influence on the way in which people engage in subsistence activities. The report also makes mention of the various plant and tree species that used to grow in and around LPFN's reserve lands but have become scarce in recent years, making the harvesting of plants for medicinal and subsistence purposes more challenging. All of these changes were connected to the social changes observed by study participants.

LPFN provided four maps showing the southern portion of the preliminary preferred route for the Project; LPFN's traditional land areas, LPFN traditional land use initiative, and traditional buffalo chase areas.

The report concludes by listing a number of concerns and issues that require further discussion:

- Electromagnetic fields and the potential impacts on humans living near to lines;
- The impact of the project, both in the construction and operation phases, on the health of local wildlife and community members;
- The ability for LPFN members to continue hunting, trapping, fishing and harvesting plant species;
- The extent of the footprint associated with the Bipole III Project;
- The placement of the Bipole III Transmission Line;
- Potential impacts on LPFN's treaty land entitlement process; and
- Traditional healing and how it relates to the Bipole III Project.

As a result of the concerns raised through the Traditional Knowledge Report, LPFN offers the following recommendations:

- Ensure meaningful consultations are conducted with First Nations;
- Ensure availability of employment and training opportunities; and
- Offer additional benefits to LPFN.

Manitoba Hydro will continue to meet with LPFN to discuss any issues arising from the Project and to consider LPFN's interests and concerns related to the project.

5.4.3.3 Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF)

Manitoba Hydro has been working to build a strong relationship with the MMF through a variety of projects and initiatives, including engaging with the MMF in relation to the Project. Engagement with the MMF on the Project has included providing support for the development of an MMF-led community engagement process and support for a Metis Traditional Land Use and Knowledge Study (submitted September 2011- Appendix to Bipole III Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Technical Report).

The purpose of the MMF's Traditional Land Use and Knowledge Study was to identify any Metis rights and interests that have the potential to be affected by the Bipole III Project. Specifically, the report outlines the methods employed to complete the study, the current Metis use of the Project Study Area, and documented knowledge about the study area. The MMF asserts that the Project Study Area includes portions of the province which are of historical and present-day interest to the Metis Nation as represented by the MMF. The MMF used two different processes to gather information

for their study. The first was a screening survey, conducted with the goal of identifying MMF members who use the study area. The survey responses were also used to identify potential participants for the interview process, which was the second component of the MMF Traditional Land Use and Knowledge Study. Interviews were conducted with the use of an interview guide and included a mapping component, in order to identify specific areas of interest and/or use. In total, forty-nine interviews were completed.

The findings of the screening survey provided information regarding the extent to which respondents engaged in traditional activities in the Project Study Area, and the demographic information associated with those respondents.

The information gathered through the interview process provided a more descriptive account of Metis land use in the Project Study Area. This included information regarding seasonal activities, the types of species harvested, the consumption of country foods, harvesting practices, the process of learning about the land, the amount of time spent on the land, and the way in which people access their areas of use. For example, the report explains that fall is the most important season to harvest large and small animals while summer and winter are identified as the most important seasons for fishing activities. In general, interviewees indicated that they began engaging in traditional activities in the company of their parents, siblings, and extended family, and that these family members were integral to their learning about the land itself and the use of the land. The average number of days per year each Interviewee spent engaged in traditional activities in the Project Study Area was 49 days. Half of those interviewed reported that they spent more than 24 days per year harvesting in the Project Study Area.

The way in which these aspects of Metis land use have changed over the last few decades was also documented. The report indicates that the average number of days per year that interviewees spent engaged in hunting, fishing, and gathering activities has changed throughout the past few decades.

With regards to cultural sites, the report identifies a number of ceremonial, burial or other sacred and spiritual places. However, the majority of these sites were located outside the Project Study Area.

The maps provided illustrate 419 food harvesting and 82 trapping areas as well as transportation routes. The maps also provide information about harvesting practices associated with large animals including moose, deer, elk, caribou and black bear, as well as for small game including upland birds, duck, geese, other waterfowl, rabbits, coyote/wolf, and beaver. Detailed information regarding fishing, and food and medicinal gathering activities was also presented.

The MMF report concluded that "...the information provided by the sample of 49 Manitoba Metis suggests extensive traditional use in the Project Study Area, particularly in the Porcupine and Duck Mountain areas of the province" (MMF: 44).

Manitoba Hydro will continue to meet with the MMF to discuss and consider MMF interests and concerns related to the Project.

5.4.3.4 Opaskwayak Cree Nation

Opaskwayak Cree Nation undertook to complete a Bipole III Aboriginal Ecological Knowledge study, in addition to their participation in the SSEA process.

Opaskwayak Cree Nation's (OCN) report (submitted July 2011 - Appendix to Bipole III Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Technical Report) indicates that approximately 83 km of the transmission line would traverse lands used by the community, including the intersection of five Registered Trap Lines of OCN members. In undertaking their Aboriginal Ecological Knowledge (AEK) Project, OCN developed the following objectives:

- Develop a process for OCN and Manitoba Hydro to discuss the proposed Bipole III Transmission Project;
- Encourage membership engagement for the purpose of addressing issues, concerns, and opportunities related to Bipole III;
- Identify and characterize the environment where the alternative routes for Bipole III are located;
- Map AEK within OCN's areas of use;
- 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 lands; and
- Propose mechanisms that will allow for follow-up on areas of primary concern related to Bipole III (OCN 2011:4).

OCN's report includes a description of their areas of use, which are identified as extending into Saskatchewan. In addition, the report outlines OCN`s rights and responsibilities in the Agreement for Joint Management of Natural Resources executed between OCN and the Province of Manitoba.

In recognition of the vital role they play in the community, OCN emphasized the importance of involving Elders in their AEK Project. As such, the first step in the project was to identify three Elders who would act as project leaders and would work with technical staff to develop an interview guide, conduct the interviews, and overview the analysis. In total, 28 Elders and resource users were interviewed. Interviews, which included a mapping component, were recorded and translated.

The importance of trapping to OCN culture and AEK was highlighted. Concerns were raised regarding the decreasing number of members, in particular youth, who engage in trapping activities. Interviewees were particularly concerned about the reduced opportunity to transfer knowledge to the youth in the absence of engaging in trapping activities. To address these issues, the Opaskwayak Educational Authority and OCN have supported the designation of the Elk trap line area, referred to as the Elk Zone, as a youth line to serve as an outdoor classroom where OCN practices and knowledge can be taught. The Elk Zone has recently been disturbed by the Wuskwatim Transmission Line, a disturbance which resource users and Elders linked to a decline in marten and fisher population in the area. Within this context, the report identifies a concern that the Project might further impact this area as well as marten and fisher populations.

Additional areas of concern were also identified in the report. The Ravensnest Zone, which includes the northern portion of Kelsey Lake, and is in close proximity of important spawning grounds, was noted as being susceptible to impacts of the Project. This area was also noted to be of cultural importance because of its birch forests from which canoes were constructed. The Kelsey Lake Zone was another culturally important area for OCN, and concerns were raised about the potential for the project to affect caribou herds found in the area.

The extent of industrial land use, including forestry and mining activities as well as Manitoba Hydro development, was noted as a source of apprehension for the OCN trappers. Trappers have observed changes resulting from these activities, such as a decrease in animal populations, an increase in outsider access to areas used by OCN, and the contamination of food sources. There are concerns that such disturbances have further cultural and socio-economic effects, as OCN sees the land as a source of cultural identity and economic stability. These existing concerns extend to the Project, which is anticipated to impact their areas of use. Conversely, the report acknowledges that the Project may bring benefits in the way of employment opportunities for community members.

The report concludes by offering a number of recommendations and socio-economic considerations:

- Ensure that OCN's AEK is considered in Manitoba Hydro's Bipole III Environmental Impact Statement and associated mitigation measures;

- Conduct a longitudinal biophysical study to evaluate potential environmental impacts;
- Compensate for impacts on the Elk Zone and for any adverse effects that cannot be mitigated;
- Establish mitigation measures to address the disturbance of subsistence use practices in the named areas;
- Develop environmental protection plans in partnership with OCN;
- Conduct monitoring and maintenance in partnership with OCN;
- Allocate timber generated as a result of clearing the right-of-way to OCN;
- Wherever possible, discourage the burning of forest related debris;
- Consider the negotiation of Impact Benefit Agreements and Purchase of Services Agreement between the successful contractor and OCN;
- Ensure that 10%, of the workforce within OCN lands and is comprised of OCN members; and
- Provide training and certification relevant to transmission line site development, installation and monitoring.

Manitoba Hydro will continue to meet with OCN to discuss and consider OCN interests and concerns related to the project.

5.4.3.5 Swan Lake First Nation

In addition to Swan Lake First Nation's participation in the SSEA process, the First Nation undertook to complete an ATK Study in relation to the Project. For a full understanding of the results of the SLFN work and the SLFN perspective, the complete reports can be found as an attachment to the ATK Technical Report.

The purpose of Swan Lake First Nation's (SLFN) Traditional Knowledge Project was to identify their community's traditional land use in the Project Study Area as well as identify the potential impacts of the Project on SLFN. To fulfill this objective, SLFN's History and Treaty Research Department conducted historical research and site visits to areas of concern. In addition, interviews with community Elders and local landowners were completed.

SLFN's report (submitted July 2011 - Appendix to Bipole III Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Technical Report) identifies a number of important community sites located in the vicinity of the Project. These include the areas known as: Long Plain, Round Plain,

Halfway Bank, Eagle's Nest, Indian Garden, Backfat Lake, Indian Springs, Hamilton Crossing, and Indian Ford. These sites carry historical relevance to SLFN and, in some cases, other Treaty 1 First Nations. For example, the Indian Garden Site is described as the area occupied by Chief Yellow Quill prior to Treaty 1 and subject to an outstanding land issue with the federal government. Another significant site is the Round Plain Site, which is considered a sacred ceremonial ground, and also the site where the Portage Band split into three bands. SLFN would like to ensure that sacred and ceremonial sites remain undisturbed.

The protection of burial grounds, noted to occur across the study area, is an area of great concern for SLFN. Although the locations of some burial sites have been identified, the lack of burial site markers makes identification of these sensitive sites problematic. It is extremely important that burial sites remain undisturbed and that any mitigation measures related to burial sites reflect the traditional practices of SLFN. The *Heritage Resources Act* provides relevant regulations. SLFN wants to ensure that these are properly enforced.

With respect to the current use of the study area, the majority is privately owned. However, local First Nations continue to gather medicines as well as hunt and fish in the area. As an indication of this use, the report also includes a vegetation survey which identifies numerous medicinal and edible plants. Maps, showing traditional and current land use of the area, were also provided.

Due to a variety of constraints including timeframes and flooding, SLFN was not able to undertake all of the work they wished to include in their report to Manitoba Hydro. However, based on the information SLFN had at the time the report was submitted to Manitoba Hydro SLFN developed the following recommendations:

- That the Round Plain Site be left undisturbed;
- That SLFN undertake research regarding the Indian Garden Site and initiate further discussions regarding this land with the federal government;
- Should a licence be granted for the project, that Manitoba Hydro allow for a SLFN monitor to be on-site for construction activities occurring between NW 35-9-9W1 to SW 26-9-9W1 to NE 8-9-8W1 east to SE 15-9-8W1;
- That a formal protocol be established and agreed to regarding the enforcement of the regulations under the Heritage Resources Act prior to construction; and
- That Manitoba Hydro continues to work with SLFN to address the community's concerns with the Project.

In addition to providing recommendations, Swan Lake identified a number of outstanding concerns related to the Project:

- Potential impacts on the resolution of outstanding SLFN land issues;
- Proper enforcement of the regulations provided in the *Heritage Resources Act*;
- Manitoba Hydro's defoliation practices and the potential impacts of chemical use on waterways and the environment as a whole; and
- Potential impacts of Manitoba Hydro's emergency management and maintenance practices on plant species.

Subsequent to Swan Lake's Traditional Knowledge report and upon request from the community, Manitoba Hydro provided funding for Swan Lake to complete additional botanical and archaeological work within the study area, in areas of concern to the community. Both studies were conducted with the purpose of further identifying potential impacts of the Project on the areas of historical significance and current use for SLFN.

To complete the botanical work, walk-through surveys of the defined areas of concern were completed in June, July, and September 2011. The botanical survey team divided the proposed project corridor into five sections and also focused on the Indian Gardens and Round Plain sites. Species lists for all the sections and sites were created and rare species as well as species of particular interest to SLFN were logged with a GPS. The botanical survey identified more than 200 plant species, more than 95% of which are known medicinal plants. Of these, nine species are currently considered rare in Manitoba. Two sections, Sections 1 and 4 were identified as highly vulnerable to disturbance as a result of unique species compositions. The report proposed the following recommendations:

- Consider adjustments to the Bipole III route;
- Once the final route is chosen, conduct detailed site surveys prior to disturbance to allow for additional mitigation measures;
- Adjust the placement of towers to minimize any negative impacts;
- Conduct construction activities in the wintertime; and
- Avoid using herbicides in areas where there are rare species and/or where community members harvest medicinal plants.

The archaeological study set out to locate known sites as well as assess the potential for undiscovered or unreported sites within the area. The archaeological study area was limited to the 7 km of the proposed preferred route where it crosses the Assiniboine

River and was not systematically studied but examined at irregular intervals. Field work was conducted in August 2011. The Historic Resources Branch inventory identified over 90 sites within a 30 km radius of the study area and provided coordinates for six known sites within, or just outside, the preliminary preferred route within the study area. Because of a lack of accessibility, only four of these sites were visited. Of these, the locations of three sites were confirmed. The study area, characterized by the intersection of three ecoregions and also containing a riparian corridor, is understood to be biologically diverse and therefore attractive to humans. The report provided an overview of the rich cultural history of the area and concluded that there is high potential for undiscovered archaeological sites within the study area given that nine of ten archaeology potential indicators were directly observed. The tenth indicator was not directly observed but is known to exist. Indeed, the field work conducted led to the identification of three new archaeological sites, an isolated find, and other finds. Apart from completing the remaining research objectives of recording landowner collections and undertaking a fall/spring site visit, which has been delayed due to extensive flooding and ongoing wet conditions, the following recommendations were proposed:

- Once the final route has been identified, a comprehensive archaeological assessment of the route and its right-of-way should take place;
- Based on the outcome of the archaeological assessment, further recommendations may be made to avoid or mitigate archaeological sites;
- Where impacts on archaeological resources are unavoidable, site specific assessments should be conducted to determine the size and nature of the site and to collect as much archaeological data as deemed necessary by SLFN and the Historic Resources Branch; and
- Archaeological work conducted in this area should be done in collaboration with the Historic Resources Branch and SLFN.

SLFN feels that additional work needs to be done to address their concerns and has emphasized the importance of continuing their community's involvement in the Bipole III project. Mitigation measures will be considered during the final design process. Discussions will continue with SLFN in an effort to address their concerns and interests and minimize impacts during construction.

5.4.3.6 Tataskweyak Cree Nation

Tataskweyak Cree Nation (TCN) has a long history with Manitoba Hydro and today, the community and the Corporation have a unique relationship, and interact across a number of projects and processes. TCN's perspective is that is has been severely

impacted by major Manitoba Hydro developments. The developments, which began in the 1950's and continue in operation today, include the Churchill River Diversion, Lake Winnipeg Regulation, and the construction and operation of four generating stations and transmission facilities in the lower Nelson River area. Along with four other First Nations, Manitoba, Canada, and Manitoba Hydro, Tataskweyak Cree Nation (Split Lake) is a signatory to the 1977 *Northern Flood Agreement*. In any given year the majority of the hydro-electric power produced in Manitoba is generated in the lower Nelson River region, within the Split Lake Resource Management Area.

Since the 1970s, Manitoba Hydro and TCN's relationship has continued to evolve. In 1992, TCN, Manitoba Hydro, Manitoba and Canada signed the 1992 NFA Implementation Agreement[7] to guide the implementation of the Northern Flood Agreement with TCN; the 1992 Agreement was the first NFA Implementation Agreement, setting the template for the other three Implementation Agreements to follow. This agreement included a range of provisions, including compensation for adverse effects, joint Tataskweyak-Hydro processes to address adverse effects of future hydroelectric development, and led to the creation of the SLRMA and definition of the Split Lake Resource Area. Agreements in 1996 and 2008 further defined the relationship and included provisions related to certain described water events. In 2000, TCN and Manitoba Hydro signed an *Agreement in Principle* in relation to the potential development of the Keeyask Generating Station, located at Gull Rapids in the SLRMA. In 2009, Manitoba Hydro and Tataskweyak Cree Nation signed the Tataskweyak Cree Nation Keeyask Adverse Effects Agreement, which sets out a range of programs to offset adverse effects of Keeyask, and the Joint Keeyask Development Agreement, which outlines the arrangement for TCN to become an equity partner in the Keeyask Generating Station (along with three other First Nations in the area).

Approximately 226 km of the Bipole III transmission line as well as a portion of the related facilities is located within the SLRMA. The Keewatinoow Converter Station and related facilities as well as approximately 15 km of the Bipole III transmission line are also located in the broader Split Lake Resource Area, just outside the SLRMA. As is TCN's preference, Manitoba Hydro provided the community with funding to consult with its own members regarding the Project. As the TCN/Manitoba Hydro working relationship has evolved over time, the community has developed its own approach to project discussions, where TCN representatives and leadership tend to consult directly with TCN members, without a strong Manitoba Hydro presence in the community.

[7] http://www.hydro.mb.ca/community/agreements/sla.

While this approach is somewhat different from that taken in other communities, it is TCN's preferred approach, and it is respected by Manitoba Hydro.

To date, the Manitoba Hydro/TCN process in relation to the Bipole III project has led to the development of two reports. The first, the *TCN Bipole III Preferred Route Selection Report* (submitted June, 2010 – Appendix to Bipole III Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Technical Report) included a constraints map and descriptive report, and provided the results of TCN's consultations with members regarding the three original proposed Bipole III alternative routes through the SLRMA. Consultations with members were conducted through community meetings and through 49 interviews with Elders and resource harvesters. The Report concluded that Tataskweyak was prepared to enter further discussions with Manitoba Hydro and conduct further examinations with a focus on Route B within the SLRMA and identified three potential adjustments to locate Bipole III as close as reasonably possible to PR 280 to reduce intrusions into otherwise pristine areas. Further discussion and examination was conditional upon reasonable funding of joint processes to address TCN concerns regarding the construction and operation of Bipole III within TCN traditional territory: determination of the 66 ft. right of way within the agreed preferred route, impacts of Bipole III on Tataskweyak, and Project benefits including training, employment and business opportunities.

Following submission of this report, Manitoba Hydro, in July 2010, announced "Route B" - the route which was most closely situated to PR 280 - as the preliminary preferred route within the SLRMA. In December 2010, at a meeting with TCN, Manitoba Hydro accepted two of the three route amendments that had been proposed by TCN in its June report, revising its Bipole III preliminary preferred route such that it follows the existing PR 280 in portions of the SLRMA, as described in Chapter 7.

A second report, the *TCN Report on Bipole III Right-of-Way and Expected Impacts* (submitted March 2011 - Appendix to Bipole III Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Technical Report) summarized consultations with TCN members and member perspectives regarding the selection of the Bipole III route and potential Project impacts in the Split Lake Resource Management Area.

For the second report, TCN based its assessment of the expected impacts from the Project on their Cree worldview, which is described as reflecting a number of beliefs expressed in vital relationships with Mother Earth that recognize "the interconnectedness of all things, living and non-living, in our homeland ecosystem" (TCN:3). This worldview was further explained through the use of the Mother Earth Ecosystem Model.

TCN used the Overview of Water and Land (OWL) process to gather information from their membership regarding the Bipole III Project. This process, which has been used for previous studies and described as reflective of TCN's worldview, relied on two

rounds of interviews conducted with the use of a general interview guide to encourage open-ended discussions. A mapping component was included in the interview process. Ninety-two members participated in the first round of interviews, and another 20 were involved in the second round. Fifty-four percent of the 112 interviewees were resource users who were believed to be the ones most likely affected by the Bipole III Project. The interviews were translated and analyzed with a view to developing a list of identified issues.

TCN's second report includes a number of maps which depict their community's areas of use, much of which are in the Project Study Area. A number of issues and/or expected impacts related to the Project were identified. The analysis of these issues "indicated that the impacts of the Project are likely to be interferences with the exercise of the customs, practices and traditions which define our cultural identity" (TCN:40). Nine possible interferences were noted including the potential impact on hunting, trapping, access to traditional foods, opportunities for sharing, as well as the experience of traditional learning and living. Concerns were also raised regarding the Project's possible interference with TCN's historical, spiritual, emotional relationship with the land including members' respect and care for Mother Earth.

The information presented from the first round of interviews demonstrated a clear preference for the transmission line built close to PR 280 as a way to minimize the potential negative impacts of the line. The second round of interviews focused on the two route amendments proposed by Manitoba Hydro in December 2010 with an emphasis on resource harvesters familiar with the area that would be affected by the amendments. No clear preference was stated from this round of interviews.

TCN members consider the Project in the context of past and future Manitoba Hydro developments. TCN has experienced various impacts from previous Manitoba Hydro projects. There are ongoing concerns regarding further loss of natural habitat, displacement of animal populations, and loss of access trails within the Resource Area and the consequent negative effects on TCN's cultural practices and identity. With regard to future developments, there was an identified interest in seeing the Keeyask Generating Station built. Without assurances that the Keeyask Generating Station and the associated benefits will be realized, members were hesitant to support the Project.

The report concluded by identifying the following conditions associated with TCN's continued support of the Project:

- Conduct negotiations with the goal of reaching an agreement regarding compensation for potential project impacts on the collective rights and interests of TCN;

- Conduct negotiations and reach an agreement regarding business, training and employment opportunities associated with the construction, operation and maintenance of the project;
- Participate in and contribute to Manitoba Hydro's Environmental Impact Statement; and
- Conduct a consultation process regarding the Keewatinoow converter station and electrode site.

Manitoba Hydro continues to meet with TCN in the context of the Project. The parties are currently in discussions regarding TCN's concerns about the Project, as well as the potential Project -related business, training, and employment opportunities. These discussions are intended to lead to a jointly developed set of principles which will address training, employment, business opportunities and project impacts. Funding for TCN-led consultation and communication with its members regarding the Project is ongoing. Manitoba Hydro and TCN are also organizing a visit of an existing northern converter station and electrode site for TCN members. This visit, being planned for fall of 2011, will include a facilitated information session regarding the construction and operation of these facilities. It is anticipated that Project-related discussions with TCN will continue past the filing of the EIS.

5.4.3.7 Wuskwi Sipihk First Nation

In addition to participation in the EACP, Wuskwi Sipihk First Nation (WSFN) undertook a traditional knowledge study to achieve the following objectives:

- Gather information related to gathering, hunting, fishing, burial sites and traditional ceremonies; and
- Document concerns regarding the placement of the Project.

To achieve these objectives, WSFN conducted interviews with community Elders and resource users. The interviews included a mapping component.

WSFN developed a series of maps depicting their community's detailed knowledge of their areas of use. Habitat areas for a wide range of species were documented, as were areas used by the community for hunting, trapping, and fishing. Specific locations where the community harvests medicinal and other culturally important plants were also noted. The community also documented the known locations of a wide range of heritage resources. Protection of sensitive sites was of particular concern.

A final WSFN report is pending.

5.4.4 Summary of Feedback from Aboriginal Communities

Manitoba Hydro recognizes the unique relationship Aboriginal communities have with their areas of use and is appreciative to all the communities who took time to share their valued knowledge and perspectives with regards to the Bipole III study area and Project. Aboriginal communities shared information about their history, culture, areas of use, as well as the current issues facing their communities. Despite the community-specific concerns identified, there were many issues that continued to be raised in Aboriginal communities across the study area. Section 5.5.2 summarizes the feedback received through the EACP and incorporates the main Project-related concerns shared by Aboriginal communities and Manitoba Hydro's responses to these issues. Further detail regarding proposed mitigation measures related to specific project impacts can be found in Chapter 8.

Manitoba Hydro has attempted to incorporate Aboriginal concerns throughout the Project planning process as well as through the development of the EIS. Manitoba Hydro understands the importance of continuing to engage with Aboriginal communities and work to address outstanding concerns. Discussions regarding culturally appropriate and site-specific mitigation measures as well as Access Management Plans will be ongoing with Aboriginal communities who have identified concerns. In addition, Manitoba Hydro will continue to provide Project updates and encourage ongoing communication with all Aboriginal communities.

5.4.5 Discussions with Resource Users

Trapping is an important activity for many Aboriginal communities. Manitoba Hydro has implemented a "Trappers Notification/Compensation Policy" to guide its interactions with trappers and provide a framework for compensation for project-related impacts on trapping activities. To date, discussion and information sharing with resource users in the vicinity of the project have taken place through the ATK Study Process, the KPI process described in Section 5.3.4, and through discussions at Community Open Houses. Following the filing of the Environmental Impact Statement, Manitoba Hydro will begin direct engagement with trappers, trapping associations, and other stakeholders whose trapping activities may be affected by the Project.

Manitoba Hydro's policy is to engage with potentially affected trappers prior to the construction of a new project, in order to discuss potential employment and other opportunities, and provide disturbance allowances to those individuals whose trapping activities will be affected by transmission line construction activities. In the case of Bipole III, the implementation of this Policy will include discussions with some 120

individual registered trappers, four Open Trapping Zones, and 12 Manitoba Local Fur Councils. Manitoba Hydro is aiming to have agreements in place with trappers in the vicinity of the project, in order to compensate them for the potential commercial losses associated with project construction, prior to the start of construction.

Manitoba Hydro has been in ongoing discussions with trappers in the vicinity of the Keewatinoow Converter Station site. Annual disturbance agreements are currently in place with these trappers and provide compensation for disturbances related to field studies and other ongoing work in the area. These agreements are in relation to all Manitoba Hydro work in the area and are not specific to the Project.

5.5 ENGAGEMENT PROCESS FEEDBACK

5.5.1 OVERVIEW

A substantial volume of feedback was gained throughout the EACP. This section summarizes the main topics of feedback provided over the course of the four Rounds. Feedback was tracked in a Master Feedback Log (MFL) which is attached to the Bipole III Environmental Assessment Public Consultation Technical Report.

The nature of the Project feedback evolved during the four rounds, moving from more general in nature to more specific in nature. Since the project information provided in the early rounds of the EACP (i.e., Rounds 1 and 2) was general in nature (project need, project goals, area, etc.), the nature of the feedback was typically general with an emphasis on questions about the Project in general. With the presentation of alternative HVdc line routes in Round 3 and a preliminary preferred route in Round 4, feedback tended to be route related, although more general Project questions were still asked. Throughout the EACP:

- 244 meetings were held;
- 137 Regional and Community Open Houses were held, with 510 comment sheets completed;
- 42 Landowner Information Centres/Meetings were held with 319 Landowner Information Centre forms (Round 4 and Ground Electrode) completed;
- Over 200 phone calls were answered on the project phone line; and
- Over 140 emails/letters were received.

5.5.2 Feedback and Responses

Several main themes emerged over the course of the EACP. Manitoba Hydro's responses to many of the issues raised evolved over the course of the four rounds as project planning became more advanced. The feedback received through the EACP has been incorporated into both the site selection process (as further described in Chapter 7) and in the environmental assessment itself (Chapter 8). The following summary describes the main issues identified as well as Manitoba Hydro's response to these issues.

5.5.2.1 East Side versus West Side location for Bipole III line

Questions around the rationale for locating the Bipole III line on the west side of Manitoba rather than on the east side were among the most frequent and common throughout all four rounds of consultation. The majority of participants indicated a preference for the line to be routed to the east side of Lake Winnipeg. Key concerns regarding a west side routing included: additional construction cost, additional line losses, impact to agricultural lands, and impact to residential properties. Some participants cited the planned east side all-weather road as a routing opportunity for the Bipole III line in eastern Manitoba. Numerous participants noted that the longer the route, the more costly and less efficient it would be. Greater length was also associated with greater exposure to weather risks, more maintenance, impacts on agriculture and greater environmental impacts. A few participants offered a contrary position on this topic – namely that greater length (when comparing an eastern alternative to the western alternatives) was justified in order to protect the eastern Manitoba boreal forest.

Manitoba Hydro responded to these concerns by indicating that following an assessment of system reliability options and review by the Manitoba Hydro Electric Board and the Province of Manitoba, a decision was made to develop the Bipole III line on the west side of the Province. Fundamental to this decision was concern for protection of a proposed UNESCO World Heritage Site on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, and a desire to avoid potential negative impacts on Manitoba Hydro's United States export revenues. Participants were also referred to the report Bipole III Transmission Routing Study (CMC Consultants Inc., 2007) which presents rationale for the selection of the western routing for the Project. This study was made available on Manitoba Hydro's project website. Manitoba Hydro also responded by acknowledging that consideration was given to the various factors identified when ultimately assessing west side alternatives (cost, impact, etc.). For example, line length was considered in comparing the alternative routes.

5.5.2.2 Need for and alternatives to the Project

Over the course of the 4 rounds, EACP participants generally indicated that they had a clear understanding of the need for the Project (as described in Chapter 2) and were supportive of Manitoba Hydro pursuing a project to address the reliability concern.

The concept of constructing the Bipole III HVdc line either underground or under Lake Winnipeg was noted on several occasions. In response to inquiries around alternative means of delivering the project, Manitoba Hydro indicated that as part of its planning process, it reviewed a number of alternatives for the Bipole III line including underground and underwater options. It was noted that these options have significant cost implications, as well as reliability, technical and maintenance implications.

5.5.2.3 Public Participation Processes

Stakeholders generally indicated that they appreciated the opportunity to be provided with project information and to share ideas early in the Project planning process, and throughout the environmental assessment.

Early in the process, some stakeholders noted that, as the SSEA process moves forward and alternative routes for the Bipole III line are identified, a special effort should be made to involve local resource users whose activities might be affected by the line. A number of First Nation representatives were concerned that the Community Open Houses might be construed as "Crown consultation", which has legal ramifications that they felt could impinge on the rights of the First Nation. Community members requested that the Open Houses not be considered formal consultation. Manitoba Hydro noted the concern, and confirmed that Manitoba and Canada have the responsibility to consult with the First Nations (consistent with interpretation of Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution Act (1982)), and that this duty has not been delegated to Manitoba Hydro by the Crown.

In Round 2 of the SSEA, a number of stakeholders noted that the low participation at many of the Community Open Houses could be attributed to local community members feeling that their input would have little impact on project planning. To increase community involvement at the Open Houses, many attendees recommended advertising the Community Open Houses on local radio stations. Manitoba Hydro subsequently adjusted the notification plan to include, where possible, a brief overview of the Project to be broadcast on the local radio station. Manitoba Hydro found that Community Open Houses that were advertised on the local radio stations had greater community participation and therefore adopted this practice for subsequent rounds of consultation.

Some Aboriginal community representatives indicated that Manitoba Hydro should be obtaining the approval of local people whose territory is being crossed by a new line before securing Provincial and Federal approvals. Some favoured having a negotiated agreement with Manitoba Hydro that clarified how their community would be involved in, and benefit from, transmission projects passing through their traditional areas. Manitoba Hydro has been committed to Aboriginal participation in the planning and assessment process and will continue to work with Aboriginal communities to minimize negative impacts, identify employment and business opportunities and address any other concerns related to the project.

Some questions were raised about whether Manitoba Hydro would provide Aboriginal communities with financial support to participate in the environmental assessment of the Project. Manitoba Hydro indicated that it would be willing to provide support to Aboriginal communities for the purposes of assistance with open house planning in their community. Manitoba Hydro also offered funding for community coordinators and considered requests for funding for self-directed ATK studies, some of which have included an ongoing consultation component.

5.5.2.4 Routing of the Line

Throughout the EACP, many questions were raised pertaining to the routing of the line. As noted above much of the feedback focused on the choice of a route on the west side of Manitoba, as opposed to an east side route. Other comments and questions pertained to the route selection process itself. Rounds 3 and 4 focused on review of the alternative routes and, subsequently, review of the preliminary preferred route.

In response to inquiries regarding how the route would be determined, Manitoba Hydro representatives indicated that the location of the line would be determined through the SSEA process, which would involve identifying biophysical and socio-economic features/constraints, as well as technical (engineering) and cost considerations. Participants were advised that the SSEA process is a phased approach, involving the systematic refinement of the study area in order to identify and assess the best balanced choice for the route. This approach includes identifying regional and site-specific features/constraints, and opportunities for routing; and identifying and evaluating alternative routes based on community/public input, local and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge, socio-economic, biophysical, technical and cost considerations. Ongoing input from stakeholders was noted as a critical component in the process and selecting the route for the HVdc line.

Some participants asked about routing through Provincial and National Parks, and First Nation Reserve Lands and were advised that, through the SSEA process, Provincial and

National Parks will be avoided if possible, and that Reserve Lands will be avoided completely. Specific feedback was provided regarding the potential negative effect that Alternative Route A would have on the aesthetic value of the Saskatchewan River Valley. A number of participants felt that the Bipole III route should not bisect Provincial Forest Reserves. Some participants expressed specific concerns about impeding access to mineral deposits in various areas on or near the alternative routes.

A number of participants offered perspectives about the proximity of alternative routes to their treaty land entitlement (TLE) selections. Manitoba Hydro has taken into consideration all available TLE information and will continue to monitor new or pending TLE selections. Through the site selection process, all existing TLE sites were avoided. More recently, two First Nations have made TLE selections of land within the Project area. Manitoba Hydro will continue discussions with these First Nations.

In response to inquiries about the separation of the Bipole III HVdc line from the Bipoles I and II lines, participants were advised that, given reliability is the primary purpose of the project, a greater separation is preferable. However, the Project study area was defined in such a way that route within the area would be acceptable in terms of the minimum separation distance.

As outlined in Chapter 7, during Round 3 of the EACP, participants were provided with an opportunity to comment on the three alternative routes. Many participants in the Public Open Houses did not offer a preference for the alternative routes presented (over 60% of respondents). Among those who did offer a preference, the majority indicated a preference for Alternative Route B (Figure 5.5-1).

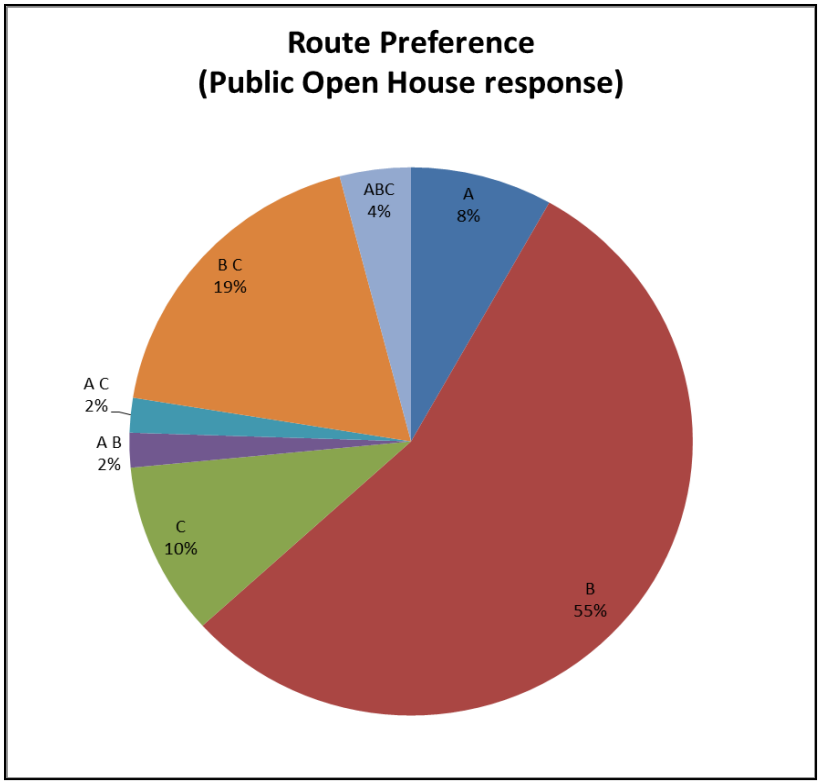

Figure 5.5-1: Route Preference Derived from Public (Regional) Open House Comment Sheets

In terms of the Regional Open Houses, the main reasons cited for Route B preference were: shortest line length, least disruption to agricultural lands, and least disruption to populated areas. In the cultivated agricultural areas south of Provincial Trunk Highway 16, there was a general preference for Route A, which generally crosses the least populated areas of the three options presented. In terms of the Community Open Houses, Route B was generally preferred, the main reasons were: proximity to their community (both closer to and farther from the community in question were documented as a preference), and fewer wildlife and environmental concerns. Many participants suggested that the shortest alternative route possible should be selected not only to reduce cost, but also to reduce risk exposure (e.g., weather events), as well as to reduce impact to forestry, wildlife and people. Manitoba Hydro indicated that line length was a consideration in the route selection process.

Feedback from Rounds 1 to 3 was assessed and incorporated into decision-making for the selection of a preliminary preferred route for the Bipole III line. This process is described in Chapter 7. During Round 4 of the EACP participants were advised that feedback obtained through the public consultation process was considered in the selection of the preliminary preferred route for the Bipole III line. As noted in Section

5.5.4, feedback received throughout Round 4 was also integral to making adjustments to identify the Proposed Preferred Route for the Bipole III line.

5.5.2.5 Project Benefits

Participants in the early rounds of the EACP frequently raised the issue of sustainable (enduring) financial benefits from the Project which had been seen with previous Manitoba Hydro projects (e.g. the Wuskwatim Transmission Development Fund). Some participants expressed concern that a new transmission line would pass through their traditional areas without providing ongoing benefits to their communities, particularly in the case of a project such as Bipole III, where the power could not be used locally. Similarly, some felt that the benefits of a project like Bipole III would only accrue to southern and export customers. A number of participants expressed an interest in the concept of enduring financial benefits from transmission lines that pass through traditional areas as a means of income to remote communities.

Some participants expressed an interest in community ownership of the line and/or revenue sharing for new Manitoba Hydro developments. A number of suggestions for community benefits were provided, including:

- Reducing electricity rates or providing exemptions;
- Revenue and profit sharing on an annual basis (rather than on a 'one-time' basis); and
- Introduction of a development fund (such as the one created for the Wuskwatim Transmission Project).

A few communities expressed a desire to be partners in the Project. They felt an annual financial payment through a development fund or trust was insufficient compensation for the use of local lands and potential depletion of resources. They also wished to have a direct role in project decision-making. Manitoba Hydro indicated that it is not prepared to share in ownership of the Project because the line will be a key part of its integrated power system and must be managed and operated in conjunction with the system.

Feedback on project benefits was taken into account in developing the Community Development Initiative (CDI) concept. The announcement of the CDI led, in turn, to further feedback around the concept of Project financial benefits. This was particularly the case during Round 4 leadership meetings and Community Open Houses. There was frequent opposition to the concept of the CDI being offered for only a ten year period.

Other concerns expressed included questions regarding:

- How population and proximity would be determined for purposes of calculating CDI payments;
- Why the CDI is not based on traditional territories and/or treaty areas;
- How eligibility for the CDI would be determined; and
- Why the CDI is including incorporated towns and villages and Aboriginal communities not in immediate proximity to the preliminary preferred route.

Manitoba Hydro continues to review and refine the CDI program having regard to community feedback received during the EACP. Manitoba Hydro will be providing information to eligible communities following submission of the EIS.

Another form of project benefit which was raised during the EACP was the concept of reduced power rates for communities as a result of the Project. Manitoba Hydro indicated that it is not considering this as a project benefit option as it would create inequities among customers. The same rates apply to all residential customers with land line connections across the province. Reduced rates have not been provided to any community in the province.

Throughout all four rounds of the EACP, Manitoba Hydro frequently received questions about potential employment, training and business opportunities. Participants were advised that transmission line construction projects do not provide pre-project training because of the short duration and seasonal nature of the work. In a given area, line construction generally involves two winter construction seasons lasting approximately three months each. There will be employment opportunities during the construction of the transmission line. The Transmission Line and Civil Construction Department will be providing employment related information to communities throughout the Project area.

Many stakeholders wanted to understand the timing and process of securing employment related to the Project as well as what types of jobs would be available. A number of participants suggested that the emphasis should be on local participation for construction jobs, which would require timely and effective training. There was an interest in having local residents participate in both the entry-level jobs and more skilled positions.

Participants asked how Manitoba Hydro engages Aboriginal communities in terms of employment and business opportunities. Some participants referred to the need for guaranteed employment opportunities for Aboriginal communities and negotiated contracts rather than an open tendering process for procurement of materials and for

construction activities. There was interest in a regional approach to construction activities, either through treaty territories or tribal council regions.

Many participants noted that job and business benefits from the Project would be of great importance to their community, while understanding that these opportunities would be modest and of short term duration.

Manitoba Hydro has employment policies/collective bargaining agreements that will be relevant to the various components of the Project. While contracts will generally be of an open tender type, inviting competitive bids, Manitoba Hydro will have opportunities to apply its Northern Purchasing Policy. Manitoba Hydro's Northern Purchasing Policy allows for evaluation of Aboriginal content in tender packages, restricted tenders and in appropriate situations, negotiated contracts.

5.5.2.6 Effects on Agricultural Operations on the Transmission Line Right-of-way and Compensation Practice

Numerous participants were concerned about the potential effects of the Project on agricultural operations in the southern portions of the Project Study Area. Participants expressed concerns regarding diagonal placement of the line across agricultural lands, which they felt would be more disruptive to agricultural operations and would create difficulties in negotiating farm equipment around transmission towers. These concerns were consistently raised during Round 3 when the alternative routes were communicated to stakeholders. This feedback resulted in a negative assessment of any alternative route segment that had diagonal routing through cultivated agricultural lands.

The effects of transmission towers and lines on aerial spraying operations, pivot irrigation systems, and GPS systems were noted as concerns. The potential loss of prime agricultural lands, due to placement of transmission towers in farming areas, was also noted as a concern by some participants. A few participants expressed concerns regarding the potential effect of transmission towers on the ability to conduct organic farming operations on or near proposed transmission lines. Some participants expressed concerns regarding the potential effects of DC lines on livestock.

Participants noted a general concern over the loss of agricultural lands due to tower placement, as well as the general nuisance they felt would be caused by the transmission line. Participants were advised that there would be one to two towers on each quarter section and that tower placement would typically be placed in a linear fashion in order to minimize disruption. One of the key concerns raised by many farmers was the offset distance between the proposed transmission towers and the edge of property line. Manitoba Hydro assessed this concern and proposed a re-alignment of the right-of-way which is discussed further in Chapter 7.

The issue of the potential effects of the Bipole III line on the ability to conduct aerial spraying operations in and around the transmission line right-of-way was raised during Rounds 3 and 4. Both aerial sprayers and farmers utilizing aerial spraying services raised the concern of lost productivity due to the decreased manoeuvrability of aerial spraying planes around the Bipole III line.

One of the specific concerns raised was the inability to spray within the right-of-way. Another concern involved the potential reduction in land productivity due to the fragmentation of farming management units. If management units that currently use aerial spraying applications are less than a quarter section in size, participants suggested that crossing of such units by the HVdc line would render them no longer viable for aerial spraying. The residual management unit, net of the right-of-way, would be too small for aerial spraying to be economically efficient. Participants that raised this concern were advised that if there is a demonstrable loss, that mitigation would come in the form of compensation for loss of land productivity.

Numerous participants asked if EMFs would have an impact on satellite GPS farm equipment operations. Manitoba Hydro had undertaken independent testing and consulted respected experts on this topic, all of which confirm that the Bipole III line will not cause any significant interference with GPS systems.

Many participants who owned land in the vicinity of the preliminary preferred route wanted to understand the compensation policies that Manitoba Hydro would have in place for the Project, and whether compensation would offset the potential impact to farm operations. A substantial number of participants, particularly north of PTH 16, indicated that the compensation amounts seemed reasonable. However, in the cultivated areas south of PTH 16, many participants indicated that compensation would have to be substantially improved to offset the lifetime impact of routing the Bipole III line through prime agricultural farm land. In response to these concerns, Manitoba Hydro undertook a review of its Landowners Compensation Policy.

Other specific responses to agricultural concerns were provided as part of the information and dialogue during Round 4, as well as through direct responses to those individual stakeholders who communicated with Manitoba Hydro representatives outside of the meetings, Regional Open Houses and Landowner Information Centres. Further elaboration of these concerns is provided below in Table 5.5-1. Responses from the Landowner Information Centres are discussed in greater detail in the subsequent section.

Table 5.5-1: Summary of Specific Concerns Related to Effects on Agricultural Operations

Description	Concern	Response
Agriculture – Placement of Towers in Field	The space between property lines and the proposed tower placement within the 66m ROW would provide insufficient space to allow for larger equipment to pass through this space, rendering extensive lands inaccessible for farming.	Manitoba Hydro will examine the precise location of the towers and the alignment of the 66m ROW to help address this issue.
Agriculture – Aerial Spraying	The proposed 66m ROW will in some cases bisect management units <160acres. Where these units are oriented perpendicular to the line, the efficiency of any required aerial spraying is seen to become substantially compromised, such that the cost of aerial spraying outweighs the benefit. Inability to aerial spray may also limit the options for crops that can be grown.	Any devaluation of land as a result of the inability to make efficient use of aerial spraying will be identified as a factor in the landowner compensation agreements. Manitoba Hydro held on-site meetings with an aerial sprayer and with the MB Aerial Applicators Association to better understand the issue, and is reviewing the potential negative effect to aerial spraying operations.
Agriculture – Compensation	Some farmers indicated that the proposed compensation policy is insufficient to reflect the long term true cost of accommodating the transmission towers, including maintenance around the towers.	Manitoba Hydro provided opportunity for face to face meetings with all potentially affected landowners in order to explain and review the policies. A compensation information brochure was produced and shared with any interested participant. Manitoba Hydro has reviewed its compensation policies for major transmission lines and is making adjustments accordingly.

Description	Concern	Response
Agriculture – Splitting of Management Units	In a few cases, the 66m ROW will split a management unit (rather than following an existing property line/linear feature), which results in smaller, less efficient farming practices or interferes with existing or planned operations (e.g. irrigation).	Manitoba Hydro has attempted to avoid all such cases, though in some instances an alignment that splits a management unit represented the least impact option when considering all variables. In these cases, where the ROW is not on a property line and interferes with the farm operation, this will be identified as a factor in the landowner mitigation options and compensation agreements.
Agriculture – Taxation	Farmers expressed concern as to whether compensation payment components would be attributable as income and therefore taxable – this would reduce the attractiveness of the proposed payments.	The advice received by Manitoba Hydro from Revenue Canada is that compensation income is generally taxable. Individual landowners will need to review their respective tax implications with Revenue Canada.
Agriculture – Liability for Damage	Farmers expressed concern as to whether they would accrue liability for any damage to transmission towers located on their land.	Manitoba Hydro advised farmers that the tower structure payment was calculated to account for any additional insurance coverage a landowner might wish to acquire.
EMF – Induction in Dairy Cattle	Farmer was concerned about potential for current induction from the DC line to dairy cattle, potentially affecting productivity.	Manitoba Hydro consulted an external EMF expert, who advised of potential issues and solutions. This information was provided to the landowner.
EMF – Electronic Devices Effects	Landowners/farmers expressed concerns about potential for the DC line to affect electronic devices, particularly precision GPS units used to guide agricultural machinery.	Manitoba Hydro retained two independent companies to review and conduct field tests with GPS devices to determine the potential for malfunction/interference in proximity to an HVdc line A brochure was produced with the relevant information and provided to participants during Round 4 Consultation.

Description	Concern	Response
Vegetation Management	Individual farmers indicated concern that they would be responsible for control of weeds beneath transmission towers.	Landowner compensation associated with the Bipole III project is intended to recognize the additional responsibilities associated with vegetation management beneath the transmission tower structures.

5.5.2.7 Health Effects of Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMFs)

Numerous participants had questions concerning the potential health effects on humans and animals as a result of proximity to the Bipole III line (i.e., EMFs). Some communities were concerned about the link between EMFs or the existence of lines to the quality of medicinal plants and other culturally important plants. Specifically, some participants indicated that they would not harvest plants near a transmission line.

Participants were provided with extensive information concerning EMFs from both AC and DC transmission lines. Brochures were developed on this topic and made available to participants. This information confirmed that, while the design and associated operating characteristics of the proposed Bipole III transmission line are still being developed, these characteristics are likely to be similar to other DC transmission lines in Manitoba. There are no known health effects associated with static (DC) electric and magnetic fields in the range of levels that would be produced by the proposed Bipole III transmission line. This issue is considered in detail in chapter 8 and in the Bipole III Environmental and Health Assessment of the DC Electrical Environment Technical Report.

Health effects are continually being studied and the general consensus of the worldwide scientific community is that a public health risk from exposure to these fields has not been established. Manitoba Hydro will continue to study the potential effects of EMFs on human health.

5.5.2.8 Effect on Residences and Property

Several participants expressed concerns regarding possible effects that the Bipole III line may have on properties and residences near the line (e.g. property values, aesthetics). Participants noted that the transmission line should be routed to avoid residences and commercial operations. The preliminary preferred route for the Bipole III line maximizes separation from existing residences and farm operations to the greatest extent

possible, in balance with the other established routing criteria (Chapter 7). Manitoba Hydro monitors property values in the vicinity of its facilities, and based on research conducted to date, has determined that property values will not be significantly affected.

There were some questions regarding who pays for property taxes on the right-of way. If a property is acquired by easement, the property owner will continue to pay property taxes.

5.5.2.9 Effects on Wildlife and Resource Use Activities

Impacts on local water, land, wildlife (including caribou), migratory birds, plants, and soil were noted as particular concerns during the EACP. Participants expressed concerns that the Project would inhibit their ability to practice land use activities (hunting, trapping, fishing, harvesting) that were identified as being important to community culture, learning and well-being. Some participants expressed concerns that the Project could impact animal populations and, specifically in the northwestern part of the province, many communities expressed concerns about moose populations. Many participants expressed concerns that Project construction activities, as well as the existence of the line (noise, etc.), may displace animals from the area. In northern areas, participants expressed concerns about the potential effects that the Project may have on traditional activities including gathering, fishing and hunting. The importance of blueberries as well as other medicinal plants to community and health was emphasized. These concerns were particularly prevalent in the discussions held through the Aboriginal Engagement process, as well as through the ATK study process, and are documented more fully in the Bipole III Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Technical Report.

Participants frequently asked about potential effects of the Project on trapping at many of the Community Open Houses. Some concerns were expressed about the adequacy of Manitoba Hydro's Trappers Notification/Compensation Policy. Some participants questioned why Manitoba Hydro does not have similar compensation policies in place in relation to gathering, fishing and hunting.

Manitoba Hydro's approach to site selection and environmental assessment is to select a route which will avoid, to the greatest extent possible, impacts on wildlife and resource use activities. Where impacts cannot be avoided, Manitoba Hydro endeavours to identify appropriate mitigation measures. These potential effects and associated mitigation measures are considered more fully in Chapter 8.

5.5.2.10 Effects on Heritage Resources

Many communities expressed concerns about the potential for the project to disturb sensitive sites/ burial sites. Manitoba Hydro will deal with all heritage resources in accordance with the *Heritage Resources Protection Act* and will ensure that all sensitive sites are identified in its Environmental Protection Plans. Discussions will also continue with communities regarding their ongoing involvement in ensuring that sensitive sites are identified and properly protected.

5.5.2.11 Effects on Access

Some participants felt that transmission lines would provide opportunities for increased access for recreation and hunting. This was viewed both positively and negatively. Some participants shared their concern that snowmobile groups would groom and use the Bipole III right-of-way, which might affect local trappers.

Some participants viewed the potential for increased access as positive in terms of increasing access to traplines and recreational opportunities, while others were concerned about the potential for increased access to result in negative effects on the environment. The latter includes concerns about overharvesting of wildlife and vandalism (i.e., damage to trapping equipment, disruption of cultural sites). Where this issue is a concern, Access Management Plans will be developed and shared with local communities.

As part of Round 4, direct conversations and correspondence were conducted with both trappers and outfitters with operations in the vicinity of the preliminary preferred route. A number of outfitters noted specific concerns with respect to the potential impact of the Project to existing bait sites or to their operations in general. Comments from outfitters are recorded in the Bipole III Environmental Assessment Public Consultation Technical Report.

5.5.2.12 Effects of Vegetation Management

Some participants shared concerns about vegetation management and stated that they do not want chemicals used for vegetation management for the Project. Participants mentioned that they thought chemical management was problematic for the animals and berries. A few participants identified organic farming as a concern, specifically, that the presence of the line could affect the status of the organic farm certification. Some communities and participants linked their concerns about chemical use with the health of local waterways and fish populations (e.g. some communities noted that they have observed the negative effects of agriculture chemical use on waterways and fish).

Manitoba Hydro will follow the guidelines and conditions set out in the environmental license for the Project related to vegetation management under the transmission line.

Inquiries were also made about the clearing and maintenance of trees in the right-of-way. Manitoba Hydro indicated that low brush vegetation is allowed to grow in a right-of-way, but larger and "danger" trees along the edge of the right-of-way will be removed. If a tree is on private property, compensation can be provided to the owner. With regard to clearing practices, many communities indicated that Manitoba Hydro should provide the trees cleared from the right-of-way to local communities to be used for firewood and other purposes

5.5.2.13 Relationship of the Bipole III Project to Wuskwatim

Early in the process, there were some inquiries about the relationship of the Project to Wuskwatim. Manitoba Hydro advised that the Project is a separate project from the Wuskwatim Generating Station. The Wuskwatim Project has transmission lines to move the power from the generating station into Manitoba Hydro's existing northern transmission system.

5.5.2.14 Effects on Mining Industry

Representatives of the mining industry expressed concerns regarding the potential impact of the Project to mining operations and/or mining claims due to the location of the preliminary preferred route for the Project in mineral interest areas. Concerns were primarily focused on the potential for the line to affect electromagnetic and other geo-physical surveys used in mineral exploration. Most concerns focused on existing mining claims and mining operations through the Thompson Nickel Belt in northern Manitoba. Meetings with representatives of the mining industry were held to try to resolve these concerns. After extensive discussions and further assessment of alternatives in this area, the preliminary preferred route for the HVdc line was modified to be located outside of the Thompson Nickel Belt area.

5.5.3 Landowner Information Centre Feedback

Manitoba Hydro representatives met with each landowner that attended a Landowner Information Centre in order to answer questions and gather relevant property information. In total, 298 Landowner Information Centre forms were completed. Discussions generally lasted between 15 and 45 minutes long, but landowners were invited to speak as long as they wished. In general, landowners with holdings in pasture

land viewed the project more favourably than landowners with holdings in cultivated agricultural land. Landowner concerns focused on interference with agricultural operations, decrease in property value, compensation amounts, taxation, liability, aesthetics and EMF effects and are summarized in the previous section.

The vast majority of Landowner Information Centre attendees were landowners (versus lessees). About half indicated there were buildings located on the lands, and slightly fewer indicated there were residences located on the lands. About half also indicated there was livestock on the lands, that they used GPS devices and/or that they occasionally made use of aerial spraying services. Only a small fraction of participating landowners indicated they used irrigation pivots or had organically certified operations.[8]

An information form (Landowner Information Centre form) was completed by Manitoba Hydro staff for each participant and included the following questions:

- What is the current use of the land?
- Are you the owner of the land or a lessee?
- Are there buildings or structures on the property?
- Do you use GPS for farming practices?
- Are crops dependent on aerial application?
- Are there irrigation pivots used on the land?
- Are the lands associated with an organically certified operation?
- Are there any livestock facilities or livestock on the land?
- Is there a residence on the land?
- Are there any potential obstructions on the land?
- Are there any rail lines, gas lines, roads, airstrips or other electrical facilities on the land?

Figure 5.5-2 provides a synopsis of the responses to these questions.

[8] Existing irrigation systems and lands with the potential for irrigation were identified as part of the routing process, and efforts were made to avoid them wherever possible.

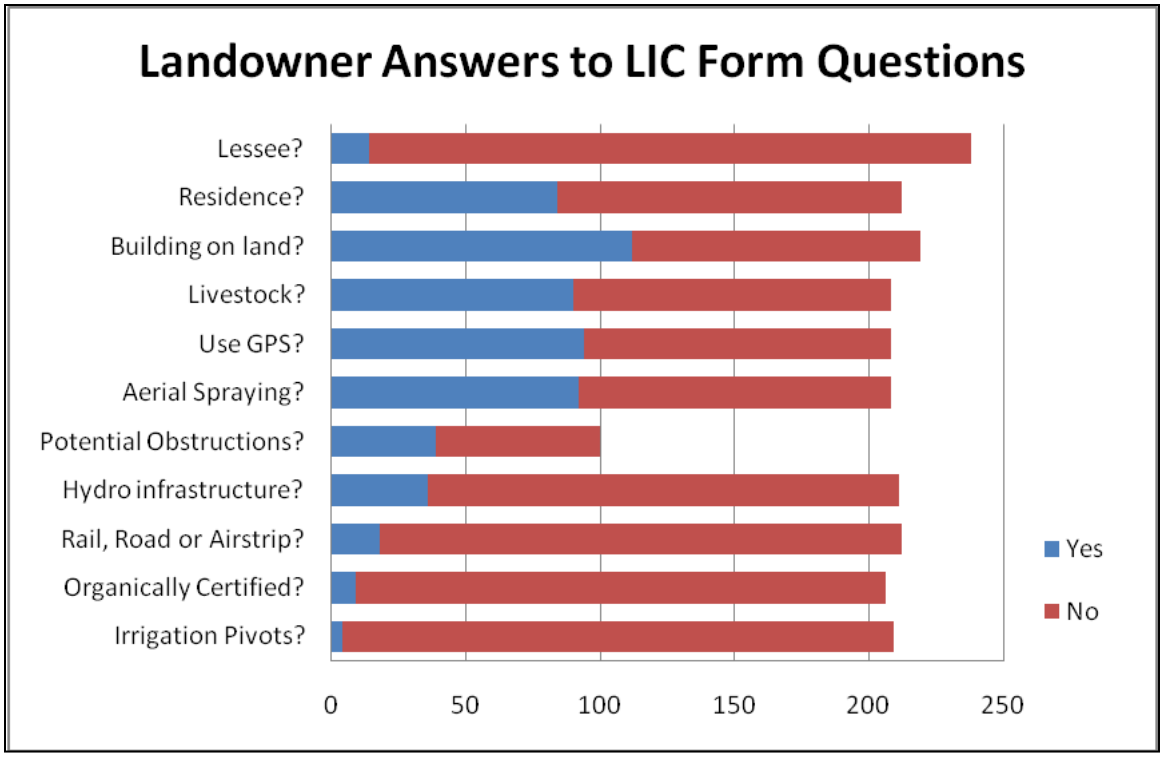

Figure 5.5-2: Landowner Answers to Landowner Information Centre Form Questions

Generally, about two thirds of those who filled out a Landowner Information Centre form indicated their land was used as cultivated agricultural land, while about a quarter indicate the land was used as pasture land (Figure 5.5-3).

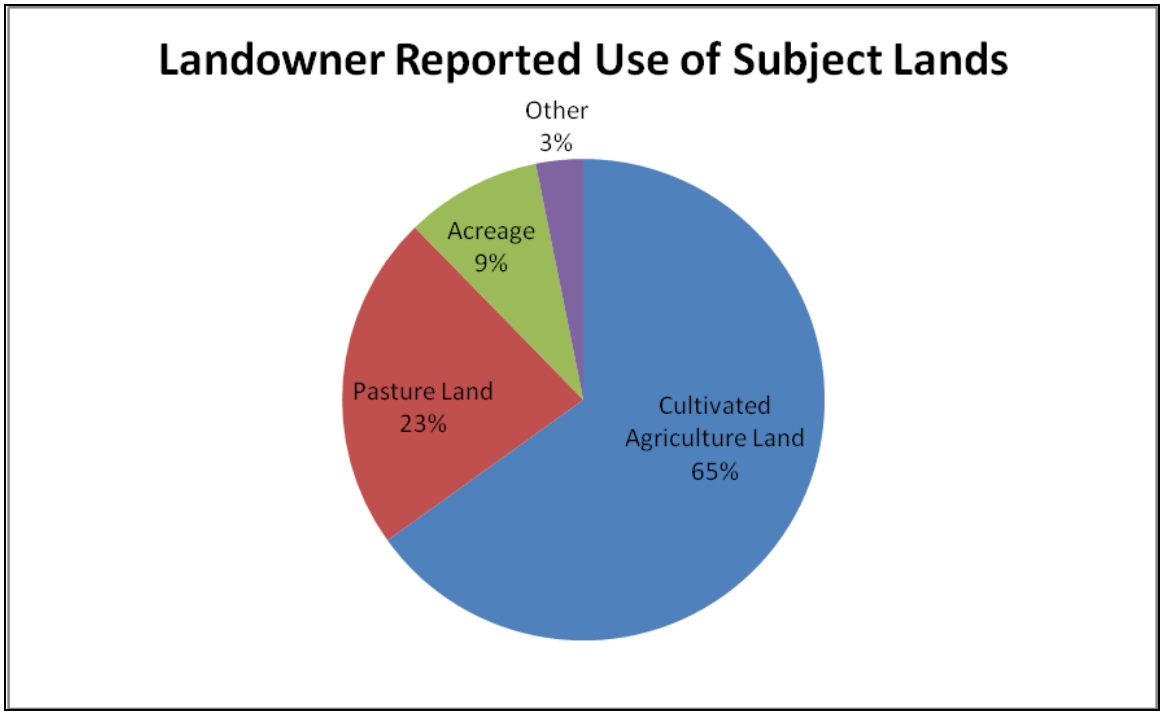

Figure 5.5-3: Landowner Reported Use of Subject Lands

5.5.4 Round 4 Route Feedback Adjustments to Determine the Final Preferred Route

Feedback was received from a variety of sources (i.e., emails, phone calls, meetings, etc.) throughout Round 4 and was an integral part in making adjustments to identify the Final Preferred Route for the Bipole III line.

During stakeholder discussions, route modifications or preferences were documented and considered by Manitoba Hydro. During Landowner Information Centre discussions, landowners were encouraged to provide Manitoba Hydro representatives with potential route adjustments to the preliminary preferred route. These adjustments were considered by Manitoba Hydro and, in certain circumstances, adjustments were made to the route. All suggestions from stakeholder and landowner meetings were recorded, documented and considered in identifying the Final Preferred Route and are discussed further and recorded Chapter 7.

Feedback and suggestions received during the EACP were also documented and utilized to minimize potential effects. Chapter 8 is the effects assessment for the Project and outlines potential effects and mitigative measures including those raised during the EACP.

5.6 REFERENCES

CMC Consultants Inc. 2007. Bipole III Transmission Routing Study: Review of Environmental Considerations and Potential Role of Environmental Organizations.