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2012 10 23

Ms. Elise Dagdick
Environment Officer
Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship
Environmental Approvals
123 Main Street, Suite 160
Winnipeg, MB R3C 1A3

Re : Alterations to Bipole III Route

Dear Ms. Dagdick:

Further to our Environmental Impact Statement filed December 1, 2011 in support of our proposal for the Bipole III Project and in response to your letter of August 29, 2012, we propose alterations to the Final Preferred Route (“FPR”) in the Wabowden, GHA 14/14A (Moose Meadows), and GHA 19A areas. A route revision in the Red Deer River area was examined and we believe is not required. The results are described below for each area.

GHA 14/14A - Moose Meadows

The principal concern for the FPR in this area is the intersection of the FPR with a relatively undisturbed area of moose habitat east of PTH 10 in the Mafeking area. Alternative routes were reviewed and a new alternative has been selected. The alternate route proposed herein diverges from the currently proposed FPR just south of PR 483, proceeds straight south, past Mafeking to Bellsite and then turns south-east to rejoin the proposed FPR (Map attached).

GHA 19

The main concern in this area was also the intersection of the currently proposed FPR with a relatively undisturbed area that includes habitat for moose. Alternatives were reviewed and a new route has been selected. The alternative proposed herein diverges from the currently proposed FPR northwest of Cowan, and heads southeast through the Swan-Pelican Provincial Forest towards Camperville. The route then turns south to join the currently proposed FPR east of Pulp River (Map attached).

Wabowden Area

The principal concern here was in relation to woodland caribou habitat intersected by the FPR east of the junction of PTHs 39 and 6 near Ponton. Manitoba Hydro is herein proposing a new alternative route for consideration. The new alternative takes advantage of existing corridors

along PTH 6 and PR 373 and reverts to a route close to the original preliminary preferred route for the area. Attached is a map showing the proposed alternative.

Red Deer River Area

The FPR in the area of the Red River crossing was reviewed. There was a concern over the proximity of the FPR to existing cottage/residences east of PTH 10 at the Red Deer River. We considered a possible move to the west side of PTH 10 in this area to create more separation from the existing development. We have concluded that this is not a viable option due to the TLE land selection on the Red Deer River right up to the west side of PTH 10.

Manitoba Hydro proposes that the above described route alterations be included in the FPR for the Bipole III project in place of those segments of route for which they are alternatives. We believe that review of the three alterations can be accommodated by the ongoing assessment process. Manitoba Hydro will be notifying stakeholders and other parties with interests in the areas where we are proposing these route alterations once we have received your confirmation that these proposed alterations are satisfactory to you and address the concerns that led to your letter to us of August 29, 2012. Further, we will file a description of the alterations in the current hearing before the Clean Environment Commission after we have heard from you. We anticipate that we will make a presentation before the Commission regarding the changes in timely fashion so that Commissioners, Participants and interested parties will have an opportunity to ask questions regarding them and to comment upon them.

Sincerely,

Original signed by P. McGarry

P. T. McGarry
Senior Environmental Assessment Officer
Licensing & Environmental Assessment Dept.
Transmission Planning & Design Division

PM/tk

Attachments

