

SUMMARY REPORT

TEMBEC INDUSTRIES INC. (formerly Pine Falls Paper Company Limited) - LAKE WINNIPEG EAST FOREST ACCESS ROAD (CLIENT FILE: 4097.00)

Overview:

On November 20, 1995 Pine Falls Paper Company filed a Proposal pursuant to the Manitoba Environment Act for the construction of a forest resource road located on the east side of Lake Winnipeg in Township 31 and 32, Range 6 EPM within the Pine Falls Paper Company Integrated Wood Supply Area East. The road will extend from the Rice River Road to the community of Bloodvein, a distance of approximately 21 kilometers. It will form an extension of the current Rice River Road right-of-way that joins Provincial Road 304 east of Manigotagan. The project will be constructed in two phases. Phase 1 will terminate at a point 1 km or more from the Bloodvein River. Phase 2 will involve the river crossing and the remaining portion of the road to the Bloodvein Reserve. Clearing of the right-of-way for Phase 1 is scheduled for January/February 1996 and completion of the subgrade during September 1996. Clearing of the right-of-way of Phase 2 is scheduled for November/December 1996 and completion of the subgrade in September 1997.

The Proposal was advertised in the Lac du Bonnet Leader on Tuesday, December 12, 1995 and the Pine Falls Community Voice for the week of December 11th, 1995 and Weetameeh on Monday, December 11, 1995. Copies were distributed to the "Transportation TAC" for review and filed in the Public Registries in Bldg. 2, 139 Tuxedo Ave. , Winnipeg; the Centennial Public Library, 251 Donald Street, Winnipeg; Manitoba Eco-Network, 867 Westminster Ave., Winnipeg; Bibliotheque Allard, Rm. 14 St. George Community Centre, St. Georges; and the Bloodvein First Nation Office, Bloodvein Reserve. Comments on the Proposal were requested by January 2, 1996.

Public Objections:

Harvey Williams, President TREE

- letter Faxed January 12, 1996
- request that an EA of the Proposal be undertaken which addresses the following concerns:
 - effect of access on wildlife populations such as woodland caribou, moose, wolves, furbearing mammals;
 - effect of river and stream crossings on stream flow, fish and other aquatic life;
 - effect of river crossings on recreation and tourism in Atikaki Wilderness Park;
 - possible rare and endangered species in the area;
 - effect on water flow and drainage patterns of marshes and bogs crossed by the road;
 - effect of public access on cultural artifacts such as petroglyphs, particularly along the affected stretch of the Bloodvein;
 - vehicle collisions with wildlife; and
 - unanticipated environmental effects.
- note that road access is likely to increase harvest in the Integrated Wood Supply Area where no Forest Management Plan exists.

Elizabeth Punter, Botanist

- letter dated January 13, 1996
- note that the list of plant species included in Appendix 1 of the Proposal has been copied out of context from Appendices C-G of her report titled "*Punter, F. 1994. Inventory and annotated checklist of the vascular plants of the Manitoba Model Forest, Project 93-2-06. Manitoba Model Forest Inc., Pine Falls, MB.*"
- mention that many of the species included in the list are rare to Manitoba, and in some cases to Canada and

- should not be considered to be representative of the Bloodvein area especially those with southern affinities.
- note that little or no botanical survey work has been done in the area to provide a reliable basis for the flora in the area.
- recommend that new exploratory surveys are required to ensure the protection of rare and endangered species and communities from the road construction.

W. O. Pruitt, Jr., Professor
Department of Zoology
University of Manitoba

- letter dated January 10, 1996
- note that the Proposal does not include discussion of justification and ground surveys.
- question the assertion in the Proposal that there are no caribou in the area. Mention that DNR delineated two caribou wintering areas along the proposed route.
- request that full public disclosure of the Proposal and submission of an environmental impact statement.

Alice Chambers

- letter dated January 15, 1996
- recommend that a PFPC be required to carry out a full EA which includes information obtained from field surveys. Also recommend that, prior to Licencing of the road, a land use plan for the area be developed with input from the First Nations and other communities along the East side. (Detailed comments attached - Attachment 1.)

Gaile Whelan Enns, Coordinator
Endangered Spaces Campaign

- letter dated January 17, 1996
- recommend that a full environmental assessment and public review be undertaken for the road.
- recommend that the gap analysis methodology used for assessment of landscape units be applied to the natural region and all landscape units impacted by the proposed road.
- independent information should be provided on the effect of the road on the Bloodvein River, reductions in eco-tourism potential, the protection of landscape units and other ecological and environmental effects.
- alternatives to the development including the use of a winter road should be explored.

Peter Miller

- letter dated January 10, 1996
- recommend that an EA including public hearings be undertaken for any further extensions of the east side road, and forest operations in areas managed by the Department of Natural Resources. (Detailed comments attached - Attachment 2.)

Anne Lindsey

- letter dated January 17, 1996
- concerns include:
 - the effects on wildlife and habitat from motorized vehicles into the area. Recommend further study and comparison to other areas in order to address this issue.
 - recommend that Pine Falls Paper Company document their long range plans to increase the wood supply in the area up to Berens R.
 - recommend that the project not be phased so that all impacts including the river crossings can be assessed at the same time under both the Manitoba Environment Act & the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.
 - recommend that a detailed archaeological survey be carried out downstream of the junction of the Bloodvein and the Sasiginnigak Rivers as far as the Lake Winnipeg shoreline.

Virginia Petch, Archaeologist
Northern Lights Heritage Services

- letter dated January 12, 1996
- mention that the area has potential for yet to be located archaeological and culturally sensitive sites based on a combination of predictive modeling for archaeological site location in this area and local knowledge. Recommend that Historical Resources ensure that any archaeological surveys of the area be sufficiently thorough to determine the historical significance of the area.
- also concerned about the status of the Bloodvein River as a Canadian Heritage River. 1993 report by V. Petch prepared for Environment Canada and MB Natural Resources regarding Human Heritage Values of Rivers in MB provided as an attachment to letter.

David Punter

- letter date January 26, 1996
- concerns relate to the impact of the road on:
 - vegetation - recommend that construction practices be strictly regulated to minimize the destruction of vegetation in such a sensitive area.
 - biodiversity, rare and endangered species - recommend that before any route is selected there should be a careful study of alternative corridors to minimize potential damage to rare species and communities.
- indirect effects including increased accessibility to the region. Recommend that a full EIS be prepared based on a thorough scoping process involving all interested stakeholders and followed by public hearings.

Dave Nickarz
Earth First!

- date of letter January 19, 1996
- recommend that the project be stopped or at the least that a public review of the FML operation be undertaken.

Comments From TAC:

Natural Resources

- approves the forest access road proposal with a preference for Route A. Note that Route A offers advantages including the crossing of the Bloodvein River at a narrow location which will have minimal impact to fish habitat and water flows given the physical features of the crossing point.
- recommend that the following conditions be adhered to:
 - at each Phase of the project the proponent meet with the Eastern Region IRMT and specific DNR regional staff to determine what additional site or design modifications and mitigative actions are required to resolve foreseeable natural resource concerns.
 - at each phase of the project Pine Falls Paper hold a preconstruction meeting with the IRMT to develop and finalize all necessary details regarding right-of-way clearing and construction timing and to review all necessary work permitting conditions. The work permit must be obtained prior to clearing or construction.
 - the proponent adhere to federal guidelines respecting the use of explosives near fish bearing waters as well as at the crossing points.
 - bridge construction during the summer should be scheduled between July 1 to September 30 to avoid interference with fish spawning. Any alteration to this schedule would have to be approved by the regional fisheries manager.
 - measures be implemented to control sedimentation from roadways or ditching areas.
 - Lands Branch advise that the right-of-way be reserved within the Crown Land registry system.

Mines Branch

- no concerns

Historic Resources

- note that heritage resource concerns are addressed by the Proposal. Historic Resources will make arrangements with Pine Falls Paper in early 1996 to carry out the field investigations.
- note that the Corridor "A" crossing appears to present a lower potential for impact on heritage resources than Corridor "B". Therefore, Historic Resources supports the Corridor "A" option as the preferred route.

Rural Development

- no planning concerns

Health (Eastman Region)

- no concerns

Highways

- no objections to the project as proposed.
- conflicts with the existing winter road are not anticipated.
- note that compliance with the Highway Act and the Highways and Transportation Act is required in relation to all proposed access roads and truck loading on all provincial highways and roads. Appropriate permits will be required for all access connections onto provincial highways.

Environment

- **(Eastern-Interlake Region)**
 - recommend compliance with regulations including the Transportation of Dangerous Goods, The Environment Act and in particular 97/88R Storage and Handling of Gasoline and Associated Products.
- **(Terrestrial)**
 - recommend that the proponent confirm with a botanist on whether rare plants can be expected to be found in the construction area.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

- Phase 1
 - recommend that the following measures be incorporated into the project to mitigate any adverse effects on fish and fish habitat:
 - the "*Recommended Fish Protection Procedures for Stream Crossings in Manitoba*" be followed.
 - no instream construction activity should occur within the period of April 15 to June 30 in any year.
 - precautions should be taken to ensure that deleterious substances do not enter any of the small creek crossings.
 - an authorization under Section 35(2) of the Fisheries Act will not be required.
- Phase 2
 - note that at the request of DFO and DNR Regional Fisheries Manager PFPC is revising its proposed crossing of the Longbody Creek crossing to avoid fish impacts. Once PFPC finalizes its plans for the crossing DFO will conclude its review with respect to the potential impact of phase 2 of the project on fish and fish habitat.
 - DFO also suggests the use of Corridor "A" as it will result in the least impact at the Bloodvein River crossing.
 - request clarification from PFPC on the extent to which the piers would be in the water during highwater. Note that there is an inconsistency in the Proposal in that the diagram of the piers suggests that they would be above the high water mark, but in the text (6.3.1 and 6.4) there appears to be "some" expected impact from crossing of Corridor A.

Canadian Heritage

- the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board recommends that a balance between preservation, conservation and sustainable development in the management of the Bloodvein River be implemented in order to conserve its heritage and integrity under the Canadian Heritage Rivers System.

Canadian Coast Guard

- request that any stream and watercourses in Phase 1 & 2 be inspected for navigability. Bridges over any navigable streams require formal approval under the Navigable Waters Protection Act. Once navigability is determined applications should be sent to the Selkirk Office for approval.

Recommendation:

In follow-up to the concerns raised as a result of the advertisement of the Proposal, Approvals Branch staff met with PFPC and their consultant on January 24, 1996.

As a result of these discussions, it was decided that:

1. The first segment of road up to a point approximately several kilometers from the Bloodvein River will be licenced as applied for as Phase 1 of the Development. This decision was made by taking into consideration that the road extension to this point only affects existing Integrated Wood Supply Area East to which PFPC requires road access for harvesting.
2. Pine Falls Paper Company will undertake an environmental assessment of the environmental affects attributable to the construction of the Bloodvein River and Longbody Creek crossings and the remaining portion of the road to the Bloodvein Reserve. (Phase 2) It is anticipated that this information will be filed with Environment during the Fall of 1996. The construction schedule of the river crossings and the remaining portion of road would remain unchanged from the original proposal (start-up January 1997).
3. Pine Falls Paper Company will be required to file a Proposal in the fall of 1996 and begin an overall Environmental Assessment (EA) on their 1999 - 2008 Forest Management Licence 01 and the Integrated Wood Supply Area East. Submission of the EA would be expected by 1998. As part of the EA process staged approval for the continuation of the road as the EA is being developed, will be considered.

Prepared by:

Bryan Blunt
Land Use Approvals