

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

PROPONENT: Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
PROPOSAL NAME: Cormorant South Wastewater Treatment Plant
CLASS OF DEVELOPMENT: 2
TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT: Sewage Treatment Plant
CLIENT FILE NO.: 3965.10

OVERVIEW:

On July 18, 2006, the Department received an Environment Act Proposal (EAP) from Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs for the construction and operation of the Cormorant South extended aeration sewage treatment plant located in SW 29-60-21WPM in the Community of Cormorant. The extended aeration sewage treatment plant will be located adjacent to the existing sequencing batch reactor sewage treatment plant that is currently licenced under Environment Act Licence No. 2038 and will be decommissioned following successful commissioning of the extended aeration sewage treatment plant. Treated wastewater from the extended aeration sewage treatment plant will be discharged to the existing pipeline that discharges to a bog area located east of the sewage treatment plant and adjacent to Little Cormorant Lake.

The Department, on August 8, 2006, placed copies of the EAP report in the Public Registries located at 123 Main St. (Union Station), the Winnipeg Public Library, the The Pas Public Library, and the Manitoba Eco-Network and provided copies of the EAP report to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA), the Clean Environment Commission, and TAC members. As well, the Department placed public notifications of the EAP in the The Pas Opasquia Times on Wednesday, August 16, 2006. The newspaper and TAC notifications invited responses until September 16, 2006.

On September 21, 2006 Manitoba Conservation forwarded requests for additional information from the TAC to the proponent. The proponent's September 29, 2006 response to the requests was then provided to the participating TAC for review and comment on October 3, 2006. There were no additional comments from the TAC.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

There were no comments from the public.

COMMENTS FROM THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Historic Resources

- *No concerns.*

Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade

- *No concerns.*

Sustainable Resource Management Branch

- *Portion of the S ½ 29-60-21WPM was reserved in 1980 by Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) for Park & Recreational Areas on behalf of Cormorant. ANA is required to request reservation of the area necessary for the treatment plant pending EA approval and amend previous reservation if necessary.*

Proponent Responses – September 29, 2006:

- Upon approval from the Environment Act, Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs will request reservation of the area necessary for the sewer treatment plant, and amend the previous reservation if necessary.

Disposition:

- The draft Environment Act Licence contains a clause that requires that the Licencee acquire any necessary land agreements prior to constructing the Development.

Transportation and Government Services

- *No concerns.*

Water Stewardship

- *The Water Quality Management Section is concerned with any discharges that have the potential to impact the aquatic environment and/or restrict present and future uses of the water. Therefore it is recommended that the license require the proponent to actively participate in any future watershed based management study, plan/or nutrient reduction program, approved by the Director, for Little Cormorant Lake and associated waterways.*
- *Given the sport and commercial fishery value of Cormorant Lake we would want to ensure that the effluent meets or exceeds the Manitoba Water Quality Standards, Objectives and Guidelines. While the treatment plant upgrades should*

- improve the quality of effluent, effluent monitoring at the outlet should be implemented throughout the year.*
- The proponents indicate using the same discharge pipe and route so there should be no concerns with alteration of fish habitat, however, as long as DFO is involved in reviewing this proposal and manages fish habitat to meet the intent of their no net loss policy within the risk management framework, provincial fisheries management interests should be met.*
 - Locations of any potable water sources within the vicinity of the proposed sewage treatment plant were not mentioned. What percentage of the local population receives treated water supply?*
 - As per the Public Health Act, Regulation 331/88R (waterworks, sewerage and sewage disposal regulation) water distribution line extensions (more than 300m) and sewer line extensions require approvals prior to construction. Therefore, the proponent is asked to contact the Office of Drinking Water.*
 - Section 3.2 mentions about septic tanks solids and dewatered sludge. Septic tanks solids will be pumped annually, but it is not clear how the solids will be treated. Similarly, the final destination of the dewatered waste activated sludge was not mentioned.*
 - It is unclear whether any monitoring will be provided to check the status of groundwater quality due to the operation of the proposed sewage treatment plant.*
 - The proposed activities should not degrade the groundwater and surface water qualities on adjacent properties unsuitable for use as drinking water sources. The consultant should identify such activities and recommend appropriate mitigation measures if required.*

Proponent Responses – September 29, 2006:

- We have no objection to this parameter of the Environment License.
- Effluent sampling and testing will occur at the outlet on a monthly basis.
- There are no proposed changes to piping infrastructure as it applies to effluent discharge. The only change at the discharge will be the quality of effluent being released.
- Most residents of the area known as Mackenzies Point draw water directly Little Cormorant Lake, along the north shore. One or two households have private wells for water, the closest of which is 600 metres from the discharge pipe. About 75 percent of the Cormorant South residents receive treated water supply. As indicated on the attached aerial photograph, water flows from Cormorant Lake into Little Cormorant Lake and outlets at Pickerel Creek and Frog Creek. The sequencing batch reactor currently in place discharges to the bog which is central to Mackenzies Point, and makes its way to the south shore of Mackenzies Point where it is released to Little Cormorant Lake. There are no channels or channeled outlets of the swamp, only low areas where seepage into the lake occurs. Residents of Mackenzies Point are continually informed of the need to boil untreated water prior to consumption, as is

the case whether a sewage treatment plant is near or not. As such, there is little or no risk of contamination of water supply for those residents as a result of the existence of the sewage treatment plant.

- Extension of water and sewer lines in this case are less than 100 m and therefore this regulation does not apply.
- Solids are removed from individual septic tanks on a rotating basis throughout the course of the year and will be deposited into the digester of the plant, becoming part of the waste activated sludge. Dewatered waste activated sludge will be deposited in the Cormorant Waste Disposal Site and covered immediately as per the Waste Disposal Site Environment Act as it applies to “sludge”. Dewatering will generally occur on a weekly basis.
- The activities proposed will produce an effluent which meets or exceeds the Manitoba Water Quality Standards, Objectives, and Guidelines, and as such, degradation of groundwater and surface water qualities on adjacent properties will not occur. As indicated above, all de-watered waste activated sludge will be removed and disposed of according to the Cormorant Waste Disposal Site Environment Act.

Disposition:

- The draft Environment Act Licence requires that the Licencee actively participate in any future watershed based management study, plan or nutrient reduction program, approved by the Director, for Little Cormorant Lake and associated waterways and watersheds;
- The draft Environment Act Licence contains Clauses that require the Licencee to sample and analyze effluent from the sewage treatment plant once each month and report results of all analyses to the Director within 60 days of samples being taken;
- The draft Environment Act Licence contains Clauses that require the Licencee to construct and operate the sewage treatment plant in such a manner as to prevent the disruption of natural wildlife and fish habitats;
- The proposal does not include extensions of water and sewer piping that exceed 100 metres; and
- The draft Environment Act Licence contains Clauses that require the Licencee to dispose sludge in a permitted or licenced waste disposal ground.

COMMENTS FROM FEDERAL REPRESENTATION:

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency

- *Based on the responses to the CEAA survey, application of The Canadian Environmental Assessment Act with respect to this proposal will not be required.*

Environment Canada and Health Canada would be able to provide specialist if requested.

PUBLIC HEARING:

A public hearing was not requested.

RECOMMENDATION:

Issue an Environment Act Licence in accordance with the attached draft. Once the extended aeration sewage treatment plant is operational, an inspection should be completed by an Environment Officer from the Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch prior to transferring the Licence to the Region for enforcement.

PREPARED BY:

Robert Boswick, P. Eng.
Environmental Engineer
Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch
Manitoba Conservation
November 6, 2006

Telephone: (204) 945-6030
Fax: (204) 945-5229
E-mail Address: rboswick@gov.mb.ca