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June 27, 2019

Christine Baljko
Environmental Coordinator
Manitoba Infrastructure
215 Garry Street
Winnipeg MB R3C 3P3

RE: Technical Advisory Group for the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project – June 2019 Meeting Key Messages

Dear Ms. Baljko:

The Technical Advisory Group for the federal environmental assessment of the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project gathered for its inaugural meeting on June 5 and 6, 2019. The purpose of this meeting was to establish the Technical Advisory Group, build rapport amongst members, share information about the environmental assessment process, and hear members' current concerns related to the proposed Project. At the request of the group, a full report on what was said at the meeting will be prepared by the Agency, reviewed and revised by members, posted on the Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry Internet site, and sent directly to Manitoba Infrastructure. To be proactive in sharing information and minimizing potential delays in the environmental assessment process, the Agency would like to advise Manitoba Infrastructure of critical information and key concerns identified during the Technical Advisory Group meeting.

Multiple First Nations and Manitoba Metis Federation indicated that they had not been engaged or consulted by Manitoba Infrastructure or that engagement or consultation done to date has been insufficient. Multiple participants articulated anticipated deficiencies in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) related to the reflection of their nations' perspectives, concerns, knowledge, and expertise, especially given the proposed August 2019 submission date.

The Agency expects to receive an EIS that meets the information requirements of the EIS Guidelines, issued on May 15, 2018 and subsequent revisions communicated to Manitoba Infrastructure on August 16, 2018, December 21, 2018, and June 27, 2019. The EIS Guidelines require Manitoba Infrastructure to

engage with the Indigenous groups identified in order to fulfill the statutory obligations of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012* and to assist the Agency in fulfilling the Crown's constitutional obligations to consult with potentially impacted First Nations and Métis on potential impacts to potential or established Aboriginal or treaty rights. Failure to meet the requirements of the EIS Guidelines, including requirements pertaining to engagement of Indigenous groups in the gathering, analysis, presentation, and verification of information presented in the EIS, could result in the Agency deeming the EIS as non-conforming with the EIS Guidelines.

The Government of Canada is integrating consultation with Indigenous peoples into the environmental assessment process for the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project, to the extent possible, to fulfill its duty to consult, and where appropriate, accommodate. The Agency therefore requires a conforming EIS before it can proceed with its technical review and meaningful consultation.

The Agency understands the importance of a timely environmental assessment process and decision making based on Indigenous knowledge and science, and welcomes the opportunity to provide additional clarity on expectations regarding the information and engagement requirements for the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project. Should you have any questions please contact me by email at anna.kessler@canada.ca or by phone at 587-785-8224.

Sincerely,

[original signed by]

Anna Kessler
Project Manager