

Presentation at PUB NFAT Hearing by Ralph Beardy, Fox Lake Cree Nation Member, Thompson May 14, 2014.

Good afternoon, I would like thank you for the opportunity to make this presentation, today. We understand the important work that has been bestowed on this Panel and responsibility imposed on you.

My name is Ralph Beardy, I'm a Fox Lake Cree Nation (FLCN) band member, a business owner, and an entrepreneur. I have obtained my Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering. I am currently a principal owner of two companies; an Engineering firm called, Oodanooketoh Inc. and a power line construction company called Wawasum Energy Inc.

My engineering company, Oodanooketoh Inc. is 100 % First Nation owned; and we work exclusively with First Nations providing project management services and civil design services. Our company vision is to provide technical services for First Nation's to promote sustainable development.

I have two other partners, who are from Ebb and Flow First Nation and Oxford House First Nation. Currently, we have two full time employees, who are from St. Theresa Point First Nation and FLCN.

I am also part owner in a power line construction company called, Wawasum Energy Inc. that provides procurement and services for power delivery projects. This private company is majority owned by First Nation people. This company is a start-up; but to date we have received a great response from Manitoba Hydro and the Union. There is great promise in this company; in harnessing the young aboriginal labour market.

FLCN council have asked me to share my perspective from the point of view of a FLCN member whom is a business owner and; whom is currently, performing work for FLCN.

With the intent of adding some context to FLCN's situation with respect to Manitoba Hydro's Preferred Development Plan (PDP).

We hope to enlighten the panel to ensure that FLCN interest and concerns are captured in the message; the Panel will be presenting to the minister regarding the socio economic impacts and benefits for FLCN.

Our goal today is to ensure FLCN unique situation is better understood; and to ensure we are not misunderstood.

The best way to describe the FLCN's unique situation and relationship with Manitoba Hydro is well illustrated with the use of the following metaphor, "Fox Lake is living with an 800 pound Gorilla". Gillam is FLCN's historical settlement; and Gillam is Manitoba Hydro's operations centre in the North.

FLCN cannot ignore the fact that Manitoba Hydro is operating from our historical town site; and operating three generating stations, two convertor stations, numerous connector lines, and two Bi-pole transmission lines. Manitoba Hydro's presence cannot be ignored; and this presence will be magnified with the implementation of Manitoba Hydro's PDP.

I don't intend to use this metaphor in a disrespectful manner, but it highlights the disparity in power between the FLCN and Manitoba Hydro relationship; and the realities and challenges FLCN must overcome when faced with Manitoba Hydro's agenda.

It is a reality that FLCN must expend a lot of resources and time in discussing Manitoba Hydro's Agenda; and at times this Agenda

can be overwhelming. The tasks that fall to Fox Lake under Manitoba Hydro's agenda are difficult to address, when competing interests arise.

We understand the Panel's Terms of Reference is very specific in terms of Manitoba Hydro's PDP; but from FLCN's perspective it is very difficult to isolate any of Manitoba Hydro's plans with respect to dealing with social economic impacts.

Our firm is currently managing projects and planning projects for the FLCN; and we constantly have to deal with Manitoba Hydro's presence, both directly or indirectly.

The projects we are involved in consist of land development projects, such as housing projects, business development and infrastructure. The main challenge we are faced with in promoting these projects is the lack of FLCN land base, in and around the Town of Gillam. FLCN needs more land to address the housing needs of members; to construct more suitable buildings to house community and government services; to develop businesses to benefit and fuel the economic activity in the region.

Manitoba Hydro is a stakeholder in these discussions with FLCN due to the following reasons:

- Manitoba Hydro and the Town of Gillam have a close financial relationship; Manitoba Hydro subsidizes the Town of Gillam with annual grants.
- Normally, Manitoba Hydro interests are supported by the Town of Gillam. The Town of Gillam does not act contrary to Manitoba Hydro interests.

- Manitoba Hydro's PDP will also impact development in the Town of Gillam during the construction and operations of these projects. Manitoba Hydro is creating a greater demand for land to meet its future land requirements in Gillam. This additional demand for land will create a competing interest to FLCN's plans, historical claims, Treaty Rights as well as Aboriginal Rights. Manitoba Hydro's estimated budget for Gillam Redevelopment Expansion Plan project is more than \$350 million.

FLCN is also challenged with providing services to residents in Gillam where there is no funding available.

Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro must address this disparity.

From a personal perspective, I was born and raised in Gillam. I was raised in a Fox Lake historical settlement; located adjacent to the Gillam. I have seen the Town of Gillam grow throughout the years; but not much has changed with respect to FLCN having the land to develop a sustainable community.

In spite of these realities and challenges; FLCN "endures to persevere".

To ensure there is no misunderstanding; FLCN is typically progressive thinking.

As you are aware FLCN is a partner to the Keeyask Project, which is part of the PDP. After years of deliberation with our people and balancing the pro and cons; FLCN decided to support this project. FLCN has had to balance the negative impacts and benefits of the Keeyask Project. We understand our way of life has been altered indefinitely; through the flooding of our traditional lands, adverse impacts to the environment, and the

social impacts on our people. The project brings hope to our members that future generations will receive the full benefits from the potential investment income. FLCN has received additional benefits; such as employment, training and business opportunities. These benefits will form a foundation for FLCN economic development plans and contribute to fuelling the regional economy.

FLCN is currently having discussions with Manitoba Hydro regarding the Conawapa Project. FLCN is hopeful a mutual beneficial agreement can be reached.

The FLCN have a vision for its' people; a vision that includes sustainable development; a vision that includes Fox Lake playing major role in driving the economy in the north that will generate benefits for all Manitobans; and creating prosperity.

To accomplish our Vision, we will need a continued commitment from Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro to invest in our people, through training and employment; creating business opportunities; and, providing partnership opportunities in developing our natural resources. This support will empower FLCN in its continued climb on the ladder of sustainable development.

Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro has to continue with these commitments, because one thing is for certain, "FLCN is not going anywhere"

It would like to thank FLCN council in inviting me in making a presentation today; and the PUB for providing the opportunity to present.

I would like to introduce councillor Conway Arthurson to make some closing remarks related to Fox Lake's history and aspirations.

- Fox Lake signed adhesion to Treaty #5 under the Fort York Band at York Factory in August 1910
- Received separate band Status in 1947 as Gillam Band
- Change to Fox Lake Band in 1949
- Have requested Reserve land in the Gillam area since the 1940's and continue to do so today
- In 1963 & '65 Manitoba Hydro conducted studies and began construction of the Kettle Dam and the redevelopment of Gillam.
- Land in Gillam area was classified as "occupied Crown land" and Fox lake Members were officially classified as squatters.
- 1977 Fox Lake receives Reserves in Fox Lake (40 miles south of Gillam) and Armstrong Lake (100 Miles west of Gillam)
- in 1985, after 13 years of negotiating with Mb Hydro, Bird reserve was created which encompasses 98.7 acres
- received reserve status for 20 federal Crown lots in Gillam which is 3.21 acres
- Hydro redeveloped Gillam in the 1960's and are doing so again to accommodate future development and we cannot be left out on the redevelopment of Gillam this time around.