

Standing Committee on The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act

Monday, September 14, 1981

Chairman: Dr. Reid

1:30 p.m.

MR CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. In spite of what the clock says, it is 1:30, so we'll start the afternoon off. There is a difficulty with numbers. We have three members who are also on the Surface Rights Committee and are presently still in Europe, and we have one member sick. So I think we'll start into the afternoon.

Before we start, I'd just like to make a couple of comments. The minister has to leave for Washington, D.C., and we'll have to work to a deadline of 3:15. That's the latest. Also, if anybody is interested in a visit to Kananaskis, would they please let Shelley know. So far she's only had one response to the possibility of a trip to Kananaskis on the 29th, next Tuesday.

Mr. Minister, if you would like to introduce the members of your department and if you have any preliminary remarks to make, you could follow that.

MR COOKSON: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to introduce Walter Solodzuk, my deputy; Peter Melnychuk, the assistant deputy; and Bill Simon, financial administrator for the department.

Perhaps just a word or two about the areas we're involved with in the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. You have the '80-81 Heritage Savings Trust Fund annual report. There are primarily six areas the department is involved in. One of our major responsibilities is the headworks of the irrigation system, to which we some time ago allocated major funds from the trust fund, some \$234 million. In addition, we have ongoing work with land reclamation. This deals with reclamation applications from municipalities, LIDs, and so on, for handling of gravel pits, reclamation of sewage lagoons, and that sort of thing.

The Capital City Park was a project started some time ago, and it's on the way to winding down insofar as trust fund expenditures. We still do some purchasing in the area, but it's minimal. Fish Creek Park, another major project by our government, is again winding down in terms of acquisition of property. The Paddle River basin work is now starting to peak in terms of construction. That's an area north of Edmonton which deals with a river which has continually been a problem insofar as erosion. Finally, we have another ongoing project, the Lesser Slave Lake project. That is a project of lake stabilization in hopes of helping out those on the west end of lake, in particular, who have had ongoing continuous problems for many years because of the lake level fluctuations.

Basically, that's all I wanted to say, Mr. Chairman. There may be some questions the members would like to ask.

MR CHAIRMAN: Do any members have questions to start off?

MR R SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, with regard to the headworks on the irrigation. The study is going on in terms of the South Saskatchewan basin. I was

wondering if there is any idea of proceeding with further development of the headworks. What's the planning and some of the staging at the present time?

MR COOKSON: Perhaps my assistant deputy, Peter Melnychuk, could add to what I have to say about the progress we're making. The major work taking place now as a result of the settlement with the Piegans is that area that flows from the Oldman River to Keho Lake. Some tenders are being released there. We have ongoing work which will take place on the St. Mary east major channelling that goes to Medicine Hat. The Forty Mile, in the south, east of Lethbridge: maybe I could call on my assistant deputy to update on that.

MR MELNYCHUK: Just to add to what the minister indicated, the Lethbridge Northern main canal is well under way in terms of construction, as is the Keho Lake reservoir. Forty Mile coulee: the engineering is under way for St. Mary as well as the main canal. Internal storage in the Eastern Irrigation District: engineering has begun at Crawling Valley. Engineering is under way as well for the Badger reservoir, internal storage for the Bow River Irrigation District.

Decisions with respect to the main canal for Bow River, as well as part of the EID, will be delayed until we get some results from our South Sask. basin study. The sizing for these canals will require that information.

MR R SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, a supplementary to Mr. Melnychuk. Will the study on the South Saskatchewan have to be finalized before that decision can be made, or by next spring, or in 1982? Can that decision be made for, say, the 1982-83 construction year?

MR MELNYCHUK: We are anticipating that sufficient information will be available from the South Sask. study program by early '83 in order to make the sizing decisions or enlargement decisions. For example, the Bow River main canal would be the main one.

MR R SPEAKER: Can any steps be taken to bring that decision to an earlier date in, say, 1982? What type of information is lacking at the present time? I think the historic data in terms of water availability must be available to us at the present time. What data is lacking at this point in time?

MR MELNYCHUK: Well, additional information is required. It's mainly a matter of activating our water balance model for the South Sask. basin, which will attempt to match up water supplies and demands and also other water uses for various districts. A variety of runs on this model have to be done to come up with an optimum balance of supply and demand.

MR R SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I'll just conclude at that point with a suggestion that hopefully we can move it up as soon as we can. As irrigation districts, particularly the Bow River, that's a very vital part of their physical assets and quite necessary historically, I think, and in the future.

MR NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, on that subject, too. I wonder if either the minister or Mr. Melnychuk could bring us up to date on just where things stand in terms of headworks, particularly with respect to the Three Rivers dam or some alternative: what the planning is, if any, and what the options are. Perhaps we could just begin with that kind of general question.

MR COOKSON: I'd just comment on Three Rivers, Mr. Chairman. As you know, when we finalized the announcement with regard to the recommendations of the Environment Council of Alberta, we concluded that on-storage would be required, so we made the decision that a dam would be constructed. However, we left our options open as to the exact site. In our final negotiations with the Piegans we made available to them that option as to the possibility of siting on the Piegan reserve.

The trip I'm making tomorrow is to look at similar types of structures in Washington with Chief Nelson Small Legs. At this point in time, we are still waiting for a proposal from the Piegans, and we're helping them in what way we can with our own expertise. We've given them a reasonable time frame to come forth with a proposal. So within a year, I would think -- somewhere in there, anyway -- the Piegans will make a proposal to us. We will then take it through the system here and determine what negotiations are necessary or whether we can accept or reject. Depending on that decision, the site will be verified at one location or the other.

MR NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, just to follow that up, to the minister or perhaps Mr. Melnychuk: do we have any preliminary estimates, at least, in terms of the capital costs of the Piegan site compared to Three Rivers? Also, do we have any estimates of the amount of land that will be disrupted by the Piegan site as opposed to Three Rivers? I realize that the Piegan site would be dependent on negotiations, and we don't want to sort of march in and unilaterally do things. But just so the committee has some idea of what the options are from a financial point of view, because we are talking about Heritage Savings Trust Fund money, also the agricultural land, if we have any figures at this stage, it would be useful.

MR COOKSON: Those figures on the recommendations on alternate sites, of which there were three, may be rather rough in nature. The relationships between the three sites were spelled out in terms of acreage, relative cost, the disruption of property owners, and the relationship insofar as power supply is concerned. So that was public information at the time. I don't think we have any more detailed knowledge in that respect, because that was a fairly good comparison of the cost/benefits. But perhaps Peter might want to add to that.

MR MELNYCHUK: As the minister indicated, the announcement that was made by him a year ago last August outlined the technical details on both sites: Three Rivers and Bocket, which is on the Piegan Reserve. As I say, that information is available. Technically, we are of the view that both sites are about comparable in terms of sizing, cost, and the kinds of results that can be produced by them. I don't have on hand the acreages you referred to but, as I say, they are available and were made public at the time the announcement was made, a year ago last August.

MR NOTLEY: Perhaps it might be helpful. We could go back, but if you could send it to the committee chairman, it might be useful.

A follow-up question to the minister, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the water agreement with Saskatchewan, I gather we've made a commitment. I forget the exact term, now.

MR R SPEAKER: Apportionment agreement.

MR NOTLEY: Apportionment agreement with respect to the South Saskatchewan system. To what extent is our agreement with Saskatchewan a factor in the decision to build a dam? To what extent is any time frame involved as a result of the growth in demand, hopefully, for all sorts of purposes, including irrigation, along the Saskatchewan system, but also Saskatchewan's needs too? Do we have any time frame?

MR COOKSON: I could maybe start off, and perhaps one of my fellows could add to that. The prairie water management agreement, which is a joint agreement with the three prairie provinces -- Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta -- requires that the province of Alberta guarantee Saskatchewan 50 per cent of the flow. That is apportioned at the present time so a larger portion comes from the Red Deer River system to meet that requirement. Then there's a subsequent guarantee to Manitoba by Saskatchewan. Recent discussions with Saskatchewan have been to the effect that they would like to discuss 50 per cent on a day by day basis or something similar to that, which would be a great departure from what the original agreement was. So that has not been pursued.

I think it's probably safe to say at this time that the timing of the on-stream storage is not important to the guarantee of supply to Saskatchewan. In other words, it's not perceived as a problem as long as we don't change the terms of the agreement. If we were to change them, then we would have a problem. As you know, dam construction tends to control rapid spring run-offs and spread the apportionment of water throughout the year. The construction of dams could very well add a lot of positive things to Saskatchewan's desire to get that minimum flow of 50 per cent all through the year, because it spreads the flow out in that regard. But to answer that question specifically, Mr. Chairman, there is no problem as yet insofar as supply.

MR NOTLEY: Could I just ask one supplementary question on that, Mr. Chairman, with respect to the present plans for irrigation expansion. That can all be accommodated in the current arrangement without affecting the apportionment arrangement with Saskatchewan?

MR COOKSON: Yes, because of course we're going for major off-stream storage.

MR SINDLINGER: Mr. Cookson, is it correct that the money for the irrigation rehabilitation and headworks expansion goes from the government to the irrigation district for its distribution or use?

MR COOKSON: No. The \$234 million that we committed -- that is, the province through the heritage savings trust -- will be used to upgrade the headworks totally and will be under Environment's control. There wouldn't be any transfer of funds. When you get into the area of Agriculture, that's another matter. As you know, they were allocated \$100 million, and it's apportioned on an 86:14.

MR SINDLINGER: Mr. Cookson, one of the earlier annual reports indicates that under this program approximately 65,000 new acres would come under irrigation. Then a subsequent annual report indicates that there will be about 300,000 new acres. Can you indicate how many acres have benefited from these programs to date and what the cost per acre would be?

MR COOKSON: Mr. Chairman, you have to remember that at this time we haven't even been able to allocate additional water supply to most of the districts. Perhaps it's getting into an area that's partly Agriculture, but perhaps Peter could add to that. We don't even issue water permits in most cases now, because of the limited water supply.

MR MELNYCHUK: Just for possible clarification, the Department of Agriculture's cost-shared program is funding directly to the irrigation districts for the rehabilitation of the districts' distribution works. With this rehabilitation of these distribution works, some intensification of irrigation is possible within the districts, so additional acreages are added that way. But in terms of a major expansion, there has been a moratorium by most of the large districts, mainly because of water supply shortages.

So two programs are operating here. Environment's deals with the headworks systems. Agriculture's deals with the internal distribution systems within the districts.

MR SINDLINGER: Could you help clear this up a little bit for me, please? One of the annual reports says there is a potential of 65,000 new acres, and another says there is a potential of 300,000 new acres. Now, I do know that some money has been expended under these programs, so presumably it follows that some acres are potentially available for new production. Have you an inventory of those acres?

MR COOKSON: You're referring to the Heritage Savings Trust Fund report?

MR SINDLINGER: Yes. Mr. Chairman, if you like, the first one is the 1976-77 annual report on page 16. That's where the 65,000 acres is indicated. The next one is in the 1977-78 annual report on page 12, where it's indicated that there will be an additional 300,000 acres of new land. Earlier, in response to one of your other questions, I heard you referring to cost/benefit analysis. I think this would be a particularly good case where such analysis should apply. We have spent so much money so far. What have we got in return? The essence of the question is: how effective has this program been? Until that question can be answered, it's difficult to say whether or not the program should be continued. If the program has been effective in the past, we should continue with the \$234 million expenditure referred to by Mr. Cookson earlier. If it has not been effective, it may be worth while for this committee to re-examine the allocation of funds to that program.

MR COOKSON: Mr. Chairman, one gets into a pretty complex area in discussing something that's been ongoing for some period of time. As you know, we went through the hearing process through the Environment Council of Alberta. So we based a lot of our decisions on the input from the public in general, from the irrigation districts, from our own technical expertise in Environment, also the expertise in Agriculture in particular. On the basis of all that input -- and I think the acreage they estimated would be capable of irrigation at the time is in the Environment Council report -- and on the basis of that report, we made the decision to expend this kind of money. If you look over the report, the actual allocation toward the major development, in '80-81 we invested \$7.5 million, which brings the total to \$17 million.

We still have a long way to go in terms of investment, but you have to remember two things. One is that the tremendous portion of that allocation of money is going to be simply for upgrading the present system. If you've had

an opportunity to visit some of the archaic systems down there -- one in particular, where it wasn't even safe to walk beneath it for escaping water. The flume over the Oldman River is a classic kind of aged, decrepit operation. Regardless of whether or not there was any increased acreage, a good portion of that funding would be to upgrade the headworks and so on under the present system.

Perhaps a more pertinent question might be how much really is going to be allocated just simply for upgrading the present system. The balance of the funding -- and again, \$234 million is allocated, in terms of an '80-81 kind of estimate -- will be for new facilities, new off-stream storage, and increased on-stream storage. It will be that portion of the expenditure that will be for the increased acreages you've mentioned.

We're now doing a further assessment -- at least we're in the process -- to again upgrade those estimated acreage increases. The Oldman study report is something I think one should check as far as the acreage and so on. That's a public document. We could supply that to the chairman if you wish. That's the Oldman report.

MR SINDLINGER: Mr. Cookson, I'd like to follow up on my earlier question, but prior to doing so, perhaps I'll follow your voice and your suggestion that the better question would be: of the total amount expended, how much was for upgrading the system? Do you have that breakdown in terms of how much was for upgrading and how much was for new development?

MR COOKSON: Mr. Chairman, it might help if the member took the document on page 11 of the '80-81 report. There are two breakdowns on that page. One deals with the rehabilitation and expansion for the '80-81 year. That's Agriculture, and that gives you the figures there. The other, which is Environment's, is the irrigation headworks improvement. That portion is strictly capital construction and nothing to do with the operational part.

MR SINDLINGER: Mr. Cookson, am I correct? Are you referring to expenditures out of the Department of Agriculture's budget as opposed to expenditures through the heritage fund?

MR COOKSON: I just wanted to clarify the two different parts, Mr. Chairman. Of the \$234 million we committed from the trust fund, our responsibility in Environment deals just to the headworks and deals with the capital cost of that. The other \$100 million that was allocated is strictly Agriculture, cost-sharing and so on. It deals with the rehabilitation and expansion.

MR SINDLINGER: If I may come back to the initial question, please. Again, the annual reports dealing with the expenditure of heritage funds indicate that there will be a prospective land development of 65,000 acres in one case; in another case, 300,000 acres. We have spent some money to date through the heritage fund to accomplish that end. My question would be: how much land have we benefited by from that expenditure? In other words, what have we got for our money's worth so far?

You indicated you were in the process of upgrading estimates for the program. Again, you're talking about estimates. I'm asking you about actual developments, actual acres that have come under development now because of these expenditures, actual expenditures to date -- actual costs, actual benefits. Is there no way the department has monitored that?

MR COOKSON: We might be able -- and perhaps Walter could comment on this -- to separate what expenditure would be strictly for upgrading the present facilities as opposed to expansion for increased acreage. As was commented on earlier, most of the 13 districts now have a moratorium on any expansion of acreage until such time as we can first accomplish the upgrading and, secondly, the increased capacity of water retention. So there's certainly going to be a delay factor. The cost is going to have to be incurred in advance of any figures on increased acreage. I don't know whether that helps.

MR SOLODZUK: Mr. Chairman, I'm not familiar with the numbers being referred to, but there are probably acres added to the assessment role of the irrigation districts. There are no brand-new projects, so perhaps we could give you the numbers and attempt to leave them with the chairman, to identify the actual additional lands that have been added to the assessment roles within the individual irrigation districts.

MR SINDLINGER: Mr. Chairman, could we ask them to do that? The reason for that is this: the justification for these projects is in the annual report, saying that if these projects are undertaken, this amount of additional land will come under development in the province. We ask them to do that so we can find out how much land has become available as a result of these expenditures.

MR CHAIRMAN: For clarification for myself as well as for the staff of the department, what you're asking for is the number of acres that have so far been added to the existing irrigation district acreages. Is that right?

MR SINDLINGER: Yes.

MR CHAIRMAN: And you want to know how much of the cost for upgrading of the existing facilities has been used to obtain those extra acres.

MR SINDLINGER: Yes.

MR CHAIRMAN: Does that clarify it, Mr. Solodzuk?

MR COOKSON: You're getting close, Mr. Chairman.

MR SOLODZUK: Yes, I think you're getting close. All I can say is we'll try to do the best we can in providing these numbers. When we started in 1976, the thrust up to just about a year or so ago was to the rehabilitation of the existing works. As far as the expansion of the actual acreages, that has not been one of the criteria up to this point in time. It was really the rehabilitation of the existing works. Again, as the minister has identified it, we in Environment look after the major on-stream headworks, and Agriculture looks after the distribution systems with the irrigation districts. But we'll try to do the best we can.

MR CHAIRMAN: If I could have another point of clarification. Are the increases in the acreages mentioned by the Member for Calgary Buffalo dependent upon new headworks and off-river storage? I come from a tree-growing area, not a farming area.

MR SOLODZUK: Yes, I think there is a relationship, of course, because you have to have more water if you're going to put more land on. But to be very

specific at this time, I would have some difficulty in answering the question. As you appreciate, some of the water being used for irrigation is what they call return water. You could have lands on the assessment role that are not using new water but generally return water as it goes back into the river system. So just exactly how these acreages break down into these little compartments, we would just have to try to see if we can provide you with the answer.

MR SINDLINGER: Mr. Chairman, for greater certainty, I just want to reference the comments I've made, so there's no misunderstanding. The first one was in the 1976-77 annual report on page 16. It says: "approximately 65,000 new acres potentially will come under irrigation". The second reference I referred to is in the 1977-78 annual report on page 12. It says: "the programme includes the development of new land area". It goes on further to estimate that 300,000 new acres will come under new development. Those are the quotes I referred to. If estimates can be made at the start of the program to justify the program and if those can be the identification of the benefits, I'd like to know how you measure those benefits today, now that the money has been spent.

Mr. Chairman, then I have a supplementary question. Mr. Cookson, you indicated that the irrigation districts had put a moratorium on something, and I'm not too certain what that is. My question to you would be whether or not that moratorium would impede the continuation of this program as it's presently envisioned.

MR COOKSON: There are 13 districts that deal with water. Certainly a good portion of them now, under our Water Resources Act, have limited the amount of water that's available. That's the present situation. Unless Peter can give a little more update on the seriousness of that, that moratorium will simply be there until there's a water supply, which we in Environment are responsible for supplying. So until the work now taking place through Environment's portion of the funding is completed -- that's off-stream storage, at least -- and the capacity of the present channelling system, I guess that moratorium has to remain there.

MR SINDLINGER: The moratorium then in no way will slow down expenditures of funds under this program?

MR COOKSON: The moratorium should speed up the process, because the idea is to upgrade the facility to handle a greater capacity of water.

MR SINDLINGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR PAHL: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister could indicate whether the cost/benefit to the expansion of irrigation -- and I know that's under Agriculture but related -- and headworks improvements is in any way improved or dependent on interbasin transfers. In other words, given an apportionment agreement with down-stream users, is there a point at which we have to start looking at interbasin transfers to make more water available to sort of remove these moratoriums and make those headworks improvements more effective?

MR COOKSON: The South Saskatchewan basin study will give us a better handle on what point we reach where the total demands on our water supply will be maximum. At that point, of course, we are interfering with our agreement with

Saskatchewan. Now that's not just for irrigation but for industry and for domestic use: local use, municipal use. Before that point, I think we have to address ourselves in a practical way as to when we'll reach the point of decision, we have something else in place. Let's assume that by 1990 the total growth in the southern part of the province is completely limited because of water supply. Then we should have studied in advance very clearly the implications of water transfer between basins. That isn't to say that it'll ever happen, but I think we should at least run it through the system.

MR PAHL: A further supplementary might be the question whether the present investments and the contemplated investments in capital costs would be done in any other way if interbasin transfers were contemplated. In other words, are you running the risk of sinking some costs into facilities that might better not be there if there was a larger water management plan on an interbasin basis?

MR COOKSON: That's a really excellent question. I don't know whether I want to tackle that one or not, Mr. Chairman. I think what the Member for Edmonton Mill Woods is saying is: could we transfer water from the Peace River for less cost than the \$200 million or whatever which may eventually be spent on on-stream storage and so on and so forth. I guess I don't have a very good handle on that, except to say that since 1971 it has always been the policy of the government that there would be no interbasin transfer until such time as those basins had reached their maximum in output. In order to get that maximum output, we have to invest in those capital costs down there. So it's true that we may not have a total handle on the concept of water transfer in terms of our capital cost down there, but it's also true that a position we've taken is that water transfer would not be considered until the maximum use of the basin itself. That's really where the situation is.

MR PAHL: Mr. Chairman, that is in fact at the heart of my question. You extended it a little for me yourself, and I appreciate that. I guess another way to put the question might be: in your estimate or your officials', Mr. Minister, how far are we toward maximum utilization of the basin, either in quantitative terms in terms of water or perhaps in terms of the capital facilities you can put in presently used basins as opposed to . . . That's coming up against the 1971 policy. How close are we to having to make that decision?

MR COOKSON: I think the South Saskatchewan study, which is to be totally completed by 1983 -- and we'll be releasing interim comments on that as we go along -- must detail very clearly how far we are away from that point. I guess that's the time some tough decisions will have to be considered. The basin study will take into consideration all the factors involved in water usage. They will consider both the quantity and the quality. Once that report is in place . . . There have been some discussions -- again, it depends a lot on who you talk to -- that perhaps by 1990 or certainly the turn of the century, tough decisions will have to be made about a major transfer of water or suspension of all growth. Those are the only two alternatives you have, unless someone can make water down there.

MRS FYFE: I just wanted to follow up on the approval process. Mr. Minister, you have commented on the projects related to irrigation. I wonder if you could comment on how a project is approved related to the flooding controls,

such as Paddle River and the Lesser Slave Lake area. Have you looked at a number of projects across the province, or are these two particularly thorny areas?

MR COOKSON: They came in as a result, I guess, of input from members throughout the province. They were considered urgent and important enough when the committee sat. In terms of prioritizing, the Paddle River project has been a major concern for a very long period of time. In their wisdom they decided . . . Other proposals have been made. But it's really input from across the province and an eventual decision by committee as to which ones would be prioritized. These were selected, and I guess there'll be others as time goes on.

MRS FYFE: A supplementary, Mr. Chairman. Were any hearings held on these projects, and were any cost/benefit studies done on them?

MR COOKSON: Yes. Of course, these were before my time, but I understand Paddle River had Environment Council hearings. At Slave Lake there was an Environment Council independent hearing. At that time, the reports which were completed were made public. They included in the report the sort of cost/benefit analysis that normally is a result of these hearings.

MRS FYFE: One final question, Mr. Chairman, if I may. Could you tell me the status of work on both these projects?

MR COOKSON: The expenditure on the Lesser Slave Lake project is indicated in the '80-81 annual report. I've got the Paddle River one here. The initial cost in '79-80 was 18.8. Most of the work that's been done has been for containment to prevent flooding. As you know, it's a river that has been a serious problem for agriculture for many, many years. According to the progress report on '80-81, flood-free road crossing and access routes have been completed, we've cleared the dam site, an environmental impact assessment is of course completed, soil testing, and I think we've just tendered the major construction, have we not, Peter?

MR MELNYCHUK: That's correct, Mr. Minister. Just to add further to that, both projects are currently under construction. In the case of the Paddle, the first phase of the dam embankment was recently tendered and awarded, and construction will now continue for two and a half years toward completion. All of the river work -- channellization and diking -- has been completed. The dam structure is what remains to be done on that project.

MR COOKSON: On the Lesser Slave, we had a major project during the winter on the lower end of Lesser Slave Lake. We were able to save some considerable money by some redesigning. For members of the committee, what we're doing is this: the river that leaves Lesser Slave Lake has a bad habit of meandering all over the place, too. Each time it does that it slows up the drainage, so we're cutting right through and straightening the whole area. So far we've been able to cut through four cutoffs. We've had excellent tenders. We've continued to purchase land, and in '80-81 we spent a million dollars on the project. I think it's already having some significant impact on the lake.

MR SINDLINGER: Mr. Cookson, in the annual report there is shown an amount for possible land claims from expropriations. Does that fall under your

department? Page 37, an amount of something like \$37 million. Perhaps you might just indicate the status of those land claims and where the majority of them occur.

MR COOKSON: What page is it on?

MR SINDLINGER: It's on page 37 under Note 8: Contingencies. It's been in the annual report for several years now, and it's still in here. I'm just wondering what the status is and where the majority of them occur.

MR COOKSON: First of all, Fish Creek is the significant one. As you know, as we acquire this property, in some cases we can't come to a mutual agreement on the pricing. In the case of Fish Creek, the major one we're still dealing with is the Mannix property. The Mannix property will be coming to court at the end of this month. I think there are two or three other properties: Shaw, Sanderson, and another small piece of property. There are actually three properties we had to expropriate, and the major one will be the Mannix; the others are smaller. But we'll deal with the one, then hopefully we can settle the other ones. That's Fish Creek.

There are none on the Capital City, and so far I don't think there are any on any of our other projects: Lesser Slave Lake or the Paddle River.

MR R SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, just an information question with regard to the site on the Oldman, whether on the Piegan or Three Rivers. I notice the federal minister, John Munro, was out the other day looking at a site as well. I'm making some assumption that it goes onto the reserve. Would the federal government then provide . . . Is there any kind of formula of matching funds? Would the heritage fund plus a contribution from the federal government plus other sources of funds, build the dam? Would that make a difference to the financial contribution of the province? Say, if the dam were put on the Three Rivers, we would most likely finance it totally. Could the minister comment on that?

MR COOKSON: The PFRA will be travelling with us tomorrow. I think they have a responsibility. Certainly we're not going to hesitate to assert our position on that. I guess time will tell what is the outcome, but we'd be happy to receive any funds from the federal government at any time, as long as the strings aren't too complex.

MR R SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, one of the considerations with regard to the location would be funding contributions. Also, the potential of irrigation on the reserve: are there a number of acres that can be irrigated, and is there a project being planned in terms of this negotiation?

MR COOKSON: As part of our agreement I think we allocated \$150,000, Peter.

MR MELNYCHUK: Fifteen thousand.

MR COOKSON: Fifteen thousand.

MR MELNYCHUK: Fifteen thousand acres have been identified as possibly irrigable on the Piegan reserve.

MR COOKSON: But just to be clear on your comment with regard to the PFRA, I would like to think they would be prepared to assist whether it's on or off the reserve. If it's not specifically on the reserve, we'll sure keep our options open on it.

Was \$150,000 allocated in our agreement with the Piegans to deal with some irrigation work, Peter? That's the figure I was thinking about.

MR MELNYCHUK: The agreement with the Piegan band included funding for part of the studies related to the Brocket site, so it was part of the total package.

MR CHAIRMAN: Are there any other members with questions for the minister and his staff? Well, thank you very much, Mr. Minister and the members of your staff. This will let you get away on the trip to Washington. But don't trust that clock; it's 10 minutes slow.

Before the members of the committee go away, I have some information I have received from Mr. Trynchy's department with some figures on the Kananaskis and Fish Creek provincial parks. If you want that, you'd better take it tonight so you can look at it before tomorrow. It's at 9:30 tomorrow.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.