



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 28th Legislature
First Session

Standing Committee
on
Resource Stewardship

Hydroelectric Energy Production
in Northern Alberta

Wednesday, October 24, 2012
6:18 p.m.

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Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship

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6:18 p.m. Wednesday, October 24, 2012

[Ms Kennedy-Glans in the chair]

The Chair: All right. Folks, I think we're ready to roll here. Welcome. I have to indicate that this is probably one of the few times that we'll get to eat at this table and work. If we have presenters here, I think that as a show of respect we won't be able to do this. If media show up, we also will probably not be eating here. But for this day let's eat.

We're going to start by going around the table to just introduce ourselves. I'll start with my vice-chair here.

Mr. Rowe: Bruce Rowe, MLA for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills, deputy chair.

Mr. Hehr: Kent Hehr, MLA, Calgary-Buffalo.

Mr. Fraser: Rick Fraser, Calgary-South East.

Ms Calahasen: Pearl Calahasen, Lesser Slave Lake.

Mr. Cao: Wayne Cao, Calgary-Fort.

Mr. Stier: Pat Stier, Livingstone-Macleod.

Mr. Webber: Len Webber, Calgary-Foothills.

Mr. Casey: Ron Casey, Banff-Cochrane.

Ms Fenske: Jacquie Fenske, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

Ms DeLong: Alana DeLong, MLA, Calgary-Bow.

Ms L. Johnson: Linda Johnson, Calgary-Glenmore.

Mr. Barnes: Drew Barnes, Cypress-Medicine Hat.

Mr. Anderson: Rob Anderson, Airdrie.

Mr. Hale: Jason Hale, Strathmore-Brooks.

Mr. Anglin: Joe Anglin, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre.

Mr. Xiao: David Xiao, Edmonton-McClung.

Dr. Massolin: Good evening. Philip Massolin, manager of research services.

Ms Sorensen: Rhonda Sorensen, manager of corporate communications and broadcast services.

Mr. Bilous: Deron Bilous, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Ms Kubinec: Maureen Kubinec, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock.

Mr. Sandhu: Peter Sandhu, Edmonton-Manning.

Dr. Brown: Neil Brown, Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill

Mrs. Sawchuk: Karen Sawchuk, committee clerk.

The Chair: Thank you. There's no one phoning in today, so that's fantastic.

I think you guys know the drill with this. The microphones are operated by *Hansard*, so you don't have to touch them; if you've got a cellphone, please keep it off; and all of this is recorded.

Everyone has had a chance to see the agenda. Can I have a motion that the agenda for the October 24, 2012, meeting of the

Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship be adopted as circulated?

Mr. Sandhu: Yes.

The Chair: Thank you. All in favour? Any objections? Carried.

Next is approval of the meeting minutes for September 27. They were posted. Any errors or omissions? Okay. If not, I'll ask for a motion, then. Would someone like to move that the minutes of the September 27, 2012, meeting of the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship be adopted as circulated?

Ms Calahasen: Yes.

The Chair: All in favour? Any objections? It's carried.

Wow. You're a quiet bunch when you have food in front of you. This is interesting. This will change, though, in a minute, I'm sure.

The meeting today was to actually gather round and focus on the stakeholder list that's been generated since our last meeting. LAO research services, headed by Dr. Massolin, prepared a very, very long stakeholder list. It was excellent. We could study this issue for about the next six years if we so choose. There are that many people with a stake in the ground here.

We've had an opportunity to review that list, consolidate it into issues, and then discuss it among working group members – so Mr. Rowe and Mr. Bilous – just this past Monday. Ms Blakeman wasn't able to participate in the meeting. She apologized for that, but she has seen it. We were able to reduce that massive hundreds of names down to something that we think is still too long for the time frame we've got, but it's separated into panels. You've all had a chance to see that list of panels.

I'm going to open up the floor to questions, and then I'm going to ask for a motion that we approve that list of prospective stakeholders on the understanding that we are able to continue to evolve this list based on your input, based on your reactions to different presenters and to refine it because we've got to stay focused on the issue at hand, the feasibility question that we've posed for ourselves. Does everybody have a copy of the prospective stakeholders document in front of them? Okay. We will make sure everyone has got that.

Before opening up the floor, I'm also going to flag that we now have people in the community that are aware of what we're doing because this is publicly shared, and that's quite wonderful. We're getting people coming to us and saying that they're interested. In some cases we will only recommend that these people offer written submissions so that you can read them. They'll be available for you to read. There are other cases like Ms Calahasen's of people reaching out into the communities that they're familiar with and sharing what we're doing and asking if people are interested in having input. So it's a process that will evolve.

I will open it up to questions and comments.

Mr. Anglin: I notice the Alberta Oil Sands Developers Group is listed down at the very back under other stakeholders. Why wouldn't they be included in the panel of proponents?

The Chair: The proponents, Mr. Anglin, were limited to the companies who had proposed the Dunvegan project and also ATCO and the project that they're proposing. The Oil Sands Developers Group would be a group that would have an interest, as you pointed out, in the economic why, why we would develop this as a resource or why we would or would not choose to do this. They are interested in presenting as far as I understand.

The other part of this process is how we do this. We have only got one-hour sessions for the month of November unless you guys want to start doing this on Fridays and Saturdays. We have one hour to hear from presenters. You know, to hear from more than ATCO in their presentation or to hear from multiple stakeholders in a one-hour session gets a little bit tricky.

6:25

Mr. Anglin: I understand that. I realize we have to try to figure out how we're going to co-ordinate our time best. The reason I asked the question is that they are the primary stakeholder, in my mind, above everybody else. They are the primary end-user in the initial stage before that electricity gets to anyone else south of Fort McMurray.

The Chair: I think, Mr. Anglin, there are lots of different ways to look at this issue. You're looking at it from that perspective, and I respect that as chair. Other people will look at this issue from different perspectives. I think we've got to keep going back to why we're here, which is to figure out the feasibility of this kind of northern river hydroelectric development in Alberta. That's got many factors, but that's one of them.

Mr. Anglin: I agree with you. But the primary end-user would be critical in the economic viability because they will basically be paying as the end-consumer, realistically, 100 per cent until the various stages take place.

The Chair: It's a point-of-entry question.
Anyone else?

Mr. Bilous: Sorry. I'm not sure if all of the members have had a chance to thoroughly go through the document, but as was brought up in the Monday working group, I just raise the issue that we've got a multitude of different stakeholders, but if you look on the environmental side, it's a little bit thin. The current panel, looking exclusively at the moment at the economic and environmental feasibility, which is on page 6, contains only two different organizations, the Pembina Institute and the C.D. Howe Institute. They're two different organizations, but the one that has the expertise in environment feasibility more is Pembina. My caucus and I discussed this and have a few additional organizations that actually were part of the draft list that ended up getting cut down – and I appreciate that we don't have all the time in the world – and one of them was the Alberta Water Council. That, again, was in the draft list that didn't make it to the short list.

The Chair: May I just make a point of clarification, Mr. Bilous?

Mr. Bilous: Sure.

The Chair: When we had our meeting on Monday, we indicated to you that the research that had been done, especially on the environmental groups and the advocacy groups, was very, very exhaustive. There are probably 20 groups that would fall into those categories. What I think we communicated to you in our meeting on Monday was that we thought that your caucus and perhaps the Liberal caucus in particular would be interested in identifying or high-grading those particular stakeholders that we could hear from. There's every intention to listen to a full cross-section of stakeholders here. I just want to be clear.

The other point I'd make is on the First Nations and Métis groups. There are many, many, many groups there. You don't see any in your document. That's not because we're not intending to invite them but because at this point in time we don't have perfect clarity on how to invite them or who specifically to invite. But

there is every intention to include them. I just want to be absolutely clear about that.

Mr. Bilous: Right. Maybe there's a different process. But before we end up adopting this, just to put it on the record, when we look at the different groups of stakeholders that we're going to be inviting, on the environmental side it is a little thin. So whether, you know, I send to all committee members notes that I put together as far as the organizations that I feel should be on this list with reasons as to why they should be on the list – I mean, I'm not sure if that's the easiest form of action.

The Chair: Absolutely. As we discussed on Monday, perhaps the best thing to do is to send them to Mrs. Sawchuk, and she will share them with the full committee. We're looking for your guidance here and your direction, and I would say the same to you, Mr. Hehr.

Mr. Rowe: If we approve this stakeholders list here tonight, I think it can remain a living document. It's not cast in stone that this is what we'll do. It's just a starting point is the way I view it. Again, we look forward to getting your recommendations on that environmental list and whoever you think we should get here.

The Chair: Yes, Mr. Cao.

Mr. Cao: Madam Chair, as far as I know, this is a public consultation. We have a list, a limited time here, but it's open to the public, so any individual, anybody, can write in, right? A written submission is available on the Internet, wide open to the world. Whoever has some comment can put it on, and then we can look at it.

The Chair: Absolutely, Mr. Cao. Just to follow up on that, one of the concerns we have, because this is a public space, is to not mislead people in that we are going to be inviting them. It would be wonderful to be able to invite everyone on the list that was prepared by Dr. Massolin, but it's just impossible. We're just trying to work through the list and continually evolve it.

Ms Calahasen: This is not an exhaustive list. However, I think it's a good list. As you said, Chair, I think we have to see this as a living document, and as we see fit for different things, we might find that we need more information, that we can access that information readily. I think this is quite a huge list. I don't know if we're going to be able to meet everybody. Holy mackerel.

Mr. Anglin: Madam Chair, if I understood you correctly – and clarify this for me – will we advertise or send out a notice that people who may not appear here can make written submissions?

The Chair: We're actually talking about that. Mr. Anglin, this is a new process, so all of these questions are good questions. One of the thoughts we had was to actually do a press release advising what we are doing, and that would indicate to people who are interested that they could come and make a contribution. Each one of you has a wide swath of stakeholders, constituents and other stakeholders, that, I'm sure, you can direct to the public website, and receipt of written submissions is always welcome.

Mr. Anglin: If I may, I think you have a working tool here because this is a long list, and you know we're not going to get through this list. But if some of these people and some other people who want to make submissions want to provide something in writing, I will definitely read whatever gets submitted. I think it is a tool that we as a committee can probably make good use of and even hone down the list.

The Chair: Ms Fenske.

Ms Fenske: Thank you. We were just discussing here, and it's not just the list, but it's where the groups are from on the list. Will we be using technology to be able to interview some of these people? I have a concern about some of them coming from Toronto and Fort Smith.

The Chair: A good point, a good question. Some of the groups from Toronto, particularly the ones that we are anticipating inviting, perhaps even for the next meeting, are quite happy to come here because this is their day-to-day work, and they're very keen, very excited that we're interested in hearing from them. They will likely show up here, which is quite wonderful.

For other groups, in Fort Smith for example, some of the community groups and some of the First Nations and Métis groups, we feel that it would be very wonderful if it was possible logistically and financially for us to actually go and visit them as part of a site visit, perhaps at the end of January. I think it would be a very big struggle for anybody to argue that a trip to Fort Smith in January was a boondoggle as long as we keep costs very, very much in check. I'm looking for Mr. Anderson on that. Where did he go? There are lots of logistical questions around that visit, but that's one of the possibilities.

For people like Mr. Prentice, who's on the list, and Shawn Atleo, it would be our deepest wish that they would be able to come and participate directly in this kind of a conversation. Of course, we'd have to provide a little bit more time than one hour to be able to do that.

Dr. Brown: Mr. Prentice is available in Calgary, Madam Chair. He's only in Toronto a couple of days a week.

The Chair: Any other observations on this list?

6:35

Ms Fenske: I would make that motion if you're prepared to have that at this point in time.

The Chair: Yes. Thank you.

Ms Fenske: That

the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship approve this list of prospective stakeholders dated October 22, 2012, as distributed.

The Chair: Okay. All in favour? Any objections? Carried. Thank you.

Now we're moving into the heart of what we came to do, which is quite wonderful. There's a lot of process here, and I really, really, am grateful. I know that Mrs. Sawchuk and my co-chair are grateful for your patience and your openness to building this kind of process.

Starting next week, on Monday we're looking at having our first presenter come to this group. It will be a very different environment. We won't be talking about process. We will be inviting people to come in and present to us. The format of those sessions: the next one will actually be run by our vice-chair here. The process will be very much an introduction – he's going to set the tone – of ourselves to the presenters, an opportunity for a presenter or presenters to present for 10 to 15 minutes, which isn't much. We will ask in many cases for them to provide written submissions in advance, and Dr. Massolin will be providing information so that you can be prepared.

Then what we will have, I'm suggesting as chair – and it's my prerogative to suggest this – is a rotation of questions. We would suggest that we start to allow the Wildrose to ask questions in a five-minute period of time. That's question and answer, so that probably means only one question unless they're quick. Then we'll move to the Progressive Conservative speaker to be able to ask a question or two in five minutes, then the Liberals, and then the New Democrats, five minutes each so it's equal time, then move back in rotation to the Wildrose and back to the Conservatives, and see how we end up. Let's play with that and see how it works. It seems to be respectful in a time frame that's pretty short. I'm open to thoughts on that as well.

Ms DeLong: I'm just concerned that I'm not going to get to ask a question because there are, you know, more Progressive Conservatives in this room.

The Chair: In a short time frame like this and with the intent of this committee being to hear from all parties, I think that as chair I'm going to allow this process to go that way and observe and see what happens. The goal here is to get all voices on the table.

Ms DeLong: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms Calahasen: How are you going to deal with question hogs?

The Chair: Severely.

Ms Calahasen: Okay. As long as we know that there is going to be a time limit, then we'd be able to deal with that, because there are question hogs around. I think it's important for everybody to be able to have an opportunity to be able to ask a question.

The Chair: The other part of that is the discipline required. It has to be polite with the response. When you're asking someone to come in to present, we'll have to be very clear in our invitation that we have a short time frame and that we will be very crisp. In fact, maybe we should get a big egg timer with a bell on it.

Mr. Sandhu: I'll buy a little hammer for you.

The Chair: You'll buy a hammer. That's a good idea. Thank you. Anyone else have comments on that process? Okay.

The next thing we're going to look at is the list of presenters. We had to set some process for which groups we invite in first. What we're recommending is that the hydroelectric power industry associations be invited first. They are available to come on Monday and participate, the Canadian Hydropower Association and the Canadian Dam Association. This is what they do every day of the week, talk about dams and hydroelectricity. What we're asking them to do is come in and give us a primer on language. I think many of us didn't know a whole lot about run of the river until about a month ago. There are lots of issues around dams and hydroelectricity. What are the issues? What is the language? This is kind of hydroelectricity with dams 101. That's what we wanted to start with.

Any comments?

Mr. Sandhu: At the end of the meeting we'll all be dam builders.

The Chair: We'll be dam good, yes. Anyone else?

Ms Kubinec: I just want to say that I support that idea.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Webber: Madam Chair, I'm just curious. Does everybody have the list of presenters? I don't seem to have it. Has that been distributed?

The Chair: Oh, sorry. You don't. They are actually enumerated on the bigger document that we just approved. I'll just run through them so that we've got the order. We're only setting the agenda for the next four weeks, and we're excluding the period that is constituency week. What we're recommending: October 29, next Monday, the hydroelectric power industry associations; Monday, November 5, the hydro developers, which are the experts, BC Hydro, Manitoba Hydro, and a fellow by the name of Clayton Bear, who's an expert on run of the river; the next week, constituency week, we won't be meeting; the following week, November 19, the Slave River proponents, which is the ATCO group; the following week, Monday, November 26, we're recommending the Dunvegan proponent, TransAlta.

That takes us through to the end of November. We can at any point in time sort of sit down and look at the high-grade list again. We've got to also set some time aside in December and in January to have half-day sessions so we can bring other groups in, but for now I think we'd just like to get started. I'll go through that again really quickly: Monday, October 29, hydroelectric power industry associations; Monday, November 5, hydro developers; Monday, November 19, Slave River proponents; Monday, November 26, Dunvegan proponent.

Any comments on that? Any questions? Okay.

I'll mention two things. One is that once we move into December, we will continue to meet on Monday evenings – that's going to be our allotted time – but we're also going to suggest that we pick some days or half days when we could invite in groups, perhaps the group that's going to look at the opportunities for economic partnerships and relationships with First Nations.

What we're recommending is Shawn Atleo from AFN and Jim Prentice from CIBC, given his experience with aboriginal communities – in fact, he did a master's thesis, something about the northern rivers and hydroelectricity – just to have an opinion before we invite some of the First Nations and Métis groups in, just to have a broader frame for looking at economic relationships and partnerships, the potential with First Nations from different perspectives.

We could also in maybe December, maybe January – let's let this evolve – invite clusters of First Nations, Métis, clusters of environmental groups. Perhaps if we have three hours in a row, we could invite 10 groups in, cluster them in an appropriate fashion. To do it right now is a bit of conjecture. I think we need to get a little bit of experience under our belt – that's, at least, the recommendation – and then figure out what those clusters can look like. Does that feel appropriate, folks? Okay. All right.

Any other questions or comments? Yes, go ahead.

Mr. Casey: I didn't have a question. I was just going to move that we accept the list here.

Mr. Bilous: It was just a quick question of when we're going to determine those dates or half days and the process of how we're going to do that that's going to be effective.

The Chair: A good point, Mr. Bilous. What I'd recommend is that, again, we always have to come back to our secretary, Mrs. Sawchuk. She looks at the schedules and comes back to us and suggests what's available. I think that's always a good starting point, and it's served us well so far. Then perhaps I will as chair

share those with a representative of the Liberal Party and yourself or Ms Blakeman or . . .

Mr. Hehr: I'll probably come.

The Chair: Okay.

. . . with Mr. Hehr and a representative of the Wildrose. We'll have a working group meeting again to talk about a schedule and then take it back to everyone's colleagues and then vote on it at a meeting.

Mr. Bilous: Okay.

The Chair: Okay.

6:45

Mr. Casey: With that, I'll move that the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship approve the proposed schedule of presenters: for Monday, October 29, 2012, hydroelectric power industry associations; Monday, November 5, 2012, hydro developers; Monday, November 19, 2012, Slave River proponents; and Monday, November 26, 2012, the Dunvegan proponent, understanding that the order of presenters may vary depending on their availability, and that the committee identify a further schedule of presenters at its November 26, 2012, meeting.

The Chair: The only suggestion I might make to that is that it might be an earlier meeting than the 26th when we actually set the next schedule, perhaps November 19.

Mr. Casey: I'll maybe just amend the motion here so that instead of "at its November 26, 2012, meeting," it's a further schedule of presenters "at a future meeting."

The Chair: All right. Would you read that again so that we know what we're voting on? Thank you.

Mr. Casey: Sure. It's that

the Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship approve the proposed schedule of presenters: for Monday, October 29, 2012, hydroelectric power industry associations; Monday, November 5, 2012, hydro developers; Monday, November 19, 2012, Slave River proponents; and Monday, November 26, 2012, Dunvegan proponent, understanding that the order of presenters may vary depending on their availability, and that the committee identify a further schedule of presenters at a future meeting.

The Chair: All in favour? Any opposed? Carried. Thank you.

The next item on our agenda is the research. It's a very important part of this committee. I think that as you have looked at it, I'm sure you've gotten a sense of the weight of this issue. It's a very technical issue, and there is a lot of material to read. There are people coming to us with reports, and we will pass them along to Dr. Massolin. He makes sense of them all, which is quite wonderful.

I would invite Dr. Massolin to comment on the research thus far and the progress going forward.

Dr. Massolin: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I just want to point out to committee members, if you're not already aware, the Summary of Issues Regarding Hydroelectric Development in Alberta document that was posted and, therefore, distributed. Just in case you haven't had a chance to read it, I'll just reiterate what it's about. It's a document that was prepared by my group pursuant to a motion that was passed at the last meeting. It has to do with identifying the issues surrounding the hydroelectric devel-

opment sort of issue or proposition for those three northern Alberta river basins, the major ones.

This is just an issue identification. It doesn't necessarily go into any depth in terms of the ramifications of the issues, and it's not by any means an exhaustive identification of the issues. But I think it gives an overview of what those issues might be.

As the motion that was passed at the last meeting stipulated, there is also an annotated bibliography, which I think, you know, can grow over time as well. Then we added an appendix there. Hopefully, if you need to consult it, it's a glossary of terms giving you an insight into what some of the terminology that you may not be familiar with actually means. So that's that document.

Of course, Madam Chair, we're open to further requests when it comes to research.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much. This is a wonderful start. It's an impressive gathering of all the information. The only caution I would add is to just make sure we constantly go back to our initial mandate for this issue and make sure that we stay in scope. Again, we could all dedicate the next six years of our lives to these issues, and we just have to be sure that we stay in scope.

Any comments or feedback or suggestions for Dr. Massolin?

Mr. Casey: I guess, just as we're moving through this, we need to be cautious to not make it look like there's any kind of conclusion being drawn at the front end of this and that, at least in my mind anyway, what we're doing here is reviewing the information available to us from a feasibility point of view, that we're not moving forward with some kind of an assumption that this is a final deal, that this is, in fact, a direction.

What we're doing here is researching the feasibility. At the end of that research if it turns out there isn't an acceptable move-forward position, then we would simply drop it. This is nothing more than feasibility. I'm cautious about it as we move forward, that we make sure we keep focused on the fact that we're looking at feasibility here and not talking about what the end product might be.

The Chair: That's a fair observation. I think all of us, when we're interacting with different stakeholders in the public or our contacts, must make sure that we remember that because we don't want to mislead and suggest to anybody that we're going down this path. It's a study. It's an evaluation. I think the word "feasibility" is an apt one.

Mr. Anglin: There's one item, Madam Chair, I would like added to the research. It's a very important item, I think, on the policies of Alberta. The Premier has talked about an energy plan. I know that when Manitoba comes, I will be directing questions regarding an energy plan, particularly an east-west grid which is part of an energy plan. Eventually the idea was for a grid established east-west all the way across Canada. There are regional implications, and there are national implications. Would this feasibility, because that would be part of the question, play a role in that?

Right now we have roughly 11 or 22 different peak hours in travelling across the country. If you have a national plan, a national grid, for security and economic viability we would have two rolling peak hours each day travelling across Canada. That's significant. So if this were feasible, it would be significant as far as playing a role in the whole Canadian plan.

When Manitoba comes, I will be asking questions because I had a chance to talk to them about that at one of these conferences I just attended. If I could add that to the research, that would help.

The Chair: All right, Mr. Anglin. I want to reiterate, though, that we have to keep this tight within the frame we set when we started. When Manitoba Hydro is here and you want to ask that question, you will be able to ask that question. I just remind you to make sure to revisit the scope of this project so that we don't turn this into something that's far bigger than intended. We'll be watching that.

Mr. Anglin: With the greatest respect, I will always respect when you bring me back in line.

The Chair: I'm glad to have that on the record, sir.

Mr. Anglin: And lots of lawyers have tried.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Cao: Well, Philip did a great job here. I scanned through the table of contents. Of course, we talk about hydroelectricity, but when we build the dam to get the water, there's another side of it, which is the impact, maybe positively, on agriculture because of irrigation and all of that. I was wondering. I have never gone up north there walking to see the scenery or the fields, but there are always implications on irrigation for agriculture. So it's not just about electricity. I was wondering, maybe, about a comment on that aspect.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Cao.

Any other comments, suggestions?

Ms Calahasen: I was just wondering, Philip. You know that there have been some studies that have been done on the water systems – right? – on the waterways. Are we going to get that kind of information to be able to utilize that as we move forward? The last study that was done was on the Athabasca River.

Dr. Massolin: Yes. If you'd permit me, Madam Chair, I can certainly assemble and add to this annotated bibliography information on that if it's not already there.

Ms Calahasen: I don't see it there.

Dr. Massolin: Okay. Then we'll certainly look into that.

Ms Calahasen: Okay. That would be great.

6:55

The Chair: The other comment I would add to that is that as we bring presenters forward, remember that you are able to frame the questions in advance as well. If you would like information from these people before they present or after they present, that's always possible as well as the questions that you have.

Any other thoughts or suggestions, Dr. Massolin?

Dr. Massolin: No except just to point out as well that there is a very large list of news clippings on this issue that's been posted to the internal site. You know, if the committee members are not aware, there's lots of reading to be done there as well.

Mr. Casey: Maybe just on the point of individuals asking questions, this is sort of a team sport committee, so it would be really helpful if individuals would at least share that information with the rest of the committee. If somebody has a question that isn't, you know, going to be asked at the meeting because there might not be time, it would be really helpful for the whole committee to have that answer and that question simply because it's a building of knowledge. I think that's what we're about here, trying to

understand enough about this to be able to make a judgment call at the end of the day.

The Chair: Mr. Casey, that's a really good point. It is a public space, and questions asked that are within the scope of this work will be shared, and the research will be shared as well. So we'll make sure that Mrs. Sawchuk – you may not want an e-mail from Mrs. Sawchuk every eight hours, but maybe weekly we could have an update with the meeting notices or something to that effect.

Is that reasonable, Mrs. Sawchuk?

Mrs. Sawchuk: Yes, Madam Chair.

Mr. Casey: That would be better than hourly.

The Chair: Perhaps Mrs. Sawchuk could take up tweeting.

All right. Yes, Mr. Casey.

Mr. Casey: Sorry. It must be my question night. Just as far as research goes, is there a good base of knowledge about baseline data for these rivers? How much research has been done on them? Is there baseline environmental data in place currently, or is that something that we are going to have to try to chase down or proceed without?

Dr. Massolin: Yes, Madam Chair, I think that there is. We'll do some further research into that and provide the studies that are available to the committee, certainly.

Mr. Anglin: Just beyond that, each one of these experts, particularly the hydro organizations that come in, will actually have flow data with them also, and they'll probably really give us a tremendous amount of data. From a number of different sources, whether you went to Alberta Environment or to the industry people, there's a lot of data out there.

The Chair: Right.

Okay. Looking at the time and not wanting you to be late, for those of you going back.

Mr. Cao: Just probably for Philip. I have sort of a news scan on the omnibus from the federal. Some constituents told me that they're going to deregulate some rivers, okay? Now, we're talking

about rivers here, so maybe you perk your ear up and say: what is going on there, too? So just a tip for you.

Dr. Massolin: Yes. Madam Chair, I think I've raised that. I think it's the issue that has to deal with, for lack of a better term, liberalizing navigation on navigable rivers. So, yes. I think what we could do is certainly set up a news clipping monitoring of the hydro issue and some of the surrounding issues. We'll update that list that's being posted to the internal site with that sort of information.

Mr. Cao: Right. Thank you.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

Folks, I'm going to move to the next agenda item. Any other business for discussion? Okay.

Date of the next meeting. We've approved it for Monday, October 29, 6:15, and we'll hear from the Canadian Hydropower Association and the Canadian Dam Association.

If there's nothing else to consider, I'll call for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Rowe: Madam Chair, just for clarity, do we have these people booked for the 29th? Are we sure they're coming?

The Chair: Dr. Massolin, have you been the one in contact with these groups?

Dr. Massolin: I haven't. But I've been told that they're available, and maybe the clerk can confirm that.

The Chair: Oh. It's Mrs. Sawchuk. I'm sorry.

Mrs. Sawchuk: Madam Chair, we have made contact with both groups. They're on hold pending our meeting this evening, and 10 to 1 they're even listening to the proceedings. We'll confirm with them tomorrow morning the specifics.

The Chair: Well, assuming they're listening, let's say we're really excited to hear from the Canadian Hydropower Association and the Canadian Dam Association next Monday.

Thank you very much, folks.

[The committee adjourned at 7 p.m.]

