RETURN UNDELIVERABLE MAIL TO: TAIGA COMMUNICATIONS 650-70 ARTHUR STREET, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, R3B 1G7



"Serving Vancouver Island & The Gulf Islands for 63 Years"

For all your Building needs: Commercial, Residential, and Industrial

Sidney Head Office (250) 656-1125 Admirals Road: (250) 388-5443 Langford (250) 478-5509 Saltspring (250) 537-4978 Delta: (604) 580-3033

Vancouver: (604) 215-1152 Slegg Wall Panel Plant: Sidney (250) 656-9255 Slegg Door Shop: Langford (250) 386-3667 Nanaimo (250) 758-8329 Tofino: (250) 725-2538 Lantzville: (250) 390-1207 Cumberland: (250) 336-8710 Comox: (250) 339-2207 North Island Representative I-888-444-5563

TOLL FREE 1-888-444-5570

SLEGG LUMBER

Proud To Serve The First Nations www.slegglumber.com

Perfect Storm a Triple Threat to First Nations Channel between lakes impacts First Nations

Gaile Whelen-Enns

What is the Channel?

WWW.FIRSTPERSPECTIVE.CA

The Manitoba government identified a way to reduce current Lake Manitoba water levels from both natural and artificial flooding this year, in advance of spring 2012. Based on engineering reports a decision has been taken to spend \$100 million to build a channel that wouldill movewould move water between Lake Manitoba, Lake St. Martin, along Dauphin River to Lake Winnipeg. Press releases indicate only one inch increase in water for Lake Winnipeg, which already exceeds levels allowed for Lake Winnipeg. One inch of water for the entire surface of Lake Winnipeg going through the Jen Peg spillway is a lot of water.

First Nations Impacted

First Nations affected by 2011 Lake Manitoba water levels live an almost annual pattern of being flooded with costs and disruption year over year. This flooding results from Red River flooding, Assiniboine River flooding, overland flooding - and poor location of reserves. This year Lake Dauphin, Little Saskatchewan, Fairford, Lake Manitoba, Peguis, and Lake St. Martin First Nations have much greater flooding impacts, costs and risks. Decisions to direct water coming down the Assiniboine River away from Brandon, Portage la Prairie, and Winnipeg through the Portage Diversion to Lake Manitoba created the highest artificial water levels ever on the Lake Manitoba. High water levels on the Red River also increased water to certain First Nations. Add storms, rain, and wave action and these Manitoba First Nations are experiencing 'The Perfect Storm' of impacts. (According to Wikipeadia a 'perfect storm' describes an event where a rare combination of circumstances will aggravate or multiply a situation drastically.)

Being flooded out, roads out, bridges out, evacuation, months in hotel rooms, mold in homes, rebuilding roads/bridges and homes, fighting for disaster assistance in past years looks like rehearsals for 2011. Dominant society communities, roads, cottages are also affected by the combined flooding (natural

and artificial) of Lake Manitoba. Over 800 homes, businesses, and cottages are either destroyed or need extensive repairs. As many as 300 roads in southern Manitoba have been flooded out. Numerous bridges are

gone. And lake water levels remain high in the face of fall storms. The Manitoba government has approved new dike projects for municipalities on the south basin of the lake.

Who will be Helped?

The First Nations potentially affected by the Channel are being expected to help many Manitobans: farmers, ranchers, municipalities, cottagers, and businesses. To date these First Nations do not have answers on relocation of their reserves, housing, preparations for next spring, compensation, the school year for their children, or an and ability to resume normal governance and programming activities. Risks to federal funding exist should any of these First Nations end up in a non-reserve location.

The Honour of the Crowns

Several First Nations have primary impacts from the flooding of Lake Manitoba, and overland flooding. (See(See above.) These same First Nations would be affected by the Channel. Question remainQuestions remain: Hhow many other First Nations will be affected by tThe Channel? How many First Nations are already experiencing impacts from the 2011 high water levels in Lake Win-

nipeg and Lake Manitoba? Manitoba? Will moving Channel water through Lake Winnipeg to spillways of northern dams impact more First Nations in northern Manitoba? Are extra 2011 water levels already impacting northern First Nations? Does this emergency decision to add water to Lake Winnipeg, move it through dams, and through the Churchill River Diversion affect Aboriginal rights, including under the numbered treaties, and the Northernthe Northern Flood Agreement?

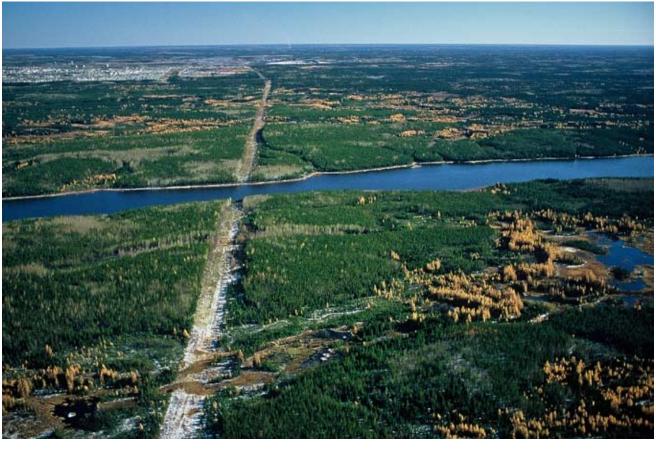
The Canadian courts repeatedly say the same thing: the Crown must act honourably with respect to Aboriginal peoples and their communities. The Crown must anticipate, and be ready to act with respect to Aboriginal constitutional and treaty rights, especially with regards to lands and waters, natural resource use. And The Crowns must take into consideration Aboriginal rights and impacts on Aboriginal people in advance of any significant decision, due to their special relationship to the Crown. This means both Ottawa and Winnipeg governments must fulfill aboriginal rights even in an emergency.

Is This an Emergency?

It is odd, but true, that this emergency is not about 2011being the highest water year in 200 years or more. No, the emergency is about possible water levels in spring 2012. The decision to build this Channel is to reduce water levels in Lake Manitoba before spring 2012!

First Nations with primary flooding impacts this year, who have experienced year after year of flooding, are expected to agree to the Channel being built before solutions are found for their flooded communities. In the midst of reserves being unlivable, with roads out, no ability to plan the school year or provide services to their members, these First Nations are supposed to say 'Yah, go ahead with your Channel.' Solutions for these First Nations' community emergencies, based on full information and community consent, must be a priority.

Based on narrow government staff identification of affected First Nations, First Nations on or near the site of the Channel or/and affected by current Lake Manitoba water levels are being 'negotiated with' about the Channel. First Nations located where the diverted Channel water would go are not yet identified as even potentially affected. Does the provincial 'emergency' mean appropriate consultations with First Nations will be ignored? The intention is to have the Channel built by freeze up November, 2011.



THE FIRST Perspective AUGUST 23, 2011 **VOLUME 28 • ISSUE 8**

Channel between lakes impacts First Nations

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

No public information tells us how long the Channel 'emergency' will last – that is how long the Channel would be considered an emergency. Nor is there information there information about whether the Channel is temporary or potentially permanent.

What is an Exemption?

Manitoba Conservation Minister Blaikie signed an Environment Act regulation that declares Manitoba Environment Act procedures are not needed for this emergency Channel. No environmental licencelicense, environmental standards, or public review will occur. The Channel is an exemption under with respect to the Environment Act. In normal circumstances alternatives to the Channel would be considered.. It is not clear how work permits would be handled, or which departments of the Manitoba government would issue permitsissue permitsthose.

There is no sign environmental studiesare no sign environmental studies or monitoring under the Environment Act would occur if the Channel is built. Several Manitoba government ministers and their departments have responsibilities with respect to the Channel project. To date there is no order in council available indicating how responsibility will be shared or transferred among ministers. Steve Ashton, Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation minister, has the Channel added to his flood responsibilities.

pay the \$ 100 million costs for the Channel. Disaster fund costs for floods in Manitoba are usually split 90% federal and 10% provincial funds. Several federal triggers under may be relevant. (see above.) The Manitoba the emergency project (the Channel) from these federal authorities. This could mean federal departments or agencies. Without such exemptions Manitoba could risk future shared funding for the Channel. Past significant Manitoba public works included federal responsibility regarding: federal funds, alternatives to the project, endangered species, Aboriginal rights, impacts on aquatic species and habitat, built infrastructure standards, migratory birds, shared

A Triple Threat

regulatory frameworks, etc.

For many First Nations the Channel presents risks to community, to the environment, and to rights. And that is just for a start. It is unlikely any town or municipality completely flooded out would agree to the Channel before compensation, relocation, and an agreement regarding impacts from 2011 flooding were all in place.

DISCLAIMER

This article is based on information available at the time of writing. Little public information exists, and no public registry file exists for the Channel.

It is is not clear which government(s) will the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act government has to request an exemption for an exemption is needed from each of several

Meeting the Human Resource Needs of

First Nations Administrations in BC

Key Topics Covered

- **Effective human** resource planning
- Best practices in HR policy development
- **Employee benefit**
- Federal/Provincial employment law
- And much more.

Who Should Attend?

- Administrators in human resources and financial management
- First Nations Employers, Managers or Administrators
- **Human Resource** Consultants
- **Federal and Provincial** government representatives

First Nations administrations are experiencing increasing demands in the area of human resource planning and management. In some cases, new job opportunities are coming on stream requiring new job descriptions, benefits and financial resources. In other cases, the need for effective human resource policies and procedures that guide management in their hiring and compensation methods are required.

AFOA BC Human Resource Management

Conference and Annual General Meeting

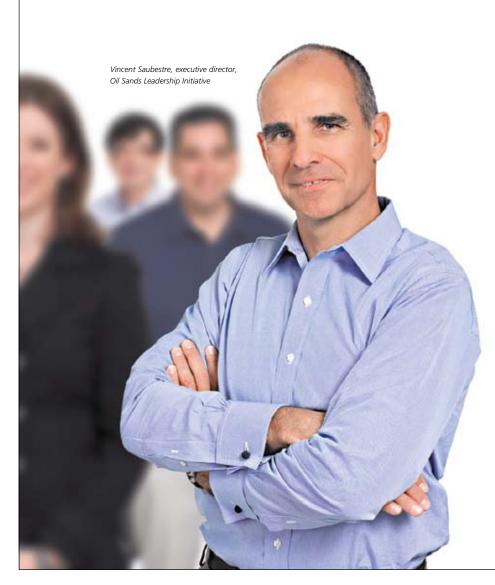
Adding to the complexity of human resource management, due to limited resources, band administrators take on the role of human resource manager. This creates a challenge to the administrator to keep up with employment standards, wage scales and evaluation methods. This reality is a serious matter facing many administrators in First Nations communities and demands innovative solutions.

During this two day conference these challenges will be discussed and you will gain a better understanding of human resource essentials for your administration. This will help to ensure that workplace behaviors' meets the expectations of the organization and legal requirements.

As noted from past AFOA BC conferences, a key benefit of these gatherings is the networking, meeting new friends and sharing our experiences. We hope to see you next September!

Full program details and agenda coming soon to our website at www.afoabc.org. For more information please email us at edcoordinator@afoabc.org

After September 5, 2011 Member or Guest...... Non Members....



We see the possibilities.

For Suncor Energy, growth brings opportunity and a set of new challenges. The biggest one of all: balancing increased development with the need to live up to our social and environmental responsibilities, both as an individual company and collectively as part of Canada's oil sands industry. We believe the key is collaboration. A great example is the Oil Sands Leadership Initiative where Suncor works closely with four companies to improve environmental, social and economic performance in the oil sands industry. With a shared commitment to excellence and innovation, we can work together to build a more sustainable energy future.

Suncor has withdrawn from the Athabasca River since 2004*

intensity at Suncor's oil sands operation from 1990 levels*

billion

investments in Suncor's new tailings technology

Find out more about Suncor's track record and how we are planning to responsibly develop North America's energy supply. www.suncor.com/sustainability



performance partnerships possibilities

