

**Meeting of First Nations to discuss Lake Winnipeg.  
Brokenhead Ojibway Nation  
Wednesday June 3, 2015  
Some Notes**

**Attending First Nations:** Black River, Peguis, Fairford, Norway House, Brokenhead (various staff, government attendees, Manitoba Hydro staff, and guests)  
Brokenhead hosted the two day event.

**Assistant Deputy Minister Bruce Gray** was asked a series of questions regarding the Section 35 Aboriginal Consultations about Lake Winnipeg Regulation and the Manitoba Hydro request for a final licence.

Assistant Deputy Minister ( Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship) provided the following comments:

Asked about conservation districts not including or talking with First Nations he said:

“I agree totally, I look forward to any collaboration.”

Asked about why First Nations are not invited to the table, not consulted over the dramatic increase for inflows to Lake Winnipeg he said:

“That’s the intent of these efforts. We will reach out individually, including so we can get everyone to the table. It has to start with better communication.”

After being told by a Norway House Cree Nation speaker that: “We need to change the way decisions are made in Manitoba ADM Gary said: ‘I agree. Let’s work together on an equal footing.’”

ADM Gary said the department will: “Engage in dialogue on a community basis” indicating there is a “lot of information we have to share and catch up on.”  
He then asked about “creating that forum to keep it going” and asked “are we on the right path?”

ADM Gray referred to the Conservation Districts and said government is “looking at legislation for improvement to engage First Nations, other tables, a more integrated, holistic process.”

Later ADM Gray was specifically asked about **the Section 35 Aboriginal Consultations for a final Regulation of Lake Winnipeg licence.**

ADM Gray reassured the attendees and said: “There will be Section 35 consultations. I will go back and make sure. The plan is to have them from now till the time it takes.”

When asked if the results of the Section 35 consultations will be fed into the decision about the final licence request from Manitoba Hydro, ADM Gray said:

“Both processes go to the same decision making process. The Minister will consider CEC hearing results (report) and the S 35 processes for his decisions. ....The minister takes advice from both.”

Mr. Gray was advised that the scope of the LIST of affected First Nations needs to be widened so that all First Nations around Lake Winnipeg are included in the Section 35 consultation options, and that any First Nation potentially affected be included.

He was also informed that government staff continually chop the budget and the activity in a proposal for a Section 35 community consultation.

It was suggested by a visitor that the ADM advise his minister that steps are needed right away to:

- Renew the 5 Year Section 35 Consultation Fund and commitment for consultation funding for affected communities.
- Show the crown’s assessment of the level of consultation with a First Nation to that First Nation, as it may be based on inaccurate or insufficient information.
- Learn from the CEC hearings about regulation of Lake Winnipeg water levels, and make sure that all affected First Nations are included in the Section 35 consultations. (Not just those downstream from Lake Winnipeg)
- Make sure that those First Nations who participated in the CEC hearings about regulation of Lake Winnipeg water levels are acknowledged, and their knowledge is included in decisions.