

## Manitoba Water Strategy (April 2003) - Getting to the Final Doc

Two documents preceded the final Manitoba Water Strategy (April 2003)

- Water: A Proposed Strategic Plan for Manitoba (“Discussion Paper”); October 2001
- Steering Committee Report to the Minister of Manitoba Conservation on The Water Strategy Discussion Document (“Steering Committee Report”); April 30, 2002

Each of the three documents identifies issues and strategies related to six separate policy areas. They are:

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water quality    | <input type="checkbox"/> Water supply |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation     | <input type="checkbox"/> Flooding     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use & allocation | <input type="checkbox"/> Drainage     |

### Strengths

- The April 2003 Water Strategy largely reflects the contents of the Discussion Paper.
- The April 2003 Water Strategy incorporates all of the issues and actions of the two other documents in the policy areas of Water Supply and Drainage

### Specific Weaknesses

- The April 2003 Water Strategy incorporates **some** of the language of the Steering Committee Report; major exception is regarding hydroelectric development. The April 2003 Water Strategy **omits critical language pertaining to hydroelectric development.**
- The April 2003 Water Strategy ignores the following Steering Committee Report recommendations
  - A need to review Manitoba’s water policies (policies that are now over 13 years old)
  - A need to include demand side water conservation strategies within the overall strategy
  - A need to include northern perspectives and issues (e.g. ignores recommendation to ‘prepare watershed plans for northern areas of the province which address the effects of water power development projects’)
  - A need to include Aboriginal perspectives and issues
  - A need to better account for Manitoba Hydro’s role and responsibilities in water management (e.g. alters Hydro flood reference to ‘hydroelectric projects have caused flooding in the past’...no reference to continuing impact)
  - A need for a better understanding of the potential contamination of surface and ground waters from surface runoff from livestock manure, inorganic fertilizer and municipal and industrial discharges
  - No content about protection of waterways, water inside existing terrestrial protected areas, or water conservation, reduction of water use, etc.
- **The April 2003 Water Strategy includes new language that refers to the ‘low impact’ nature and general benefits of hydro development.**

### General Omissions

- Limited action in addressing Lake Winnipeg and Red River contamination issues
- No reference to the Precautionary Principle
- Documents do not include any public education initiatives