

**Saskatchewan
Water Security Agency**

**Agency Report to the
Mackenzie River Basin Board**

**Meeting #57 of the
Mackenzie River Basin Board
November 28-29, 2017
Vancouver, B.C.**

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For each topic in agency report, please include:

- Ministry/Department Contact Information
- Contact information related to specific topics listed in agency report
- Website addresses
- Photos, maps, illustrations, tables, and other visual-friendly media

1 Bilateral Water Management Agreements

Saskatchewan has not been active advancing bilateral agreements to date in 2017. Northwest Territories (NWT) and Alberta will be consulted in late 2017 as to how best to advance work on the agreements respecting available resources.

With respect to Alberta/Saskatchewan discussions, a draft agreement modeled after the successfully signed Alberta/Northwest Territory bilateral has been largely prepared. There is general agreement on concepts in the agreement but the language has to be reviewed, and some content of the Appendices is outstanding and requires further discussion and clarification. Saskatchewan and NWT held their most recent discussion in January 2016 and the draft agreement with the Northwest Territories is at a preliminary phase. At that time, work was underway to refine the wording and to develop the appendices.

Saskatchewan considered it efficient to first seek provincial legal review of the Alberta draft to assure acceptance of the overall approach and structure prior to expending significant further resources refining the agreement(s). The approach is being reconsidered given that Saskatchewan legal review will not occur within the near future. Before the structure of the actual agreements is assessed Saskatchewan will work with Alberta and the Northwest Territories on options to keep at least some momentum going on advancing the technical aspects of what would be included in an agreement.

Saskatchewan held initial conversations with stakeholders including First Nations and industry (Cameco and Areva). The sessions were early in 2014 throughout the MRB and in Saskatoon, Fond du Lac in August, and most recently with Cameco in January 2016. Consultations within government and with stakeholders will again follow completion of draft bilateral agreements.

Contact:

John Fahlman, P.Eng., P.Geo.
Water Security Agency
(306) 694-3954
john.fahlman@wsask.ca

2 Water-Related Legislation / Policy / Regulations / Planning

There are no water-related legislation / policy / regulation / planning items from Saskatchewan to report on in 2017.

Contact:

John Fahlman, P.Eng., P.Geol.
Water Security Agency
(306) 694-3954
john.fahlman@wsask.ca

3 Science, Monitoring and Information

There is no new information produced / new initiatives in Saskatchewan related to the MRBB.

Contact:

John Fahlman, P.Eng., P.Geo.
Water Security Agency
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john.fahlman@wsask.ca

4 Major Projects

The Tazi Twe Hydroelectric Power Project

- The Tazi Twe project is a joint venture between SaskPower and the Black Lake First Nation through their development arm, Elizabeth Falls Hydro Limited Partnership.
- The project is currently undergoing environmental review. The EIS is completed and pending Ministry of Environment approval for start of public review. The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency approved the project in 2015.
- Black Lake First Nation asked the province and the federal government to develop regulations under First Nations Commercial and Industrial Development Act (FNCIDA)
- Saskatchewan agreed to enter into negotiations aimed at regulating the project in accordance with provincial law;
- Canada agreed to enter into negotiations aimed at regulating the project in accordance with Saskatchewan law;
- Canada, Black Lake First Nation and Saskatchewan have commenced negotiations of a Tripartite Agreement, which includes adaptation of the provincial regulations as regulations under FNCIDA, but negotiations are not complete and there is no anticipated date for concluding the negotiations.
- Demand in the province's north was expected to grow by between four and five per cent annually. Those predictions, however, have recently decreased to between one and two per cent annually, largely due to decreased mining activity in northern Saskatchewan.
- The Tazi Twe project will not proceed with construction until there is a viable business case for the project, which is largely dependent on economic activity in the north.
- <http://publications.gov.sk.ca/deplist.cfm?d=66&c=5290>

Cameco Rabbit Lake Mine

- Expansion of Cameco's Rabbit Lake Tailings Management Facility, located 350 km north of La Ronge on the west side of Wollaston Lake, will support Rabbit Lake's milling activities until approximately 2028.
- Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) has informed Environmental Assessment Branch that with the new Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012, a federal assessment is no longer required.
- On November 1, 2013, Rabbit Lake received CNSC license extension until October 31, 2023. Cameco is preparing the project expansion, EIS documents for the provincial EIA process.
- On April 21, 2016 Cameco announced it was suspending operations at the Rabbit Lake mine and laying off 500 employees citing the current economic situation and commodity prices.
- The Project Specific Guidelines were developed and have been submitted to the Ministry of Environment.
- <http://publications.gov.sk.ca/deplist.cfm?d=66&c=4416>

4 Major Projects (continued)

Highway 905 and 914

- The Saskatchewan Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure continues to work towards completion of their Environmental Impact Statements for both Highway No. 905, an all weather road from Stony Rapids west to Lake Athabasca, and Highway No. 914, an all-weather road between the McArthur River and Cigar Lake mine sites 50 km west of Wollaston Lake.
- Project Specific Guidelines for Highway 905 have been prepared and submitted to the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment in 2010 and is awaiting a Terms of Reference. Terms of reference for Highway 914 were received in 2016. The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency is considering designating the project under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (2012)
- Highway 905: <http://publications.gov.sk.ca/deplist.cfm?d=66&c=4425>
- Highway 914: <http://publications.gov.sk.ca/deplist.cfm?d=66&c=4426>

Contact:

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Water Security Agency
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5. Events, Conferences and Seminars

There are no planned key government/non-government meetings related to water management in the Mackenzie River Basin.

6. Other

There are no other items to report on from Saskatchewan.

Contact:

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