

**Public Meeting Minutes - Meeting for All Property Owners along Crooked &
Round Lakes
Saturday August 9, 2014 – 9:00 a.m. at Sunset Beach Hall.**

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Communities Represented:

Meeting Objectives:

1. To gather historical data/events which have affected the water levels at Crooked and Round Lakes in the Qu'Appelle Valley.
2. To form an Independent Committee that will meet with representatives from the Water Security Agency (WSA) to discuss the recent flooding within the Qu'Appelle Valley affecting Crooked and Round Lakes.
3. To identify issues and concerns of property owners regarding the flooding at Crooked and Round Lakes.
4. To identify the need for immediate action and a long-term plan to reduce and better manage water levels at Crooked and Round Lakes. This is critically important because water levels are higher than in 2011. This would adversely affect everyone living at the lake in 2015.

Key Points:

1. Need to ensure that we have proper structures in place to control the water flow coming in to Crooked Lake.
2. Need a plan developed immediately to deal with the water leaving the lake, which may mean cleaning out our spillways. We need to make sure that the spillway/dam at Round Lake is opened up so we don't have artificial berms holding back our water.
3. Ask WSA what steps have been taken in their water strategy to date (25 Year WSA Plan)
4. Need to ensure that we have Federal Representation helping us deal with these issues. Once we solve our problems there will be problems downstream.
5. To talk about the legislation that will be necessary or at least a means to manage the water coming off the farmland legally and illegally.
6. Need to update and add high river water monitors that measure the inflows and outflows of water coming into Crooked and Round Lakes. These need to be updated

We are looking for the following:

- Historical Reference, pictures, shorelines – need to start
- Personal concerns/suggestion of property owners
- We are looking for research, John Palmeroy and Bob Stanford, important research/studies (Wetland Drainage and Pollution coming into our lakes) statistics/ funded by the Government of SK and Govt of Canada. Pollutants (phosphorus, nitrogen) from the drainage to Lake Winnipeg. This is a Western Canada issue
- 2014-2015 WSA Plan
- We need to have the facts/organized and direction for our meeting with the WSA
- We need to identify 4-5 important components that the Committee will address.
- Need to show WSA that we are serious and our intent that we looking at long-term.
- Research into Fishing Lake happened in 2007 (what happened to Fishing Lake and can we learn from them). It is a 7 year process.

There will be a meeting of the Committee prior to Saturday's Meeting on August 16th.

- 2 Representatives from each community

Meeting Introduction/Agenda – Cherylynn Walters (Chair of the Committee)

- There were Emergency meetings held every morning during the flood across from Cowessess. What we were hearing wasn't going to meet the needs of Property Owners. There was a direct request from Lake Representatives to meet with Water Security Agency (WSA). The Resort Village of Melville Beach agreed to take the lead. A formal invitation was sent to WSA. They agreed to meet with us but not at a Public Meeting.
- We needed a public meeting to so that everyone had the opportunity to state their concerns and to give us historical information that we need and to talk about how we are going to get the water levels lowered. The water might drop another metre. We might be able to get another 3 ft out of here before freeze up. We won't survive another winter with water that high. We need to make sure we are addressing this right away.
- Each Community/Hamlet/Association/Village/Area etc of both Crooked and Round Lakes etc would identify 2 Representatives that would become members of the Official Committee.
- There will be a meeting next Saturday (August 16, 2014) at 9:00 am with Water Security.
- We have heard from the Official Speaker of the Opposition, Trent Worthospoon, Deputy Leader of the Official Provincial (NDP) has contacted Cherylynn Walters to express their concern and keep abreast of the issues and concerns of residents at Crooked and Round Lakes. They are concerned that our voices are being heard.

- There will be a Second Committee formed that will meet with Water Security. We refer to them as the Advisory Committee. If you or people you know have been on the Lake 30 years or more that is our Advisory Committee. It is really important that we get these people out.
- There have been events that have been occurring since the 1970's that are now starting to cumulate and we are seeing this huge impact. It is important that we get these people out. We are going to talk about some of that information today and try to gather as much as we can to clarify the events that occurred in the 70's, 80's and the consequences that we have seen repeatedly.
- We have asked WSA to bring maps that show every coulee, stream, creek and diverged water system coming into Crooked Lake. It hits Crooked Lake first and then it hits Round Lake. The people who have been around a long time that have been studying these maps that can tell us what is changing?
- We have also asked WSA to bring the raw data and graphs to show water levels as they have changed from the 1970's going forward, so we can see the highs, lows and averages.
- The idea that they are not ever going to drop this lake is just not going to work.
- The purpose of this meeting is: 1. To substantiate and to clarify some of these historical events; and; 2: That we hear the concerns from everyone in the room and those outside.
- We have a cordless mic for you to speak into. This session is being recorded so we can check to verify what we heard is what was said.
- A link to the Minutes will be posted on the Crooked Lake facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/CrookedLakeSK>)
- Anything missed or misstated in the Minutes please contact us and we will get them corrected.
- We will keep everyone informed as best we can. If there are areas of the lake missing, please make sure they are being informed of what is going on. Everyone was hit. Some worse than others but everyone was hit again. We need to somehow get this under control
- We want to talk about suggestions, recommendations that we can move forward.
- We need to come out of the meeting with WSA on August 16th or shortly thereafter to come up with **an immediate plan of action** to get this water out of these lakes. That has to happen before everything freezes up. We can continue to lower the water during the winter but we need to make sure that the water is away from our shorelines before freeze up.

- Then we will talk about a longer-term plan but we need immediate action. There is a tremendous amount of knowledge in this room and sitting outside; collectively we should be able to come up with some plans.
- Our first step is to try and work with Water Security Agency. We want to work with the government to solve this problem. That is very important. How are we going to move forward as RM's, as Reserves, as Resort Areas and as the two lakes as a whole. We have to worry about our immediate issues.

Meeting Discussion:

Question:

- Why are Cowessess and Sakimay First Nations involved in these meetings because there are Federal Government Compensation Water Agreements with Sakimay and Cowessess First Nations for flooding their land at Crooked Lake?

Response:

- It is important that Cowessess and Sakimay First Nations are involved in the meetings to know the details of the agreements that have been reached. Sakimay owns the leased land at Indian Point and Grenfell Beach. They need to hear the concerns of their leasees/property owners. If flooding continues, the value of their property is going to decline as fast as the rest of us.
- It really is about a solution. If this means that there will be increased flooding on the Cowessess, they have to prepare for flooding as well.
- All First Nations affected need to be involved because they are also affected by the flooding (Sakimay, Cowessess and Ochapawace First Nations)
- We need to come up with some solutions as property owners.
- The first thing we are going to do is to remember what happened in the early 1970's?
- In the early 1970's – After the flood of 1973, PFRA was in control of the water at that time. Waterfront property was staked and informed property owners of how high the water was going to be raised. It was equivalent to the flooding this year. An Association of Property Owners was formed; they fought and negotiated an agreement with PFRA.
- Crooked Lake was raised by 10 feet with the consumption of 30 ft of land of waterfront property that was permanently gone.
- Some families moved their cabins and raised them. Some were just building. They went to PFRA to ensure that they were building at the correct height.
- Does anyone remember what happened to Round Lake?

Comment:

- They have kept the lake at that level until we flooded. If we were at the historical level, it might have made a difference of ½ day. We were within 15 inches of normal summer lake levels which are max capacity for Crooked Lake, when the rain started. Lake levels went up an additional 8.5 feet from the end of June and peaked.
- Move the high river flow monitor from the old HWY 47 Bridge to the new HWY 47 Bridge. We would then know what is coming through in total. The high crossing misses Pearl Creek. Pearl Creek comes in immediately west of the new HWY 47 Bridge. I would like a high river flow monitor put in at Grid 605 Bridge at Cowessess to know how much water is going out.
- Getting the water down, after 2011, took until the end of February the water went down to almost normal.
- There is still a metre of water that has to come off of Long Lake that will come into Crooked and Round Lakes.
- In 2011 they had a metre on Long Lake to come off. The water has to run all winter long for that to happen. There is nothing that we can do to make the water leave faster.
- From the dam at Crooked to Round lakes is 30 feet of elevation. Water does not run fast on flat ground. By October we could be back to normal lake levels if we don't have a lot of rain. Chances of having another flood next year are very high unless we have a drought and no snow melt. We might not. At present lake levels, chances of a flood in 2015 are very high.
- The question that really has to be asked to WSA, is what are they doing to do about drainage on top of the Valley?
- HWY 247 has flooded twice now in the last 4 years. There was never any significant amount of water that used to come down that coulee. That is a direct result from drainage on top.
- Summerberry Flats, west of Grenfell, you can see the piles of dirt from the trench that they dug across that thing. All that water comes across Cowessess Golf Course.
- This year we weren't in bad shape. We were 1 foot above normal lake levels. The drainage would maybe have slowed the water a bit.
- Now, the drainage, when it rains, the water runs. It runs like a river. There is nothing holding it back. These guys are supposed to have permits. Some do, some of them don't.
- There needs to be a review of the drainage. Figure out the impact and is it reasonable anymore? Some of these guys may need to give up a few acres or \$50 or \$100 a year to not flood us out all the time.

Response:

- When they dredged at the Spillway or Control Station. What happened at that time? In the 1980's?
- Would dredging change the flow of the river?
- What would the benefits be to dredge at the Crooked Lake Spillway?

Comment:

- Natural River channels into the mouth of the River down here were along both shores.. The deepest on the North of the Lake. The current still runs this way. It would turn around the corner and take one step off the bank and you were in 6ft of water. There was a big sandbar in the middle and there was a similar channel on the south side but not as deep. That is how the water got through the dam.
- When they dredged they dredged directly out from the dam to where they used to be a drop 150 yards offshore, now all silted in. They dredged the deep water, thinking they were going to change the flow in the lake. That's why it silts in so badly at the dam. The water continues to go over top the stuff they have piled up and carries it into the river channel.

Response:

- Any other comments related to that?

Comment:

- During the flood, I had to go into Whitewood and it appeared that HWY #9 that the River wasn't even over the tops of the banks. I can appreciate that water doesn't run on flat ground. But how can we get 8.5-9 ft at Round and Crooked Lakes and 3, 4 or 5 ft downstream? I would think if the water is that high here and on normal low ebb it should have flowed. There should be a flood condition there as well. The Saskatchewan Government in concert with the WSA is doing something to use us as retention ponds. If the water goes up at Round Lake 8.5 ft and it goes up 8.5 ft at the #9 HWY. I would be ok with this but the water doesn't.

Comment:

- A mature gentleman has told me that the Dam at Round Lake hasn't been dredged out in 30 years. The Fishermen tell me that there is only 4.5 to 5 feet of water across the front of the dam. Where has the Riverbed gone? As this gentleman states, we are still carrying a pile of water and the river is hardly flowing. We can see sandbars all over the place. Is it a natural dam now? That river was hardly flowing until we were flooded. It was running over at the end of the lake, as far across as it could get, before anything

happened at the #9 HWY. The old bridge, once it started to flow, it was carrying 8' to 1 ft of water up on that old bridge?

Question: Who is managing the water flowing through the dams?

- Water needs to be managed. You can't manage a breach. The communities downstream will flood at a faster rate (Tantallon, St. Lazare)

Comment:

- I can address the question of the Dam. Because of the Treaty Issue at Round Lake, the long standing issue between Ochapowace and the Governments. The Dam at Round Lake has not been operational since 2002. Sask Water cannot go in there and do anything with it. As far as I know, there are no negotiations going on at this time. They are in litigation. You will not litigate and negotiate with the same party at the same time. So that is some of the issue at Round Lake. The dam has not been operational for 11 years.

Response:

- There is a bottle neck at Round Lake which needs to be resolved.
- We need to have Crooked Lake dam checked out at the same time to see what has happened over the years.

Comment:

- Everyone is talking about the water getting out of here and there is nothing that we can really do. Why aren't we talking about slowing it down at the other end by building some new structures? Obviously the structures are not doing the job that they should be doing. Maybe that is what we need to address.

Response:

- That is extremely important. If we can't get it out we need to slow it down from coming in.

Comment:

- We have already confirmed that we can't control the outflow. What we can control is the Inflow. In 2011, we had our flood. In 2012, we would have been flooded again if Sask Power was not forced into an on-going basis of reducing their water levels at that they can take the in-flow in the spring. What we have is mismanagement on an on-going basis. It all has to do with dollars. Sask Power was hesitant to drop their water levels to protect us in 2012 because it would have cost them \$10 million dollars. Not thinking the

insurance cost was over \$30 million in 2011. So there is a way to control it if they want to pay attention to it on an on-going basis. So this being proactive instead of reactive. Right now they are only reacting to what is happening. They are not preparing for it on an on-going basis. They can control in-flow a lot better than they are doing right now.

Comment:

- Talking about the water coming down from the hills, it would be a good idea to get the RM's and Ducks Unlimited involved. Ducks Unlimited are also involved in managing water

Response:

- The RM's have been invited. The Reeve of the R.M. of Grayson has agreed to attend August 16th, 2014 meeting. I can't speak about the other RM's.

Comment:

- I have a comment of how we can approach the Province. I think they are going to be concerned with is what is the current state rather than the former state? It would be a good idea if we can come to an agreement on what is the impact on us currently, suggest a remedy and prioritize those remedies. If we can come out of the meeting with an action plan and an owner. Then they can hold our feet to the flames and we can hold their feet to the flames.

Comment:

- She has been at the same location for 50 years.
- The last 5 years have been five years from hell. Other years you could predict what was coming, what was going and what you could prepare for and it was pretty much constant. Why is it that in the last five years, it has been out of this world and we don't know what we are going to get hit with, we don't know how much we are going to get hit with? This year, the Water Security Agency/Sask Water, on this last crisis, told us to prepare for something less than 2011. It was far from less than 2011 levels. It was way worse than 2011. As a result, I think history is important because it was always constant, it was always the same. We knew it was coming. We could prepare. There was never a sense of urgency. What has been going on in the last 5 years that wasn't going on before?

Comment:

- Just a comment, I am new to the lake, some of the old timers said that the river was dredged out in the 1970's. This cleaned out the river system. It has been done once. It is probably time to do it again.

Comment:

- I would like to suggest that the Government do a Study of the River between Crooked and Round Lakes immediately. Noting all obstructions, inlets and outlets and noting the condition of them and the volume that they will pass (I am talking about water). For example, the old metal bridge at Cowessess. It is full of debris. That has caused restriction in the flow. There is no need for the bridge. Remove it. However, there are other places coming down, creeks and so on that they don't know what the flow is. That should be a long-term goal to determine all of that so we can make improvements immediately. I am sure there are culverts that are not working properly as well.

Comment:

- Good day, the Gentleman that just spoke, every one of his improvements is detrimental for us.

Response:

- Unless we can get the water out at the end of Round Lake

Comment:

- He is talking about here and Round Lake.
- Everything that he is talking about makes it worse for us.

Response:

- Except if we can get an agreement reached on doing something at your end of the dam.

Comment:

- This is a lot bigger picture than Crooked Lake.

Response:

- Oh, it absolutely is. That is why we are trying to have a joint meeting. It has to be understood between all parties.
- Water needs to be managed. Someone has to manage the big picture.
- Solutions can be reached at Round Lake. They have to be.
- We need to recognize problems and we have to be able to move forward.

Comment:

- I have been coming here for 30 years but my family has been here since the 1920's.
- This is a bigger problem, as the gentleman said that is not just Crooked and Round Lake. This is actions have been detrimental to your neighbour. We are seeing the problem with the drainage and stuff. It is hitting us and it is hitting hard. Any solutions we come up with for Crooked and Round Lakes, we have to make sure that everyone along the way has input and can deal with it as well. We want to solve the problem; we don't want to just move it past east of Round Lake. It could be good for us but not for the rest of the gang.
- We need immediate action and we need a long-term plan.

Comment:

- You can't manage a breach. If your dams go out. Every road between here and St. Lazare goes out down to #8 Hwy. It's got about 3 ft of the hwy shoulder washed out on #8 Hwy. Unless you control your structures and somebody manages them. You are going to continue to have breach after breach after breach.
- Once you start to breached you have no control. If you have some kind of control, where you can control the water and what you release, in a timely fashion, maintain your levels, you can manage the water. The water wasn't managed this spring. Once it is gone, you are done.

Response:

- Need somebody to organize and managing the damming system moving towards Manitoba

Comment:

- We need somebody/organization to manage the water system. Don't stand there and watch people flood. Somebody needs to clean up their act. Get the dams and structures functional to manage the water.

Comment:

- This Committee is set-up to find solutions. We are Round Lake, We are Crooked Lake and we are the whole system.
- The solutions that we come up with should be involving everyone, yes, but it needs to start here and work our way out, so we can start to look at how we can protect ourselves. What I mean ourselves; I mean Crooked and Round Lake.

- We are talking about between Crooked and Round Lake but also after. There are a lot of issues east of us. We need to have some dredging etc.
- The only thing, in my opinion, the only thing if we can get the First Nations and Government working together, that will be the only way we can do anything. Without the support of our government or First Nations, we are not going anywhere.

Response:

- Point well taken and Ochapawace needs to be at the table.

Comment:

- I think a lot of good points have been raised. This is a lot larger than we all think. Federal Government is going to have to have a large stake in this. What we do here is important, and what goes downstream is important but let's talk about the whole Assiniboine Basin. That is what it will come down to. We can do whatever we do, we can drop our water and downstream at Round Lake, St. Lazare and Tantallon but at the end of the day it goes to Portage La Prairie, MB. We know what has been happening at Portage.
- The Federal Government will have to have a stake in this at some point because what we do and what the Province is going to do, they are limited to what the Feds will allow them to do. This is so much larger than we can all imagine. What we get we deal with it and it goes down along the stream. What ends up going down to Manitoba and what they end are dealing with at Portage and beyond. It will end up being as a Federal Issue.

Response:

- We need to ensure the Federal Ministers are aware and are involved.

Comment:

- In October 2012, the Provincial Government published a document called the 25 Year Saskatchewan Water Security Plan. Doug Johnson is the author of this plan.
- It speaks to Wetland Conservation, Flood and drought damage reduction and a lot of the points that people raised.
- There are 15 page action items, I don't know if they have implemented any of the items in the plan? Is WSA implementing this plan? If so, what have they have implemented so far?

Response:

- Doug Johnson will be at the meeting on August 16, 2014. The meeting will be recorded.

- We have talked about the water way and the water flow, the need for a study and start to document and track, long term plans.
- We haven't talked about the problem of the water coming down from the farmlands above the valley through trenching. This water has to be managed. We all have seen what happens when the water is not managed. Some people have permits and perhaps these permits need to be reviewed. We have others that are just doing it and it is creating havoc. Once the water is breached, you can't control it. What suggestions can we have from this group to work with our farmers from both lakes.

Comment:

- WSA has come up with a solution, to raise the flood level. That is their solution.
- I will give you an example, if everyone at Sunset builds up to that flood level, that is higher than the existing berm. That is going to hold the water in the lake and flood everyone else. Their solution is to build the east end up and flood everyone else.

Response:

- This is an important point. It was highlighted by some of the developers here that is what we are doing. We are creating a berm that is holding the water back. That we have raised our homes again.

Comment:

- I think the flow coming into the lake needs to be controlled. I don't know if they can build Hwy 247 up. Is this feasible? It could control the bridge. Lakes to the west of us are all looked after. To me, I have lived here for 5 years but we have had a cabin here 20 years. There never used to be a problem.
- The wetlands are full, I listed to a hydrologist on the radio, Paul Morin. He said farm drainage is 50% of the problem even though the wetlands are full. I just think the flow needs to be controlled coming in. Some structures set-up.
- I am not against the drainage. I understand the farmers' concerns but give us more time – ten days instead of a wall of water coming at us. If they put some dams up that won't break in some key locations. They need to manage the water. That is all we are trying to say.
- We are a dumping ground right now. They know it. They have known it a long time. Whether they will listen to us, I don't know.

Comment:

- We have friends at Katepwa. They can't handle any more water. You can't just back the water and keep it there. If you back it up, it goes to Buffalo Pound and we will get it anyway.
- It is a management issue.

Response:

- There are regulations in place to control the dumping from the farmers. Not sure if there is the will. Need to come up with some suggestions and solutions. It can't become a fight between us and them. It will never work.

Comment:

- Legislation for controlling drainage from farmers is outdated. It is my understanding, it was established in 1981. Legislation needs to be revised and updated. There are no guidelines and fines. There is no way to enforce anything. Farmers are supposed to get a permit to drain water off their own land. It is my understanding that 95 % of farmers are not getting a permit to drain their water. There needs to be better, updated regulations through legislation and some way to enforce it.
- There is an article from the Western Producer in one of the latest issues. By 2015 there is supposed to be some regulations under legislation to control trenching and permits.
- They may be paying farmers to store water and manage wetlands in 2015.

Comment:

- A concern is that the RM cut ditches and roads to let water go to prevent larger losses and roads. The RM also blew up beaver dams to prevent further road damage. WSA and the RM's need to be involved in this plan.

Comment:

- One thing is notification. I am a Cabin Owner. I don't know where to get information? Where the WSA and other government bodies involved having a central resource to access this information.
- Where can this information be stored? There is a facebook page but anyone can post on this page which can cause confusion.
- Need a website, one resource that community members and other stakeholders can go to in order to access regulations, community meetings etc. What were the talks with homeowners, meetings, I don't know what the plans are? What is happening downstream, upstream? I feel in the dark as a cabin owner. One resource to go to in order to access all related information.

Comment:

- It is important to start this Committee. It is a start. We can't do this every year. The water coming up 8-12 ft. Many people are losing homes. Many people can't lift their cabins to make them higher. We need to control the inflow of water into this lake. I don't know what the solution is. We can't keep doing this. We are mad as hell and we aren't going to take it anymore.

Comment:

- Comment about legislation and controlling the trenching/cutting of roads. There is an issue. You can be approved to cut a road by the Provincial government but when you do that you are liable for any damages you cause to properties due to the cutting of that road. We experienced that in the City of Melville, we were contemplating that. If we had cut a road to save the City of Melville from flooding, every property down the way we would have been liable for. So it is not as if you can get permission to cut the road and you are free of any responsibility. If they would be enforcing this when they are finding there is damage to properties. These people who are taking and breaking the law be held responsible and pay for the damages. I think you would find that it would stop this very quickly.

Response:

- Are you asking to ensure complete transparency of who has been given permits to cut the roads and if they have an Investigation
- You would find permits wouldn't be handed out so easily if people are liable for their actions.
- Ask for that information and push for that

Comment:

- A question about the structures that they are allowing. They have private structures built across waterways; they have roadways built across waterways. A dam on private farm that burst and Hwy 22 burst at Pearl Creek. What is the government doing? Why are they not engineering these structures to hold back the water that they are intended to hold back? What is the accountability of these structures? Had the water not breached the water would have come through a 6 foot culvert instead of a 50 foot wall.

Comment:

- Immediate and long-term plan
- Forming a Committee is a first step
- Identify the components that the committee will address is important