



Agriculture and Resource Development

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Canadian Commissioners
International Joint Commission
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Robert Phillips, International Red River Board Advisor
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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express the support of Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development for the recommended nutrient load targets and nutrient concentration objectives developed by the International Red River Board for the Red River at the US/Canada border. We encourage the International Joint Commission to recommend the nutrient targets and objectives to the Canadian and US federal governments for adoption on the Red River at the US/Canada border.

Algal blooms are occurring across the Red River watershed including downstream in Lake Winnipeg. Excess nutrients contribute directly to harmful algal blooms, which have negative effects for drinking water, recreational uses, and fish and ecosystem health, as well as potential human and animal health concerns from some algal varieties. Manitoba appreciates the collaborative and science-based approach taken by the International Red River Board to develop recommended nutrient targets and objectives for the Red River that will assist in improving water quality locally and in Lake Winnipeg.

In Manitoba, significant efforts to reduce nutrients are underway including implementing water quality standards for nutrients in wastewater and implementing the 4Rs for nutrient application to land so that nutrients are not over-applied or applied on frozen soils. In particular, provincial action has been taken recently in partnership with the City of Winnipeg to accelerate efforts to reduce nutrients from the City's North End Water Pollution Control Centre. We have also implemented new measures to protect seasonal wetlands that complement protection already in place for permanent and semi-permanent wetlands. Two new trust funds established over the last year provide incentives for implementing best management practices including water retention and protection of ephemeral and temporary wetlands. Together these measures will assist in reducing nutrient loading to the Red River in Canada, complementing efforts underway through our neighbours in the United States. The recommended nutrient load targets and concentration objectives provide an important mechanism for measuring and reporting on progress towards nutrient reduction measures underway.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank the Commission for their support for this work including through funding from the International Watersheds Initiative. We are greatly encouraged by the excellent progress made through the International Red River Board and we look forward to continuing to work collectively to address this challenging issue.

Sincerely,



Dori Gingera-Beauchemin
Deputy Minister

c: Mike Renouf, International Red River Board Canadian Co-Chair