



# **STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ECONOMY**

## **Hansard Verbatim Report**

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**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ECONOMY  
2007**

Mr. Kevin Yates, Chair  
Regina Dewdney

Mr. Randy Weekes, Deputy Chair  
Biggar

Ms. Doreen Hamilton  
Regina Wascana Plains

Hon. Deb Higgins  
Moose Jaw Wakamow

Mr. Delbert Kirsch  
Batoche

Mr. Eldon Lautermilch  
Prince Albert Northcote

Mr. Lyle Stewart  
Thunder Creek

[The committee met at 15:37.]

**The Chair:** — Members, I'd like to call the committee to order. I'd first like to indicate that we have two substitutions in today's committee meeting. Ms. Heppner will be replacing Mr. Kirsch, and Mr. Sonntag will be replacing Mr. Lautermilch.

With that I would like to introduce the first item of business today and that is consideration of Bill No. 3, The Fuel Tax Accountability Act. We have with us the Minister of Finance. Would you like to introduce yourself and your officials, Mr. Minister?

**Bill No. 3 — The Fuel Tax Accountability Act**

**Clause 1**

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Always a pleasure to appear before the Committee on the Economy. I'm joined today by my deputy minister, Doug Matthies, who is seated to my right. Next to him is Marlene Tuck, who is the analyst for taxation and intergovernmental affairs. Seated to my left is Arun Srinivas, who is the senior tax analyst for taxation and intergovernmental affairs. And just behind us is Gary Frohlick, who is the manager of enforcement programs.

I have no opening comments but I'd welcome the questions from the members.

**The Chair:** — Thank you very much and I'll open the floor for questions. I recognize Mr. Cheveldayoff.

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this time we have no further questions but we just have a comment on the Bill. It's something that members from our side of the House have been advocating for quite some time. We've had a chance to do extensive consultations with stakeholders across the province and we are satisfied that this legislation will indeed enhance accountability. So we are prepared to vote on it at this time.

**The Chair:** — Clause 1, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 5 inclusive agreed to.]

**The Chair:** — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: An Act to amend The Financial Administration Act, 1993 to introduce Fuel Tax Accountability and to make related amendments. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Can I have one of the members move . . .

**Ms. Hamilton:** — I would so move.

**The Chair:** — Moved by Ms. Hamilton. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — All right. Could I have somebody move the report without amendment?

**Ms. Hamilton:** — I would move that we report the Bill without amendment.

**The Chair:** — Thank you.

**Bill No. 15 — The Municipal Financing Corporation  
Amendment Act, 2006**

**Clause 1**

**The Chair:** — Seeing as we're concluded that Bill, we'll move on to Bill No. 15, The Municipal Financing Corporation Amendment Act. Mr. Minister, could you introduce your new officials.

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'm joined by Rae Haverstock, who is the executive director of capital markets, who is seated directly to my right. And to his right is Jim Fallows, who is the director of cash and debt management.

I have no opening comments with respect to The Municipal Financing Corporation Amendment Act.

**The Chair:** — All right. Do we have any questions? Mr. Cheveldayoff.

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again we've had a chance to consult on this Bill across the province and we see support for the Bill out there. It enhances financing opportunities, allows corporations to lend money as part of the agreement or in exchange for securities other than debentures. We believe that this is a positive move and we'd be agreeable to entertain the vote at this time.

**The Chair:** — Thanks, Mr. Cheveldayoff. Clause 1, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 5 inclusive agreed to.]

**The Chair:** — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: An Act to amend The Municipal Financing Corporation Act. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Could I have a member move that we . . .

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — I so move.

**The Chair:** — Moved by Ms. Higgins. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Could I have somebody move we report the Bill without amendment? Ms. Higgins. Thank you. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister, and your officials for coming this afternoon. And we'll move on to the next item before the committee which will be the consideration of Bill No. 14. It'll take a few minutes for new officials to come in.

### **Bill No. 14 — The Environmental Management and Protection Amendment Act, 2006**

#### **Clause 1**

**The Chair:** — Committee members, we're now going to deal with An Act to amend The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2002. We have with us the Minister of the Environment and his officials. Mr. Minister, would you please introduce your officials.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Yes. Good afternoon. I'm pleased to have with me this afternoon, on my right, Dave Phillips, assistant deputy minister of the conservation division, and Mr. Sam Ferris, who's the acting executive director of the environmental protection branch.

**The Chair:** — Do you have an opening statement then, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — I think this is a fairly straightforward amendment to this Bill, and we're basically trying to make this process a little simpler for everybody and that's the goal.

**The Chair:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. With that I'll open the floor to questions. I will recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Minister, you said in your second reading comments that this Bill will eliminate the need for operators of waterworks and sewage works to, it will no longer require them for multiple registrations and so on. You went on to mention, you know, there's a permit to construct. Now your department would be issuing these permits to construct or would it be through municipal relations or Government Relations? Could you just explain that process a bit?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Yes, I'll explain it. Basically this is an area of responsibility for the Department of the Environment. And it relates to these waterworks and sewage systems, and that the permits involved are ones that are done by officials in our department. Mr. Ferris will answer any more specific questions if you have them.

**Mr. Hart:** — So then I understand the current situation until this Bill takes effect is that operators of these systems would then, once they got a permit, they would then have to go and register those permits with against land titles, with Information Services Corporation, each time they had a new permit, whether

it's a permit to construct or to operate and those sorts of things. And I know some of these, particularly waterworks projects where we perhaps have a pipeline going to a number of communities or residences, I would imagine that there was quite a number of registrations that would need to take place each time a new permit was issued. Have I described the current situation fairly closely or correctly?

**Mr. Ferris:** — Yes, that's correct. In the case of pipelines, there could be multiple permits, one for every piece of property it crossed. One point of note: under the existing scheme though, the department had to do that interest registration based on information provided by the project proponent as soon as the permit to issue to construct or operate was issued.

**Mr. Hart:** — What's the cost of registering these permits? I mean that cost isn't going to change, I understand, but the operators will now have to register fewer or make fewer registrations. But what is the cost on a per parcel of land basis? Because the minister did mention that Information Services Corporation could perhaps see a loss of revenue of \$10,000, and I was just wondering how you arrived at that estimate of loss of revenue.

**Mr. Ferris:** — Right. Well presently it costs between 50 and \$60 to register an easement or a notice on the title and that's because you can register up to 10 at one time in one submission. So if you send in 10, it costs less.

And the number, the estimate is a reduction because with the proposed amendments what we plan to do — if you pass that — is that there would no longer be an interest registration for the construction or the approval for these, although certainly the project proponent could certainly do that on their own if they wished.

**Mr. Hart:** — Okay. So who raised these issues with the department to, you know, with the final result of this Bill, I mean, and how long have these issues been raised with your department prior to us seeing this Bill in this House?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Well I think basically the operators of the waterworks and sewage works have raised this and saying, well we have to do this again and again. We have to do it on all these different ways. Is there another way to do this? And at the same time it also relates, you know, to the ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan] and the efficiency with their process that people were able to, I think, see more clearly all these different layers of costs. And the real question is: what is the benefit of each of these notices? Some of them didn't seem to add much benefit in the whole process. And those are the kinds of things that we should change and actually get the kinds of information in the land titles system and for the operators that benefits the public.

**Mr. Hart:** — Would it be a fair assumption to make that registration of these permits only became a real issue once when the whole land titles transformation took place and we went to the creation of the Information Services Corporation? I mean, we've discussed this in the past in this House where there's been, we've seen increased costs in registering a transfer of land and that sort of thing. So would it be fair to assume that this is when this became an issue at that time?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Well I think the answer is, in a way, yes. Because what happened is how interests were described that required registration in the new legislation caught all kinds of notices that were provided. And in this particular case, it ended up that there might be three notices of the same project that would be caught by the land titles legislation. So this is basically looking at your processes and making them more beneficial to the public.

**Mr. Hart:** — And one final question, Minister, and I believe you have addressed it, but I just wanted to review. These changes in no way endanger the integrity of any of the systems and they don't endanger the public in any way. It's just simply we're streamlining the bureaucratic process in this Bill. Is that correct?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — I think that's exactly right. It's streamlining the process and making sure that the right interests are registered so that the public have that information. It's also putting the onus on the people who are doing the work to make sure their interests are registered as well which is also a good thing to do because it makes the system work better to provide benefit to the public.

**Mr. Hart:** — No further questions.

**The Chair:** — Seeing no further questions, clause 1, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 5 inclusive agreed to.]

**The Chair:** — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: An Act to amend The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2002. Could I have somebody move the Bill?

**Ms. Hamilton:** — I so move.

**The Chair:** — Moved by Ms. Hamilton. All in favour?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Okay. Can I have a member move that . . .

**Ms. Hamilton:** — I move that we report the Bill without amendment.

**The Chair:** — Ms. Hamilton has moved we report the Bill without amendment. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Thank you very much, members. The next item now before the committee is consideration of the estimates to the Department of the Environment.

**General Revenue Fund  
Environment  
Vote 26**

**Subvote (ER01)**

**The Chair:** — We now have before us the Department of Environment estimates, vote 26. Mr. Minister, would you like to introduce your officials.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Yes, thank you, I'd be happy to introduce the officials. I have Dave Phillips beside me, who is the assistant deputy minister of the conservation division. Beside him is Donna Johnson, who is the executive director of the finance and administration branch. To my left is Bob Ruggles, the associate deputy minister of lands and forests division. And directly behind me I have Lin Gallagher, director of the green policy branch.

And beside her is Dale Hjertaas, the executive director, policy and planning of the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority. I also have with me in the room Ray Deck, who is the executive director of the human resources branch; Bob Wynes, who is the acting executive director of the forest service branch; Steve Roberts, who is the executive director of the fire management and forest protection branch; Sam Ferris, who is the acting executive director of the environmental protection branch; and Bryan Ireland, who is the acting vice-president of the operations division, Saskatchewan Watershed Authority; and Everett Dorma, who is the executive assistant to the deputy minister of Saskatchewan Environment; and then one of my staff, Joe Dojack, who is from my minister's office.

**The Chair:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. Do you have any opening remarks that you'd like to make or . . .

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — I do have some brief opening remarks if people are interested, so I can lay a little bit of the groundwork for the budget. This provincial budget for Environment represents an investment of \$204 million to promote and protect the environment and its natural resources as part of the government's commitment to a green and prosperous economy.

Sask Environment's overall budget increases to 204.5 million from 201.1 million, an increase of 3.4 million or 1.7 per cent. The expense budget increases to 193.3 million from 178.4, up 14.9 million or 8.4 per cent. This budget includes seven and a half million dollars for green initiatives. We had \$5 million which were part of last year's budget and we've made announcements about the 20 innovative organizations and projects that are getting money from that fund to help protect the environment and address the effects of climate change.

In this month we'll be unveiling our full green strategy and our long-term response to climate change, and details of how we're going to spend the money in this year's budget will be made public at that time.

Other highlights in this budget include \$12.8 million in capital for continued work in the fire management and forest protection area which will allow for aerial fleet renewal, construction of additional fire towers, upgrading of fire access roads, and replacement of heavy equipment. Two new Convair 580A air tankers will arrive in the province in time for service during this year's forest fire season. The aerial fleet renewal costs in this year include replacement of the plane that went down last May, with replacement for that plane to be delivered next May in

time for the 2008 fire season.

Improvements in the detection and initial attack of forest fires has resulted from the construction of 38 new fire towers, and this has meant a savings of about \$640,000 in aerial detection costs over the last two years. So we have to balance the airplanes and the fire towers in this new system. This budget includes 4.4 new positions to staff the towers and to provide road maintenance for these towers. The emergency firefighters will receive a 5.3 increase in wages as a result of the increase in the minimum wage effective March 1 of this year.

The provincial parks system receives an additional 3.1 million in funding, including 1.8 million in additional capital funding to upgrade the existing park facilities. The major capital projects that will include completion of the Cypress Hills visitor centre and rebuilding of washrooms at The Battlefords, Rowan's Ravine, and Echo Valley provincial parks. There'll be a number of smaller improvements right across the park system including electrification of 71 campsites distributed between Duck Mountain and Candle Lake provincial parks

A key component of the budget is addressing the effects of climate change and also dealing with the green strategy, and this includes the development of a integrated water management framework. So Saskatchewan Watershed Authority's budget is included in what we're doing today and their grant has been increased by \$647,000 or 9.9 per cent. And this funding will contribute to the authority's work in the implementation of watershed and aquifer protection plans and the overall protection of source water.

Also this budget has a change as it relates to the forest secretariat. As you know, this is a key component in looking at the various business challenges facing the forest sector in Saskatchewan, and so this funding has been taken out of our budget and placed into a new vote and I think will be dealt with separately in front of this committee. The secretariat will receive 2 million in this year.

The Fish and Wildlife Development Fund is being increased by 297,000 in recognition of increased revenues collected from the sale of habitat certificates and hunting and trapping and fishing licences.

As well 325,000 that has traditionally been withdrawn from the fund to cover salaries and operating costs incurred by the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority will now be offset from the authority's accumulated surplus rather than from the fund. This will give more money to that development fund to complete their work.

The spruce budworm program budget is reduced by 1.13 million for this year. This will eliminate the spraying application, but allow the continued monitoring of population levels. The loss of merchantable trees is expected to decline in upcoming years due to the natural decline in the population of the spruce budworm.

The department's occupational health and safety unit has identified the need for enhanced safe work procedure training and equipment, and personal protective equipment as a priority. So that in this budget the department will be able to address

many of the requirements for equipment and personal protective equipment. There's also money available for their safety training and certification processes.

The budget includes the additional 4.9 million needed to accommodate adjustments related to the SGEU [Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union] collective bargaining agreement.

Overall this budget positions the department very well to move forward as we implement the green strategy and continue to deliver on the department's mandate, which is to protect and manage Saskatchewan's environmental and natural resources so as to maintain a high level of environmental quality, ensure sustainable development, and provide health, economic, and social benefits for present and future generations.

So thank you for allowing me a few minutes to set out an overview and I look forward to answering all the very good questions which I know I will get.

**The Chair:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. (ER01) central management and services in the amount of 20,316,000, is that agreed? Are there any questions? Are there any questions? Thank you. I'll recognize Ms. Heppner.

**Ms. Heppner:** — Thank you, Minister, for being here today. And I thank your officials for their time here as well. My first question is on anti-harassment legislation and how it has affected the Department of Environment.

The Minister of the Public Service Commission has stated recently that the current legislation is not adequate. And I'm wondering if there is any money allocated in this year's budget to pay for staff training to ensure that all harassment complaints are taken seriously by supervisors within the Department of Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Well I'll start and then I'll have Ray Deck assist me here. This would be clearly part of the ongoing budget in the department and it's managed out of the human resources area, but it's spread right throughout the government. But I'll maybe let Ray add a little more to that.

**Mr. Deck:** — Well we have conducted extensive training within the department in the last several years, particularly in the North. And we do continue to make training available to all staff on a as-needed basis. And every time we do come across a situation where if there's disrespectful behaviour or whatnot, we develop a comprehensive plan to kind of reform that work unit and assist them to adopt the behaviours that are appropriate. So we have, as I say we have conducted extensive training and we will continue to offer training to ensure that staff are acting in a respectful way.

**Ms. Heppner:** — You said that training has been ongoing. Do you have a date when comprehensive training began? A year, a fiscal year when that training began?

**Mr. Phillips:** — Beginning in 2003 the department implemented a very deliberate respectful workplace program. There was a committee of both in-scope and out-of-scope staff that was created to develop an action plan dealing with all

matters related to awareness and creating conditions of respect. That committee operated for two years, reported three times back through the deputy minister to staff. There was a special emphasis on training and communication with staff throughout the department during those years.

Since that time, as Ray has mentioned, it's been more part of a recurrent training, regular training. The special respectful workplace committee was collapsed into our UMC [union management committee] and our diversity committee in 2005, I believe.

**Ms. Heppner:** — So there was no official training programs or information programs prior to 2003?

**Mr. Phillips** — The special training would have started in 2003. Prior to that it would have been part of our normal human resources communications that would have gone on.

**Ms. Heppner:** — The \$275,000 payout to Murdoch Carriere, was that money that came through Environment or was it another department of government?

**Mr. Phillips:** — That came through Department of Environment from our fire budget.

**Ms. Heppner:** — How was that amount of money arrived at — that dollar figure?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — I think this particular question relates to the settlement and I'm not sure it's one that we could answer here, given the nature of the settlement of that matter.

**The Chair** — I would like to remind members that questions before the Assembly today should deal with the budget before us and relevant to this budget year. Thank you.

**Ms. Heppner:** — If the money was paid to Murdoch Carriere came out of the Environment budget, I think that's relevant. The other thing that I think is relevant to this discussion is if harassment is taking place in the workplace, that leads to low morale and low productivity which is obviously a cost to the department which is going to affect their budget and their bottom line. I think that these questions are relevant.

**The Chair:** — The matter of the settlement to Mr. Carriere was paid out in the previous fiscal year and so it's not in the budget year under review. This budget deals with a period of time from April 1, 2007 through March 31, 2008. So if we could contain our questions to the budget year under review, please.

Yes, I'll recognize Mr. Weekes.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Minister and your officials, I believe you said there was a training program offered. Is that training program mandatory or is it not?

**Mr. Phillips:** — The training, the special training that went on in 2003 through 2005 was mandatory. We incorporated it into recurrent staff training occasions such as spring meetings prior to the operating season for the fire program or for the parks program. The training now, you might answer that.

**Mr. Deck** — The training that we offer now would be both, two forms. General offerings and, if as part of a restorative plan we need to go into a unit and offer further training, that's when we'd offer it as well.

**The Chair:** — The Chair recognizes Ms. Heppner.

**Ms. Heppner:** — Well moving on then. I'm a little disappointed. The government had said that they were going to be forthcoming with answers but I will move on.

I was reading through the government's environment performance plan 2007-08, and it stated on page 17 that the emissions in Saskatchewan are now 62 per cent above 1990 levels which I personally found quite shocking. My concern is that the new clean air Act that was introduced at the federal level has gone to committee and has been amended quite substantially by federal opposition parties. And they want to ensure that Kyoto Protocol, as written, that those targets are maintained. Considering those targets are 6 per cent below 1990 levels that would, if my math is correct is a 68 per cent reduction in emission targets under the proposed legislation that is now sitting with the House of Commons in Ottawa. And I'm wondering if the government has done a cost analysis of what a 68 per cent reduction in emissions targets would mean to the economy in Saskatchewan.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Well this is exactly the kind of work that we're looking at as it relates to Saskatchewan, but also as it relates to Canada. We will be setting out our green strategy, which includes comments about climate change, but then we are actually going to be setting out a climate change strategy which will address the kinds of issues that you're raising in this question. And this will be based on work that has been done here in Saskatchewan over quite a number of years, within the department, within Industry and Resources, also in a number of the industries in Saskatchewan. And, as we know, our coal-fired electrical plants at SaskPower are a major contributor to this.

And what you've identified is one of the large issues and challenges for us as Saskatchewan people. And our goal is to set out the kind of plan that we think can work so that we can contribute as Saskatchewan people in this global problem, but that it also recognizes the unique situation that we're in and, as you identified, a large challenge. That's why we don't skirt from it. We set it out clearly in our documents but we know that everybody has to be a part of this solution.

**Ms. Heppner:** — Thank you for that. I realize that the plan has not yet been released but I'm wondering if the initiatives outlined in that plan are based on a 68 per cent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Saskatchewan or if there's another target that you're using.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Well I think that is where the debate goes, and the questions become how you reach these various targets in the situation that you're in, in a particular province. We know a number of the issues that are there for Saskatchewan that relates to the fact that 70 per cent of our electricity is produced with coal. But I think the practical questions around this we'll have to lay out in our overall plan, and I know we'll get a chance to talk about them at that point.

But clearly our wish is to try to meet the goals of Kyoto, but as we lay out the plan we know that we have some major challenges.

**Ms. Heppner:** — I'm going to go back to part of my first question. I'm wondering, has a cost analysis been done on what it would cost our economy if a 68 per cent reduction is undertaken?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — We haven't used those particular figures. But we know and we've looked at the information that's provided worldwide on this particular issue around some of the costs. And where the costs really are dramatically difficult for an economy, which we can see with some of the targets in some parts of the world, then we can extrapolate back to what kinds of things are happening in Saskatchewan. But that's exactly the kind of thing that we want to set out as a plan of how to look at what the costs are, and then balance off what can happen with our economy and with what our plan is.

But clearly we recognize that we all have this responsibility to take it seriously and make some clear plans on what to do.

**Ms. Heppner:** — It would seem to be that a 68 per cent reduction is quite a substantial thing for anybody to undertake. And if Bill C-30, the federal clean air Act, as it's amended and sitting with the House of Commons today, goes through that could be devastating for our economy, considering that we are going to be relying on oil and gas and those sorts of resources. And I'm wondering if the government or the Department of Environment has communicated in any way to the federal leaders — opposition leaders or the Prime Minister's office — voicing their concerns that Saskatchewan may or may not have over this.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Well I know that the discussion is there. What I would say — and I was with the Premier just an hour ago where we were having this same conversation with the media — that we have talked with the oil and gas industry leaders, other people in industry. There is a common purpose in recognizing that we all have to change how we produce the energy products that we have here in Western Canada and that it's a joint task that we have to work at together.

The concerns that we have with the federal government — and I'm taking it from the tenor of your questions that you're quite supportive of the old version of the federal clean air Act and not the new version — but our questions really go to, how are these kinds of costs shared on a national basis and what kind of plans do we have? I think that's the debate that's going on in parliament right now is that, where are these costs to be dealt within the national system?

We're in a province that has substantial contribution on a per capita basis to some of the concerns that are there, so we have an extra obligation to be more diligent about this. But there are some aspects of it that we can't bear on our own. And it's not dissimilar to quite a number of other issues where we have to point out to the federal government they seem to have abandoned us on — and this is one of them.

**Ms. Heppner:** — As I stated before, my concern is, is that if Bill C-30 as written is passed — and it's my understanding that

it has the majority of support in the House of Commons currently — that will mean that Saskatchewan has to reduce their emissions by 68 per cent. And I am just wondering if . . . I would imagine that there would be massive economic implications for our province when it comes to that. And I am just wondering if those concern you.

You said that you had talked to industry representatives. I'm wondering if those concerns were also raised with the leaders of the opposition parties and the Prime Minister that a 68 per cent reduction is going to be difficult for Saskatchewan to meet, because this will, as I said, if this Bill passes, this is the law that we have to meet those targets.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — This has been an ongoing discussion. I know that our Industry and Resources officials, before the present federal government that we have now, were much more involved in working with the national government in trying to design what was happening, so that this was actually part of the discussion in the previous Liberal conversations. So I think that that, the kind of conversations that you're talking about, would be there.

But the other thing that is important to note in this whole area is that this is trying to set a national target. And so it wouldn't necessarily be translated on to the province in quite the same way. So we will be making sure that we do our part in, I think what will show is on a per capita basis much higher than anywhere else in the country. But whether we could actually meet that kind of a national target in the provincial situation is not clear.

**Ms. Heppner:** — You had mentioned speaking with industry representatives. There is a story that was out on Saturday in the *National Post*. And it quotes the president of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, and he says in regards to Bill C-30 that:

“It is unachievable and nothing other than a tax on economic activity in Canada.”

I won't editorialize on that, I'm just wondering if you agree with him or if you've been in discussions with the president of CAPP [Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers] on this issue.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — I assume that you're referring to Mr. Pierre Alvarez. And I know that he has been in discussions with other ministers. I've talked to him about that. I know that the Premier has talked about this whole area. And that's where I take the reference that our oil and gas industry, and our energy industry, our mining industry, our agricultural industry in Canada recognize that we're going to have to do some things in a different way.

And I think where the comments will come publicly from the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers and other places is that we have to do this in a reasonable manner and in a rational manner — and I think that's clearly everybody's goal — but that we have to do it. I don't think there's any doubt about this any more. And that therefore we need to sit down and make sure that we do the appropriate planning and take the steps that we can take here.



**Ms. Heppner:** — I don't disagree with you on that. I fully agree that climate change is an issue and that we need an action plan to address those things. You had mentioned doing this in a reasonable way and that the Kyoto targets under Bill C-30 would be a national target. Is there any indication what share Saskatchewan would have to carry of that?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Well I mean there's lots of ways to answer that question. I mean on a population basis, we're 3 per cent, okay. So that would be one way of doing it. But we know that our contributions from our 3 per cent are greater than other 3 per cents in the country. So I don't think that's a simple answer. We have a number of federal ministers around talking about 60/40. And so I don't think that quite applies in this area, but you never know because it seemed to show up in lots of areas it never had shown up before.

I think that the clear task for each and every Canadian, each and every global citizen is to do the best job that they can and then sit down and see how they can do better. Because unless we all take this seriously and actually spend some time and effort — and maybe some dollars, whether it's other sources of revenue — to actually address some of this, I don't think we have any choice.

**Ms. Heppner:** — The federal government has a new program — I believe it's called the ecoTrust — and they've had various announcements with other provinces and territories. And I'm wondering is . . . I know that they offer funding for project-specific things in different provinces and territories. Is this program cost shared with the federal government, or is it solely federal government funding that comes into the provinces?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — This is federal government money that comes to every province and it's allocated on a population basis. So we'll be getting our 3 per cent like everybody else and we're working very diligently. You should hear about this very soon.

**Ms. Heppner:** — All right. You'll have to excuse me for a minute. I have way too much paper. Go ahead.

**The Chair:** — Thank you very much. I recognize Mr. Weekes.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Minister, I just want to ask some questions concerning how harassment complaints are dealt with in your department. What is the process involved when a complaint is raised? Who would that person go to and what are the steps that follow after that complaint is made?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — I think the question that you're asking relates to how the civil service works in general. But I can let Mr. Deck explain the process in Environment, and I'm sure that it parallels the process in most other departments.

**Mr. Deck:** — There's multiple avenues for employees to bring forward concerns if they have them. They can talk to their immediate supervisor. They can talk to a co-worker. They can talk to a local shop steward. They can talk to a union official, union employee. They can talk to human resources. In some cases some folks call the Public Service Commission directly.

So there's multiple avenues, and these have been advertised in the department so staff understand where they can go with their concerns.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Well could you elaborate a bit more? At what time does this go up the chain? Does it eventually get to the deputy minister, to the minister?

**Mr. Deck:** — Well there's a process that has to take place. And quite often the conversation will get to human resources or the Public Service Commission where the particular incident will be assessed and discussed with the complainant. And an assessment will be made if it falls under the protected categories in the policy and then we explain the process of how to file a formal complaint. If it doesn't fall within the formal policy then we explain what we might do to assist them in bringing up a resolution to the issue.

In our department whenever there is an issue where there's harassment under the policy, the deputy minister receives a briefing of what the issue is, what we're doing to address it, and then, when the issue is resolved, what restorative plan we intend to put in place to bring that workplace back to a healthy state.

**Mr. Weekes:** — You said there's an assessment made at some point. Who would do the assessment?

**Mr. Deck:** — Again as I said it quite often gets routed to human resources, but that . . . The actual call for whether or not a complaint falls into the protected categories is, in the formal process, a joint decision between the Public Service Commission and the SGEU that they would jointly look at a complaint.

What I was describing is a process of having a . . . kind of an exploratory discussion with the employee to find out the nature of the complaint and get some more details. Once they make a formal complaint, the formal complaint would be forwarded to the Public Service Commission who would then have a discussion with the SGEU about whether or not this issue falls under the policy and should potentially be investigated further.

**Mr. Weekes:** — And at what level . . . Or what is the recourse for an individual when it is deemed by someone through the hierarchy that it's not a valid complaint? What does the individual do at that point?

**Mr. Deck:** — Well what normally occurs is that, after the parties have assessed a formal complaint, the employee would be notified in writing that the joint PSC [Public Service Commission] and SGEU have determined that it does not fall within the protected categories. And in practice usually what happens is that there is still a further discussion around what we might do to offer assistance to resolve whatever issues might have arisen.

**Mr. Weekes:** — It's interesting to note though, in our questioning concerning the Murdoch scandal, it seemed that that process wasn't followed whatsoever. I mean at some point, from the information we have, is that the person that laid the complaint was basically told by — I'm not sure — the deputy minister and assistant to the deputy minister and other officials that that was just Murdoch. And there was nothing . . . There

was no other further action taken. And it seemed to have died at that point or stalled at that point until other circumstances arose.

**Mr. Deck:** — I'd say that the policy has been developed much further and better processes are in place now than five years ago or four years ago. So the policy hasn't been stagnant. It's been developing. And it's progressed, I'd say, quite a bit in the last few years in terms of ensuring that employees' concerns do get properly heard.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Of the nine individuals who laid the complaint and received money concerning a payout because of their problems in the Murdoch scandal, could you tell me, are all those individuals still working for the department? And are they still working at the same positions as they were when they laid the complaint?

**Mr. Phillips:** — The answer would be no. Some have gone to work in other places with our department, also in Prince Albert. At least one I believe is no longer an employee of the government. And another person, they're working in a different location. But I think about five may still be in their same work location. Four would have had a change in circumstance over the last four years.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Are all the individuals that are still working in the department still working at the same level or at a higher level of employment, both in responsibility and remuneration?

**Mr. Phillips:** — This would be the people who filed complaints?

**Mr. Weekes:** — That's right.

**Mr. Phillips:** — We'd have to check the exact classification. To my knowledge they're working in a similar role. Whether or not they would have gone through a reclassification because of an addition to their job responsibilities over the last four years, we don't have that information with us today.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Could you just give me the dates again when the new harassment policy came in? Did you say it was in 2003?

**Mr. Deck:** — After 2003 the Public Service Commission went through an extensive review of the policy and it was enhanced after that point. I do not know if I have the actual date but it was a lengthy review, and all departments were consulted in that review to make improvements to the policy.

**Mr. Weekes:** — I'd like to ask the minister if you could have your officials supply us with the information. Obviously I don't want the names. I don't want necessarily even the communities that these individual women live in. But I would like to know what positions they do have in the department now, and basically their job description and classification of the women that laid the complaints, that are still working with the department.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Well if that's the kind of information that's provided without breaching any of the rules that we have in the Public Service Commission, we'll attempt to do that for you. I think the sense is that people are continuing to work in

the civil service where they can or they're moved to other positions. But we'll look at what kinds of information we can provide you.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Could you also . . . I've made the assumption that they're still working in the Environment department. If they happen to be working somewhere else in the civil service I would like to know that as well.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — I think the previous answer said that some had moved to other departments so it's clear that that's happened.

**The Chair:** — Thank you very much. I'll recognize Ms. Heppner.

**Ms. Heppner:** — In the performance plan '07-08 it — I think it was on page 5 — it states that there were 1,900 prosecutions conducted under various resource protection legislation. I'm just wondering about the collection of fines or penalties under these prosecutions. Does all of that money go into the General Revenue Fund?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — These collection of fines would all be collected through the Department of Justice, and so that's where that particular item as a revenue source would be. And then it goes into the General Revenue Fund.

**Ms. Heppner:** — Even though it's collected through Justice, I'm wondering is there any thought to . . . considering that a lot of these will be environmental penalties or prosecutions, if there's any thought of putting those funds or revenues received from fines into, like, a green fund or something that's specifically used for environmental projects to improve the environment.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — I would have to say, as the former Attorney General, that this is not necessarily something that government would consider doing. There are a number of reasons for it. Right now you will know that with fines there is a surcharge that goes to the Victims Fund and so that's one part of dedicated financing that relates to fines. But the general amount goes into the General Revenue Fund and then it's allocated throughout all of the departments in an appropriate way.

I think there are some examples of a specific kind of green fund fines in some other jurisdictions in North America, but they haven't always quite worked the way people wanted them to. And I think ideally fines are a last resort. What you really want is to change behaviour through appropriate education, training, re-education — re-education as we all know when it comes to people doing things incorrectly. And I suspect that that's where we want to put our resources as opposed to trying to generate funds for green activities through bigger fines.

**Ms. Heppner:** — I have a quick question about a town in my constituency, Hepburn. They're still operating on a well system and I know that they've looked into tapping into possibly water lines from Saskatoon. My riding is a rural riding but it's . . . the population is growing and people are moving from the Warman and Martensville area farther out. And Hepburn is kind of next along the line on Highway 12 and the potential for growth for

that town is quite substantial were there water lines come into the town. And I'm wondering, is there any kind of funding available, grant system, loans, infrastructure programs, for municipalities to establish a stable clean water supply such as that?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Yes. Well there are a couple of different opportunities and I will try to explain what I know which . . . I think I know quite a bit about this, but I don't know all of it. In our system of funding for municipalities and towns, most of those kinds of funding arrangements would be arranged through Government Relations and they're often federal-provincial-local funding agreements. And you hear about them and they're reannounced. So that's the first place that one would go.

In Saskatchewan though we're quite lucky to have the Saskatchewan Water Corporation which is a utility. And one of the things they do in various parts of the province is actually what you're talking about which is take good water from a good source and bring it to communities. And what they're very good at doing is, with their engineers and their financial people, is calculating what kinds of costs there would be versus using traditional wells or setting up your own treatment plant. And so for example I think around Regina some of the communities have used SaskWater to hook into the overall treatment system or . . . And we know up the Humboldt-Wakaw area there's a number of good systems there. So that's another place.

The kind of grant . . . There are some kinds of things that we look at, a bit at too in Environment, but often they're related to developing new technology or new techniques and how we can provide some green technology, if I could put that way. But those are not often the sort of meat-and-potatoes kind of funding that you're talking about which . . . A small town can't afford to put out \$20 million for a big water system. But if they had that kind of a water system, all of a sudden their town doubles in size. And that's an area where the federal-provincial-municipal grants can work, and it's also an area where SaskWater as a corporation can provide very good advice.

**Ms. Heppner:** — I have one more set of questions and I think some of my colleagues have some questions as well. I understand that the Saskatchewan Scrap Tire Corporation is independent of government but it does operate under legislation, provincial legislation. I'm just wondering, is there any oversight of the provincial government with this Scrap Tire Corporation?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Well the answer is yes, in that they provide us with an annual report and we have people specifically within the department that work with them. But they are a industry-run organization where what we have done is, on their recommendation, put a fee on the sale of all the new tires and then that money is used to complete the mandate that they've set out.

**Ms. Heppner:** — I'm just wondering, so there's . . . If a company that's currently dealing with the Scrap Tire Corporation has problems with something that they're doing or takes issue with like incentives being paid or that sort of thing, is there any place for those companies to go? Like, there's no

government involvement then. Do they have any avenue?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — I think these kinds of arrangements are based on contracts that are negotiated with the Scrap Tire Corporation. I know that lawyers are involved to sort out that. Ultimately if you have problems with contracts, the provincial government dispute resolution mechanism system we have is the court system with the ability to use mediation through your lawyers at any part of that dispute.

I know that we are interested if there are problems, but that primarily those are all sorted out between the parties because they usually are commercial arrangements based on contracts that have been negotiated.

**Ms. Heppner:** — No hands-on from government.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — No.

**Ms. Heppner:** — Okay. I just wanted to clear that up.

**The Chair:** — Thank you very much. I'd recognize the member from Indian Head-Milestone.

**Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a couple questions regarding the Qu'Appelle Valley and the water structures at Fort Qu'Appelle. I wondered where that stands right now.

I mean there was a two-year interim agreement. We've come to the end of that agreement. People in the valley are certainly wondering. I remember when I was asking questions on this two to three years ago — two years ago — when that interim agreement was put in place, it was felt that that was put in place just so that we could have enough time to finalize a final agreement. So I'm wondering where that's standing at.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — I will give you a higher-level overview question, and then I'll let my colleague here to answer in more detail. Clearly the goal is to try to get a long-term plan within the valley to deal with all of the different lakes and the different structures that are there. And we've been working at the parts that we are responsible for.

And often the issues are related to the federal government sorting out what kind of responsibilities they have with the local First Nations and others. And then our plan ultimately is to manage this when they've sorted out some of those relationships. And I'll turn it over to you.

**Mr. Ireland:** — Thank you. Just to supplement, negotiations are still underway. And you may know that we had some success working with federal negotiators and the First Nations in the valley to have interim agreements on all of the lakes except Round Lake. And a couple of those are coming to an end and we're trying to work out a longer-term arrangement.

It's a bit too early right now to say that those long-term arrangements will be in place for this coming year, but there is some optimism that some arrangements will be able to be successful. So a little early to tell just at this moment just how successful it will be.

**Mr. McMorris:** — What do you think the chances are then? I mean, I realize it's maybe too early to talk about a long-term agreement — some would want it to be a final agreement, but a long-term agreement. And maybe April is early yet to expect that, but hypothetically if a long-term agreement is not put in place, what would you think the chances are of another interim agreement to get us to that point? The economic impact on that valley and especially the community of Fort Qu'Appelle is huge when that water . . . I think it was one year for sure when the water level was allowed to drop and by July the lakes of Pasqua and Echo especially were virtually unusable. So I guess I would really urge and like to hear your comment on an interim agreement to get us to a long-term agreement.

**Mr. Ireland:** — The effort is for a long-term agreement but the need for or the possibility of interim is still there — in other people's minds is the possibility. So at this moment I'd say the intention is long term but if there's an . . . cannot work out the terms for a long term, interim may still be possible. But that's not the emphasis at the negotiating table at this moment.

**Mr. McMorris:** — Could you give me a . . . maybe describe the negotiation process in as far as it used to be QVIDA [Qu'Appelle Valley Indian Development Association] that was negotiating for the bands. Then the interim agreement was, I think for the most part, reached on a band-by-band basis. Is that how the negotiations are proceeding right now?

**Mr. Ireland:** — Yes, essentially on the band-for-band basis. Yes.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — What I would add to this is that it is Mr. Prentice, federal Minister for Indian and Northern Affairs, that has the responsibility for trying to sort this out on the federal basis. But it's complicated by the fact that some other departments federally are involved. And so we're trying to work with all of the people involved but we don't necessarily have a unified position coming from the federal government on this one. And that's where some of the negotiation issues arise.

**Mr. McMorris:** — One more question then. How would you — and this is maybe a tough one to answer — describe the negotiations as far as percentages? The minister mentioned that Saskatchewan is kind of looking after its part of the negotiations. The federal government has a lion's share. How much? Is it like 80 per cent responsibility of federal government, 20 per cent provincial? How would you describe the interests of the various parties?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Well I guess what I would say is — to get the issues resolved that cause the most trouble — 100 per cent federal government, okay. And that's the problem is that they have to get the ownership of these structures and that perspective resolved. Then where the province steps in, as a watershed authority we're quite concerned about management of water in the province. If they can get all those relationships sorted out then we're willing in the long-term to manage it and that's 50, 100 years.

And so you can't . . . I mean, it's not really necessarily a three-way discussion on each point and that's been the frustration.

**Mr. McMorris:** — Just as far as the ownership though I mean it's owned, the one at Fort Qu'Appelle . . . I'm not as familiar with the one at the end of Crooked Lake, but the water structure at the end of Fort Qu'Appelle, in Fort Qu'Appelle at the end of Echo Lake, which controls the water for Echo and Pasqua is owned 100 per cent by the federal government and managed by the provincial government. Is that right?

**Mr. Ireland:** — Let me just try to clarify. Owned, yes, by the federal government. And the provincial government provides direction to the federal agency who's responsible for that structure as to opening, closing. In other words based on water supply forecasts and runoff forecasts, we provide the advice as to how it should be operated.

**Mr. McMorris:** — I think that's good enough for now.

**The Chair:** — Thank you very much. I recognize Mr. Hart.

**Mr. Hart:** — Just a follow-up question to my colleague's questions. I believe none of the structures that are causing . . . that are part of the discussions are located on First Nations land. Is that correct?

**Mr. Ireland:** — If you're meaning is there any land where there's diking or control structures? I believe there is one spot where there is a part of a control structure on First Nations property. But otherwise it is flooding First Nations land is what is being contended.

**Mr. Hart:** — What First Nations would have that control structure located on its land?

**Mr. Ireland:** — I'm not as close to this file as you'd like me to be perhaps, but Kahkewistahaw, is that the right word? . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Okay. I believe that's the one.

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you. To open up an entirely new matter here. Minister, recently I saw a report but I don't recall all the details that your department had issued on the value of hunting and fishing to this province. My questions are more so with the value of hunting in this province and particularly out-of-province hunters. And particularly . . . The vast majority are out-of-country I guess would be more so, and I would assume that most of the out-of-country hunters would be coming from the US [United States]. What approximate value did you determine the US hunters would bring to the economy of Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Well I think that as far as the fishing — which I assume you're interested in as well — we think that the commercial fishing side is worth about \$5 million in the economy, but that the provincial outfitting industry expenditures around the whole business have increased from 25 million in 1990 to 85 million last year. So it's been a substantial increase and I think that includes both fish and the hunting part. And so quite often there are people who operate in both areas, so that's how that's presented.

But I think the basic point is that this is a very important industry in Saskatchewan. And we did this study together with the outfitters to actually show that this was an important part of our economy and that we need to work together to make sure

that it stays that way for the long term.

**Mr. Hart:** — As part of the study was there any work done on the contribution to the economy by US hunters hunting or harvesting animals on game farms? Was that part of your study? Or was it only animals taken in the wild?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — No, I don't think so. The responsibility for that actually is in the Agriculture department and so that was treated more as a livestock kind of issue in the Ag department and not as something that would be related to wildlife.

**Mr. Hart:** — Well perhaps I'll have an opportunity to ask the Minister of Agriculture that question. Just as a follow-up to that whole area, what regulations are in place that would affect a US hunter who would like to take his trophy back home with him, whether it be the horns or whether it be the capes and horns? What is the procedure and what is your department's responsibility in that area?

**Mr. Phillips:** — For most species . . . I'll use a deer, white-tailed deer as an example. The provincial hunting licence cancelled with . . . You know, if say a non-resident American coming to hunt white-tailed deer, the licence itself — attached to the horns, to the hide and to the meat — is a sufficient authority to take it out of the country.

There's at least one species though that's governed by, it's called CITES. It's the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. It captures black bear, so there's a special permit that's required for a hunter. It's a federal permit that's required to move a black bear hide or parts into the United States. It's also been the case for . . . I guess this was big game. But for . . . Sandhill cranes are also captured by the CITES requirement.

**Mr. Hart:** — So then if I understood you, Mr. Phillips, correctly, if an American hunter has a licence to hunt elk or deer or moose that's all they really need to take their trophies back home with them, and the meat. They don't require an export permit or anything along that line.

**Mr. Phillips:** — That's correct. It would only be the case though for white-tailed deer and moose. We don't have a non-resident season for elk. And black bear would be distinguished in the way I described.

**Mr. Hart:** — Now does your . . . Does the Department of Environment have any involvement and responsibility in animals that are harvested on hunt farms? And hunters when they wish to take their animal home with them — whether it be the meat or the whole carcass, the carcass or the capes and horns — does the Department of Environment have a responsibility in that area?

**Mr. Phillips:** — Most of that responsibility doesn't fall to our department. Our department primarily is concerned with matters related to importation and export of live animals. That's with respect to concerns about disease. However there are concerns about movement of animals harvested on First Nation outfitting businesses across the border.

So we . . . Our compliance staff work co-operatively with the

US Fish & Wildlife Service and with First Nations themselves to try and provide the type of documentation that would enable an animal that was harvested on a First Nations outfitting business across the US border.

A couple of things that have been done, we've helped First Nations through the creation of sample bylaws — band bylaws — with respect to marking, tagging requirements. We've also provided advice in the past on what type of actual tag could be used and we continue to work to try and, you know, enable proper enforcement with our counterparts in as it goes across the US border.

**Mr. Hart:** — So just to be clear then, so if a US hunter is harvesting an animal on a hunt farm that is not located on a First Nations land, the Department of Environment has no role in and has no responsibility in the export of that harvested animal to the US. But you do have some responsibilities and have played a role with regards to those animals that are harvested on a First Nations hunt farm. Is that what you just told me?

**Mr. Phillips:** — Yes, that's correct. It's more of an assist role that we've been providing to First Nations and the FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] to try and, you know, enable the activity, the legitimate activity that they're involved with.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Can I maybe just add something to that, is that the issue at the US border is, is this an animal from a hunt farm or is it an animal that's taken in the wild? And sometimes it's not always easy to tell, and so that's where some of the discussion may take place. And so there have been different concerns that are joint Agriculture concerns and Environment concerns around importation of animals into Saskatchewan that are then harvested and then what happens to those particular animals. And so this is an area where there have been a number of rather complicated issues that involve what happens at the US border.

**Mr. Hart:** — Now what agencies would be raising these issues at the US border? Would they be Canadian agencies? Would they be American agencies? I wonder if you could just explain that a bit more.

**Mr. Phillips:** — Generally the United States Fish & Wildlife Service.

**Mr. Hart:** — And their concerns are whether the animal is an animal harvested in the wild or whether it's harvested on a hunt farm? Are they making the further distinction on hunt farm animals, whether they're First Nations or non-First Nations?

**Mr. Phillips:** — I think that's part of the concern. It's been unclear at the border which animals come from where and which are appropriately marked. There's at least potential and there is concern that there is illegally harvested wildlife that's flowing through that system. It's the US Fish & Wildlife Service that's raised that with us. I expect probably the customs service as well, because it would typically be at airports or at border crossings where these questions would arise.

There's also been some concern about consistency in the type

of tag that's used. We've worked with the FSIN to recommend a consistent tagging format that would be more readily recognized. There have been some cases in the last few years where individual First Nations have adopted a different system so it leaves the US Fish & Wildlife Service people uncertain, unsure whether the animal is marked properly or is it a legitimate tag. And those are the types of concerns that we're responding to.

**Mr. Hart:** — Well I have a document here, it's issued apparently by your department and it deals with . . . It's called the application for export permit for wild game taken under First Nations bylaws. Now is this . . . I'm presuming that this doesn't apply to hunt farm animals. Is this export permit, is that specifically for First Nations outfitters? And in fact is this still in effect?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Perhaps you could send us a copy of what you've got here so we could take a look at it. But I think that this may be an attempt to try to deal with this particular issue at the US border. And so it's an issue that we have talked with the FSIN about and with some of the local First Nations. Because, as you know, the FSIN can try to solve problems on a broad basis but each First Nation needs to set up some of their own rules.

And so what happens then is when a person comes to the border and they don't have a provincial tag . . . I mean they could get a provincial tag on top of the First Nations one. It's when they go without a provincial tag that these issues arise. And so I think this document that you're showing there may be a first attempt at something that might be a common practice that would work at the level of providing a provincial endorsement of an FSIN local First Nation process that then eliminates the confusion for the American hunters who obviously spend a lot of money when they come up here.

**Mr. Hart:** — Well I think if you look at the document, it has the Sask Environment name on it and so I'm guessing that that's your document. Is that process still . . . Is that an old document or is this permitting process still in place?

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Well I just know this is from 2004, is when the document came. But I know that this particular issue of what kind of certification would be satisfactory to the US officials is a question that we've discussed with the chiefs at the FSIN, and that people are trying to sort out how we can deal with this in a way that . . . Basically the US guys say, well give us one or two examples of what you would see as legitimate from Saskatchewan and we'll accept those. But when we get 20 or 30 or 40, how do we know which ones are valid or not?

And so, you know, you're asking questions about something that is clearly an issue. The simplest way for an outfitter to deal with it is to make sure that all of the people who hunt with him have a provincial tag, and then they don't have a problem.

**Mr. Hart:** — Now there are some issues surrounding hunt farms located on First Nations land. What is your department's policy and what is your department's involvement in that area as far as, again, the export of the carcass and the . . . or the capes and horns and those sorts of things? What role is your department playing in that whole area?

**Mr. Phillips:** — Provincial authority doesn't actually extend onto the First Nation for purposes of, you know, monitoring or involvement in the outfitting activity or the hunt farm activity that goes on. Our involvement comes when the products of those activities move through the province and across the . . . you know, into neighboring jurisdictions.

So our efforts have been to try and, number one, control and manage risks around disease for animals that are coming into the province, onto a First Nation. And we work with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and with our adjacent provinces on that matter. And then with respect to the export of animals taken, then that's where . . . It's what we discussed earlier about the identification of the animals as being, you know, appropriately taken.

**The Chair:** — Thank you very much, members. Seeing that we have reached the hour of 5 o'clock, I'd like to conclude the meeting by thanking the minister and his officials for coming today. And I'm sure that we will all have the opportunity to ask further questions at a later date.

[The committee adjourned at 17:00.]