



STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ECONOMY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ECONOMY

Mr. David Buckingham, Chair
Saskatoon Westview

Mr. Trent Wotherspoon, Deputy Chair
Regina Rosemont

Hon. Greg Brkich
Arm River

Mr. Terry Dennis
Canora-Pelly

Mr. Warren Kaeding
Melville-Saltcoats

Mr. Delbert Kirsch
Batoche

Mr. Greg Lawrence
Moose Jaw Wakamow

[The committee met at 19:00.]

The Chair: — All right. Well we just as well get started here for tonight. So I'll introduce everyone here. I'm David Buckingham, Chair of the Economy Committee. We have Ms. Rancourt chitting in for, in the opposition, for Mr. Wotherspoon. We have the Hon. Greg Brkich, Terry Dennis, Warren Kaeding, Delbert Kirsch and Greg Lawrence.

Before we begin today, I would like to add Bill No. 100, *The Agrologists Amendment Act, 2017* to the agenda today after the November supplementary estimates for the Minister of the Environment. Is everyone in agreement with the addition of this bill?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Thank you.

I now need to advise the committee that pursuant to rule 148(1), the supplementary estimates for the following ministry was committed to the committee on November 29, 2017: vote 26, the Environment.

We also need to table the following documents: ECO 9-28, Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure responses to questions raised at the May 2, 2017 meeting; ECO 10-28, Global Transportation Hub responses to questions raised at the September 12, 2017 meeting.

**General Revenue Fund
Supplementary Estimates — November
Environment
Vote 26**

Subvote (EN10)

The Chair: — We'll begin by considering the November supplementary estimates for the Ministry of Environment, vote 26, wildfire management, subvote (EN10). Minister, if you would please introduce your officials and make any opening comments.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and good evening to you and to members of the committee. It's a pleasure to be here with the committee this evening to discuss supplementary estimates for the Ministry of Environment. Tonight with me is Lin Gallagher; the deputy minister is to my right. Steven Roberts, executive director of wildfire management, is to my left. Veronica Gelowitz is executive director of corporate services division and Cheryl Jansen is director of corporate services division, and they're seated behind us. And Tyler Lynch is my chief of staff; he is here as well.

The ministry's 2017-2018 appropriation is \$169.565 million. The ministry is requesting an additional 20.080 million. The wildfire management subvote is forecasting an overexpenditure mostly due to the large number of late-season fire starts. A below-average fire season until early August allowed the province to provide much-needed help to British Columbia, Montana, and Parks Canada. Although Saskatchewan incurred

an overexpenditure of \$1.3 million as a result of this assistance, the province anticipates receiving in excess of \$6 million as reimbursement from the governments that were helped.

In early August there were several major fires in the Pelican Narrows area. There have been 352 wildfires in the province in 2017 compared to 364 wildfires in 2016. The 10-year average is 468 wildfires. The significant difference is that in 2017 there were 65 fires in excess of 100 hectares and 33 in 2016 as a comparison. The size of the 2017 fires generated the remainder of the overexpenditure due to increased firefighting costs for fuel, aircraft rental such as helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft, contracts for other equipment, and assistance from Manitoba and other municipalities.

With that we would be pleased to take your questions, Mr. Chair, so thank you.

The Chair: — All right, thank you very much. I should also take some time to introduce Mr. Vermette here is with us this evening as well. And I'll open it up for questions.

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you. First of all I want to say thank you to everybody that's here and all of the people who are here that are representing the Economy and coming here to answer questions. I know you don't get much notice for these meetings, and I appreciate you taking the time out of your busy family lives to come here and answer some of these questions because it's really important for people to understand exactly where the dollars are going.

And I know myself and my colleague here, we get a lot of questions with regards to wildfire management because of where we're from, and so it's a big, big deal in our area. So again I want to thank you for being here, and my other colleagues here that are here tonight taking some time.

I'm going to kind of . . . You kind of gave a quick little description about why the extra funding is happening, so I'm going to start there and ask some of the questions from there. So how many firefighters and how many aircrafts were sent to British Columbia?

Mr. Roberts: — So we actually only dispatched one aircraft group to British Columbia. So a group of 580s and a bird-dog went to Abbotsford and worked there for less than a week and a half and came back to Saskatchewan. That's all went to BC [British Columbia]. We did send a command team and multiple 20-packs into June to British Columbia to assist with their fires.

Ms. Rancourt: — So what was the total cost with regards to sending them there?

Mr. Roberts: — So as we talked about, there's generated on wildfire management books an overexpenditure of 1.3 million. That's offset by over \$6 million which will be recovered to the General Revenue Fund when the provinces and the states pay us back for those resources.

Ms. Rancourt: — I'm just trying to break it down to the different locations. So that was the cost of BC. So I'm wondering how much were the costs when you went to

Montana, and how much staff and aircraft were sent there as well.

Mr. Roberts: — So the only thing that we sent to Parks Canada was just a single 20-pack crew and their vehicles to Parks Canada. Our 215T aircraft were what were sent to Montana and no crews were sent to Montana. So in proportional, about 60 per cent of our resource money was probably from British Columbia for those crews and about 40 per cent . . . a little bit to Parks Canada but not significantly so.

Ms. Rancourt: — And when you say Parks Canada, where were they located? Which areas?

Mr. Roberts: — So those crews were actually dispatched to Glacier National Park and they were dispersed through the Revelstoke Glacier area on three different fires during their term there.

Ms. Rancourt: — And the 6 million in reimbursement, can you break that down on where we're expecting to get that reimbursement from?

Mr. Roberts: — Like I said, about 60 per cent of that will come from British Columbia and about 35 per cent will come from Montana and about 5 per cent will be from Parks Canada.

Ms. Rancourt: — Have you received any of that reimbursement yet?

Mr. Roberts: — I do not know if we've received that.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — I'll just maybe jump in there. So that comes not to the Ministry of Environment, it goes to general revenue, and so we'll inquire to whether or not the province of Saskatchewan has received that. But it wouldn't be directly to the Ministry of Environment.

Ms. Rancourt: — All right. My understanding was there was a contingency fund put aside for wildfires because of the 2015 wildfires was quite a surprise and hit us hard. So my understanding was that there was going to be money put away in case something like that happened again. Can you tell me a little bit about what's going on with the contingency fund?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you for the question. So I would say it's . . . I wouldn't describe it as a contingency fund. There is the variable fire budget allocation that's made every year. So that was the \$16.2 million during this budget year. It was increased from the year prior by about \$1.7 million, so we did increase it in this budget year.

Ms. Rancourt: — And when you were doing your initial remarks you indicated that when we had our late-in-the-season wildfires you needed to rent some aircraft and you got some assistance from Manitoba and other areas. So how much did it cost to have those aircraft rentals?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — So the majority of the \$20 million in supplementary estimates that we're requesting is to cover that cost past when the . . . let's see, I'll find my notes here. So the ministry in terms of the variable fire budget was essentially on track in terms of what was the allocation going into late July.

And typically, as the fire season starts to wind down, it was really the fires that did begin in August that is the bulk of the 20 million that we are requesting, I would say, minus out the costs that were incurred to go to British Columbia and in the other areas that Mr. Roberts has identified. But most of that 20 million was for that August-onward period to essentially, I'd say, in October, to when the fire season really came to an end for us this year.

Ms. Rancourt: — So would you have a breakdown of how much the aircraft rentals would be with regards to the costs?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — So at this point we just have estimates. We can endeavour to provide the committee with . . . once those numbers are firmed up. But we don't have individual breakdowns from all those different areas at this point. They're still at this point estimates, but we feel confident about those estimates.

Ms. Rancourt: — Okay, so . . .

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Ms. Rancourt, I'll maybe just . . . So we don't have all the billing that has come in yet. That's why we're estimating at this point, knowing what we did use and the billings that we have received to this point. But when all the billings are in, we'll provide that information. But our estimate is in line with the supplementary estimates that we're requesting from the legislature.

Ms. Rancourt: — And what about with regards to the assistance from Manitoba? And can you outline some of the other areas that you would've gotten some assistance? And how much will that also cost?

Mr. Roberts: — So the assistance the province received from other agencies was only from Manitoba this year. They assisted us on the fires in Pelican Narrows area. They were doing control on the eastern side of that fire where it approached the Manitoba border. And we had a joint partnership arrangement to manage the flow fire which was near Flin Flon. So it was a shared partnership arrangement on that one where we each contributed resources and crews and aircraft. So they did provide us a little assistance for that one. It will just be the cost of the helicopter and their air ignition crew.

Ms. Rancourt: — And I'm sorry, I'm going back to that \$6 million in the reimbursement that we're expecting from helping out other areas. Is that going to fully pay the costs of sending staff and aircraft to these areas?

Mr. Roberts: — So the estimates when we send crews out, we actually have day rates and costs of aircraft and equipment that fully reflect both the cost that the province incurs for those, and in the case of aircraft, the cost of maintenance and extra wear and tear on aircraft. They pay the direct costs like fuel and accommodations for those, so that the province doesn't pay. But we will be reimbursed for staff wages, overtime, everything incidental. So the province does not expend dollars that is not recovered in the exercise.

[19:15]

Ms. Rancourt: — So can you explain the breakdown of these

estimates here, the \$1.4 million increase for salary? Can you explain that a little bit more and where exactly those extra dollars are going to?

Mr. Roberts: — Typically in a fire season, our seasonal crews that are government employees are released in the end of August. In the case of these fires that went late into September and October, we had to extend those crews, pay their full wages, and all the overtime occurred on these specific fires.

So their base wages would not have been forecasted because they would have been at the end of their term hiring, and obviously there wouldn't have been any overtime factored in for September or October. So that's what makes up the extra wages that would've been incurred related to these fires.

Ms. Rancourt: — And were any of these staff also deployed to go help with the fire in the southwest of the province, the wildfire there?

Mr. Roberts: — So for the fire that occurred in the Southwest, in an area of our jurisdiction, we did not send ground crews. We did not have any of our seasonal staff remaining, but we did bring in some pilots and prep some aircraft for response that were not used for the incident.

Ms. Rancourt: — Okay. And then in the breakdown here too, it has 18.68 million for the goods and services. Can you explain that a little bit more?

Mr. Roberts: — Right, so that's just a reflection of the 28.8, and that includes the GST [goods and services tax] that will have to be assessed on those services. So that's the breakdown. It's 18 plus the GST portion . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . PST [provincial sales tax], sorry, on that portion.

Ms. Rancourt: — Okay. Now getting to the fires, I have a few questions with regards to the impact of that. And I was wondering how many communities were evacuated and how many people were evacuated, both from the northern fires and the southwest fire in particular.

Mr. Roberts: — For the northern fires, the community of Pelican Narrows and a portion of the community of Sandy Bay were evacuated and two small communities, Jan Bay and Tyrrell Lake, briefly were evacuated.

I do not have a count of the number of individuals that that impacted. But those are the communities all related to those same fires in the Pelican area. It just depends which side they were on.

Ms. Rancourt: — And my understanding was that there was a fire in Ile-a-la-Crosse, but did it require any evacuations or anything like that?

Mr. Roberts: — At this time we're not aware of any other evacuations other than those that occurred in the Pelican lakes area.

Ms. Rancourt: — So would you say the fire in Ile-a-la-Crosse was more contained or did it impact a larger area?

Mr. Roberts: — So the process is, is that we assess the fires, look at where we expect them to grow, where we will be stationing our resources, and then we advise the community leadership of those. And they work with Government Relations to determine whether they will or will not evacuate. That is outside of our scope. We provide them real-time factual information and projections, and then from that they make the decision on whether they feel at risk and to which group that might occur.

Ms. Rancourt: — And were there any structures that were impacted by the northern fire, especially the one by Pelican Narrows area?

Mr. Roberts: — So there were structures lost in the fires that were burnt. There were two cabins, I believe. The patrol cabin belonging to the Ministry of Environment was also burnt by the fire, a couple boats that were left near some of those structures, and some outbuildings. But no family homes or any of the community settlement structures were burnt.

Ms. Rancourt: — So is any of this money being allocated to the budget in order for compensation for the losses of these structures?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — No.

Ms. Rancourt: — What about the Ministry of Environment's cabin that was lost? Is that going to need to be re-established?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — So as government-owned capital we will have to make a determination of whether or not the structure needs to be replaced or whether we don't need to go ahead. That decision hasn't been made at this point.

Ms. Rancourt: — And is there a reason why none of the money that's allocated here was put towards any of this lost structures?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Chair, so the additional dollars that we're seeking through supplementary estimates are really for the costs that have been incurred by the ministry to fight those fires. We do not provide for compensation for structures that are lost. We do, though, as a part of our annual budget, usually do have dollars available for fire-smarting programs to help people to reduce the fuel load around structures, cabins, etc. So that's where we put our dollars or try to reduce the risk of fire and reduce the risk of structures being lost.

Ms. Rancourt: — So do you have a breakdown of how much these northern fires cost for . . . I believe the three main fires were the Preston, the Granite, and was it Wilkin?

Mr. Roberts: — Wilkins.

Ms. Rancourt: — Do you have the breakdown of how much those . . . the cost were for those fires?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — We will endeavour to provide that information to the committee on our estimate for those three fires. We don't have that breakdown per fire. We're seeking an additional 20 million on top of our variable budget for the year, but we will endeavour to provide a cost for those three fires.

Ms. Rancourt: — And is any of this money . . . For the southwest fires, did the Ministry of Environment do any of the work or spend any money with regards to that fire?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — There really was minimal costs that were incurred for the southwest fires. Essentially, a crew prepped a plane in the event that it was going to be deployed. It was not deployed to the fire and so there really wasn't a cost incurred, aside from just that prep time.

Ms. Rancourt: — And you gave a little bit of a breakdown about the average amount of fires. You gave the 10-year average of how many fires and how many fires were this year. Do you have a breakdown of how many hectares were impacted and how that compared to previous years?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair, and Ms. Rancourt. So in 2017 the total area burned to date is approximately — sorry my mind works in acres, but I'll do hectares — 396,569 hectares; in 2016 it was 241,608 hectares; and the 10-year average is 637,276 hectares. So this year was 396,000, last year was 241,000, the 10-year average is 637,000 hectares.

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you. That's all the questions I have, but my colleague has some questions here as well.

The Chair: — Mr. Vermette.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Of the money that, the extra dollars you're asking, 20 million — I think it's 20,080,000 — out of those dollars, is any of that money going to be allocated for those that were, you needed to house, whether it's Red Cross, there was certain hotels that were paid. I know you'll be receiving bills. Can you identify any part of that was for people that were, you know, had to evacuate their communities? Can you just show us, if you know the number, give us an idea?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you for the question, Mr. Vermette. So the additional dollars that we're requesting would not provide for covering of those services. So those services would be covered by Government Relations as well as emergency social services. So the 20 million that we're requesting is strictly for the salaries for the people that were kept on later into the fire season because of the lateness of the fire season and the overtime that was incurred and really just the fuel, the retardant, the rental of equipment, rental of helicopters in this case. So it's really just the cost to actually fight the fire, not in dealing with the individuals that were affected by the fire.

Mr. Vermette: — Okay. Then you mentioned . . . And that's fine and I appreciate that. That clears it up. You mentioned that there were cabins that, you know, were lost in the fires. Do you know if those were traditional cabins, trappers? Were they, you know . . . I'm just trying to have an understanding of the ones that you know of.

Mr. Roberts: — I don't have a breakdown of that right now, but we do have a list. They've all been identified and including whether they were a recreational cabin, a traditional-use cabin, or an outfitting cabin. So we categorized them. We'll have all

that information and we can share that information.

Mr. Vermette: — So you could provide that to the committee so that we could just have a look at that.

And you talked about there . . . And I know that there's areas where I guess with different ministries that they could apply if someone's lost a cabin. Obviously somebody's reached out to them to say, here's an agency that will assist you or a process that can help if they've lost their cabin. Does anyone, you know, from your ministry reach out to any of those or no? Nobody. There's no contact telling them where to go. It's up to them to research that on their own and find out. I'm just curious.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — So typically in these types of cases, Government Relations and emergency social services are the point of contact for individuals that have been affected. Environment and the wildfire crew and branch are responsible for directly fighting the fires, and so individuals that are affected or impacted by that, Government Relations and emergency social services are the points of contact for those types of questions.

Mr. Vermette: — Okay. I guess we can do that tomorrow because we'll be in with some of the ministries so we'll get that information.

I guess probably an area where comparing year to year, and I don't know in supplementary estimates if you've had to ask in prior years to come back because of the late fire season and what happened here, you're saying. Do these numbers reflect that that's happened before or this year? Is it really pretty high, you know, 20.080 million?

Mr. Roberts: — So I can give you a breakdown is that I've been in charge of the fire program for 14 years and we've never had a fire season go as late as it has in 2017.

Mr. Vermette: — Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: — All right. Are there any other questions?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Chair, sorry. If I could just add. So the amount that was allocated for the variable fire budget, just to build on Mr. Roberts's last answer, so \$16.2 million. If I look back to going back even 2011 to 2012, that time frame, our actual expenditures under that variable fire, the actuals, have been under the \$16,000.

So I would say that for five, four of the last seven years, we've actually come in under that budget allocation amount. In the times that we've come over that budget amount, for example the 2015-16 year was a significant year — that's when we were well above because of an above-average year — I believe it would have been dealt through special warrants. I think by that time the legislature wasn't sitting and so there wasn't an opportunity for supplementary estimates.

[19:30]

Mr. Vermette: — I just want to be clear. You said 16,000. You meant 16 million, right?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — I wish it was 16,000. Yes, 16 — sorry, my apology — 16 million, yes.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you.

The Chair: — All right. Thank you for your questions and, Mr. Minister, if you have any closing remarks.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — No, Mr. Chair. I just want to thank the committee for giving us an opportunity this evening and the members for their questions. And Mr. Vermette for reminding me that I need to make a phone call to him.

As well, Mr. Chair, I do want to thank Mr. Roberts and everybody that works for the Ministry of Environment in dealing with a very . . . Obviously any time you're dealing with wildfire, we want to ensure that our, first and foremost, staff are safe and that the people that we're trying to protect and the properties that we're trying to protect, that everybody is safe at the end of the day. And so I want to thank him for his leadership and all those that work in our wildfire branch for the work that they did this year in fighting a significant number of fires.

The Chair: — All right. Thank you, Mr. Minister, and thank you to your officials. We'll start voting off. You're welcome to stay if you wish but . . .

Okay, so vote no. 26, Environment, wildlife management, subvote (EN10), in the amount of 20,080,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Environment, vote no. 26, 20,080,000. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2018, the following sums for Environment, in the amount of \$20,080,000.

Mr. Brkich. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Agreed.

Standing Committee on the Economy, fourth report. Committee members, you have before you a draft of the fourth report of the Standing Committee on the Economy. We require a member to move the following motion:

That the fourth report of the Standing Committee on the Economy be adopted and presented to the Assembly.

Mr. Dennis: — I so move:

That the fourth report of the Standing Committee on the Economy be adopted and presented to the Assembly.

The Chair: — Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Bill No. 100 — *The Agrologists Amendment Act, 2017*

Clause 1

The Chair: — All right, we'll now take a five . . . Oh, we already have the officials here, so I guess we'd just as well get started. We'll continue on the consideration of Bill No. 100, *The Agrologists Amendment Act, 2017*, clause 1, short title.

Minister Stewart is here with his officials. Minister, please introduce your officials and make any opening comments.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. With me seated on my left is Deputy Minister Rick Burton, on my right, executive director of policy branch, Jonathon Greuel; and Ashley Anderson, chief of staff.

First I'll read a few bullets that roughly describe the bill. I know that Ms. Beck is very familiar with it, so I won't go into my long preamble that we sometimes go through.

And before that I want to thank Ms. Beck for hurrying this bill along to committee. We very much appreciate it, and I know that the SIA [Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists] does as well.

We're here today to review proposed amendments to *The Agrologists Act, 1994*. The proposed changes to this Act will broaden the definition of "practice agrology" to recognize agrologists working in areas beyond primary agriculture related to bioresources and the environment.

It'll broaden the academic requirements to become a member of the Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists, the SIA, and allow the SIA to license diploma graduates to practise in Saskatchewan, add a second public appointee to the SIA council, remove the deputy minister of Agriculture from council, allow the SIA the flexibility to create administrative bylaws, and make housekeeping improvements to the Act. Example, replace the term "membership certification" with "licence," and allow the SIA to serve documents and notify its members of meetings or bylaw changes by means other than mail.

And these amendments will ensure the Act is relevant to the current practice of agrology in Saskatchewan with a definition that reflects the broader role that agrologists are playing in this changing sector; support labour mobility across Canada by allowing the SIA to register people with less than a four-year university degree with a restricted licence to practise, as is the case in Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario, and allow the SIA more flexibility in recognizing a broader range of educational institutions; ensure the public continues to be protected in matters related to agrology; and to improve the internal administration of the SIA.

And I welcome any questions the committee may have.

The Chair: — All right. I'll introduce Ms. Beck who will be

chitting in for Mr. Wotherspoon. And if there's any questions, go ahead, Ms. Beck.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the minister and to your officials for being with us this evening. Thank you also for your kind words, and it is really my pleasure to be here tonight to allow for swift passage of this bill.

I think a lot of what I'm going to go over I did go over this afternoon, but I will have a few questions at the end. But just to recap some of my comments, obviously it's not every bill that is initiated that . . . from our side of the House that we would be willing and able to initiate or go along with swift passage of. But some of the things with this particular proposed bill made that really quite an easy decision on our part.

And as I noted today, one thing that was really appreciated was in second reading of the bill, providing a full accounting of what this bill was intended to do, what your consultation process looked like, and then having the opportunity to also consult with those who you had consulted with. So we feel like we have been able to have a full discussion about this and have willingly and gladly brought this bill to committee tonight so that we might be able to allow passage before we rise for the winter break.

As you noted, Minister Stewart, we recognize that this is the result of some considerable lobbying or long-standing discussions on behalf of SIA and has come about after a rather broad-based consultation with those who might be impacted by this bill, including APEGS, the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Saskatchewan, and they certainly have confirmed as well that they are in agreement with the bill. As well some of the modernization pieces are really bringing *The Agrologists Act* more in line with the model legislation for regulatory bodies, professional regulatory bodies in the province.

So I think my comments will be rather brief, but there were a few questions that I did have, just going back to your second reading. I'll just find that here. One of the things that you noted was the consultation process to a rather broad stakeholder group, and again we have talked to SIA and to APEGS. You noted also the educational institutes as well as institutes of agrology in other provinces and also made note of the fact that this would be bringing our provincial legislation in line with how agrology is practised in other jurisdictions across the country. I'm just wondering if you could give us a bit of an overview of . . . This brings us in line with a majority of provinces with regard to their Acts around agrology and where the other provinces are at. Would they have similar legislation?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you for the question. Saskatchewan will be on a par with Manitoba, Quebec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia. We'll be on a par as far as that includes right to practise and right to title. We'll be on a par as far as right to title goes with British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland. And so you know, I think this puts us in line with the majority of provinces in the country. And I think that's one of reasons that the Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists wanted this change, is to be more in line with those other

provinces.

Ms. Beck: — And it's my understanding that allows for some mobility as well as some common recognition of degrees that are granted from both the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] but other institutions across the country.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — That's correct, and the SIA can decide on their own which educational institutions that they . . . from which they will honour the diplomas or degrees anyway.

Ms. Beck: — One other comment, Minister Stewart. You indicated that there was general support for the proposals. I note that you used the term "general support." Were there any concerns that were brought forward in your consultations, and is anything you'll be keeping an eye on?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — The stakeholder feedback has consisted of no comments or concerns, support for the proposed amendments, and slight alternative wording suggestions. There's been no overwhelming objection to proposed amendments during the consultations and general support. And so you know, having done a number of consultations on bills, it's seldom as unanimous as this one.

Ms. Beck: — And as I've indicated, that certainly was our experience as well in talking with people. You did note that there were consultations with both Sask Environment and the Water Security Agency. Can you maybe explain why those two agencies would be involved in these consultations?

[19:45]

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — The new Act allows agrologists the opportunity and ability to represent bioscience resources that would be of interest to SaskWater and Sask Environment, so we took the extra step to consult with them as well to make sure that they're onside with this.

Ms. Beck: — So that's sort of in keeping with that broadened scope of the practice of agrology is also sort of that multidisciplinary, some blurring of the lines I suppose in terms of scope of practice not only for agrologists but also geoscientists and engineers — like, for example, ground water remediation or environmental remediation?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Yes.

Ms. Beck: — Okay. I guess the only other question I had or comment, if you wish, to make, I have some understanding with regard to the request by SIA to . . . that any changes would come in place January 1st. Have they discussed with you the reasons why that might be helpful for them to have those changes in place by January 1st?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — It's strictly a matter of convenience because of their . . . I guess the way their operating year is on the calendar year and their memberships are renewed as of that time and it's . . . For operational reasons, it's convenient for them if we can get this done.

Ms. Beck: — It's my understanding that if we weren't able to pass this until after April, it would take another calendar year

for them to be able to put the changes in place. Okay.

[The committee adjourned at 19:50.]

Again I just wanted to say thank you for being with us tonight and for the opportunity to ask a few questions and for presenting the thorough consultations. And as I said before, we are happy to expedite this to committee tonight and look forward to . . . I suspect we'll see Allan in the gallery later this week.

The Chair: — Thank you for your questions, Ms. Beck. Are there any other questions? Seeing none, we will now begin to vote on Bill No. 100, *The Agrologists Amendment Act, 2017*. Clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 14 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: *The Agrologists Amendment Act, 2017*.

I would ask a member to move that we report Bill No. 100, *The Agrologists Amendment Act, 2017* without amendment.

Mr. Dennis: — I so move.

The Chair: — Mr. Dennis. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Mr. Minister, do you have any final comments?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Only to thank you, Mr. Chair, the committee members, my officials that are here with me tonight, and Ms. Beck for expediting this matter to committee. Very helpful. Thank you.

The Chair: — All right. Thank you, Mr. Minister, and your officials. Do you have any closing comments, Ms. Beck?

Ms. Beck: — No, I think I'll probably go over what I've already said just to thank you for the opportunity, and it's been my pleasure to be here this evening.

The Chair: — All right. Thank you very much. Seeing that our business before this committee is done, I would ask that a member move a motion of adjournment.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I so move that we adjourn.

The Chair: — Mr. Brkich. All agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. This committee stands adjourned until the call of the Chair. Thank you all for coming.