

Wowchuk continues to mislead us

Dear Editor:

Rosann Wowchuk, the Minister Responsible for Manitoba Hydro, continues to mislead the public on details to the Bipole III high-voltage transmission line from northern Manitoba to a converter station east of Winnipeg.

Wowchuck downplays the extra costs that will be incurred by following the west side route as opposed to running the line down the shorter, more direct east side of Lake Winnipeg.

The west-side route will be 480 kilometers longer and require approximately 900 more towers to carry the line. Even the Minister agrees the west side line will be considerably more costly to build and maintain. However, she doesn't take into consideration the line losses incurred because of the longer route. Those line losses will be substantial and will continue for the full life of the line. The longer line will also emit more GHGs.

Wowchuck has also talked on several occasions about power sales to Saskatchewan, leading people to believe that you can just draw power off the Bipole III line. Once again, this is misleading.

The Bipole III line will be transporting direct current (DC) which must be converted into alternating current (AC) before it is usable to the public. One cannot 'siphon' off power midway through a DC line. Therefore, the line has to go directly to the converter station east of Winnipeg, be converted to AC power and then transported by other lines back to the markets. Unless Saskatchewan - or for that matter Manitoba - builds two more converter stations on the west side of the province, direct power

sales from Bipole III are not possible. Building a converter station costs in the neighborhood of \$1 billion.

She is also trying to convince the people of Manitoba that the new line is a done deal, that it is too late to change the route. However, construction of Bipole III is not slated to begin until 2013 with completion in 2017. At a time when our provincial debt continues to climb at an alarming rate, when deficit budgets have become routine and hydro rates continue to rise every year, I suggest all Manitobans tell Premier Greg Selinger and his NDP government to stop saddling future generations of Manitobans with more debt. The new Bipole III transmission line should be built on the shorter, cheaper, more reliable route on the east side of Lake Winnipeg.

Yours truly,

Stuart Briese
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