



May 5, 2023

SUBJECT: CBCL Report – Wood Islands Ferry Terminal and Kip Smith Emails

Dear Mr. Rousseau and WIADC Board Members;

Thank you for forwarding the emails from Mr. Kip Smith concerning the Government of Canada commissioned study on sea rise and environmental effects associated on the Wood Islands Ferry Terminal that was completed by CBCL and published in January 2020 (herein referred to as “the Report”). You have asked me to comment on the Report and the content of Mr. Kip Smith’s emails.

At the outset, I am obligated to state that I am not an engineer who practices in the area of predicting sea rise and its effects on buildings and infrastructure. However, I did spend 5 years of my career as Area Director<sup>1</sup> for Fisheries and Oceans Canada which manages the small craft harbours in PEI. I am acutely aware and sympathetic to the perils of our coastal infrastructure including our wharves and beautiful public spaces such as the Provincial Park and the WIADC landmark lighthouse in Wood Islands.

Report observations:

1. Transport Canada, working through government’s procurement department – Public Works and Government Services Canada, was contracted for several studies in Atlantic Canada that studied climate change impacts on critical transportation infrastructure. The Wood Islands ferry terminal was not singled out as a special or high risk case.
2. The Report is specific to the ferry terminal and its buildings and infrastructure. It does not study the lands and infrastructure owned by WIADC or Provincial Parks. The small craft harbour in Wood Islands was not part of the scope either, however the flood mapping data does show the possible impact on neighbouring properties.
3. Typical of this type of study, many possible scenarios are considered. The consultants attempt to establish a probability and severity of impact for these events.
4. Some low elevation lands at the ferry terminal and neighbouring fishing wharf are at risk of being submerged or partially submerged with a 50% probability by 2020 which was the year after the development of the model. Refer to Figure 6.6 Appendix B based on a storm and sea rise event of an additional 1.8 meters.
5. A major portion of the ferry terminal and virtually all of the small craft harbour wharf and the roadway leading to the park and lighthouse are predicted to have a 50% probability of being submerged by 2040 during a storm event combined with sea rise of 2.4 meters. Refer to Figure 6.7 in the same Appendix.

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<sup>1</sup> For one year I concurrently filled the subordinate position of Manager - Small Craft Harbours PEI.



6. The Report goes further to predict what might happen in 100 years. Even under the direst of circumstances, the water level is never predicted to threaten the Wood Islands Lighthouse or other asset investments that are currently being considered by WIADC. At a permanent sea rise of 2 meters (see UPEI Climate Change Laboratory report on page 74) the road to the park and lighthouse could be impacted. Note that nearly every coastal community and infrastructure in Prince Edward Island will be adversely affected by a sea rise of 2 meters and the road to the lighthouse is not unique to this possible scenario.
7. Even with the 100 year worst case scenario<sup>2</sup> analysis for storm and sea rise combined impacts, the park and the lighthouse remain above sea level, although, it may become an Island if the extreme possibilities become reality. Note that a significant portion of Prince Edward Island would be submerged at this point and many concerns would be immaterial at that point.

In summary of my read of the Report, I can see why some individuals and organizations may have grave concerns over its contents. Certainly, Transport Canada being responsible for the management of the ferry terminal facilities would have a significant interest in the future of their coastal infrastructure. I see no reason for WIADC to abandon their plans for improving their property and lighthouse.

As mandatory requirement of the Active Transportation Program which proposes to extend the Confederation Trail to the lighthouse, WIADC was required to complete a Coastal Hazard Assessment. I commissioned this work on your behalf last year. The report which was sent to you and your Board in December 2022 does indicate there was a long-term moderate to high risk of a flooding event over the road to the park but no risk was identified for the areas of the park that are planned for reinstating the replica fishing village. It is possible that water will over-top the road to the park during an extreme weather event at some point in the future. The road might have to be raised or protected from extreme climatic events. Again, this is the responsibility of the Provincial government and not WIADC or others.

You had also asked that I review the content of emails sent by Mr. Kip Smith. I note there are three emails from Mr. Smith including:

- December 31, 2021 - to WIADC – Subject: Consultant ○ EMAIL CONTENT: Mr. Smith indicated that members of the harbour authority have taken the position opposing any development in this area. Any change in position by the harbour authority would require a vote.
  - SUGGESTED RESPONSE: Mr. Smith refers to events 20 years ago when this was discussed. It is recommended that WIADC engage the elected members of the Harbour Authority by briefing them on the scope of the proposed work at the lighthouse property and to assure them that protection of the environment is a top priority in moving forward.
- April 24, 2023 to WIADC – Subject: Further ○ EMAIL CONTENT: Mr. Smith is concerned about flooding around the wharf. ○ SUGGESTED RESPONSE: None. There is nothing in the email that pertains to WIADC or its future plans.

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<sup>2</sup> The Report does not consider environmental impacts of GHG reduction or reversal of sea rise due to natural effects or human intervention.



- April 24, 2023 – To Belfast Rural Municipality – Subject: FW Further ○ EMAIL CONTENT: Mr. Smith has concerns the Harbour Authority was not consulted by authors of the Report. He re-iterates the Harbour Authority has not changed their position on any development at the lighthouse property.
  - SUGGESTED RESPONSE: None to Mr. Smith. The email was directed to the Municipality. WIADC should make the Municipality aware of all plans and the consultation process with extreme transparency concerning past, present and future activities. One mechanism for transparency and good governance might be to invite the Municipality to appoint a representative to join the WIADC Project Oversight Committee. As a minimum, the Chair of WIADC should draft a letter to the Municipality to go on record to dispel any misinformation that might be generated by Mr. Smith or possibly others concerning future plans.

As a final observation concerning emails from Mr. Smith, it is difficult to understand what is the underlying motivation and rationale. Any development of the Park and lighthouse property will bring more prosperity to the community. If these assets are abandoned, then there will be less public interest in maintaining the park, future trail extension and the roadway. Conversely if there is greater public investment in the area, it is more likely there will be public interest in improving the road system and the lands around it - which is a direct benefit to those that use the fishing wharf. One would hope that the fishing community would see that the development efforts of the WIADC are not in competition with the fishers but, in fact, a direct benefit to the whole municipality.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Drost". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Bill Drost, P.Eng.