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wet-dry cycles and it is expected they would increase the confidence of predictions on the time it would take to fill the reservoirs.

This is crucial information to assist in determining predicted flows in the basin downstream in both North Dakota and in Manitoba.

In the area of water quality, the panel noted that the validity of information from the models available would strongly depend on the manner in which they synthesize processes and on the existence and accuracy of available data. Although the water quality models reported in the SBDA Environmental Impact Statement appear to be state-of-the-art, there was in the mind of the panel insufficient data for proper calibrations and verification.

Consequently the panel asked for more information on water quality projections in the Rafferty Dam reservoir, in particular, and what was being done to address the uncertainties associated with the predictions on water quality in the western part of Manitoba.

In the area of fisheries, the panel noted that the operation of the reservoirs is expected to have both positive and negative effects on fish habitats in North Dakota and Manitoba, as well as in Saskatchewan. The sustainability of fish populations and the success of some of the proposed fisheries mitigation measures would depend on the conditions which prevail under the operating plan specified in the international agreement or required to meet the primary objectives of the project. Consequently, the panel wondered how the fisheries mitigation measures proposed for the Saskatchewan portion of the basin, and which might be required for the North Dakota and Manitoba parts of the basin, would be compatible with the operating plan and the primary objectives of the project.

In the wildlife area, the panel noted that the SBDA waterfowl mitigation plan outlines procedures to be implemented to address anticipated project-related waterfowl losses in Saskatchewan. But the panel also wondered what measures would be undertaken which would ensure that there would be no net loss of waterfowl production in the Souris basin as a result of the project and what national and/or international interim measures, if any, are under consideration.

The panel also noted that reservoir flooding will destroy vegetation that is important to the sustainability of wildlife populations, particularly white-tailed deer. It

asked therefore that the effects of the loss of range on the regional population of white-tailed deer be quantified and to outline what measures are contemplated to provide alternate habitat for white-tailed deer.

These are only a few examples, Mr. Speaker, of some of the detailed questions that the panel raised to provide you and other members of the House with an example of the thorough analysis that the panel was undertaking in trying to do its job properly.

These are also important questions that will have to be thoroughly answered before any decision can be made on the potential environmental effects of this project.

It should also be noted that the panel received a response to these four questions from the SBDA on September 24. Thus the panel had reached step five in its seven step process and was about to make documents available for public review prior to proceeding to the final public hearing.

It should also be noted that while the panel was conducting its work, Saskatchewan was proceeding with ancillary works in the Rafferty reservoir and below the Rafferty dam. These activities included the construction of a causeway in the reservoir area, continuation of work on the new Dr. Mainprize Park and, most recently, the initiation of channelization downstream of the Rafferty dam.

After the panel had finalized its information request, initiated on August 1, it arranged for another tour of the Rafferty-Alameda area in early September. It visited the Rafferty dam and ancillary works and the proposed site of the Alameda structure. The tour was well advertised and somewhere between 50 and 100 people accompanied the panel throughout its visit, with SBDA officials and their consultants being present. The panel visited some of the mitigation lands that the SBDA is developing to reduce impacts. These include tree planting areas designed to replace wildlife habitat that would be flooded by the Rafferty reservoir. They also visited areas that have been designed to replace or to create fish habitat in the Rafferty reservoir.

The panel also visited the proposed location for the Alameda dam. The involvement of individuals from the Souris basin in the Estevan area and from Manitoba was considered to be most valuable to the panel in achieving a better understanding of the potential impact of the