Keeyask Generation Project

Environmental Impact Statement

Supporting Volume

Physical Environment

KEEYASK
Hydropower Limited Partnership

June 2012

KEEYASK GENERATION PROJECT

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTING VOLUME

SEDIMENTATION

KEEYASK
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7.0 SEDIMENTATION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This section describes the **sedimentation** processes and how the baseline **environment** will change with the proposed **Keeyask Generation Project** ("the **Project**"). Constructing the Keeyask Generating Station (GS) will increase the water level upstream of Gull Rapids thereby **flooding** land and changing river **hydraulics**. Changes to the **water regime** and shoreline **erosion** may lead to changes in sedimentation processes, including the transport and **deposition** of mineral sediment and **peat** material. The extent of those changes would depend upon the scale of alteration of water regime and other physical environment indicators that may result from the development of a hydropower-generating scheme. Based on the **effects** of the Project on the Water Regime (Section 4.0) and Shoreline Erosion Processes (Section 5.0 – Volume and Mass of Organic and Mineral Soil), this section summarizes an assessment of the effects of the Project on sedimentation processes in the Keeyask **hydraulic zone of influence** and further downstream to Kettle GS**.**

The objectives of this section are to estimate the effects of the Project during the **construction** and operating phases (Section 7.4). More specifically this section discusses:

- Characterization of historical and current sedimentation processes (**bed material transport**, **suspended sediment transport**, deposition).
- Prediction of future sedimentation processes, mineral and organic suspended solids **concentrations** (**nearshore** and **offshore**), sediment transport (mineral and organic) and deposition rates, thickness, and volumes for:
    - Construction Period.
    - Future Conditions/Trends.
    - Future Environment with the Keeyask GS.

Changes in the sedimentation environment have the potential to **impact water quality** and fish **habitat** (documented in the Aquatic Environment Supporting Volume (AE SV)), within the hydraulic zone of influence of the Project. It is, therefore, important that the sedimentation processes be studied sufficiently during the planning phase of the Project, so that possible Project effects can be assessed and appropriate **mitigation** measures can be adopted if required.

As presented in this section, studies (as described in Section 7.2 - Approach and Appendix 7A - Model Description) were undertaken to gain an understanding of the sedimentation (mineral and peat) **regimes** in the existing condition (Appendix 7B) in the **study area** (Section 7.2.2), as well as for the future conditions and for the **Post-project** environment. Studies were also carried out to assess potential shoreline erosion, material loss from **cofferdam** construction and potential changes to the sedimentation environment within Stephens Lake during the construction period.

7.1.1 Overview of Sedimentation Processes

Sedimentation is a combination of processes, which includes erosion, **entrainment**, transportation, deposition and compaction of sediment (American Society of Civil Engineers 1975 and Garcia 2008). The Shoreline Erosion Processes (Section 6) predicts that the Keeyask reservoir will expand over time as both mineral and peat shorelines erode. The eroded material will enter the waterway where it will contribute into the sedimentation processes. Since the physical properties of mineral sediments are different from the physical properties of peat sediments they are treated separately in this assessment. This sub-section describes and differentiates mineral sedimentation and peat sedimentation processes.

7.1.1.1 Mineral Sedimentation

Bed material transport processes of mineral sediment particles start with **shear stress** being applied to static sediment particles on the channel bed. Bed material load is the transport of sediment from the riverbed. As the applied shear stress increases and exceeds the **critical shear stress**, **movement** of particles is initiated. At this stage, particles usually roll over the bed and are described as "bedload", which is the measure of moving particles over the bed. Functionally, this usually means that this material transport is measured within about 5 cm to 10 cm of the riverbed's surface (depending on the bedload sampler). Bedload occurs by sliding, rolling, or saltation (*i.e.,* hopping). Some near-bed suspended load is also included and measured as bedload. As the shear stress increases, the particles become entrained in the **flow** by turbulent mixing processes and are transported as suspended load. As the applied shear stress weakens, the particle deposition process may commence, depending upon the settling **velocity** of the particles. A conceptual diagram of these major sediment transport processes are illustrated in Figure 7.1-1.

7.1.1.2 Peat Sedimentation

Transport processes of organic (*i.e.*, peat) material are different from those of mineral sediment particles. Displacement and deposition of floating mobile organic material can occur in the form of peat islands, mats, chunks, fibres and particles (Section 6.0 – Shoreline Erosion). The size of this material varies from small to large forms and may be distributed in thin mats along the surface, or have a thickness over a metre. Studies by Ouzilleau (1977) suggested that peat island development is difficult to predict due to the complexities in the variables that form, erode, and move peat islands. According to these studies, denser peat islands tend to persist longer and maintain morphology allowing them to move over longer distances. Different environmental conditions affect peat displacement, and the process of peat transport is very complex. Wind, flow and location tend to be the main **driving factors** in peat island displacement within reservoirs (Maloney and Bouchard 2005). In areas of open water with long **fetch** distances (Foramec 2006), wind tends to dominate peat island displacement. The location of transported peat islands is related to prevailing wind direction. The grounding of peat islands between shallow islands and sheltered bays may minimize continued displacement and provide conditions for long-term deposition.

Small particles of peat are classified as organic suspended solids. These particles have a lower density than mineral sediment and are heterogeneous, and some particles could be denser than water while some could be less dense than water. It is therefore difficult to predict how much will sink, float or stay in suspension. The wind, flow and where the particles originate are the main factors influencing the fate of these particles. Over long periods of time these particles may settle or breakdown due to bio-chemical processes and become dissolved organics.

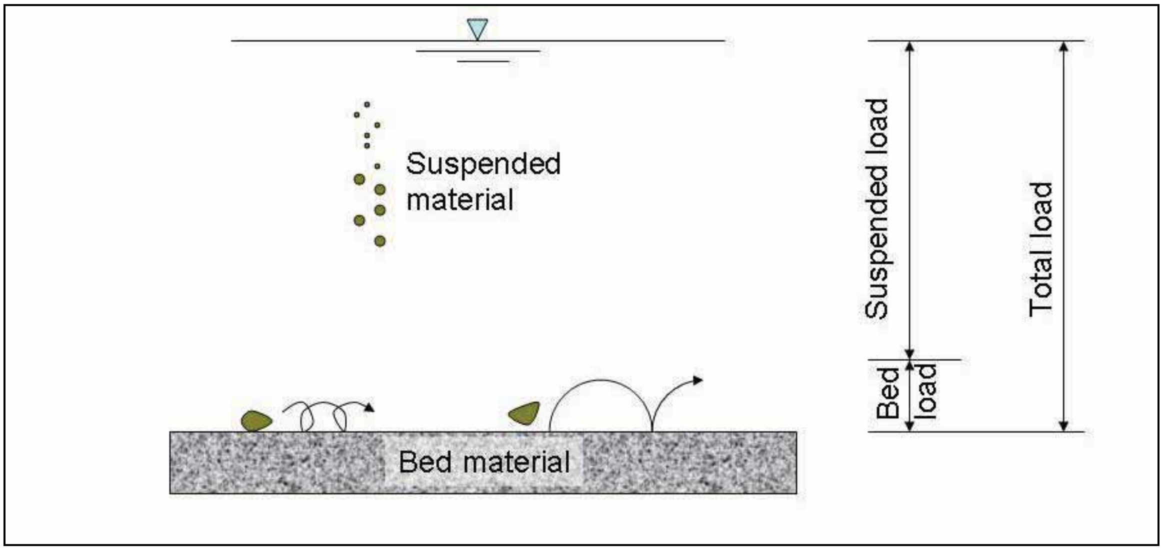

Figure 7.1-1: A Conceptual Diagram of Major Sediment Transport Processes

7.2 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

7.2.1 Overview

Development of the Project will involve alterations to the physical environment, and this includes sedimentation. Changes to, and in sedimentation in the study area will occur in different stages. The present study assesses the sedimentation environment in a comprehensive manner. It does so by addressing both mineral and organic sedimentation as well as peat material transport within the study area under varying stages of development. These stages include the **existing environment**, the construction and operating periods of the Project. This section discusses the existing sedimentation environment and the potential Project impact separately for upstream and downstream **reaches** of the Project. The future sedimentation conditions/trends, (environment without the proposed Project) also receives appropriate attention in the present study.

The transport processes of mineral sediment and peat material are very different and their interaction is complex. No literature could be found that addresses the composite processes of mineral and peat transport. Therefore, this study addresses the transport mechanisms of these two sediment types separately.

Development of the study approach was conducted in close consultation with water regime, **shore** erosion, and **aquatic** assessment study teams. The specific technical approach varied depending upon the type of material being considered and the scenario under study. A detailed description of the **models** used in these analyses is provided in Appendix 7A.

Sedimentation is characterized and assessed for three conditions:

- Past conditions and existing environment.
- Construction period.
- Future conditions/trends.
- Future environment with the Project.

Quantitative sedimentation predictions for the future environment with the Project are provided for time intervals following projected **impoundment** for Year 1, Year 5, Year 15, and Year 30.

7.2.1.1 Sedimentation During Construction Period

Construction activities during river management (*i.e.,* cofferdam construction) will introduce additional sediment into the Nelson River near Gull Rapids due to: i) shoreline erosion as upstream water levels increase, and ii) changes in flow patterns due to placement of material within the river-channel. There is a potential that some of the additional sediment will flow downstream, which may affect the sedimentation environment in Stephens Lake. A preliminary sediment management plan (KGS ACRES 2009) has been developed to assess and address impacts to the sediment environment during the construction of the Project. Computer based modelling was used to quantify the effects of sediment due to construction activities.

Hydraulic and sedimentation modelling of the existing Project environment as well as for the different construction stages of the Project was carried out using the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) model HEC-RAS Version 4.0 (US Army Corps of Engineers 2008). The model developed for assessing the impacts from the construction activities during river management predicted shoreline erosion and subsequent sedimentation by first calculating the change in river hydraulics resulting from cofferdam construction. These hydraulic changes were applied to the riverbed and bank materials, which had been incorporated into the model, and changes in shoreline erosion were calculated. The model estimated the total volume of sediment that would result from shoreline erosion during construction. The estimated total volume was then broken down into **suspended sediment concentration** and **bed load**. A detailed description of the hydraulic and sedimentation model components can be found in Appendix 7A.

In addition, to estimate the potential changes to suspended sediment concentrations due to cofferdam construction activities at the Project site, the model results were assessed at **monitoring** location K-Tu-02, located approximately 1 **km** downstream of Gull Rapids (Map 7.2-1). Construction activities include in-stream work where material is placed in the river to construct the cofferdams as well as the removal of cofferdam.

The one-dimensional HEC-6 numerical model (US Army Corps of Engineers 1993) was applied to assess potential changes in the sedimentation environment in Stephens Lake. The model was formulated based on available water regime information and field data including velocity and depth data, as well as sedimentation data. Predictions of suspended sediment concentrations and sediment deposition in Stephens Lake were carried out by using the numerical model for flow conditions of 4,855 m^3/s (95th **percentile** flow) and 6,358 m^3/s (1:20 Year flood flow). This prediction model utilized the predicted suspended sediment concentrations at K-Tu-02 estimated for shore erosion and cofferdam material loss as discussed above.

7.2.1.2 Mineral Sedimentation During Operating Period

The processes of mineral sedimentation are generally well understood and allow for the use of industry standard numerical modelling tools that can be calibrated using sediment data collected over several years. The Project effects can be determined by comparing the conditions/trends, *i.e.*, the environment without the Project (based on an understanding of the existing environment) to a prediction of future environment with the Project. The information on the existing environment was gathered by collecting sedimentation-related data in the field, by reviewing relevant past field data and reports, and by conducting numerical simulations of the hydraulic and sedimentation environment (mineral) under variable flow conditions.

The sedimentation environment in the future conditions was assessed qualitatively by understanding the existing environment and the possible changes in the driving factors – river morphology, shoreline erosion and water regime.

Prediction of the post-impoundment mineral sedimentation environment upstream of the Project was carried out by using numerical modelling techniques. Depth-averaged mineral **suspended sediment concentration**s were estimated for average (50th percentile) flow for prediction periods of 1 year, 5 years, 15 years and 30 years after impoundment. Sediment concentrations were also predicted for low (5th percentile) and high (95th percentile) flow conditions for periods of 1 year and 5 years after impoundment. While outside the zone of hydraulic influence, a qualitative assessment was carried out for the sedimentation environment in Stephens Lake.

The predicted volumes of eroded shore mineral material under both base loaded and peaking modes of operation for the Project, as presented in Shoreline Erosion – Section 6.0, were utilized in estimating the post-impoundment depth-averaged suspended sediment concentrations.

In addition to the offshore modelling discussed above, a conceptual model was also developed using MIKE21 to study the transport of mineral sediment in the nearshore areas. This small-scale localized model was developed using a representative post-impoundment nearshore **bathymetry** profile in the Keeyask Project area. This nearshore analysis was done to gain an understanding of nearshore sedimentation.

Levels of mineral suspended sediment concentration, bed material load and **total sediment load** recorded in the study area was compared with those of other major river systems in order to understand the sedimentation environment within the study area. There are various levels of concentrations that can be observed in different river systems. For example, according to the information provided in the official websites of City of Winnipeg and Water Survey Canada, the Red River and the Assiniboine River carry high concentrations of suspended sediment. Average concentrations measured from these two rivers are greater than 200 mg/L. Much higher concentrations (in the order of hundreds and thousands of mg/L) are observed in major rivers, such as the Brahmaputra in Bangladesh, the Yangtze in China, and the Szamos in Hungary. Low concentrations (approximately 5 mg/L to 30 mg/L) are observed in the

Burntwood and lower Nelson River systems in northern Manitoba (Acres 2004; Acres 2007b; KGS Acres 2008b; and KGS Acres 2008c).

Bed material transport rate also varies from one river **basin** to another. For example, a study (Sasal *et al.,* 2009) of 17 northern rivers in Canada and Alaska shows that the average transport rate in these rivers is 277 gm/m/sec. This data includes all available samples, not just **bankfull** events. Only 21% of the observed transport rates on these rivers are less than 10 gm/m/sec. A study on the Fraser River (Rennie and Villard 2004) shows that the **gravel** bed Agassiz reach of the river transports bed material load in the order of 100 gm/m/sec.

As discussed above, levels of suspended sediment concentrations and bed material load can vary **significantly** from one river basin to another, which means that the total sediment load also can vary noticeably. Based on information compiled by Meade and Parker in 1984, US Geological Survey (2008) reports that the average annual sediment discharges in major rivers in the United States of America, including Mississippi and Yukon Rivers, are greater than 10 million tonnes per year. In addition, several major rivers outside North America, *e.g.*, Volga in Russia (Korotaev *et al.,* 2004), Danube in Romania (Sinha and Friend 1994), and Indus River Basin in Pakistan (Ali *et al.,* 2004) carry significantly larger sediment discharges. In comparison St. Lawrence River (Meade and Parker 1985) carries low sediment load (average annual sediment discharge of 1.5 million tonnes per year) as the Great Lakes act as the natural sediment trap.

7.2.1.3 Organic Sedimentation During Operating Period

There are no widely used standard numerical models that can be used to predict transport of peat mats or organic suspended solids in reservoirs or rivers. For the purposes of this analysis, specific methods were developed to approximate these processes and are described in Appendix 7A – Model Descriptions.

The characteristics of the existing environment and the future conditions/trends are based on water quality monitoring and general observation of the study area, as well as an understanding of the evolving Shoreline Erosion Processes (Section 6.0).

The determination of Project effects, in terms of the transport and deposition of peat material, the amount, volume and type of organic material generated in the flooded area was obtained from the studies on Shoreline Erosion Processes (Section 6.0). The transport and the general locations of expected deposition were approximated for post-impoundment conditions using numerical modelling and GIS analytical tools. These tools were developed for this study using data on wind and Post-project flow conditions identified in the Surface Water and Ice Regimes Section (Section 4.0).

A simplified spreadsheet analysis was performed to estimate organic suspended sediment concentrations for the future with the Project. The information for **peatland disintegration** presented in Shoreline Erosion Processes (Section 6) was used in this analysis. Settling tests were performed for five representative samples of the peat material expected to cause organic suspended solids. The resulting settling-rate distributions were used to predict the range of potential peak organic suspended solids concentrations in the reservoir.

Qualitative assessments were made for the Post-project peat transport and organic sediment concentration environment downstream of the Project.

7.2.2 Study Area

As shown in Map 7.2-2, the study area extends from Clark Lake to Stephens Lake upstream of Kettle GS and includes reaches beyond the Project's zone of hydraulic influence. This is consistent with the section on erosion processes in that this analysis of sedimentation anticipates the associated indirect effects on the zone's adjacent peatlands and **mineral soils**. The study area was sub-divided into upstream and downstream zones to reflect major differences in Project impacts and Post-project water and **ice regimes**.

The coverage area for the application of the peat transport model extends from Birthday Rapids to the proposed Keeyask GS location, where the flooding of peatlands is expected to occur. This is based on findings from the peatland disintegration studies (Section 6.0), in which mobile peat input is insignificant upstream of Birthday Rapids. Thirteen peat transport zones were originally identified, based on sub-dividing the Post-project reservoir into components consisting of bays and **riverine** environments where peat input is expected to occur (Map 7.2-3) (Section 6.0 – Shoreline Erosion). Organic suspended sediment was analyzed in the same peat zone shown in Map 7.2-3. Although the potential for peat material and organic suspended solids to travel downstream into Stephens Lake, which is beyond the Project's hydraulic zone of influence, was assessed it was not directly modelled.

The study area for mineral sedimentation upstream of the proposed Keeyask GS was divided into nine modelling reaches upstream of the Project. Predictions were developed for each of these reaches as shown in Map 7.2-4. The study area of mineral sedimentation downstream of the GS included Stephens Lake from Gull Rapids to Kettle GS.

7.2.3 Data and Information Sources

7.2.3.1 Mineral Sedimentation

The present study utilizes sedimentation and erosion data collected in the field from 2001 to 2009, and published literature on relevant issues. As well, to support aquatic habitat studies suspended sediment concentrations were measured near the water surface (at approximately 30 cm below), and collected bed material samples in the open water period of 2001 to 2004 as a component of the water quality monitoring program (see Aquatic Environment Supporting Volume (AE SV)).

More extensive sedimentation and erosion data was collected in the open water months of 2005 to 2007. Maps 7C.1-1 to 7C.1-8 in Appendix C show the monitoring locations. Manitoba Hydro conducted a sedimentation and erosion data collection campaign from mid-August to early October in 2005 (Manitoba Hydro 2006). During this campaign, water samples were collected to measure suspended sediment concentrations at variable depths over several sections across the river and lake within the study area (Appendix 7C). Bedload was measured at all sediment measurement locations. In 2005, sample collection and measurements were carried out only once at each measurement location.

In 2006 and 2007, the **scope** of data collection was expanded (Acres 2007a and KGS ACRES 2008a). Water samples were collected for suspended sediment concentration measurements as well as for particulate size analysis at variable depths at several measurement locations (Appendix 7C). Bed samples were collected along with bedload measurements at selected sections upstream and downstream of Gull Rapids. These bed load measurements were taken monthly from June 2006 to October 2006 as well as from June 2007 to September 2007.

Water samples were collected for suspended sediment concentration measurement in the winter months (January to April) of 2008 and 2009 at five monitoring sites in Gull Lake and Stephens Lake. The samples were taken by drilling through the ice cover at locations that had been considered safe for monitoring. Map 7D.1-1 in Appendix 7D shows the locations of winter monitoring within the study area.

Sediment coring programs were carried out in Gull Lake and in Stephens Lake in 2006 and 2007 (JD Mollard and Associates 2009). The coring program in Gull Lake was conducted in April 2006 at four **transect** locations approximately 10.2 km to 14.4 km upstream of Gull Rapids. Three of the four transect locations are located on the south shore of the lake, with the fourth located on the north shore. In the winter months of 2006 and 2007, 31 nearshore **sediment cores** were collected from eight transect sites in Stephens Lake to investigate nearshore sedimentation rates and sediment characteristics in the impounded reservoir. Samples were collected in water depths of 1 m to 14 m and at distances of approximately 25 m to 200 m offshore. Stephens Lake was impounded in 1971 following construction of the Kettle Rapids GS.

Since 2004, several field trips have been carried out by the study team members to conduct sedimentation related field observations.

7.2.3.2 Peat Transport

No field based data collection program was specifically undertaken to obtain peat transport related information. A predictive peat transport model was developed using general assumptions regarding transport by wind-induced currents during the main open water period. The peat transport model is based on very limited literature relating to peatland resurfacing and monitoring within reservoirs. Extensive documentation from recently begun monitoring programs by Hydro-Québec has produced preliminary findings. These initial findings were used in the predictive modelling of peatland displacement and deposition. An assessment of the quantity of post-flooding peat available for transport is considered in the Shoreline Erosion Processes Section of this volume. A detailed description of the model can be found in Appendix 7A.

The study of peat transport carried out for this assessment utilized the hourly continuous wind direction (in bearings north) and speed data for the period 1971 to 2002 obtained from Environment Canada for the nearest location at Gillam Airport, Manitoba. The flow information was obtained from the Surface Water Regime and Ice Processes Section (Section 4.0).

7.2.3.3 Construction Period

Hydrometric data that was used to develop and calibrate the sedimentation models is described in the Surface Water Regime and Ice Processes Section (Section 4).

Existing environment and Post-project Digital Terrain Models (DTM) developed from the bathymetric and topographic data sets were used to develop the hydraulic model (see Surface Water and Ice Regimes Section for details). For modelling of the construction period the geometry from the existing environment was modified to depict the various stages of the river management activities.

The physical characteristics of the Nelson River bed and bank material was required for HEC-RAS sedimentation model (*e.g.*, soil type, grain size distribution, etc.) in order to simulate the sedimentation processes. This information was collected from various sources (*e.g.*, borehole logs, shoreline sampling, visual observation, etc.) and a detailed list of this information sources can be found in Section 6.2.3 of the Shoreline Erosion Processes.

Modelling results from physical model and three dimensional numerical hydraulic model (Section 4.2.5 Description of Numerical Models and Methods) were used to calibrate the HEC-RAS model. A detailed description of the model calibration and verification can be found in Appendix 7A.

The HEC-6 sedimentation modelling for Stephens Lake used several types of field data including velocity and depth measurements carried out in August 2007 (Environment Illimite 2009), and sedimentation data collected in the open water months of 2005 to 2007. Map 7.2-1 shows the sedimentation monitoring locations. A brief discussion on the sedimentation data collection campaign is presented in Section 7.2.3.1.

7.2.4 Assumptions

Several assumptions underpin these sedimentation assessments. The model descriptions found in Appendix 7A outline the assumptions that are relevant to each specific topic. The following general assumptions relate to the overall study approach:

- In the absence of substantial historic sedimentation data, it is assumed that the data collected in the period of 2005 to 2009 represents typical ranges of sedimentation in the study area.
- Climate changes are not considered.
- No catastrophic natural events (*e.g.,* earthquake, flood, landslides) will occur in the future.

7.2.5 Description of Models

The assessments of probable impacts of the proposed Keeyask GS on the sedimentation environment involved detailed numerical modelling techniques, which included utilization of a two-dimensional modelling tool (MIKE21) as well as one-dimensional modelling tools (HEC-6 and HEC-RAS). The modelling methodology developed to ensure the outcomes of the assessment required the formulation and application of several models. The following discussions provide brief descriptions of the models that were applied in this sedimentation study. Detailed discussions on the modelling approaches are presented in Appendix 7A.

7.2.5.1 Mineral Sedimentation

Three different models were developed in MIKE21 to assess the overall mineral sedimentation environment in the Project area. Existing sedimentation environment model, Post-project sedimentation environment model, and Post-project nearshore sedimentation model. In setting up these different models, several key data sets were required including existing bathymetry, existing and Post-project water level and flow regime, existing shoreline polygons, sedimentation related field data collected in the past, existing mineral sediment loads, Post-project shorelines and polygons, and Post-project mineral sediment loads.

The study area utilized in this exercise extended from the outlet of Clark Lake to the proposed location of the Keeyask GS at Gull Rapids. Based on the requirements of several studies, including assessments of **mineral erosion**, peat disintegration, and the **aquatic environment**, the study area was divided into nine reaches, as shown in Map 7.2-4. Each of these reaches is further sub-divided into north nearshore, offshore, and south nearshore sub-reaches (Map 7.2-4). Based on the requirements of the aquatic assessments, nearshore was defined in this study as the 3 m water depth contour relative to the 95th percentile water level of the proposed Keeyask reservoir.

The existing sedimentation environment model was developed using the existing bathymetric and topographic information and its hydrodynamic performance was calibrated and validated under variable hydraulic conditions. After the hydrodynamic component of the model had been calibrated, work was then undertaken on the calibration and validation of the sedimentation module. The sedimentation model was set up and run to simulate the sediment concentrations for June 2006 for calibration and for four different months during the 2005 and 2006 open water periods for validation. The model results were then compared to the field data collected from 10 measurement locations over this month. Once the model was calibrated and validated, the existing sedimentation environment was then simulated for low, medium and high openwater flow conditions.

The Post-project sedimentation environment model was developed to simulate the sedimentation environment after impoundment and assess the Project impact under variable flow conditions. In developing the Post-project model, several modifications were made to the existing environment model to include Post-project shorelines, newly inundated areas, and Post-project mineral sediment load that would be eroded from the new shore line. The Post-project sedimentation environment was simulated under low, medium and high open water flow conditions for different time frames of 1 year, 5 years, 15 years and 30 years after impoundment.

A conceptual model was also developed to study the transport of mineral sediment in the nearshore areas. This small scale localized model was developed using a representative post-impoundment nearshore bathymetry profile in the Project area. This conceptual model considered a nearshore reach of depth ranging from 1 m to 2.2 m. The hydraulic condition simulated for the model provides an alongshore flow velocity of about 0.1 m/s, which is similar to the Post-project flow regime in the nearshore area in the Keeyask reservoir. A sediment source which injects a representative concentration was added into the system, assuming a relatively large volume of short-term eroded material input from the shore. A sensitivity test was carried out to study the effect of the location of the injection point on the model results. The distance of the sediment injection point from the shoreline was varied from 15 m to 50 m. The mean size of eroded shore material utilized in the model is 0.06 mm representing coarse shore material which constitutes more than 95% of the Post-project eroded material.

In addition to the existing and Post-project mineral sedimentation modelling as briefly discussed above, one-dimensional modelling activities using HEC-RAS were carried out to assess the erosion potential from potential shore erosion during construction in the vicinity of Gull Rapids. This modelling activity included simulation of hydraulic and sedimentation conditions during Stage I and Stage II instream construction activities under 95th percentile and 1:20 year flow conditions. Potential of mineral sediment input from cofferdam construction was assessed based on engineering judgement, previous construction project experience and conservative assumptions. Probable impacts of erosion during construction in Stephens Lake were assessed using a one-dimensional model HEC-6, which spans from downstream of the proposed Keeyask GS to Kettle GS. The model was used to assess transport of additional sediment, which may result from construction activities, within Stephens Lake.

7.2.5.2 Peat Transport

The predictive peat transport model was developed using general assumptions regarding transport by wind induced current during the main open water period. Utilizing organic sediment loads derived from field studies and partitioned into the predetermined zones, the model incorporated a two-dimensional hydraulic model and ArcGIS software tools to assess general direction and nearshore deposition within specific Post-project time periods. The peat transport model, which is a conceptual formulation based on linear displacement dominated by wind induced current, assesses peat transport and deposition. This scenario relates to the 50th percentile of potential events such as wind direction. The peat transport model could not be verified due to the absence of relevant field data from any existing reservoirs. However, the logical mechanisms of peat transport processes and variables input with assumptions incorporated in the model have been peer reviewed and also presented at a technical conference for discussions and feedback.

The potential ranges of organic suspended sediment concentrations were estimated using spreadsheet calculations based on estimation of the annual peat load that becomes a suspended peat load entering the water column each hour during the open-water period and settling properties of peat material from the study area. The peatland disintegration analysis (Section 6.0) quantified the total mass of **peat resurfacing** and shoreline breakdown for the Year 2-5 operation period as a whole. This mass was prorated to obtain annual loadings assuming the greatest fraction of the mass enters in Year 2 and decreasing amounts enter each subsequent year for Years 3, 4, and 5. Settling properties of peat were determined from settling tests performed on five representative peat samples from the study area. Predicted changes in organic suspended sediment concentrations due to the Project are reported for the peat sample that results in the highest concentration increases.

7.3 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The environmental setting has been described based on available background data and the information collected in the course of the EIA studies.

The environmental setting has been influenced by past **hydroelectric** development in northern Manitoba, particularly **Lake Winnipeg Regulation** (LWR) and the **Churchill River Diversion** (CRD). The water regime section of the Physical Environment Supporting Volume (PE SV) describes the nature of the changes in the flow regime, which is a key **driver** of the sedimentation related processes. The CRD was constructed in 1977, diverting water from the Churchill River into the Burntwood River and eventually into Split Lake. The amount of water diverted into Split Lake fluctuates monthly and annually between 400 m^3/s and 1,000 m^3/s.

A small amount of sedimentation information is available in the water bodies upstream (Split Lake) and downstream (Stephens Lake), with no relevant information in the open water hydraulic zone of influence from the Keeyask Project. Lack of sufficient information does not allow a complete understanding of the sedimentation environment in the Keeyask Project study area prior to LWR and the CRD.

Playle reported suspended sediment concentration field data collected in Split Lake in the period of 1972 to 1976 (Playle 1986). According to the dataset, the concentrations varied from 4 mg/L to 32 mg/L with an average of approximately 15 mg/l in the open water months (May to October), while the concentrations ranged from 5 mg/L to 12 mg/L averaging approximately 9 mg/l in the winter months. The same report also included data from 1977 to 1984 in Split Lake. The suspended sediment concentrations were reported to vary from 5 mg/l to 25 mg/l with an average of approximately 10 mg/L to 11 mg/L both the in open water and winter months.

Based on the data collected in the Kettle reservoir in the period of 1972 to 1974 (Penner *et al.,* 1975) reported the suspended sediment concentrations range from 1 mg/L to 32 mg/L, with an average of approximately 12 mg/L in the open water period. Only two concentration results (17 mg/L and 53 mg/L) were reported for the winter months of 1972-73 (Penner *et al.,* 1975).

Northwest Hydraulic Consultant (1987) carried out an assessment study of the impact of the CRD on the sedimentation environment. The study commented that the available data were insufficient to give an adequate picture of the situation along the CRD and that a more intensive program, in respect of both timing and spacing, would be required over at least one year. The study concluded, however, that the transported sediment volumes were found to be in the order of 10 times greater than pre-diversion because of the much larger volume of water, with the sediment concentrations along the CRD remaining substantially unaltered from the pre-diversion period.

7.3.1 Existing Conditions

This section includes a consideration of existing conditions of mineral and organic sedimentation in the study area. The analysis of mineral sedimentation includes the following:

- Suspended sediment concentrations in deep water as well as in nearshore areas.
- Bedload.
- Sediment budget.

The assessment of organic sedimentation includes the following:

- Peat transport (large mats or chunks of peat).
- Organic suspended solids (smaller particles of peat).

7.3.1.1 Mineral Sedimentation – Upstream of Project

Mineral sediment processes in the study area are based on the available information discussed in Section 7.2.3 as well as the results from the existing environment sedimentation modelling. A more detailed discussion of mineral sedimentation in the study area is provided in Appendix 7B.

7.3.1.1.1 Mineral Sediment Concentration

A summary of the results of the extensive monitoring program from 2005 to 2007 is shown in Table 7.3-1 and a more detailed summary for each year is shown in Appendix 7E – Tables 7E.1-1 to 7E.1-3. The data shows that the suspended sediment concentration is consistently within the range of 5 mg/L to 30 mg/L with the mean in the range of 13 mg/L to 19 mg/L. The sampling locations are shown in Appendix 7C.

A model was developed (Appendix 7A) and calibrated to the suspended sediment concentrations measured in the field. This modelling exercise provides a greater understanding of the factors influencing mineral concentration. The modelling also provides estimates of suspended sediment concentrations and their spatial variation throughout the study area. However, it should be noted that suspended sediment concentrations under very low flow conditions have not been monitored in the field as the flows during the monitoring years of 2005 to 2009 were high. Therefore, high uncertainties are involved in the results for low (5th percentile) flow.

Based on the model results, field data and observations, and a review of previous reports, the mineral sedimentation in the upstream reach of the study area can be characterized as follows (Maps 7.3-1 and 7.3-2).

General Observations for Upstream Study Area

In general, suspended sediment concentration is low and remains within the range of 5 mg/L to 30 mg/L under variable flow conditions. The changes in concentrations within the range of 5 mg/L to 30 mg/L are unlikely to be visually noticeable in the field.

A comparison of suspended sediment concentration data collected from 2005 to 2007 shows that average concentration in the high flow year of 2005 was marginally higher than in 2006 and 2007. However, a close investigation of this data shows that the measured suspended sediment concentrations have poor correlation with instantaneous discharges and the relationship between concentration and discharge is complicated as discussed further in Appendix 7B.

Analysis of the particulate size of suspended material collected in the open water period reveals that the suspended sediments are generally composed of clay and silt as well as some fine **sand** particles. This is true for both the riverine reach downstream of Split Lake, as well as the **lacustrine** locations in Split Lake and Stephens Lake.

Table 7.3–1: Range of Suspended Sediment Concentration Measurements for 2005, 2006 and 2007 (Openwater)

Sampling Location	No. of Samples	Minimum Concentration mg/L	Average Concentration mg/L	Median Concentration mg/L	Maximum Concentration mg/L
K-S-8 (entrance to Clark Lake)	146	5.2	14.2	13.0	27.4
K-S-9 (exit of Clark Lake)	145	6.4	15.3	16.0	27.7
K-S-10 (between Clark Lake and Birthday Rapids)	70	14.4	19.1	19.0	23.8
K-S-1 (downstream of Birthday Rapids)	107	7.8	13.8	12.2	22.6
K-S-11 (upstream of Gull Lake)	10	16.8	19.8	18.7	29.2
K-S-2 (entrance to Gull Lake)	145	5.0	13.2	11.4	30.6
K-S-3 (Gull Lake)	209	8.2	16.1	16.1	26.9
K-S-4 (Gull Lake – south channel)	148	5.6	15.6	15.2	28.5
K-S-5 (Gull Lake – north channel)	142	7.0	14.8	15.6	25.6
K-S-6 (upstream of Gull Rapids)	240	6.0	15.2	15.3	28.7
K-S-7 (downstream of Gull Rapids)	226	3.2	14.3	14.6	29.5

There is little correlation between suspended sediment concentration levels and water depth. This is expected for **washload** of fine particulate, which should be well mixed in fluvial environments, and is an indication that the suspended material is not transported bed material. Furthermore, field data show that suspended sediment concentration does not vary substantially across the width of the Nelson River, typically only varying by as much as 5 mg/L.

Suspended sediment concentration measurements during the winter months (January to April), of 2008 and 2009 show that concentration variations are larger than during the open water period. A limited data-set collected at monitoring locations in Gull Lake shows a concentration range of 3 mg/L to 84 mg/L, with an average of 14.6 mg/L.

Observations of nearshore suspended sediment concentration levels measured during data collection in the open water months of 2005 to 2007 shows that the suspended sediment concentrations remain generally within the range of 2 mg/L to 35 mg/L. However, a few high concentrations (60 mg/L to 125 mg/L), have also been observed in the nearshore areas. An example of a sediment **plume** with high concentration of suspended sediment in the nearshore area is shown in Photo 7.3-1. The occurrence of these high concentrations, are likely a result of local disturbances and maintain for a relatively short **duration**, as the driving factors *e.g.*, high wind events, wave actions, failure of shoreline material usually occur over a short period, *i.e.*, hours as opposed to days.

Spatial variations of suspended sediment concentrations are discussed below for the study area from Clark Lake outlet (Reach 2) to Gull Rapids (Reach 9). No discussion for Clark Lake (Reach 1) is included herein as it is situated outside the hydraulic zone of influence.

Clark Lake Outlet to Birthday Rapids (Reaches 2 and 3)

Field data demonstrate that as the flow in the Nelson River increases the suspended sediment concentration level also tends to increase within this reach. The 5th percentile flow transports a sediment concentration range of 5 mg/L to 20 mg/L. This estimate for a comparable low flow condition could not be verified in the field because low flow conditions did not occur during the data collection period. The 50th percentile flow condition carries a sediment concentration range of 5 mg/L to 25 mg/L, with a mean concentration of approximately 13 mg/L. This sediment originates primarily from water bodies upstream of the Project area. The 95th percentile flow condition carries a higher sediment load due to increased flow velocity, thus higher excess shear stress. The estimated mean concentration in this riverine reach under such high flow conditions is approximately 22 mg/L.

Birthday Rapids to Inlet of Gull Lake (Reaches 4 and 5)

Sediment concentration generally remains low as the area immediately downstream of the **rapids** is shallow **bedrock**. There is little opportunity for the river to replenish the sediment load for some distance downstream of Birthday Rapids. The 5th percentile flow transports a sediment concentration range of 5 mg/L to 20 mg/L. As noted above, this estimation for a comparable low flow condition could not be verified in the field. The 50th percentile flow condition carries a sediment concentration range of 5 mg/L to 25 mg/L, with a mean concentration of about 10 mg/L. The 95th percentile flow condition carries a similar concentration range, with a mean concentration of about 17 mg/L.

Gull Lake (Reach 6)

As the flow enters Gull Lake (Reach 6), the velocity dissipates. This process of **energy** dissipation occurs over the lake bottom of lacustrine clay. The finer bed material is re-suspended and becomes entrained, thereby resulting in relatively higher concentrations over a distance of approximately 2 km within the upstream reach of the lake. It is quite possible; however, that clay on the lake bottom is consolidated and therefore would have a higher critical shear stress than that was considered in the estimation for clay.

The suspended sediment concentrations tend to drop with decreasing flow velocity, thereby further reducing concentrations as the flow travels downstream. The 5th percentile flow is estimated to transport a sediment concentration range of 5 mg/L to 20 mg/L. As noted above, this estimation for a comparable low flow condition could not be verified in the field. The 50th percentile flow condition carries a sediment concentration range of 5 mg/L to 30 mg/L, with a mean concentration of about 10 mg/L. The 95th percentile flow condition carries a sediment concentration range of 5 mg/L to 25 mg/L, with a mean concentration of approximately 15 mg/L.

Caribou Island to Gull Rapids (Reaches 7, 8 and 9)

Sediment concentrations are similar to that in Gull Lake for the 5th and 50th percentile flow conditions. However, during higher flow conditions (95th percentile), sediment concentrations increase marginally, due to excess shear stress and possible entrainment of sediment into the water column.

Photo 7.3-1: An Example of High Suspended Sediment Concentration in Nearshore Areas (Photo Taken by Lynden Penner in 2004)

7.3.1.1.2 Bedload and Bed Material

A number of observations can be made based on the measurements of bedload and bed material (more details on the bedload sampling is found in Appendix E, Table 7E.1-4), in the upstream reach of the study area. While there are insufficient samples to estimate an annual bedload discharge, the samples collected in 2006 and 2007, suggest an average bedload transport rate of approximately 4 gm/m/sec. Considering that the vast majority of samples yielded zero bedload, average bedload transport rate was only ~0.1 g/m/s. Other than the sand collected as bedload in the centre of the channel upstream of Gull Rapids (K-S-06) in 2007, bedload samples included fine gravel. Thus the measured bedload was bed material transport, not near bed suspended washload. The bed material in transport was likely eroded locally from channel banks. Both Newbury (1968) and Penner *et al.,* (1975) described the bed of the lower Nelson River as comprised of **cobbles** and **boulders**. Newbury observed a paved bed surface consisting of cobbles with a mean diameter of 0.3 m in the vicinity of both Gull Rapids and Kettle Rapids. The bed of the riverine portion of the study area is likely very coarse with a few pockets of **alluvial** sand and gravel. The Aquatic Habitat Mapping (Volume 6) also indicated areas of cobbles in the main channel of Gull Lake.

7.3.1.1.3 Total Mineral Sediment Load

In order to assess the sediment load carried though the study area by the Nelson river in the recent past, estimates of **sediment budget** at monitoring locations downstream of Clark Lake (K-S-09) and upstream of Gull Rapids (K-S-06) were undertaken for the periods of 2005, 2006 and 2007 (Appendix 7C for locations of sample stations).

Based on the sediment load analysis, the total suspended loads passing through the study area in 2005, 2006 and 2007 were estimated to be 3.1 million tonnes per year, 1.9 million tonnes per year and 1.5 million tonnes per year, respectively. According to the load estimates at the monitoring locations K-S-09 and K-S-06, no significant deposition or accumulation occurred in the study area in 2005, 2006 and 2007.

The absence of deposition or accumulation of sediment in the study area under the relatively high flow conditions of 2005 to 2007 suggests that the suspended material, which is predominantly washload, **advected** through the Nelson River reach from downstream of the exit of Clark Lake to Gull Rapids.

The estimated sediment load for 50th percentile flow of 3,057 m^3/s is approximately 1.0 million tonnes per year. In comparison to other major rivers as discussed in Section 7.2.1.2, the Nelson River carries a relatively low sediment load.

7.3.1.1.4 Mineral Sediment Deposition

Coring investigations revealed that where deposition occurs in nearshore shallow areas, the deposited sediment generally consists of predominantly silty sand with some organic deposit. In **shore zones** where flow velocities are higher (*i.e.*, coring locations on the south shore of the lake) sediment thicknesses of up to approximately 30 cm occur within a distance of approximately 50 m from the shore. Gravel bed material was encountered farther offshore in these high velocity areas. In tranquil water areas (*i.e.*, the north shore coring site), sediment thickness of 25 cm to 50 cm were encountered up to 150 m offshore. These general observations are likely applicable for the rest of Gull Lake. In absence of a reliable chronological marker within the sediment cores that were collected in Gull Lake, it is not possible to determine the rate of deposition in the existing environment. Based on the total sediment load that passed through the study area in 2005 to 2007, it is unlikely that any appreciable sediment deposition occurred in those years.

According to the information gathered from the **substrate** data collection program, the substrate in the **lotic** zone of the lake is rock with some presence of soft mud at places. The exception is the north channel, which has sandy substrate. In the **lentic** zone, however, it is mostly silt and clay (see existing environment substrate map, AESV). This is consistent with the coring results described above.

7.3.1.2 Mineral Sedimentation – Downstream of Project

7.3.1.2.1 Mineral Sediment Concentration

Average concentrations at Stephens Lake sites ranged from 3 mg/L to 15 mg/L in the open water months of 2005 to 2007 with an overall average of approximately 9 mg/L, as shown in Table 7.3-2. The average concentration at a monitoring location (SL-S-06) in the immediate reservoir of the Kettle GS was approximately 7 mg/L during the same monitoring period. The concentrations in Stephens Lake decrease in the stream wise direction because some of the relatively coarser particles transported by the Nelson River settles in Stephens Lake.

Water samples that were collected in the winter months of 2008 and 2009 show that the range of suspended sediment concentrations varied in Stephens Lake from 5 mg/L to 156 mg/L, with an average of 40.5 mg/L. The occurrence of high concentration was likely due to the active shoreline erosion resulting from the ice dam in the reach immediately downstream of Gull Rapids. Under present conditions, the large hanging dam that typically occurs in this area results in large amounts of erosion on the river's banks in the winter. The large volumes of ice that collects in this area also lead to some redirection of flow and the occasional formation of new channel segments. The localized erosion of these banks and channels may increase the overall suspended sediment concentrations in this area, and may lead to some seasonally increased deposition rates within Stephen's Lake. Suspended sediment concentrations at monitoring location SL-S-06, which is approximately 4 km upstream of Kettle GS, showed a range of 5 mg/L to 40 mg/L, with an average of 15 mg/L in the winter months of 2008 and 2009. See Appendix 7C for location of SL-S-06.

7.3.1.2.2 Bedload and Bed Material

As discussed in Section 7.3.1.1, bed material transport rates from upstream of Gull Rapids are relatively low. The largest recorded transport rate of 13 gm/m/sec was at the monitoring location K-S-07d downstream of Gull Rapids in July of 2006. See Appendix 7C for location of K-S-07d.

The aquatic habitat mapping (AE SV) indicates that the substrate downstream of Gull Rapids consists mostly of cobble and gravel. However, after a certain distance, the substrate changes to silt, even in the lotic area along the old river channel. The Kettle reservoir today is mostly silt depositional area.

Table 7.3–2: Average Suspended Sediment Concentrations in Stephens Lake (Based on all Available 2005-2007 Samples for Each Station in Stephens Lake)

Sampling Location	No of Samples	Minimum Concentration mg/L	Average Concentration mg/L	Median Concentration mg/L	Maximum Concentration mg/L
SL-S-01	45	1.0	3.5	3.2	11.6
SL-S-02	47	2.0	6.6	6.0	15.2
SL-S-03 (K-Tu-01)	44	8.2	14.1	13.9	22.2
SL-S-04	47	5.6	11.5	11.4	23.0
SL-S-05	49	4.4	11.2	10.7	32.0
SL-S-06 (K-Tu-06)	50	2.4	7.5	7.2	16.0

7.3.1.2.3 Total Mineral Sediment Load

Total annual suspended sediment load upstream of the Kettle GS has been estimated in 2005 and 2006 to be 1.2 million tonnes and 0.8 million tonnes respectively. Total sediment loads entering Stephens Lake in 2005 and 2006 were estimated to be 3.1 million tonnes and 1.9 million tonnes respectively. This shows that approximately 1.9 million tonnes and 1.1 million tonnes of sediment were deposited in Stephens Lake in 2005 and 2006 respectively.

7.3.1.2.4 Mineral Sediment Deposition

The substrate immediately downstream of Gull Rapids consists mostly of cobble and gravel. However, after a certain distance, the substrate changes to silt even in the lotic area along the old river channel. Stephens Lake today is mostly a silt depositional area.

An analysis of the cores recovered in Stephens Lake demonstrates that the history of sedimentation at these sampling sites is complex. Much of the sediment apparently originates from the erosion of banks adjacent to the coring transects. The transects also show a general fining of grain sizes with increasing water depth and distance from shore, except where surveys indicate steeper sub-surface slopes.

Compared to sites under lentic conditions, lotic sites exhibited lower deposition rates, at the farthest offshore sites (approximately150 m to 200 m offshore). Sedimentation rates range from 0 cm/y to 2.4 cm/y based on recovered core thicknesses and on a 35 year period since impoundment of Stephens Lake. In the absence of any chronological controls within the cores, it is not possible to estimate the sedimentation rates for mineral and organic sediments separately.

7.3.1.3 Peat Sedimentation – Upstream of Project

7.3.1.3.1 Peat Transport

The analysis of results from field observations suggest that small amounts of organic sediment and floating peat are generated in the existing environment from shoreline erosion processes within the study area between Birthday Rapids and Gull Rapids. Upstream of Birthday Rapids there are very few peat banks, therefore this area has a negligible contribution to peat that is transported in the existing environment. Based on the field observations, the section between Birthday Rapids and Gull Rapids does not generate measurable amounts of mobile peat caused by shoreline erosion. However, infrequent short-term events such as ice damming, high water levels and forest fires may cause disintegration of mobile peat from shorelines that would not contribute mobile peat under more typical conditions.

7.3.1.3.2 Organic Suspended Sediment Concentration

In the existing environment, organics in the water column are typically present in a dissolved form, not as suspended solids. Water quality test results obtained for baseline aquatic studies (documented in the AE SV) show that the concentration of suspended organic carbon is typically less than 1 mg/L and may regularly be near 0 mg/L. Given that organic carbon likely comprises about 50% of the mass of suspended organic solids, the amount of organic suspended sediment concentration in the existing environment would typically range from 0 mg/L to 2 mg/L. This is confirmed by results of lab tests on water samples from the study area that were obtained during baseline monitoring of sedimentation processes. Samples were tested to measure concentrations of volatile suspended solids, which provides an approximate measure of organic suspended sediment concentrations. Average concentrations of volatile suspended solids were less than 2 mg/L (*i.e.,* below the laboratory detection limit) at 70% of the sites tested while the remaining 30% had an average reported concentration of 2 mg/L.

7.3.1.3.3 Organic Sediment Deposition

Based on the low levels of peat transport and organic suspended sediment concentration, little organic sediment deposition occurs in the existing upstream environment.

7.3.1.4 Peat Sedimentation – Downstream of Project

7.3.1.4.1 Peat Transport

Further downstream in Stephens Lake, field observations indicate that floating peat mats are most often found in sheltered areas. Mobile peat mats that are not trapped in sheltered bay areas are likely to move further downstream.

7.3.1.4.2 Organic Suspended Sediment Concentration

Like the upstream reach, water quality test results showed very low levels of organic suspended sediment were present in the downstream area, with typical concentrations likely ranging from 0 mg/L to 2 mg/L.

7.3.1.4.3 Organic Sediment Deposition

Analysis of sediment cores recovered from Stephens Lake shows that a higher percentage of the cores consist of organic rich sediment in the lentic zone. The sediment deposition in the nearshore zone and the ratio of mineral-rich to organic-rich sediment are a function of the erosion rate and height of the eroding bank, the thickness of peat over mineral soil in the bank, the flow velocity, and the offshore distance from the bank to the sampling site. The sedimentation rates of 0 cm/y to 2.4 cm/y, as discussed in Section 7.3.1.2, include both mineral and organic sediments. In absence of any chronological controls within the cores, it is not possible to estimate the sedimentation rates for mineral and organic sediments separately.

7.3.2 Future Conditions/Trends

7.3.2.1 Mineral Sedimentation

A **qualitative analysis** was carried out to assess potential changes in the future sedimentation environment. The study included a qualitative assessment of possible changes in the driving factors, including River Morphology, Shoreline Erosion (Section 6.0) and Water Regime (Section 4.0) of PE SV, which may influence future sedimentation environment. This assessment is described in Appendix 7B.

The following key assumptions, in addition to the general assumptions listed in Section 7.2.4, were made in the analysis:

- No human-induced changes (*e.g.*, construction of **dam**, diversion of channel) will take place in the study area.
- The **watershed** will not undergo any significant changes.
- Future flow regime in the study area will remain the same as in the past flow regime.

The factors that drive sedimentation processes are not expected to change in the future conditions. Therefore, it is expected that the future will generate sedimentation conditions and rates similar to those found in the existing environment.

7.3.2.2 Peat Sedimentation – Upstream and Downstream of Project

As discussed in the Shoreline Erosion Processes (Section 6.0) of the PE SV, the disintegration of peat banks in the future conditions would be minimal, thereby generating a statistically insignificant amount of mobile peat.

Organic suspended sediment concentrations and deposition of peat will remain low in the future conditions.

7.4 PROJECT EFFECTS, MITIGATION AND MONITORING

The section will describe the effects of the Project on the sedimentation processes during construction and operation of the Project. Mineral and peat sedimentation processes upstream and downstream of the Project are discussed.

7.4.1 Construction Period

A two-stage program is planned to divert the Nelson River in order to construct the Project at Gull Rapids. The first stage involves blocking off the north and central channels of Gull Rapids to facilitate construction of the central dam and **powerhouse** cofferdams (see maps in surface water regime and ice processes). Also included in the first stage is the construction of a U-shaped cofferdam (**spillway** cofferdam) along the north bank of the south channel that will divert the river towards the southern bank and permit construction of the spillway structure and spillway approach and discharge channels. The second stage of diversion will involve removal of the spillway cofferdam, which will allow the river to flow through the partially completed spillway, and construction of the south dam cofferdams across the southern portion of the river. Additional details of the planned construction can be found in the Project Description Supporting Volume (PD SV). Additional details of the Project effects on water levels, velocities, and ice during the construction phase can be found in Section 4 of the PE SV.

The assessment discussed herein characterizes the potential to introduce additional mineral sediment load to the Nelson River due to cofferdam construction and shoreline erosion during construction and to determine the effect of the additional sediment load on the downstream area, particularly Stephens Lake. The potential addition of organic sediments during construction due to flooded peat has not been estimated as there is no practical means to estimate effects of incremental **staging** on peatlands, though it is expected to be low. During Stage I of construction the water level staging is limited (Surface Water and Ice Regimes, Section 4), primarily affecting mineral shorelines. In Stage II, the level of staging is also limited until the end of this stage when the reservoir is fully impounded and operation begins. The effects on peat during Stage II are integrated into the discussion of Project effects during Year 1 of operation.

The assessments discussed herein are based on an assumed construction schedule and construction methodology. Appropriate measures will be incorporated in the final construction methodology and schedule in order to meet the regulatory requirements. The study results presented herein have been obtained using conservative analytical techniques and assumptions.

7.4.1.1 Stage I Diversion

7.4.1.1.1 Gull Rapids to Inlet of Stephens Lake

As described in the Section 6 of the PE SV, construction activities will have the potential to cause shoreline erosion upstream of the spillway cofferdam along the south channel of the Nelson River at Gull Rapids. It is predicted that the additional sediments introduced into the river could potentially elevate the sediment concentrations by 3 mg/L to 7 mg/L in the Nelson River approximately 1 km downstream of Gull Rapids at the K-Tu-02 monitoring location for both the 95th percentile and 1:20 year flood conditions. A range estimate has been predicted due to the complexity and uncertainties of the sedimentation analyses. The peak sediment concentration increase during spillway cofferdam construction is assumed to occur within the first few days of Stage I diversion and tapers gradually over the following weeks, with subsequent small increases during different stages of construction (Figure 7.4-1). A detailed description of the sedimentation analyses for Stage I diversion can be found in Appendix 7A.

A simplified assessment was carried out, as discussed in Appendix 7A, to estimate the elevated suspended sediment concentrations at the K-Tu-02 monitoring location that may result due to the placement of material in the river during cofferdam construction and subsequent removal of the cofferdam material from the river. The estimated sediment concentrations are based on professional judgment and experience, utilizing conservative assumptions. It is predicted that the increase in suspended sediment concentrations at K-Tu-02 due to cofferdam construction and removal activities will be small, up to 4 mg/L, for cofferdam construction in 2014 and 2015 and spillway cofferdam removal in 2017. The small increase is primarily due to the mitigation measures that were considered in the engineering design of the proposed cofferdams and their construction methodologies.

7.4.1.1.2 Stephens Lake

As discussed above, the Stage I construction activities may result in an additional suspended sediment concentration at monitoring location K-Tu-02. It is predicted that approximately 30% of this additional sediment concentration will likely be deposited before the flow reaches Kettle GS. Most of the sediment will be deposited in a 5 km section near monitoring location K-Tu-01 (Map 7.4-1), which is located approximately 3 km downstream of K-Tu-02. The remaining sediment that is not expected to deposit in Stephens Lake will pass through Kettle GS and flow downstream.

As identified in the AE SV, a young of year habitat area for Lake Sturgeon currently exists downstream of Gull Rapids near a sand and gravel/sand bed. Two-dimensional modelling was used to assess the spatial distribution of the potential for suspended material to be deposited near the young of yeah habitat area. The modelling results indicate that the deposition pattern during Stage I diversion is very similar to that of the existing environment. Map 7.4-2 illustrates the potential for sediment deposition as well as the existing substrate immediately downstream of Gull Rapids during Stage I diversion under the 50th percentile flow condition. A detailed description of this two-dimensional modeling can be found in Appendix A.

7.4.1.2 Stage II Diversion

7.4.1.2.1 Gull Rapids to Inlet of Stephens Lake

The assessment of Project effects on sedimentation during Stage II Diversion through construction of the South Dam Stage II cofferdam is very complex in nature in comparison to Stage I. This complexity arises because the Stage II diversion incorporates a series of changes to water levels starting with conditions similar to Stage I Diversion up to reservoir impoundment at the **Full Supply Level** (FSL).

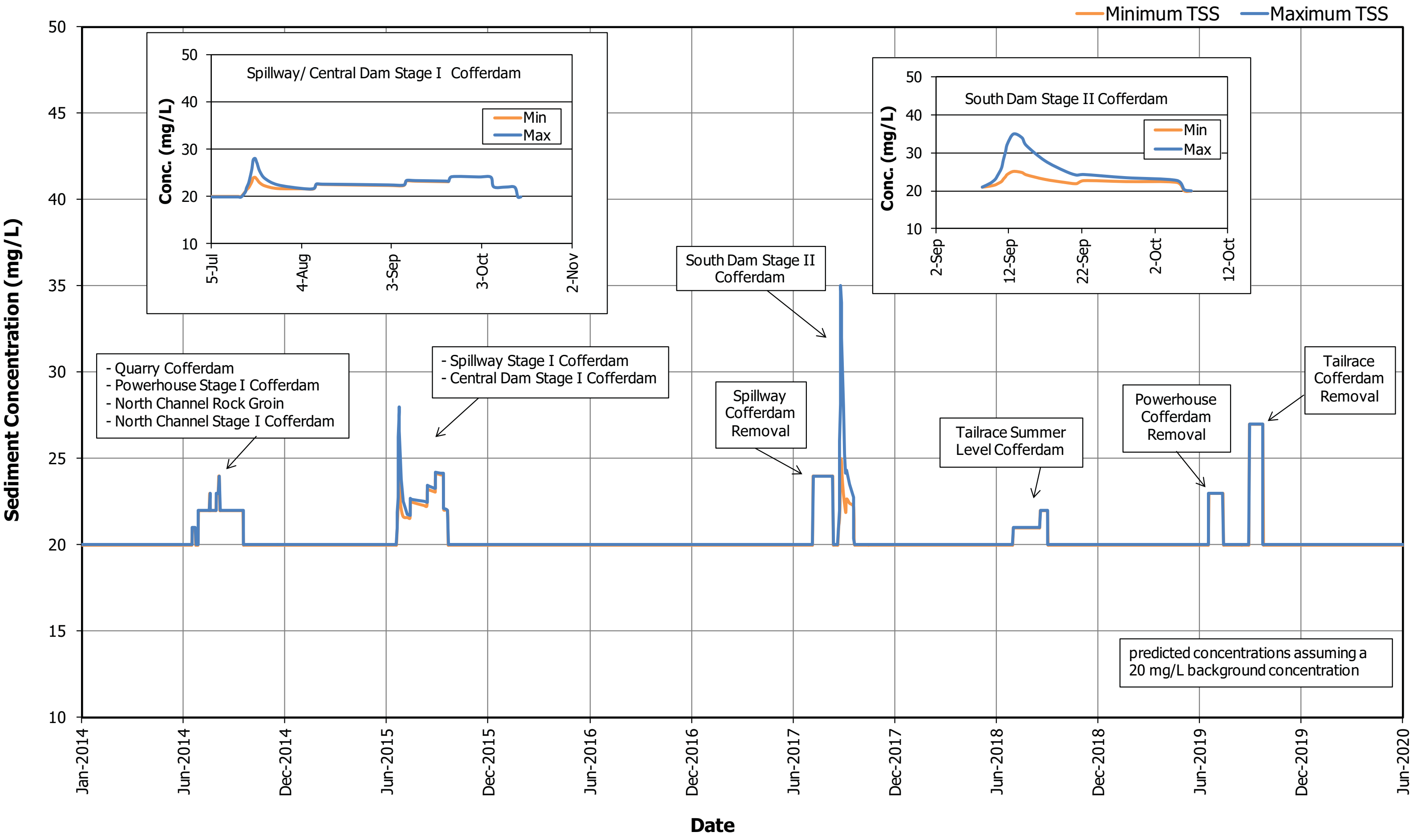

Figure 7.4-1: **Temporal Variation of Suspended Sediment Concentrations at Site K-Tu-2 During Construction for 20-Year Flood Flow of 6,358 m^3/s**

A detailed description of the Stage II Diversion and associated effects on water levels can be found in the Surface Water Regime and Ice Processes (Section 4).

The potential for the maximum rate of shoreline sediment loads occurs when all flow in the Nelson River is being passed through the newly constructed spillway sluice-bays prior to **rollway** construction. This stage of construction would last about 21 months; therefore it may have effects in all four seasons. It is predicted that the additional sediments introduced into the river could potentially elevate the suspended sediment concentrations by as much as 5 mg/L to 15 mg/L in the Nelson River approximately 1 km downstream of Gull Rapids at the K-Tu-02 monitoring location for both the 95th percentile and 1:20 year flood conditions (Figure 7.4-1). Increased sediment concentrations are assumed to occur within the first few days of Stage II diversion and taper gradually to background sediment concentrations (Figure 7.4-1). A range estimate has been predicted due to the complexity and uncertainties of the sedimentation analyses. A detailed description of the sedimentation analyses for Stage II diversion can be found in Appendix 7A.

It is predicted that the increase in suspended sediment concentrations at K-Tu-02 due to construction of the **tailrace** summer level cofferdam will be no more than about 2 mg/L. Removal of the powerhouse and tailrace cofferdams will increase suspended sediment concentrations approximately 4 mg/L and 7 mg/L respectively. This is primarily due to the processes involved in the excavation of the materials in the wet within the flowing water. In contrast, the activities related to cofferdam material placement do not cause a substantial increase in sediment concentration, due to the initial placement of larger sized material that protects the finer material from displacement. It is to be noted that a process of staged removal of material will be carried out. Material will be removed from the inside of the cofferdam "in-the-dry", as much as reasonably practicable, followed by the breaching of the cofferdam in a controlled manner. The controlled breaching will be achieved by removing a portion of the impervious and transition **fill** material on the upstream side to control the rate of seepage into the cofferdam area. Once the **head** of water is balanced on either side of the cofferdam, the removal "in the wet" of the tailrace summer level cofferdam will occur over a period of about 4 weeks. This will involve excavation either by means of a hydraulic excavator (large backhoe) or with a dragline. Some sediment will inevitably be released into the river with each bucket of material excavated, particularly when excavating the **impervious fill** sections. Removal of the tailrace summer level cofferdam will occur in September 2019.

7.4.1.2.2 Effects on Stephens Lake

As discussed above, approximately 4 mg/L to 14 mg/L and 1 mg/L to 4 mg/L additional suspended sediment concentrations are expected at location K-Tu-02 from shoreline erosion and cofferdam material removal respectively. According to the planned schedule presented in (PD SV), construction activities involving passing flow through the newly constructed spillway bays and removal of material from spillway Stage I cofferdam and tailrace summer level cofferdam do not occur at the same time. Therefore, the incoming maximum additional suspended sediment concentration in Stephens Lake would likely be limited to approximately 14 mg/L. Similar to Stage I diversion approximately 30% of the additional suspended sediment concentrations will likely be deposited in Stephens Lake (Figure 7.4-2 and Figure 7.4-3). Most of the deposition will likely occur in a 5 km section near monitoring location

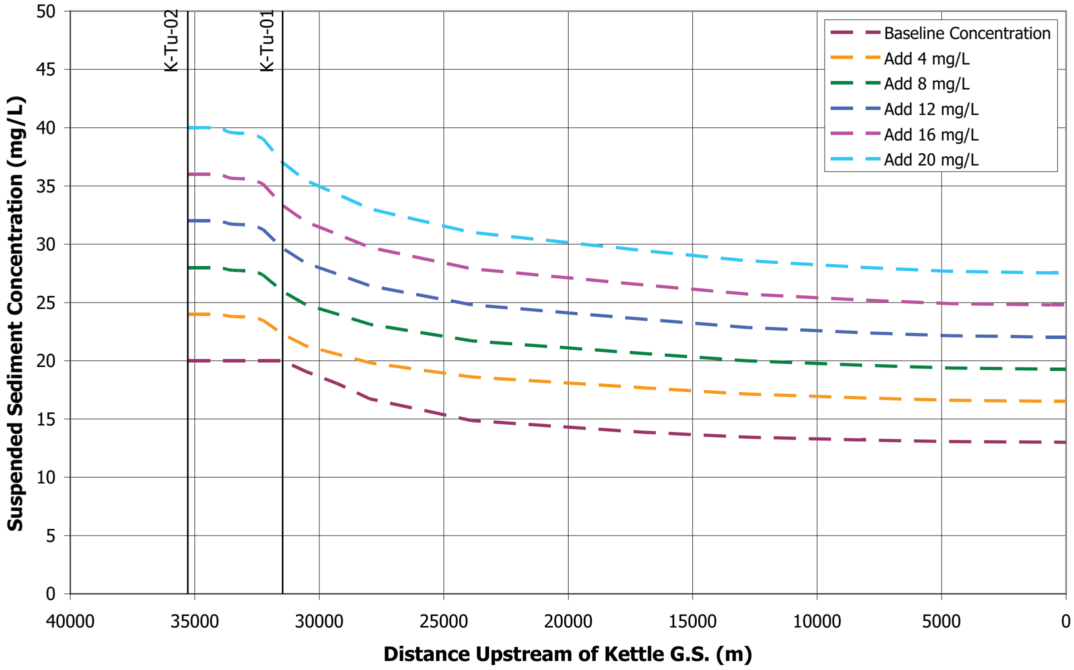

Figure 7.4-2: Longitudinal Description of Suspended Sediment Concentrations During Construction Within Stephens Lake for 95th Percentile Flow of 4,855 m³/s

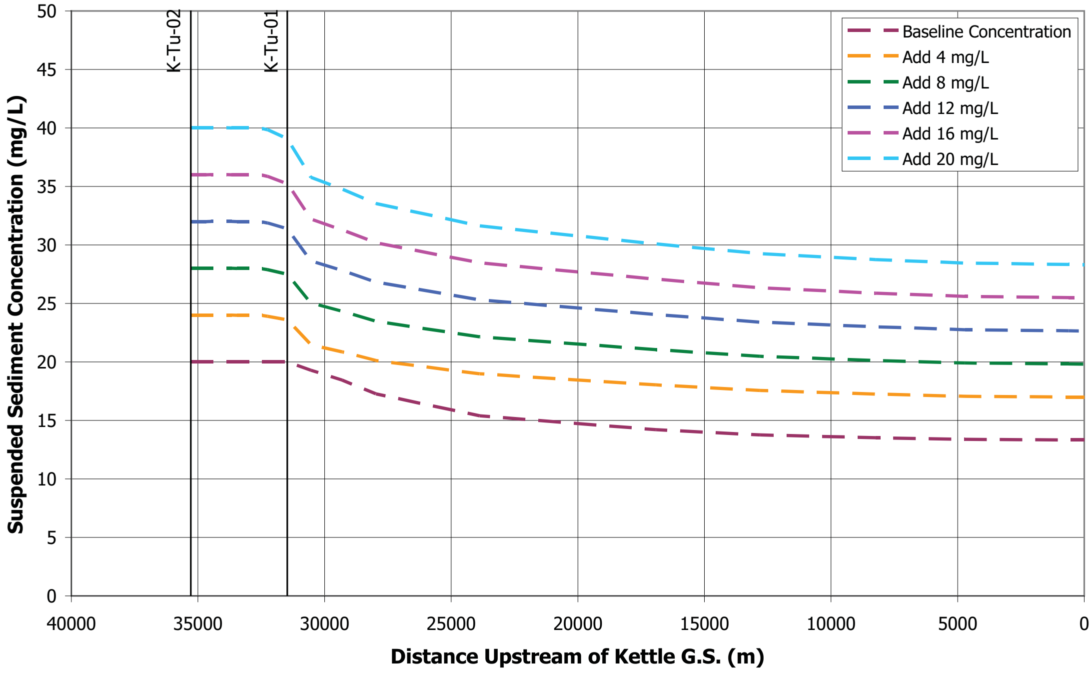

Figure 7.4-3: Longitudinal Distribution of Suspended Sediment Concentrations During Construction Within Stephens Lake for 1:20 Year Flood Flow of 6,352 m³/s

K-Tu-01 (Map 7.4-1). It is expected that the deposition will include mostly the relatively coarser particles and the remaining suspended sediment will pass through Kettle GS and will flow downstream.

The Stage II diversion modelling results indicate that the deposition pattern near the young of year habitat area will be slightly different than the existing environment under average and high flow scenarios but will be similar to the existing environment under low flows. There is a higher potential for silt to be deposited along the north part of the young of year habitat area under the 50th and 95th percentile flows compared to the existing environment. However, it is likely that the silt will not be sufficiently consolidated during Stage II diversion to resist subsequent erosion. Map 7.4-3 illustrates the potential for sediment deposition as well as the existing substrate immediately downstream of Gull Rapids during Stage II diversion under the 50th percentile flow condition. A detailed description of this two-dimensional modeling can be found in Appendix 7A.

7.4.2 Operating Period

7.4.2.1 Mineral Sedimentation – Upstream of Project

7.4.2.1.1 Mineral Sediment Concentration

Modelling of mineral sediment concentration was carried out for the 5th (1,950 m^3/s) percentile, 50th (3,060 m^3/s) percentile and 95th (5,090 m^3/s) percentile Post-project open water flow conditions for different Post-project time periods (end of Year 1, Year 5, Year 15 and Year 30 of the operating period). Details of the modelling process can be found in Appendix 7A. The estimated **magnitude** and spatial distribution of the Post-project depth-averaged suspended sediment concentration is illustrated in Map 7.4-4 through Map 7.4-13. As discussed earlier in the report, the sediment concentrations under very low flow conditions have not been monitored in the field. Therefore, high uncertainties are involved in the results for 5th percentile flow.

7.4.2.1.2 General Summary of Sediment Concentrations

The Post-project suspended sediment concentrations upstream of Birthday Rapids (Reach 2) are not expected to be different from the existing environment. Water levels and velocities are not expected to be substantially changed by the Project and limited shoreline erosion occurs in this reach. Expected offshore suspended sediment concentrations in all other reaches will generally be less than the sediment concentrations that currently exist.

For 5th percentile flow conditions, the mean depth-averaged concentration is predicted to decrease by about 2 mg/L to 5 mg/L from its existing condition and will generally remain below 20 mg/L after impoundment. For 50th percentile flow conditions, the mean depth-averaged suspended sediment concentration is predicted to decrease by about 2 mg/L to 5 mg/L from its existing condition and will generally remain below 20 mg/L after impoundment. For high flow condition (95th percentile), the depth-averaged sediment concentration is predicted to drop by approximately 5 mg/L to 10 mg/L from the existing environment and will generally remain below 25 mg/L after impoundment.

Suspended sediment concentration will be highest during the first year of operation and will decrease each year as illustrated in Map 7.4-14, Map 7.4-15 and Map 7.4-16. This occurs because the volume of eroded shore material will decrease with time after the first year of impoundment. Near **equilibrium** is expected to occur after 15 years of operation. This is shown in Map 7.4-16 which illustrates that the difference in suspended sediment concentration at Year 15 and Year 30 nearly the same. It is also expected to remain the same beyond Year 30.

The range of suspended sediment concentration throughout the reservoir should be comparable to the concentration currently observed in Stephens Lake, particularly in the immediate reservoir of Kettle GS. As recorded in the open water periods of 2005 to 2007 and reported in Section 7.3.1.2, average concentrations in Stephens Lake vary from 3 mg/L to 15 mg/L, with an average of approximately 9 mg/L. The average concentration in the immediate reservoir of Kettle GS was approximately 7 mg/L during the same monitoring period.

Similar to observations made about sediment conditions in the existing environment, it is expected that short-term turbulences or disturbances may cause higher concentrations in localized nearshore areas than in offshore areas. Both the base loaded and peaking modes of operation will result in very similar magnitudes and distributions of depth-averaged sediment concentrations in all modelling reaches.

It is expected that under Post-project winter conditions, a mechanically thickened cover will continue to form in the riverine reach upstream of Portage Creek (Reach 5) as it does in the existing environment, and existing erosion and sedimentation processes are expected to continue in the Post-project environment. In the area downstream of Portage Creek, the river will be transformed into a deeper reservoir. The reservoir will extend upstream from the Keeyask GS for about 25 km, and will transform the ice cover from a rough mechanically thickened cover to a smooth lake ice cover over this length (Section 4.0). The overall flow regime through the Project reservoir is not expected to be substantially different between open water and ice covered conditions. The sedimentation regime is also expected to be similar under both open water and winter conditions. The open water modelling simulations should adequately represent these processes over the winter period.

7.4.2.1.3 Bedload and Bed Material

With the Project in place, the small bed load currently observed in the existing environment will likely be replicated.

7.4.2.1.4 Total Sediment Load

Given that the sediment load entering the study area is assumed to remain the same with the Project in place, the total sediment load passing through Gull Rapids will likely be reduced. After Year 1 of operation the sediment load will be approximately 0.8 million tonnes per year (for average flow condition) which is a reduction of 20% or 0.2 million tonnes per year entering Stephens Lake. After Year 15 of operation the sediment load will be approximately 0.6 million-tonnes per year (for average flow condition) which is a reduction of 40% or 0.4 million tonnes per year entering Stephens Lake. As discussed earlier in this section, the sedimentation environment will reach a near equilibrium state after 15 years of impoundment and, therefore, change in the total sediment load will be minimal after that.

7.4.2.1.5 Mineral Sediment Deposition

Following impoundment, deposition of mineral sediments in the Keeyask reservoir is predicted to occur both in the offshore deepwater and nearshore areas. Deposition in the offshore deepwater areas after Year 1 of operation will be low, ranging from 0 cm to 1 cm in thickness (Map 7.4-17) for average flow conditions. The ranges of nearshore deposition thickness (computed using eroded shore mineral volumes for both base load and peaking modes of operation) for the different modelling reaches are presented in Table 7.4-1 to Table 7.4-4, and Map 7.4-18 to Map 7.4-25.

Figure 7.4-4 and Figure 7.4-7 illustrate the predicted average annual deposition in nearshore areas of the north and south shorelines for the base loaded and peaking modes of operation. Deposition would be generally higher in the first year of impoundment for both modes of operation. According to the analyses, the south nearshore of modelling Reach 6 in Gull Lake would experience the highest rate (4 cm/y to 6 cm/y for base loading and 2 cm/y to 3 cm/y for **peaking**) of deposition in Year 1, after which the rate would decrease. Unlike most of the other reaches, the south nearshore area of modelling Reach 7 in Gull Lake would experience higher deposition rates for both base loading and peaking modes of operation following Year 5. This is due to the relatively high volume of eroded mineral shore material that is expected to increase after Year 5 (Section 6.0). Along the north shoreline, a part of Reach 9 is expected to have the highest deposition in its nearshore area. This is due to a combination of a relatively high volume of eroded mineral shore material and very slow flow velocity.

Table 7.4-1: Range of North Nearshore Mineral Deposition Thickness in Modelling Reaches (for Base Loaded Scenario)

	Year 1		Year 5		Year 15		Year 30	
Reach	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
4	0.5	1	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
5	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
6	1.5	2.5	0.5	1	0.5	1	0.5	1
7	1.5	2	0.5	1	0.5	1	0.5	1
8	0.5	1	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
9	3	4.5	1	1.5	1	1.5	1	1.5

Table 7.4-2: Range of South Nearshore Mineral Deposition Thickness in Modelling Reaches (for Base Loaded Scenario)

Reach	Year 1		Year 5		Year 15		Year 30	
	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)
2	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
3	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
4	1	1.5	0.5	1	0	0.5	0	0.5
5	1.5	2.5	0.5	1	0	0.5	0	0.5
6	4	6	1	2	1	2	1	2
7	2	3	1	1.5	1.5	3	1	2
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 7.4-3: Range of North Nearshore Mineral Deposition Thickness in Modelling Reaches (for Peaking Scenario)

Reach	Year 1		Year 5		Year 15		Year 30	
	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
4	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
5	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
6	1	1.5	0.5	1	0	0.5	0.5	1
7	1	1.5	0.5	1	0.5	1	0.5	1
8	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
9	1.5	2.5	0.5	1	0	0.5	0.5	1

Table 7.4-4: Range of South Nearshore Mineral Deposition Thickness in Modelling Reaches (for Peaking Scenario)

	Year 1		Year 5		Year 15		Year 30	
Reach	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)	Min (cm/y)	Max (cm/y)
2	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
3	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
4	0.5	1	0	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
5	1	1.5	0.5	1	0	0.5	0	0.5
6	2	3	0.5	1	0.5	1	0.5	1
7	1.5	2	0.5	1	1	2	0	0.5
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Apart from the high rate of deposition (as much as 4 cm/y to 6 cm/y) in Year 1 in one of the nearshore areas, the post-impoundment depositional rate is predicted to generally remain within 1 cm/y to 3 cm/y or less for base load scenario and 1 cm/y to 1.5 cm/y for peaking mode in nearshore areas where a comparatively higher volume of eroded mineral shore material is expected. The predicted Post-project depositional rates are comparable to deposition currently observed in Stephens Lake (Section 6.0). In the nearshore areas where the eroded mineral shore sediment would be comparatively lower, depositional rates would likely be very small (0 cm/y to 0.5 cm/y).

Given that the **bank recession** and volumetric erosion rates for the Year 15 to Year 30 period (Section 5.0) appear to represent relatively stable long-term rates, it is unlikely that the deposition rates of mineral sediment will change significantly beyond Year 30.

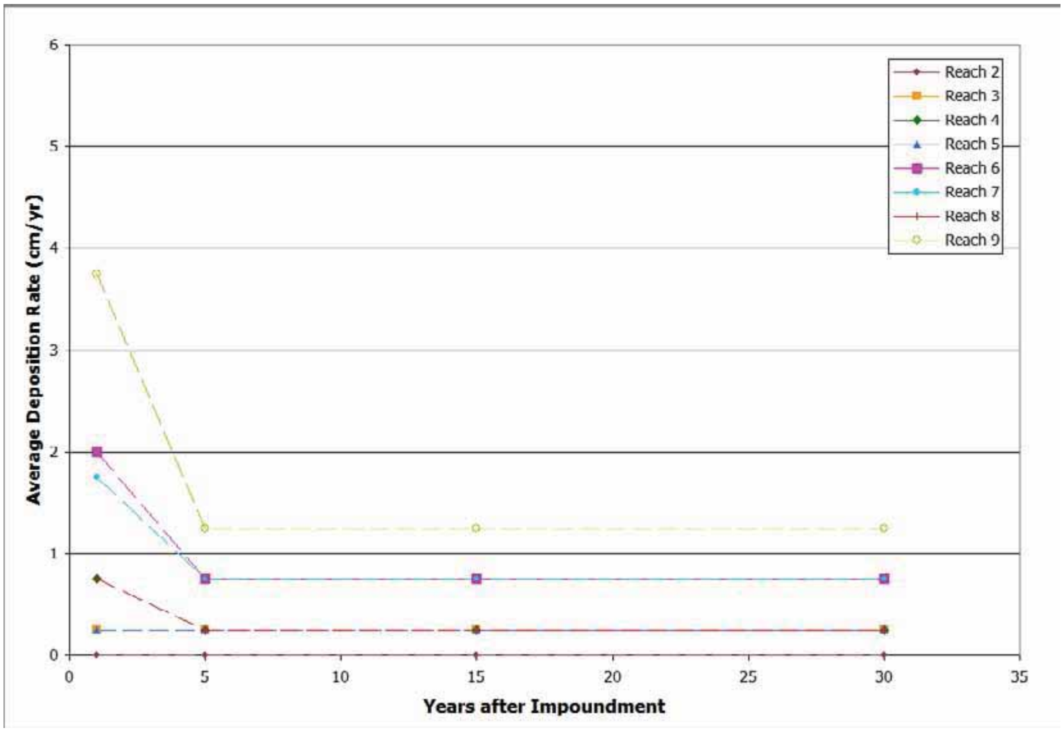

Figure 7.4-4: Mineral Deposition Along North Nearshore (Base Loaded)

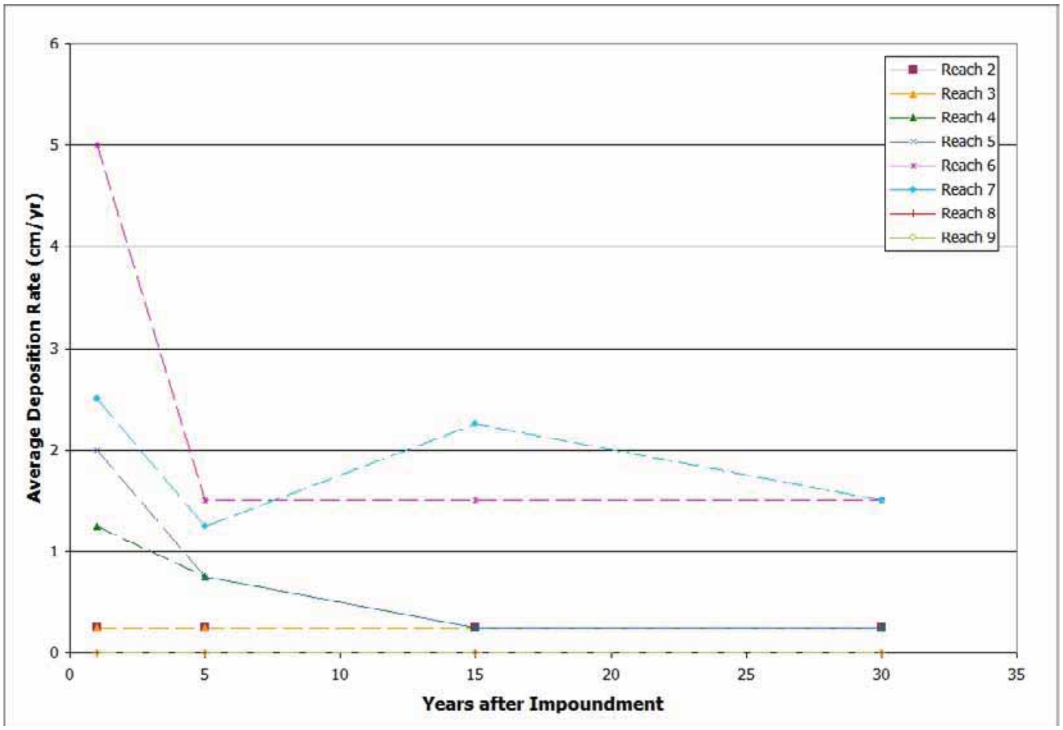

Figure 7.4-5: Mineral Deposition Along South Nearshore (Base Loaded)

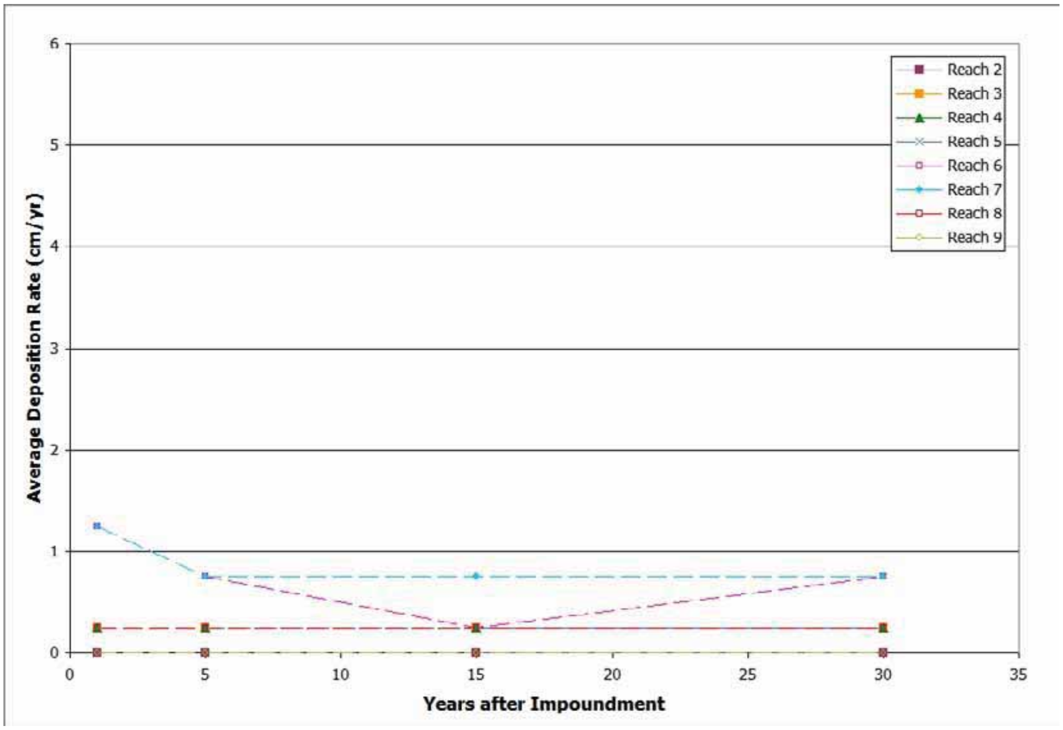

Figure 7.4-6: Mineral Deposition Along North Nearshore (Peaking)

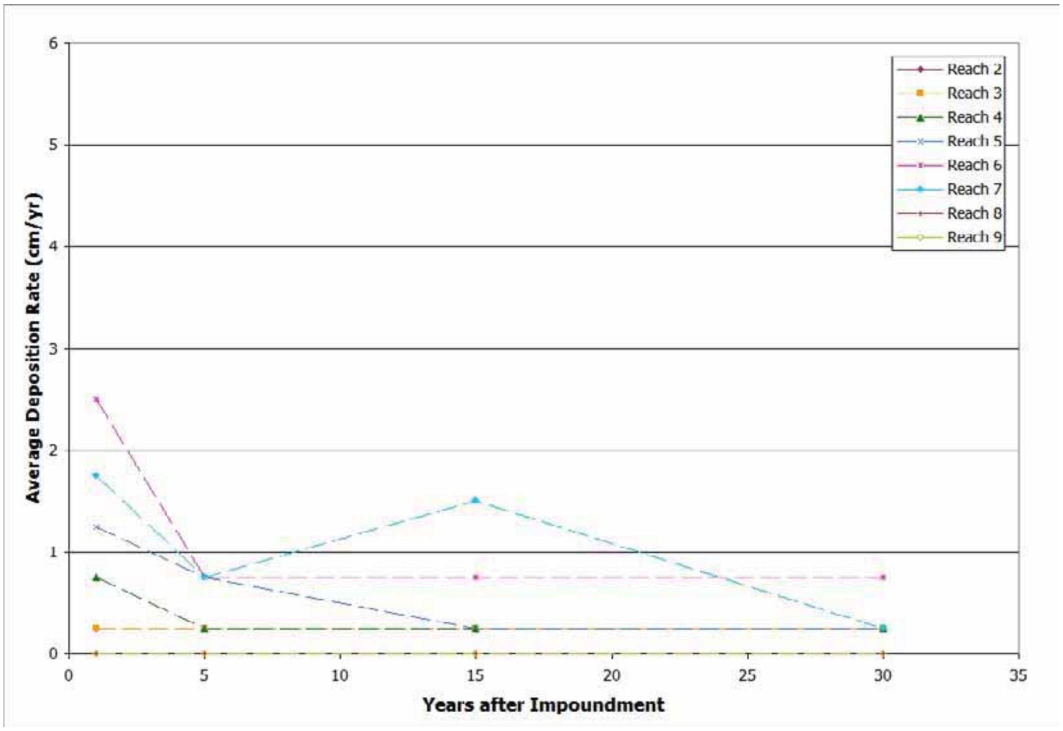

Figure 7.4-7: Mineral Deposition Along South Nearshore (Peaking)

7.4.2.2 Mineral Sedimentation – Downstream of Project

7.4.2.2.1 Mineral Sediment Concentration

In the existing environment, suspended sediment concentrations in Stephens Lake reduce with distance as the water flows downstream from Gull Rapids to Kettle GS. The 2006 and 2007 field measurements show that the concentration reduces by approximately 10 mg/L to 15 mg/L through Stephens Lake, and is greatest at the inlet and lowest at the outlet. The reduction of concentrations from upstream to downstream in Stephens Lake suggests that relatively coarser material that travels from upstream of Gull Rapids deposits within the lake.

As discussed in Section 7.4.2.1, the Post-project sedimentation concentration upstream of the Project will eventually drop by about 2 mg/L to 5 mg/L for low and average flow conditions, and 5 mg/L to 10 mg/L for high flow conditions relative to existing environment conditions. This reduction in suspended sediment concentration suggests deposition of some of the relatively coarser material in the Keeyask reservoir. The finer materials are expected to flow through Keeyask GS. It is likely that the upstream end of Stephens Lake will experience reduction in suspended sediment concentrations by approximately 2 mg/L to 5 mg/L for low to average flow conditions and by 5 mg/L to 10 mg/L for high-flow conditions. However, the flow in Stephens Lake would continue carrying finer particles in the water column. Therefore, the concentrations in Stephens Lake for the most part, particularly in the immediate reservoir of Kettle GS, would likely not be greatly affected by the reduction in suspended sediment in the Keeyask reservoir. It is expected that Project impact on the sediment concentrations would be limited to a reach of approximately 10 km to 12 km from Gull Rapids.

For Post-project winter conditions, the ice cover will be significantly altered in some areas, particularly immediately downstream of Gull Rapids. The large **hanging ice dam** will no longer form, but will instead be replaced by a much thinner, smoother ice cover. This will significantly reduce erosion potential in this reach of the river. The suspended sediment concentration is expected to be generally similar under both open water and winter conditions after the Project is built.

7.4.2.2.2 Bedload and Bed Material

In the Post-project environment, there will not be any measureable bedload in Stephens Lake, as the bed material from upstream will be trapped by the Keeyask GS assisted by an insufficient velocity in Stephens Lake to transport bed material. The bedload is very small in the existing environment.

It is expected that the substrate downstream of Gull Rapids will consist mostly of cobble and gravel. However, the substrate in Stephens Lake will consist mostly of fine material, including find sand, silt and clay. The substrate composition will not be different from that in the existing environment.

7.4.2.2.3 Total Mineral Sediment Load

The sediment load entering Stephens Lake will be reduced after the Keeyask GS is built. As discussed above, it is expected that the suspended sediment in Stephens Lake will be mostly fine and the concentration in the immediate reservoir of Kettle GS will not likely change from the existing environment. Therefore, it is unlikely that the sediment load immediately upstream of Kettle GS will be altered appreciably.

7.4.2.2.4 Mineral Sediment Deposition

As discussed earlier in this section, some of the relatively coarser sediment material would be deposited in the Keeyask reservoir. Absence of relatively coarser material in the flow in the Post-project environment downstream of Keeyask GS would likely cause reduction in deposition currently observed in the existing environment in Stephens Lake, particularly near the upstream end of the lake. It is expected that Project impact on the mineral deposition would be limited to a reach of approximately 10 km to 12 km from the Gull Rapids.

As discussed earlier in Section 7.4.1.1, a young of year habitat area for Lake Sturgeon currently exists downstream of Gull Rapids near a sand and gravel/sand bed. Two-dimensional modelling was used to assess the spatial distribution of the potential for suspended material to be deposited near the young of yeah habitat area under Post-project conditions. The modelling results indicate that it is unlikely that silt will deposit near the young of year habitat under on-peak flows, such as all seven powerhouse units. Under off-peak flows, such as one Powerhouse unit, there is a higher potential for silt deposition near the young of year habitat area compared to the existing environment. However, due to the relatively short duration of off-peak flows, the amount of silt deposition would be very small and will likely be eroded from the bed under on-peak flows. Map 7.4-26 illustrates the potential for sediment deposition as well as the existing substrate immediately downstream of the Keeyask GS under all seven Powerhouse units operating at best gate flow. A detailed description of this two-dimensional modeling can be found in Appendix 7A.

7.4.2.3 Peat Sedimentation – Upstream of Project

7.4.2.3.1 Peat Transport

The total amount of mobile organic material in each peat transport zone was calculated (Section 6) for Year 1 after impoundment (Map 7.4-27). Applying the predictive peat transport model, the amount of peat accumulation in each zone due to wind driven currents over two time periods (May-July and August-October) in the first year after impoundment was calculated (May 7.4-28 and Map 7.4-29).

Map 7.4-28, Map 7.4-29 and Map 7.4-30 illustrate the predicted distribution of mobile peat mats following Year 1. Similar distributions were estimated and assessed for the Years 5 and Years 15. As shown in the maps, total organic material (both non-mobile and mobile) is highest in the large bays located on the south side of the reservoir. These areas have extensive peatlands and creeks and it is reasonable to expect that these locations would produce the highest input following impoundment. This would occur because of a variety of factors (Maloney and Bouchard 2005), including the following:

- Some inundated peat material will resurface (Section 6.0 Shoreline Erosion).
- Some shoreline peatlands will break down.
- Some shoreline peatlands become detached from the shoreline.
- Some **peat plateau bogs** will break down and will become mobile.

Resurfacing from water level variation is considered minimal in the proposed Keeyask reservoir.

There will be an overall decrease in total organic material disintegrated from the shoreline between Year 1 and Year 15 (Figure 7.4-8). As shown in the figure, a small portion (approximately 7% to 15%) of the total organic material (peat mat) will be mobile depending upon the material composition of peat and mechanism of disintegration from the shoreline. The highest maximum total mobile peat mass occurs in Year 5 with approximately 170,000 tonnes, decreasing towards Year 15 to approximately 90,000 tonnes. As discussed in the Shoreline Erosion Processes Section (Section 6.0), there is not expected to be any additional mobile peat after 15 years of operation. The total mobile material in the south side of the reservoir is predicted to increase by 60% between Year 1 and Year 5 because of shoreline disintegration and dominant northerly winds. The area surrounding Gull Lake (Zone 1) will contribute large amounts of material in Year 1 because of inundation and input from other zones. The lowest amount of material will be accumulated in Zone 5 in Year 1, Year 5 and Year 15, because of little amount of material originating from the shoreline in this zone, and will be progressively decreasing with time. Locations of the modelling zones are shown in Map 7.2-3.

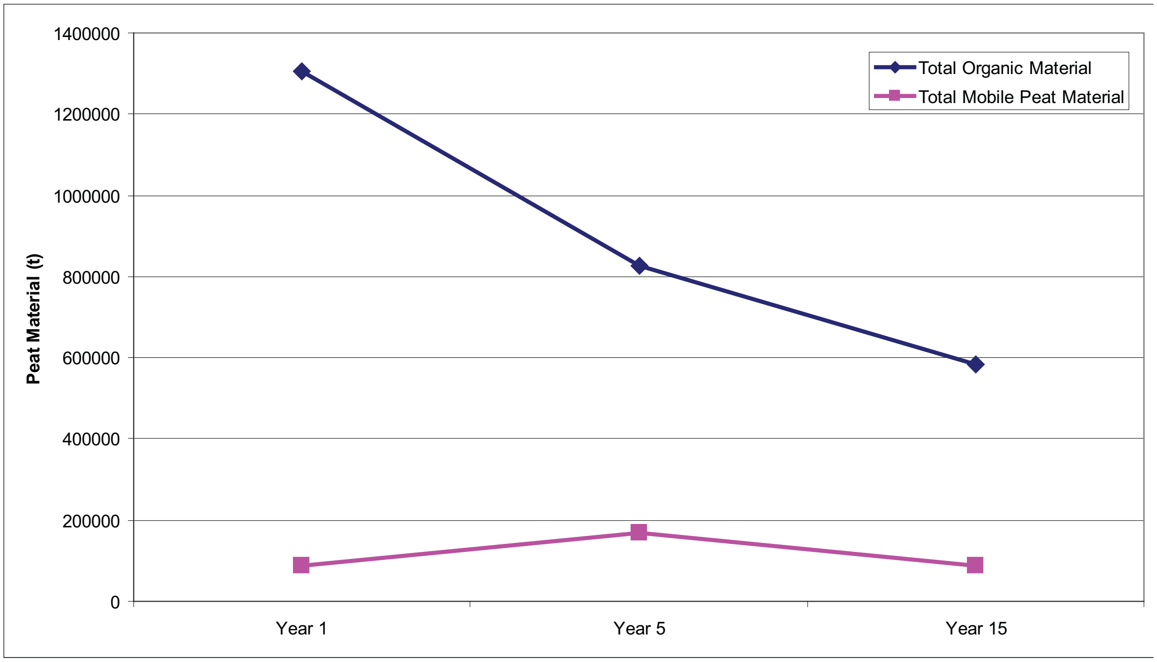

Figure 7.4-8: Total Organic Material for Year 1, Years 2 to 5, and Years 6 to 15

7.4.2.3.2 Organic Sediment Concentration

For each peat transport zone (Figure 7.2-3) Project effects on the peak organic suspended sediment concentrations were estimated. Overall, the **mainstem** of the reservoir (peat transport Zones 1, 2 and 3) had the lowest levels of organic suspended sediment increases. Conversely, flooded **backbays** were affected the most. Peat transport Zones 7, 8, 9, 11 and 12 had the greatest Project effects on peak organic suspended sediment concentrations while Zones 5, 10 and 13 were less affected. Results for Years 1, 2 and 5 (Table 7.4-5) show that organic suspended sediment concentrations drop substantially between Year 1 and Year 5. In Year 6 and beyond, the organic loadings are lower, therefore, it is not anticipated that the Project would cause increased organic suspended sediment concentrations in the study area.

7.4.2.3.3 Organic Sediment Deposition

Most of the organic sediments are expected to accumulate in the bays of origin. The process of accumulation will occur in different forms including deposition. The magnitude of deposition will vary depending upon the amount of peat disintegrated from the shoreline and the location of the bays. The bays in the south side of the reservoir will experience relatively higher deposition than those in the north side. It is unlikely that there will be any appreciable amount of organic sediment deposition in the main stem waterbody outside of the bays.

Table 7.4-5: Predicted Peak Organic Suspended Sediment Concentration Increases

Peat Transport Zone	Year 1 (mg/L)	Year 2 (mg/L)	Year 5 (mg/L)
1	1	<1	<1
2	2	1	<1
3	0	<1	<1
5	2	1	<1
7	10	2	<1
8	21	3	1
9	8	1	<1
10	4	3	1
11	15	1	<1
12	9	4	1
13	3	1	<1

7.4.2.4 Peat Sedimentation – Downstream of Project

7.4.2.4.1 Peat Transport

There are no peat banks downstream of the Project. Therefore, it is predicted that no peat will be generated in this area and the transport of floating peat will be non-existent.

It is possible that some floating peat material may pass through the spillway and move downstream into Stephens Lake. It is expected however, that the amount of peat passing through the spillway will be small. For example, approximately 10,000 tonnes to 13,000 tonnes of the 1.3 million tonnes of peat extant within the reservoir are expected to travel downstream after Year 1, if no peat management measures are implemented. This would only occur when the spillway is being used which would occur approximately 10% of the time based on historical river flows.

7.4.2.4.2 Organic Sediment Concentration

In Year 1 of Project operation it is expected that the increase in organic suspended sediment concentration in the water discharged to Stephens Lake due to the Project will be 1 mg/L or less. In Year 2 and beyond it is expected that the increase due to the Project would be less than 1 mg/L. The Project is not expected to measurably increase downstream organic suspended sediment concentrations: not even during the first year of operation when the greatest mass of peat enters the reservoir as a result of peat resurfacing and shoreline breakdown.

7.4.2.4.3 Organic Sediment Deposition

As discussed above, small amount of mobile peat would travel downstream into Stephens Lake, if no peat management measures are implemented. It is a possibility that a portion of this organic sediment would be deposited in nearshore shallow areas of bays.

7.4.3 Mitigation

Cofferdam designs, construction methodology and sequencing have been developed to minimize the introduction of sediment into the water during construction. Some measures include:

- Stage I cofferdams generally located in areas of the channels with lower velocities reducing entrainment of sediment.
- Methods to place and remove material in the river selected to minimize the generation of suspended solids from the cofferdam materials.
- Cofferdams designed to prevent generation of suspended solids due to wave action.
- Cofferdams will be removed in stages to minimize sediment inputs.

7.4.4 Residual Effects

Additionally, a Sediment Management Plan will be in place during construction that will describe where monitoring is to be done and what actions might be taken if in stream construction causes suspended sediment to increase beyond specified target levels (see Response to EIS Guidelines, Chapter 8). The Sediment Management Plan is separate from the physical environment studies and monitoring, and will be implemented by on-site environmental officers during construction.

Based on the results obtained from the modelling of shoreline erosion for the Post-project environment, an assessment was made regarding the **residual effects** of the Project (Table 6.4-4) using criteria defined for the Keeyask EIS (Section 1, Table 1.2-1).

Table 7.4-6: Summary of Sedimentation Residual Effects

Physical Environment Sedimentation Residual Effects	Magnitude	Extent	Duration	Frequency
Effects During Construction				
During Stage I Diversion, lasting approximately 40 months, suspended sediment concentrations are predicted to increase at the inlet of Stephens Lake by up to approximately 7 mg/L due to shoreline erosion occurring within Gull Rapids and by up to 4 mg/L due to cofferdam construction related activities. The increase in concentration at the outlet of Stephens Lake is estimated to be less than 5 mg/L.	Moderate	Medium	Short-term	Infrequent
During Stage II Diversion, lasting approximately 26 months, suspended sediment concentrations are predicted to increase at the inlet of Stephens Lake by 4 mg/L to 14 mg/L due to shoreline erosion occurring within Gull Rapids and by up to 7 mg/L due to cofferdam construction related activities. The increase in concentration at the outlet of Stephens Lake is estimated to be approximately 10 mg/L or less.	Moderate	Medium	Short-term	Infrequent

Physical Environment **Sedimentation Residual Effects**	**Magnitude**	**Extent**	**Duration**	**Frequency**
Effects During Operations – Upstream of the Project Site				
Mineral suspended sediment concentrations within the reservoir between Birthday Rapids and the **generating station** are predicted to reduce as a result of the Project. The concentration will reduce by 2 mg/L 5 mg/L during low and average flow conditions and will generally remain below 20 mg/L. Suspended sediment concentrations will reduce by 5 mg/L to10 mg/L during high flow conditions and will generally remain below 25 mg/L. The concentrations will be highest during Year 1 of operations and will reduce to equilibrium conditions by Year 15. By Year 15 the concentrations in the Keeyask Reservoir will resemble Stephens Lake.	Moderate	Medium	Long-Term	Continuous
The sediment load would reduce through the reservoir and would be lower than the existing environment conditions at Gull Rapids.	Moderate	Medium	Long-Term	Continuous

Physical Environment **Sedimentation Residual Effects**	**Magnitude**	**Extent**	**Duration**	**Frequency**
The majority of mineral sediments will deposit in the nearshore area. The rate of mineral sediment deposition in the nearshore zone of the reservoir would range between 0 cm/y to 3 cm/y depending on the location. Deposition in the offshore area would range between 0 mc/y to 1 cm/y. Deposition rates will be highest during Year 1 of operations and will be reduced in subsequent years of operation. Deposition rates for a peaking mode of operation would be less than rates for a **base loaded mode of operation**.	Moderate	Medium	Long-Term	Continuous
There would be an overall decrease in total organic sediment load that would disintegrate from the shore between the Years 1 and 15 after impoundment, with the highest amount of mobile peat mass occurring after Year 5. The highest accumulation of mobile peat would likely occur in the southern bays of the reservoir.	Moderate	Medium	Mid-Term	Continuous
In flooded backbays with high peat loads, the peak organic suspended sediment concentration increases may range from about 2 mg/L to 3 mg/L in less affected bays to as much as 8 mg/L to 21 mg/L in the most affected bays. The concentration ranges are expected to drop substantially by the second year of operation. By the fifth year of operation, the peak organic suspended sediment concentration increases due to the Project would decrease to 1 mg/L or less.	High	Medium	Short-Term	Continuous

Physical Environment Sedimentation Residual Effects	Magnitude	Extent	Duration	Frequency
Effects During Operations – Downstream of the Project Site				
It is expected that the mineral suspended sediment concentrations between the generating station and extending 12 km into Stephens Lake would be reduced by 2 mg/L to 5 mg/L during low and average flow conditions and will generally remain below 20 mg/L. TSS will reduce by 5 mg/L to 10 mg/L during high flow conditions and will generally remain below 25 mg/L. TSS concentrations will be highest during Year 1 of operations and will reduce to equilibrium conditions by Year 15 that would be similar to the existing environment concentrations.	Small	Medium	Long-Term	Continuous
It is expected that the deposition of mineral sediment in Stephens Lake, particularly at the upstream end of the lake, would be reduced.	Small	Medium	Long-Term	Continuous
It is expected that there would be a relatively small amount of mobile peat passing through the spillway into Stephens Lake during the first few years of operation. The quantity will decrease with time.	Small	Medium	Long-Term	Infrequent
The Project is expected to increase organic suspended sediment concentrations within Stephens Lake concentration by less than 1 mg/L during the first year of operation. This effect likely will not be measurable and will decrease with time.	Small	Medium	Long-Term	Infrequent

7.4.5 Interactions With Future Projects

There are several foreseeable projects in the area, including the following:

- Proposed Bipole III Transmission Project.
- Proposed Keeyask Construction Power and Generation Outlet Transmission Lines.
- Potential Conawapa GS.

A brief description of these projects is provided in the Keeyask Generation Project: Response to EIS Guidelines document (Chapter 7).

While there will likely be temporal overlap in the construction and operation phases of all of the foreseeable projects, none are expected to influence the sedimentation processes within the hydraulic zone of influence. None of the projects are expected to overlap or interact with the Keeyask surface water and ice regime (see water regime and ice processes), peatland disintegration and mineral bank erosion (see shoreline erosion processes).

7.4.6 Environmental Monitoring and Follow-Up

Physical environment monitoring of sedimentation parameters (*e.g.*, suspended solids and turbidity) is planned to occur upstream and downstream of the Project during construction and into the operating period to verify model predictions regarding Project effects. A comprehensive physical environmental monitoring plan will be developed if the Project proceeds and will include sedimentation monitoring.

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