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To: MCM Congregational Chairpersons and Pastors
From: Edgar Rempel, Executive Director and Hans Werner, Moderator
Date: November 10, 2009
Re: Camp Assiniboia Property

The 2007 MC Manitoba Fall Delegate Session approved a resolution that established a task force with a mandate to consider creation care and environmental issues related to the Camp Assiniboia property. The task force has completed its work and has presented its report and recommendation to the MC Manitoba board for consideration by congregations. The task force report is attached for your information.

To begin the dialogue with congregations on this matter, the task force report will be presented at the November 16, 2009 Fall Delegate Session. As part of the report each congregation is invited to take time between now and the February 2010 Annual Delegate Session to discuss the report and the issues that are presented.

The MC Manitoba board, in receiving the report, has concluded that the task force has fulfilled its mandate as it was set out. However, the board would like to be sure that important issues and perspectives from others involved in the camping ministry are considered in the dialogue. To that end these additional issues and perspectives are being raised at this time to give opportunity for them to be brought into the conversation at the outset.

Other Considerations:

1. Consideration of the range of possibilities – The board’s overriding concern is to process this issue in a way that allows all concerned to engage in the dialogue. More particularly, the board wants to ensure that all perspectives are given equal status in contemplating how best to proceed. The task force recommendation as to how to proceed is important, but should not limit the possibilities that might be considered for the way in which we follow through on the principles that we determine are important.
2. The option of self-directed care and protection within MCM – The task force considered this method but opted for an outside agency to undertake these responsibilities. The question needs to be considered as to whether MCM should retain full control of managing the property as it relates to creation care and environmental matters. Strong proponents of this option make the argument that MCM should retain control from a number of perspectives. Firstly, we have a biblical mandate to be good stewards of all we are and have. This can best be done as we continue to discern what this means, and then to apply this directly to how we manage our property. Secondly, a self-directed approach gives us the advantage of retaining full control of the property and thus the ability to consider all possibilities as to how we use the property. This might include developing the property, more specifically the forest, for program related buildings and activities. Further, it gives us the opportunity to optimize the commercial value of the land for possible sale, should that become necessary.
3. The original purpose for the land – Sixty years ago visionaries determined that the parcel of land we know as Camp Assiniboia should be used for the ministry of Christian camping. Placing the responsibility for managing the “creation care and environmental protection” of our property in the hands of an outside agency is antithetical to this original purpose.
4. Other – There may be other perspectives that are brought forward. These should be part of the dialogue as we discern how best to proceed.

We offer these additional ideas in the hopes that it will give everyone the opportunity to participate to the fullest extent. Also, we trust that all perspectives will be given their due consideration. We invite you to include these ideas as you, the congregations of MCM, undertake a discussion in your midst.