



## Release

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For Immediate Release

### **FOUR ABORIGINAL FIRMS AWARDED WORK ON RED RIVER FLOODWAY EXPANSION PROJECT**

#### **Construction Begins on Improvements to West Dike**

**Winnipeg, MB** – Today, the Manitoba Floodway Authority (MFA) announced the successful contractors who have been awarded work on four construction contracts for the Aboriginal Set-Aside Initiative on the Red River Floodway Expansion Project.

“Providing opportunities for Aboriginal contractors on the floodway project will help to build capacity within the construction industry and to help meet our economy’s future labour demand,” said Steve Ashton, Minister of Water Stewardship. “By encouraging Aboriginal contractors to participate in the floodway project today, we will be in a better position to meet the looming labour shortage not only for the floodway but other future construction projects.”

“We congratulate all of the firms for being awarded work on this historic project,” said Ron Evans, Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. “While obtaining experience and generating economic opportunities for our communities, these firms will contribute to improving flood protection in our province.”

“The Manitoba Métis Federation is pleased to work with the MFA on this unique initiative,” said David Chartrand, President of the Manitoba Métis Federation. “Providing opportunities for Métis construction firms will benefit our communities long into the future. We congratulate all of the firms and look forward to work on the floodway project proceeding into the future.”

The successful contractors are:

- Camster Construction Ltd., from St. Laurent, who supplied the lowest of five bids in response to the W1 tender estimated at \$500,000;
- Skownan/Dyck Joint Venture Construction Company from Skownan First Nation who supplied the lowest of six bids in response to the W2 tender estimated at \$1.8 million;
- H. Baudry Construction from Ste. Agathe, who supplied the lowest of five bids in response to the W3 tender estimated at \$2.5 million; and
- L. Chabot Enterprises Ltd. from Winnipeg, who supplied the lowest of four bids in response to the W4 tender estimated at \$2.4 million.

Earlier this year, the MFA advertised four tenders for work on a 10 kilometre (six mile) section of the West Dike that was identified as part of an Aboriginal Set-Aside Initiative. In response to the tenders, the MFA received twenty compliant bids from eight different firms.

The West Dike, which is currently approximately 45 km (28 miles) in length and located southwest of Winnipeg, will be extended between 10 km (6 miles) to 15 km (9 miles) and raised in height in varying amounts to 1.5 metres (6 feet) to increase the flood protection safety factor. These improvements will provide increased protection against wind and wave action during major flood events. The work will consist of the dike construction, ditch grading, culvert installation, traffic control, temporary detours, traffic signage, silt fencing, other temporary erosion control measures, granular road surfacing, revegetation, as well as the supply and installation of rock rip rap for various sections. To qualify as an Aboriginal firm to bid for work on the Aboriginal set-aside, a contractor was required to be atleast:

- 51% Aboriginal-owned; and
- 1/3 of its employees must be Aboriginal persons

“We are very pleased with the response we received on the Aboriginal Set-Aside Initiative,” said Ernie Gilroy, CEO of the MFA. “The successful contractors represent a good mix of northern and southern contractors and both First Nation and Métis. We look forward to working with all of the successful contractors in the weeks and months ahead as we improve upon the West Dike.” Gilroy noted that pending the outcome of all of the work on the first section, additional sections may be tendered as part of the Aboriginal Set-Aside Initiative in subsequent years.

The Red River Floodway Expansion Project will divert more water around Winnipeg during major floods by more than doubling the capacity of the floodway channel. Once completed the project will protect more than 450,000 Manitobans, over 140,000 homes, over 8,000 businesses and prevent more than \$12 billion in damages to the provincial economy. To date, the Government of Canada and the Province of Manitoba have contributed \$324 million toward the Red River Floodway Expansion Project.

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