

11.0 IDENTIFICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL CONCERNS

An All-Weather Road from P.T.H. 10 to Pukatawagan could potentially have significant impacts on the environment and the social fabric. It is therefore important at this stage to identify the general categories of impacts that would accompany the implementation of such a project.

In identifying the potential impacts of an All-Weather Road, we have assumed that all the processes (including community consultation) essential to achieving a successful All-Weather Road implementation will be carried out, most probably in the following sequence:

- Land Use Planning
- Route Selection
- Environmental Impact Assessments*
- Preliminary and Functional Design
- Right-of-Way Acquisition
- Final Design
- Environmental Approvals*
- Tendering/Employment Strategies
- Construction (staged to minimize impacts)
- Mitigation Operation and Maintenance

* including the appropriate Federal Process.

11.1 Physical and Habitat Impacts

a) Preconstruction and Construction

Table 11.1 illustrates the relative scale of potential impact and potential mitigation actions that will have to be dealt with when building an All-Weather Road. These will apply regardless of the actual physical alignment of the roadway corridor. Not surprisingly, the biggest concerns and most difficult to mitigate relate to right-of-way clearing, stream crossings, drainage, borrow pits, access roads, and embankments.

Table 11.1: Physical and Habitat Impacts

Activity	Impacts and Mitigation
<p><i>Preconstruction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys/Geotechnical 	<p>Planning/Controls</p>
<p><i>Construction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right-of-Way Clearing/Stream Crossings • Drainage/Borrow Pits • Access Roads/Embankments • Camp Sites/Fuel Handling • Noise/Dust/Chemicals • Wildlife Conflicts 	<p>Streambed and Vegetation Protection</p> <p>Erosion Controls</p> <p>Licensing and Vegetation Protection</p> <p>Surface Treatment</p> <p>Management Practices</p> <p>Fencing</p>
<p><i>Road Location</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endangered Species/Migration • Community/Public Safety • Lakes and Streams • Traps/Wild Rice • Heritage Resources • Tourism/Lodges • Protected Areas/Preserves • Traditional Land Use 	<p>Avoidance/Mitigation</p> <p>Avoidance/Mitigation</p> <p>Design Strategies</p> <p>Design Strategies</p> <p>Avoidance</p> <p>Avoidance/Compensation</p> <p>Avoidance/Land Use Control</p> <p>Licensing/Land Use Control</p>

b) Route Location

Table 11.1 also shows the type of issues that will need attention in determining the most appropriate route for an All-Weather Road. The biggest concerns, and most difficult to mitigate, deal with endangered species habitat, migration routes, community proximity, public safety, protected areas, and natural resource reserves.

Particular concerns that will influence route location on an All-Weather Road to Pukatawagan include:

- Forest Management Issues/Firefighting
- Numerous Stream Crossings
- Various Lodges/Outfitter Camps
- Registered Traplines/Commercial Fishing Lakes
- Traditional Hunting Grounds
- Heritage/Archaeological Concerns
- Community Proximity at Sherridon (traffic through community)
- Potential Mining Finds
- Churchill River Crossings
- Kississing River Crossing
- Kennedy Creek Crossings

11.2 Consequential Physical/Habitat/Socioeconomic Impacts

a) Resulting Resource Development

Table 11.2 illustrates the type of consequences that would result from the presence of an All-Weather Road. Greater mobility will create new opportunities for resource development, resource exploitation, forest fire fighting, new settlements, and tourism. Some of these results will be net benefits while others may be negative.

Table 11.2: Physical/Habitat/Socioeconomic Impacts

Activity	Impacts and Mitigation
<p><i>Resulting Resource Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Hunting/Fishing • Tourism/Lodges • Exploration/Mining • Forestry/Fire Fighting • New Reserve Settlements • Unauthorized Roads • New Business • Off-Reserve Settlements 	<p>Licencing/Control</p> <p>Licencing/Control</p> <p>Resource Management/EIA</p> <p>Resource Management/EIA</p> <p>Land Use Planning/EIA</p> <p>Licencing/Policy</p> <p>Licencing/Policy</p> <p>Land Use and Social Planning</p>
<p><i>Service Consequences</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Air Costs/Reduced Service • Reduced Rail Service <p><i>Employment Opportunities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All-Weather Road Construction/Maintenance • Forestry/Mining/Fishing • Tourism/Service Industries 	<p>Alternative Transport</p> <p>Alternative Transport</p> <p>Agreements/Training Programs</p> <p>Agreements/Training Programs</p> <p>Agreements/Training Programs</p>
<p><i>Socioeconomic Values</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilderness/Lifestyle/Traditional Values • Resource Management • Financial Partnerships • Local Medical/Justice/Schools • Population Growth 	<p>Route Location/Land Use Control</p> <p>Multi-Stakeholder Council</p> <p>Agreements/Training</p> <p>Regional Planning/Training</p> <p>Social/Community Planning</p>

b) Service Consequences

Table 11.2 also shows some of the downside issues of an All-Weather Road. It is highly likely railway service will decline and possibly disappear. Air service will be reduced/costs will rise, and it will be more difficult to justify an airstrip upgrade.

c) Employment Opportunities

The All-Weather Road construction and maintenance will produce new job and job training opportunities. An All-Weather Road will drastically increase road transport and create some service industry employment.

It is possible that some of the regional service centre functions in the health/education fields and could be relocated to Pukatawagan from The Pas or Flin Flon.

Resource development is likely to be the largest job creator. This is more likely in the forestry sector than the mining sector. Increased fisheries and wild rice operations are also possible.

Tourism could, with an appropriate regional plan, create new jobs in specific areas. Growth of some existing lodge operations would have a similar effect.

d) Socioeconomic Values

Throughout the region and in each of the communities, an All-Weather Road, while it has the potential for new economic opportunities and a more affordable/better standard of living, will also result in losses. These will likely be most significant in the areas of Wilderness Setting, Traditional Lifestyles, and Traditional Values (Table 11.2). Considerable planning and effort will be required to minimize these losses.

Local participation in Resource Management, Financial Partnership Ventures, Community Health/Education/Justice will be important if an All-Weather Road is going to benefit the Pukatawagan community. Longer range population growth will put great pressure on existing resources with or without an All-Weather Road. Planning strategies may need to be developed to deal with either scenario.